



# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

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**Bethany House Abuse Shelter**

# AGENDA

**Introduction to Bethany  
House Abuse Shelter**

**Disabilities and  
Relationships**

**How to recognize healthy vs  
unhealthy**

**How to find help**

# BETHANY HOUSE ABUSE SHELTER

Bethany House Abuse Shelter is located in Somerset, KY. We serve 10 counties (Lake Cumberland ADD) which includes Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, McCreary, Pulaski, Russell, Taylor and Wayne. We provide emergency shelter for victims of intimate partner violence as well as support groups, court advocacy, and community outreach.

# SHELTER LIFE

- Home atmosphere
- Access to case management, group counseling, crisis intervention, and court advocacy
- Provides food, hygiene, transportation, and for most basic needs
- Assistance with applying for most types of benefits such as SNAP, Medicaid, KTAP
- Play areas for children both inside and outside, with a dedicated child advocate



# STATISTICS ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will experience during lifetime
- The rate of violent crime against persons with disabilities (12.7 per 1000) is more than 3 times the average of 4 per 1000 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017)
- Women with disabilities have a 40% greater risk of violence than women without disabilities (NCADV)
- The most common perpetrators of violence against women with disabilities is their male partners (NCADV)
- Women with disabilities are three times more likely to be sexually assaulted than women without disabilities (NCADV)
- Between 97 and 99 percent of perpetrators are known and trusted by the survivor, with 32% family members, and 44% caretakers (YWCA.org)

# LOCAL STATISTICS

- In 2023, our shelter served 108 adults in shelter. Of the 108, 43 (40%) reported some type of disability, with 10 being physical disabilities and 1 being deaf/hard of hearing
- In 2024, our shelter served 98 adults in shelter. Of the 98, 55 (56%) reported some type of disability, with 13 being a physical disability
- Disability data is not collected on any clients we see outside of staying at the shelter- clients receiving court advocacy, support group services, or crisis intervention are not included in this statistic

# WHY ARE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE ABUSE?

- Lack of resources (such as transportation, access to a phone, or accommodations for their disability)
- Lack the knowledge or skills needed to access help
- Lack of knowledge about services needed for assistance (such as a DV shelter)- many services are not public knowledge and not provided in ways that are easily accessible to those with disability
- Persons with disabilities are usually dependent on others- and an abusive person ensures they are heavily dependent on them for care
- If the person with a disability reports- who will care for them? Where will they go?
- If they have children, there is a greater risk of losing custody
- Overall vulnerability and ability of an abuser to take advantage in multiple ways

# WHAT DOES ABUSE LOOK LIKE?

| Physical  | Emotional/Verbal  | Psychological   | Sexual   | Financial  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Punching, kicking, hairpulling, choking   | Name calling, berating/yelling  | Changing description of events or lying                       | Forcing sexual acts with them or others                            | Not allowing partner to have a job   |
| Damaging property   | Continual criticism or insults  | Threats to kill partner or themselves                         | Pressuring for sex after one has said no                           | Intentionally ruining a partner's credit   |
| Preventing partner from eating or sleeping  | Isolation from friends or family  | Threats to harm children, pets, or service animals            | Using drugs or alcohol to lower inhibitions                        | Stealing or withholding partner's check or money                                 |
| Damaging or denying access to assistive technology (wheelchair, communication device, prostheses) | Shaming or blaming-telling the partner they deserve the abuse because of disability | Threats to take children or report partner to social services | Making a partner feel scared about what will happen if they say no | Breaking necessary items for partner's disability, without funds to replace them |
| Withholding, forcing, or manipulating medication  | Controlling appearance such as clothing/makeup                                      | Gaslighting or invalidating partner disability                | Videos or photos taken without consent                             | Taking out loans or credit cards without partner's consent                       |
| Denying access to transportation to medical appointments  | Withholding affection as punishment   | Threats to place in institutional environment                 | Inappropriate touching during hygiene or dressing                  | Misuse or control of partner's money   |



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# FRIENDSHIP VS INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

## SIMILARITIES

- Emotional bonds are involved
- Social contacts are necessary for humans
- Can be emotionally or physically abusive
- Dynamics are difficult to navigate
- Relationships are HARD- more so if there is a power disparity between the two people

## DIFFERENCES

- Intimate relationships tend to be more involved
  - Emotions are stronger and paired with attraction, so impact is greater
  - Friendships tend to involve more disparity of tactics in manipulation, intimate relationships tend to involve more threats and emotional abuse
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HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

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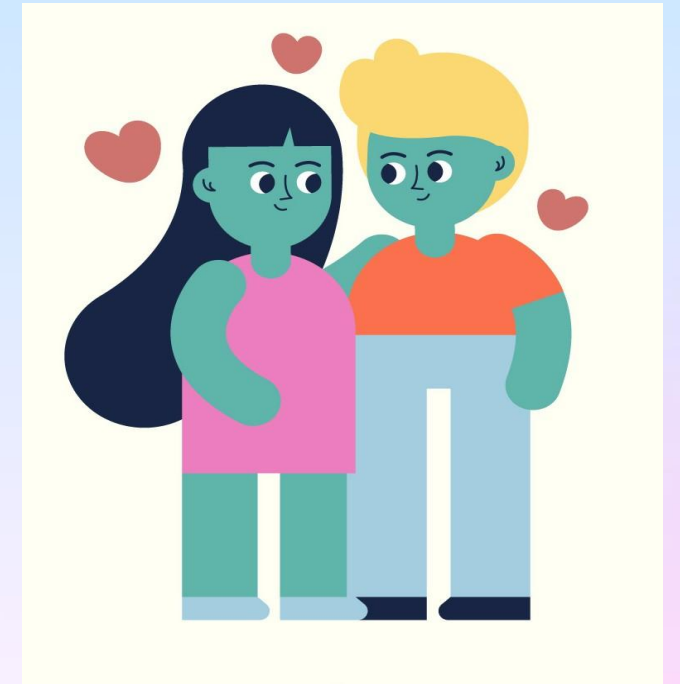
# WHAT DOES HEALTHY LOOK LIKE?



HEALTHY PEOPLE USE RESPECT!

HEALTH RELATIONSHIPS ARE  
RESPECTFUL!

LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT



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# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS CHARACTERISTICS

- Enjoy spending time together, with each other's friends as a couple and separately
- Support the other's goals in life
- Always feel safe with one another
- Trust each other
- Respect each other's opinions even when they are different
- Accept responsibility for actions, apologize
- Solve conflicts without putting each other down, cursing, or making threats
- Have control of your own money
- Are proud to be with each other
- Encourage each other's interests
- Have privacy- of phone or conversations with others
- Have close friends who like the person and are happy about the relationship
- Never feel pressured for sexual intimacy
- Communicate with each other frequently without fighting
- Allow each other space when needed
- Have fun together more often than not

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# HOW CAN I EDUCATE MY LOVED ONE AND PREVENT THEM FROM UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?

- Educate them on the characteristics of healthy relationships
- Ensure that they are in control of as many aspects of their life as they are capable of managing
- Empower them to know their worth
- Build self-esteem and make them feel capable and confident
- Encourage friendships with supervision when they are young, identifying the positive and negative aspects as you go
- Utilize community resources to ensure people stay connected to others
- Model positive communication and relationships
- Utilize safety plans frequently, even if abuse has never occurred
- Listen and believe the person's story
- Be a supportive person in their life

# WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUSPECT SOMEONE IS IN AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

- Ask questions; open ended questions are better
- Ask and listen as if you know nothing about their experience
- If you have observed behaviors that made you suspect abuse, point those out gently in a safe and confidential place
- Express your concern about their safety and well-being
- Offer resources and information, consider calling a crisis line together
- Reassure the person that it is not their fault, they do not deserve to be hurt
- Preserve the person's ability to make their own decisions if at all possible
- Be patient and listen!

# WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUSPECT SOMEONE IS IN AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

- Don't use words like "should" "must" or give direct advice
- Don't be judgmental or aggressive when discussing options
- Do not judge or criticize the abusive person- they may have complicated feelings for this person
- If you have to report abuse, tell the person if possible that you are doing so, or do so anonymously
- Do not force the person to leave the situation- they have many reasons to fear leaving and this will cause them to withdraw
- Do not pretend to be an expert on their life
- Do not tell others or break their confidence unless absolutely necessary for safety
- Do not make the person feel crazy or stupid if they are making a choice you don't like

# RESOURCES

- Bethany House Abuse Shelter- 24 Hour Crisis Line 1-800-755-2017
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 (also offers online chat or text options)  
[www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)
- Zero V [www.zerov.org](http://www.zerov.org) List of shelters across Kentucky
- Center for Prevention of Abuse [www.centerforpreventionofabuse.org](http://www.centerforpreventionofabuse.org) Information resources
- [www.domesticshelters.org](http://www.domesticshelters.org) List of shelters nationwide and hotline numbers