Early Warning Signs of Relationship Violence

Relationship violence is where one person gains and maintains power and control over their intimate partner. Abuse can start out slowly and be subtle. There are often early warning signs, but they may be overlooked because there is no physical violence. People who are abusive may:

**Act jealous**, which may be flattering at first, but in time can feel smothering and isolating. The abusive partner often makes accusations that the other partner is cheating.

**Be too good to be true**, seeming like the perfect person. Often the good times in the beginning make it difficult for the other partner to make the decision to leave, when the relationship is no longer safe.

**Blame behavior on external factors** such as drinking, drugs, stress, growing up with abuse, problems at work, being unemployed, things the other partner may have said or done, or because an ex-partner allegedly treated them badly.

**Engage in name calling and criticism** that can affect the other partner’s self-esteem and mental health.

**Move quickly**, convincing the other partner to move in together, get married, or have children right away.

If you would like to talk about your relationship, or you are concerned about someone you care about, contact MSU Safe Place for confidential, non-judgmental support.

(517) 355-1100
noabuse@msu.edu
safeplace.msu.edu