

# Wellness Counseling Corner Newsletter

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## Tips for Intervening If You Witness Domestic Violence

*Each year, over 12 million individuals in the U.S. are impacted by domestic violence.* Often we think of domestic violence as occurring behind closed doors. In some cases domestic violence may be difficult to detect, however it can occur in public spaces or around family and friends. When you overhear or witness a situation that does not seem right, it can be difficult to respond. This week we will be discussing tips for what you can do if you witness domestic violence.

**Focus on safety.** Assess the safety of the survivor as well as yourself. There is safety in numbers. Approach the situation as a group. ***Safety comes first, contact the authorities for additional help and guidance.*** Remember that some survivors will choose not to take legal action.

**If you hear suspicious noises from neighbors,** contact your RA, or speak with the survivor on their own. Be sure to approach them in a safe place, and listen to them carefully. Do not pass blame, but offer support. Provide resources to the survivor. ***If you are ever concerned for the survivor's immediate safety (or your own) you do have the right to contact police.***

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
(717) 545-6400  
www.pcadv.org  
National Domestic Violence Hotline  
Call 1.800.799.SAFE (7233)  
thehotline.org

## Types of Domestic Violence

- ◆ Physical
  - ◆ Intentional but unwanted physical contact
  - ◆ Can lead to injury
  - ◆ Includes preventing someone from leaving or forcibly taking someone to a location
  - ◆ Using weapons to threaten or injure
  - ◆ Throwing objects
- ◆ Verbal
  - ◆ Often used in conjunction with emotional violence
  - ◆ Verbal threats
  - ◆ Screaming
  - ◆ Demeaning language
- ◆ Emotional
  - ◆ Used as a form of control
  - ◆ Name calling
  - ◆ Humiliation
  - ◆ Behaviors and comments to erode self-worth
  - ◆ Playing mind games
- ◆ Financial
  - ◆ Occurs in approximately 99% case of domestic violence
  - ◆ Is the least known form of abuse
  - ◆ Creates intentioned dependence on an abuser
  - ◆ Entraps a survivor in the relationship

(pcadv.org)

