

DEDICATED TO WOMEN

THEY FREQUENTLY
TALK ABOUT
VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN.

SO THEY NEVER
TALK ABOUT
MEN'S VIOLENCE.



Associazione no-profit O.N.L.U.S.
CENTRO ANTIVIOLENZA di PARMA



HOW TO ASK FOR HELP - HOW TO GIVE HELP

PREFACE

This guide offers a key to recognize and understand the experience of violence and abuse against women. It's addressed to all women who need help and to people close to them who are trying to help.

The Anti-Violence Centre of Parma addresses these issues since 1985.

Since then it represents an important reference point for women who need to be listened, accepted, and those who need practical help for escaping from violent situations.

Statistical analyses indicate that the phenomenon of violence is primarily directed against women and that it does not depend on social class, cultural background, educational level or age.

According to the statistical data, violence is carried out mainly by acquaintances or relatives.

The guide helps women who hardly recognize risky situations they may encounter. It is a tool to make women think over abuses already suffered. It's important to acquire a clear vision of viable paths to avoid suffering and danger situations.

The final part of this guide is for people close to those who have been abused.

Friends, relatives or partners, sensitive to their unease can find in these pages the tools needed to recognize the problems and to provide an effective help.

Our experience, supported by the practices of other Anti-Violence Centers and by international community studies, brought us to the believe tha abuse experiences must be faced, rather than ignored.

This guide has been drawn thanks to the financial support of the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

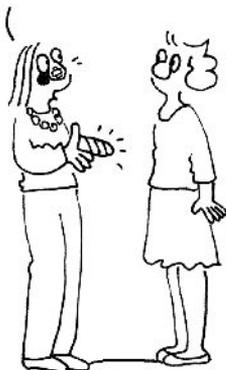
TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Violence against women is considered as a power and control abuse that exhibits through through physical, sexual, psychological, and economic oppressions.

- Physical violence: all forms of violence against your body and your properties.
- Psychological violence (ill-treatment, mobbing, stalking): any abuse and lack of respect that hurts your identity and your freedom.
- Economic violence: any form of control over your economic autonomy.
- Sexual violence: any form of involvement in sexual activity without your consent.

Often these types of violence appear with different combinations.

I HAD SLIPPED
ON AN ORANGE
PEEL...



...OR KIWI...
OR BANANA...



OR ON A FRUIT
SALADE OF LIES.



Physical violence: any form of abuse of power and control, characterized by acts of intimidations or direct action, which is manifested through physical abuse. Most importantly, it is a crime.

Following are the more popular behaviors which can be classified as physical violence, to jostle, to cast out, to tie, to overhang, to break objects as a form of intimidation, to spit up, to bite, to grab the hair, to push down the stairs, to kick, to hit, to slap, to strangle, to burn with cigarettes or to cause burns, deprivation of medical treatment, deprivation of sleep, to seize, to prevent to let out or to escape, to cause fractures or physical trauma, to produce wounds with or without objects, to threaten with weapons.

Very often physical violence is preceded by others types of violence resulting the culminating point.

The abuser uses physical violence as a tool to frighten, since it damages the physical integrity and it makes women live in a state of continuous feeling of insecurity.

If you suffer physical violence, you may feel ashamed, due to visible signs of violence. You may try to justify the wounds with accidental causes, living these moments with a sense of extreme inadequacy. As a result of this, you do not have the opportunity of thinking over, thus you suffer a double violence.



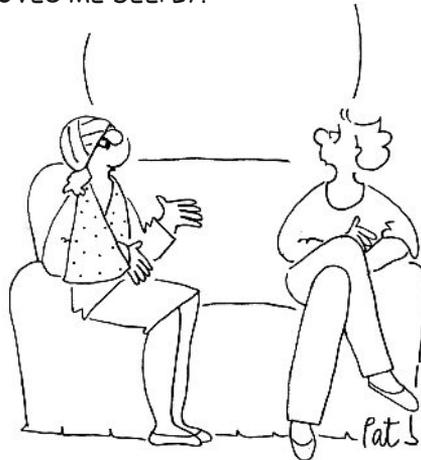
What to do?

- Don't try at any risk to forget, but try to face the problem.
- In any case go to the Emergency Hospital to get treated and get the medical report, maybe one day you will need it.
- If you think it's important go to the Police Department.
- It's your right to denounce your aggressor to police, in any way the fact happened. Remember that in case of physical violence you have 3 months to make a complaint.
- If the situation becomes risky, call 113 (police) or 112 (Carabinieri).
- Speak as soon as possible with someone who may help.
- **Speak in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

All centers operate guaranteeing anonymity and supporting you without any conditions, and respecting your future decisions.

HE TREATS ME
BADLY, BUT REALLY
HE LOVES ME DEEPLY.

AS DEEPLY
AS AT THE BOTTOM
OF A WELL?



Psychological violence: words, gestures, allusive tones, explicit or veiled insults aimed at humiliating you. Psychological violence does not leave bruises on body, but causes invisible and deep injuries. Appealing to a feeling that has nothing to do with love, he tries to control you instigating to you guilt-feelings, confusion and bad self thoughts.

Sometimes you do not understand:

- Why you are feeling so bad.
- Why a simple look makes you shake.
- Why you feel unwelcome and insignificant to his eyes.
- Why everything you do for him is never good.
- Why he is continuously mocking at you.
- Why he publicly uses nicknames or negative names to express to his contempt.

Don't ask yourself what is wrong with you, try to consider that perhaps the problem **is not you**.

The psychological violence is a process of slow destruction constituted by dirty actions which in most cases, are hidden. It is based on the devaluation of everything that a woman thinks or does and in which she is interested. It also includes restrictions of movement freedom without using physical force, for example, using the action of staying at home as a "proof of love".

Who suffers psychological violence feels continuous and permanent stress. However, it is hard to bring the symptoms of her malaise to violence, especially if the abuser is a loved person she is afraid to lose.

The most frequent signs of malaise are

- Sleep troubles
- Irritability
- Frequent headache
- Gastro-intestinal disorders
- Continuous state of apprehension
- Constant stress
- Anxiety



What to do?

- Don't feel guilty for what's happening.
- Try to maintain have a clear what happened.
- Speak/talk with someone who can help clarify your ideas.
- **Go in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

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Sexual violence: all those sexual acts carried out by one or more persons against the woman's will, or in all other cases in which the woman who suffers is not aware of what is happening.

Includes:

- Sexual harassment and physical contact
- Sexual relation (often in domestic violence)
- Humiliating sexual acts requests (often in domestic violence)
- Sexual aggression (attempted rape)
- Rape (compulsion to sexual relations with threat of violence).

The abuser may be a stranger, a co-worker or a supervisor, a friend, a relative, or the partner / husband: no matter who he is or what role he has in your life: The important thing is that you know that **you are not guilty**.

You should not feel guilty for something that you had suffered, and above all do not to be afraid to report the abuse because you are feeling misunderstood.

The trauma suffered as a result of sexual violence may include:

- Panic and confusion
- Shame for what happened
- The relationship with your body becomes hard
- Fear of feeling misunderstood
- Fear of getting out or of remaining alone
- Feeling of having lost the control of the own live

The sexual violence and rapes lead, in many cases to serious psycho-physical consequences, nightmares, insomnia, nausea, vomiting, irregular heart beats, quivering, state of nervous excitement, depression, eating disorders. The mental suffering of those who have suffered such abuse is sometimes heaviest than physical pain.

So if after violence or sexual harassment you do not feel the same and do not understand why, **ask for help**.



What to do?

- If you decide to lodge a complaint, remember that it is important to keep the same clothes you had on and go as soon as possible to the Hospital, before a shower. On your body and your clothes there may be physiological traces of aggression, useful for identification of the aggressor.
- It's your right to denounce to the police, any circumstance the fact happened. Remember that in the case of sexual violence, you have six months to lodge a complaint (in special cases the time is higher).
- If in the subsequent weeks or months of sexual violence you feel that you still feel bad, ask for psychological help.
- Speak as soon as possible to someone trusted: If you keep in silence, it will be difficult to come out. Shame and sense of fault will stop your story.
- **Go in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

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Economic violence: it consists in all forms of control economic autonomy.

This is a type of widespread violence, but less recognized. Indeed, men's claim to hold the economic control, is still broad consensus in the old family stereotypes. This attitude forces a woman to a situation of dependency, depriving her of choice and participation in family decisions.

Some examples:

- He prevents you from finding a job or behaves in a way that forced you to leave what you own.
- You work in the family firm without remuneration and without authority for decision, power or access to financial resources.
- He prevents you to manage the family money.
- He does not let you know the financial account.
- He requires a report for each expense.
- He doesn't contribute to house and family expenses or contributes in a poor way.
- He makes you sign documents without explanations.
- He takes you charge of debts or commitments in behalf of him
- He prevents you to own a personal account and requires you to have your salary paid to his account.
- He embezzles your wealth.
- He doesn't pay your maintenance cheque established the separation.

It is a weapon of blackmail : your partner tries to get you believe that you may not be able to maintain yourself or your children.



What to do?

- Do not sign confidential documents (insurance, banking, proxy, contracts, etc.) without having understood the contents and their uses.
- Ask for a copy of any document you signed.
- Ask information to be always updated about your financial situation directly to the Bank employer or insurance.
- Demand official recognition if you collaborate with the family business.
- To protect you, deposit your economic income in your own personal bank account.
- If he does not pay the maintenance, ask for help from a lawyer.
- **Go in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

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Domestic violence: All violence that occurs at home and that are carried out by live-in people.

Domestic violence may appear in one way or as a combination of physical , sexual, psychological and economic violence, differently combined from case to case.

The whole family system becomes a place where relations are becoming more complicated, changing in relationships of power and control with the person who seems weaker. For different cultural and social reasons, the woman is often considered weak, since her attachment in children and family is viewed as a point of weakness rather than of strength.

The reasons that most often are used as an excuse of male violence by the abuser are:

- Jealousy
- Disregarded expectations on domestic work
- A way to correct the children education
- The punishment for what he considers a wrong your behavior
- A punishment for an assumed lack of respect

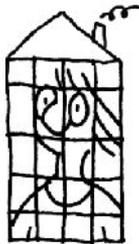
It can be difficult to understand what happens because violence is done by a person of your choice, considered important in your life.

What usually happens:

- He tries to isolate you, he does not let hang around, he does not allow you to find a job
- He threatens you with words, gestures, objects
- He minimizes and denies the violence, tells it's not his fault, indeed often argues that it's your fault

- He uses children to threaten you or to disconcerted you
- He excludes you from the important family decisions
- He humiliates you, laughing at you, and making you feel inadequate

Everything is done inside an emotional relationship so it is difficult to understand why you feel so bad, and often you judge the violent relationship as rare episodes . You hope that tomorrow it will be different and that he will change with your help.



What to do?

- Do not feel shame and do not suffer in silence for fear of being judged by others
- Do not try to play unnecessarily along with his countless requests
- Try to get by, maintaining your self-worth and making an objective criticism on what's happening (it may be difficult because you choose and loved him)
- Do not stay alone but try to maintain relationships with people you're connected, and who can help you
- If for your safety you are suddenly forced to drift away from home because of Violence suffered by the father of your children, take the children with you and communicate via telegram that you were forced to go away because of his violent behavior. Also, you must indicate that through social services, you can set the modalities through which children can be seen. It can happen that if your children remain with him, the father will eventually refuse to leave the children to you and you will have to wait until the Court decides about whom the minors must stay with

- Try to speak with a trusted person to understand what is happening.
- **Go in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

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Please note that domestic violence is the most widespread and the most difficult to understand for different reasons such as: shame and fear that others can see the whole family negatively. The emotional relationship between the family members make you decide to remain in silent and endure . This is a disadvantage for the weakest parties . Example: children who witness violence often learn wrong behaviors, apart from suffering.



I NEED HELP!

Stalking: (oppressive persecution) when a person obsesses and persecutes another person and by means of intrusions, ambushes, repeated and undesired communication attempts (letters, phone calls, email, SMS, shadowing, intrusions into working life).

This behavior makes you feel controlled, in a state of constant stress and danger, making your ordinary life very hard.

The stalker (the harasser) acts to set an involvement even if unrequired, or to salvage an old relationship or to take revenge for having been left. These men usually show serious relationship difficulties, thus they use a wrong and “aggressive” approach against the chosen women.

Some may suffer of psychological discomfort which makes them strongly believe that a relationship exists, although it does not.

The stalker can be a friend, a colleague, a stranger, but in most instances he is an ex partner.

What to do?

- Ignore (but keep in case of complaint) gifts, messages, letters, emails, since answering you may enhance the vicious circle. The stalker interprets the negation as a dialogue which confirms the interest to him.
- Activate a new phone number, which should not be spread, unless to trusted people.
- Try to understand if someone provides information to your stalker. In this case avoid to inform on schedules and places you usually attend.
- Talk to trusted people who can help you rid of this serious situation and who can guarantee a sort of safeguard in the event of legal proceedings against the stalker

- Refer to the Police before the harasser becomes so intrusive to become able to totally manipulate your life, even using violence.
- **Go in any case to a specialist centre that acts against violence, they will help you understand what happens and together you can build a path to escape from the unease you are feeling.**

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ABANDONED
WOMEN CRY.
ABANDONED
MEN KILL.

SO THEY
CAN CRY
AT THE FUNERAL.



Mobbing: It consists in behaviors and actions carried out by employers, managers or colleagues which become persecutions. These behaviors are so continuous that can cause important psycho-physical damage (daily abuse, isolation, disqualification of a person and of her job). A research made in Italy by Prof. Harald Ege, shows that mobbing is suffered much more by women compared to men.

Included in the categories of Action mobber :

- Prevent you to express yourself at work (ex. Ignoring you when you speak or continuously interrupting you, not responding to your requests for interview and your letters, tying up your work using any way to stop your autonomy)
- Isolate you (ex. moving you to another room, denying you the use of telephone, preventing you the access to information or to the computer, unjustified transfers)
- Put you on the spot (ex. alluding to your private and working life)
- Decry your work (ex. unjustified or exaggerated continuous criticism)
- Expose you to health risks (ex. assigning tasks that are incompatible with your psycho-physical skill)

What to do?

- Do not depress
- Make sick leaves only for as long as necessary
- Report physical and psychological damage to qualified organizations
- Go to the Doctor and RLS (representatives of workers to security) as a references
- Keep a record of diseases.

- Keep a diary of all violence suffered containing: date, time, place, people who were there and description of the facts
- Try to find colleagues willing to testify
- Do not accept provocations, usually these are tricks to give you disciplinary sanctions
- Don't get isolated

Speak to your union and to the Mobbing Office on the territory, or in any case to competent staff that can help you get out of the situation.

Mobbing Office

Head Office: c/o CGIL Via Confalonieri, n.5

Tel. no: 0521 297614

Time: Lunedì 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Martedì 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Mercoledì 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.



I NEED HELP!

IT'S VERY
DANGEROUS
FOR US
TO GO HOME
BY OURSELVES...



...AT NIGHT.



IT'S TRUE.
MY HUSBAND'S
WAITING FOR ME
AT HOME ...



...TO BEAT ME UP.



THIS PART IS ADRESSED TO PARTNERS, RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OF WOMEN WHO SUFFERED VIOLENCE AND ARE ABUSED.

It may happen to find out about situations of violence involving women who are close to you and to do not know what to do.

How you feel:

- You feel powerless
- You feel confused about how to help her
- You feel guilty for not having noticed the situation before
- You feel anger because you think that she bears all this without reacting
- You feel very uncomfortable because you do not know how to help without embarrassing her
- You are very concerned for her safety
- You feel so bad, that you would like to intervene quickly on her rights, even if this may go against the woman's interests.

What to do?

- Help her and stay close and listen her
- Do not judge
- Do not force her to change her decisions
- Respect her times and try to understand her point of view
- Be tolerant, some situations require much time and patience to be changed
- Try to encourage her and support her in her capacities (often women do not react because the violence has convinced her of being incapable)
- Remember that violence does not depend on social class, on cultural appearance, on the degree of education and on age of those who abuse and who suffer.

- **Suggest her to contact a Specialist Center which acts against violence. She'll find qualified women that will help her understand the situation she lives and develop the suffered violence.**

They will also respect her choices and they will support her ridding herself from the violence. The anti-Violence Parma works in the territory since 1985. It aims at fighting the violence against women, it is an important reference point for the suffering women. The Center provides free and anonymous help, a support that helps to recover self-esteem and autonomy. They work with specialists, trained operators, volunteers , lawyers and psychologists.

The Center offers:

- INTERVIEW SUPPORT
- LEGAL INFORMATION
- PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVICE
- TEMPORARY HOSPITALITY IN GUEST-HOUSES IN AGREEMENT WITH THE COMPETENT OFFICES



LAST
ENDANGERED
SPECIES



Where to go

Association Center Anti-Violence

Head Office, vicolo Grossardi, 8
Tel. 0521 238885 - Fax 0521 238940

Monday 9:00 - 16:00
Tuesday 9:00 - 13:00 / 14:30 - 18:30
Wednesday 9:00 - 13:00
Thursday 9:00 - 13:00 / 15:00 - 19:00
Friday 9:00 - 13:00

C.A.V.S. Hospital Maggiore Padiglione Rasori

Monday 9:00 - 13:00
Toll - free number 800.090.258

Listening Centres the province

Borgo Val di Taro

Presso il municipio
Friday 10:30 alle 13:00

Fidenza

Via Carducci, 41
Wednesday 9:30 alle 12:30

Fornovo

Presso il municipio
Tuesday 10:30 alle 13:00



Anti-violence centres addresses in Italy

- Ancona - Casa Rifugio "Zefiro"
Tel. 071 2075383 / 071 55235
- Arezzo - Pronto Donna - Tel. 0575 355053
- Avellino - Filo di Arianna - Tel. 346 8688344
- Bologna - Casa delle donne per non subire violenza - ONLUS
Tel. 051 333173
- Bolzano - Centro d'Ascolto antiviolenza
Tel. 800 276433 / 0471 513399
- Cagliari - Centro d'ascolto - Tel. 070 652525
- Caserta - Telefono Rosa - Tel. 0823 354126
- Como - Telefono Donna Como - Tel. 031 304585
- Ferrara - Centro donne e giustizia - Tel. 0532 410335 / 0532 247440
- Firenze - Associazione Artemisia - Centro "Catia Franci"
Tel. 055 601375 / 055 602311
- Forlì - Centro donna
Tel. 0543 712660 / 0543 712661 / 0543 716262 / 0543 716263
- Genova - Centro Accoglienza per non subire violenza
Tel. 010 2461716
- Gorizia - SOS ROSA - Tel. 0481 32954
- Imola - Ass. "La Cicoria" - Donne contro la violenza alle donne - ONLUS
Tel. 333 2197061 / 0542 604608
- L'Aquila - La Biblioteca della Donna "Melusine"
Tel. 0862 65985
- Livorno - Centro Tutela Giuridica per Donne e Minori
Tel. 0586 887009 / 0586 885283
- Merano - Casa delle donne - Tel. 0473 222335
- Mestre - Casa di AWA
Tel. 041 4566213 / 338 2737570



- Milano - Casa di accoglienza delle donne maltrattate
Tel. 02 55015519 / 02 55015638
- Modena - Centro contro la violenza alle donne
Tel. 059 361050
- Palermo - Le Onde - Centro accoglienza e casa delle Moire UDI-ONLUS
Tel. 091 327973 / 091 329604
- **Parma - Associazione Centro Antiviolenza O.N.L.U.S.**
Tel. 0521 238885 - numero verde: 800 090 258
- Parma - Lunaria Soc. Coop. Sociale
Tel. 0521 776549
- Pisa - Associazione Casa della Donna
Tel. 050 561628
- Potenza - Casa per le donne "Ester Scardaccione"
Tel. 0971 55551
- Ravenna - Linea Rosa
Tel. 0544 216316 (Ravenna) / 0544 583901 (Russi)
- Reggio Emilia - Casa delle Donne - Ass. Nondasola Centro Antiviolenza
Tel. 0522 921380 / 0522 920882
- Roma - Centro "Maree" - Tel. 06 6535499
- Roma - Centro Accoglienza per donne che non vogliono più subire violenza
Tel. 06 5810926 / 06 5833275
- Roma - Centro Antiviolenza del Comune di Roma
Tel. 06 23269049 / 06 23269079
- Trento - A.L.F.I.D. - Tel. 0461 235008 / 0461 233528
- Trieste - Centro Antiviolenza G.O.A.P. - Tel. 040 3478827
- Udine - Iotunoivoi Centro Antiviolenza
Tel. 0432 421011 / 335 1389212
- Udine - Officina delle Donne - Tel. 348 8405148
- Udine - Zero tolerance Contro la Violenza sulle Donne
Tel. 800 531 135
- Venezia-Mestre - Centro Antiviolenza
Tel. 041 5349215





Associazione no-profit O.N.L.U.S.
CENTRO ANTIVIOLENZA di PARMA

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