



**Our Lady of the Wayside Parish
Domestic Abuse Ministry**

How Can I Help a Friend or Family Member?

Everyone deserves to be safe and healthy in their relationships. If you or someone you know may be in an abusive relationship, a path to safety exists. Get help.

Where to Start

- ⌘ Be supportive and listen; believe what your friend or family members says.
- ⌘ Acknowledge that they are in a very difficult, scary situation.
- ⌘ Don't judge; only the victim knows all the challenges of their circumstances.
- ⌘ Encourage them to talk to professionals who can provide help and guidance.
- ⌘ Do no harm; seek professional guidance.
- ⌘ Help them develop a safety plan.
- ⌘ Encourage them to participate in activities outside the relationship with friends and family.
- ⌘ Know that you cannot "rescue" someone else; they must make their own choices.
- ⌘ Offer to pray with them and for them, while encouraging them to get help.
- ⌘ Whether or not they change or end the relationship, continue to be supportive.

Useful Tips When Dealing with Domestic Abuse

- ⌘ Do reassure them that this is not their fault, they don't deserve this treatment, and it is not God's will for them to suffer abuse.
- ⌘ Do support and respect their choices. Even if the victim is aware of the risks and chooses initially to return to the abuser, it is their choice. The victim has the most information about how to survive.
- ⌘ Do protect the victim's confidentiality. Do not give information about the victim or their whereabouts to the abuser or to others who might pass information on to the abuser.
- ⌘ Do not discuss the victim with anyone who might inadvertently pass information on to the abuser.
- ⌘ Do not approach the abuser or let the abuser know that you know about the abuser's violence.
- ⌘ Do not advise or pursue couples' counseling if you are aware that there is violence in the relationship.

How to Get Help

IN AN EMERGENCY – DIAL 911!

Illinois Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotline – Information & referrals.

877-863-6338 or <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30275>

Parish Nurse Kathy O’Neill – Referrals to counseling, spiritual guidance, assistance.

847-253-5353 x 238 or parishnurse@olwparish.org

WINGS 24-Hour Hotline - Emergency shelter, counseling, information.

847-221-5680 or <http://wingsprogram.com>

Love Is Respect National Teen Dating Violence Helpline – For Teens.

866-331-9474 or <http://www.loveisrespect.org/>

Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach – Information and excellent resources.

<https://pvm.archchicago.org/human-dignity-solidarity/domestic-violence-outreach>

**All contacts are completely confidential.*

You are not alone; help is available.

"As pastors of the Catholic Church in the United States, we state as clearly and strongly as we can that violence, inside or outside the home, is never justified."

– US Conference of Catholic Bishops