

# Spotlight on: Domestic Violence and Abuse

OMH's Spotlight series highlights the challenges faced by different New York populations. We recognize the unique issues surrounding Domestic Violence and invite you to learn more.

## Did you Know?

People who survive Physical and Sexual Violence can also experience:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Suicidal attempts
- Sleeping and eating disorders

### Mental Health Coercion

**Definition:** abusive tactics targeting a partner's mental health as part of a broader pattern of abuse and control

**Examples:**

- Preventing someone from accessing treatment and medication
- Convincing someone that no one will believe them
- Coercing someone to use substances
- *Gaslighting*

### Gaslighting

**Definition:** A form of emotional abuse that causes a victim to question their own feelings, instincts, and sanity, which gives the abusive partner a lot of power and control.



7 out of 10 psychologically abused women show symptoms of PTSD and/or depression

85%

of domestic violence survivors say a partner has accused them of having a mental illness



Almost 50% of domestic violence survivors seeking mental health support said they were prevented or discouraged by their partner from getting that help and taking medication.

MORE THAN 50%

of domestic violence survivors say a partner threatened to tell authorities they were mentally unstable to prevent them from getting something they needed, such as custody, an Order of Protection, or medication.

Domestic Violence is Trauma. Experiencing trauma is linked to:



Substance use



Engaging in risky behavior (like self-injury or risky sexual encounters)



Mental Health conditions

Data from: NYS Office of Prevention of Domestic Violence, National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health, National Domestic Violence Hotline

## Take Action

Learn some of the warning signs of abuse:

### PHYSICAL SIGNS:

bruises  
black eyes  
marks on the wrist or neck  
clothes inappropriate for the season

### EMOTIONAL SIGNS:

personality changes  
withdrawal  
isolation  
nervousness  
overly apologetic

### CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR:

needing permission to do things  
constantly updating their partner about whereabouts  
not being allowed to wear or do certain things  
not being allowed to spend time with certain people

Learn how to ask and respond:

### ASK VICTIMS:

How can I help you be safer?  
How can I support you?  
What are your biggest fears?

### TELL VICTIMS:

I am concerned for your safety.  
This is not your fault.  
Help and resources are available.

## Need Help?

**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat)

**The NYS Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline:**

Call: 800-942-6906 | Text: 844-997-2121 | Chat: [opdv.ny.gov](https://opdv.ny.gov)



Office of  
Mental Health

Office for the  
Prevention of  
Domestic Violence