

# October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Since 1981, October has been National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The observance serves to educate communities, individuals, couples and families about the Family Advocacy Program services and other community resources that can help prevent, raise awareness of community responsibility, and inform the community of the many ways to report domestic abuse.

Measles, mumps and rubella are serious public health issues that are preventable. Every October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month is observed because it, too, is a serious public health issue that is preventable with the help of all members of the community.

Domestic violence goes against all relationship and military core values and standards of conduct. No one deserves abuse, and anyone can be a victim. Abuse can be verbal, physical, emotional or sexual. Some of the most hurtful and long-lasting forms of abuse never leave a bruise. At the end of the day, abuse is never justified or acceptable.

Everyone can strengthen their family and their community by following three steps:

1. Live by core values.
2. Strengthen your family.
3. Reach out to help others.

## Live by core values

Core values provide the foundation for how we live our lives and interact with others. Just as each branch of the military has a set of core values, so should every relationship. Core values of successful, lasting relationships include:

- **Respect** — treating people well because every life has value
- **Trust** — believing a person is reliable, honest
- **Commitment** — promising to be loyal or keeping your word
- **Integrity** — being honest and fair
- **Selflessness** — putting the needs of others before your own

## Strengthen your family

Healthy relationships don't just happen — they take time and effort. Every couple experiences relationship challenges. No matter how tough times get, couples will benefit when they:

- Commit to living by the core values and working through problems in a healthy way
- Avoid letting individual or family stress escalate into domestic abuse
- Find resources to develop positive relationships and handle common relationship challenges at every stage of life through your installation [Family Advocacy Program](#)

Exposure to domestic violence can cause long-term harm to children's health, behavior and learning abilities. Children imitate what they see and hear, which influences how they behave today and how they parent their own children in the future. Parents can strengthen family bonds and provide good examples for their children by:

- Modeling safe, respectful communication and conflict resolution with their spouse or partner
- Teaching their children early about relationship core values
- Contacting [Military OneSource](#) or their installation Family Advocacy Program for resources to help in times of relationship and family stress

## **Know how to help**

Everyone plays a role in upholding core values that support safe, healthy relationships for all community members. If you want to help but don't know where to start, the following information can help:

- Call 911 if you or someone you know is being abused. Domestic violence can be fatal.
- Call [Family Advocacy Program \(325-696-8378 / DSN:461-8378\)](#) for information and support around the clock if you suspect abuse. Call a [Military OneSource](#) consultant at 800-342-9647, the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233 or your installation
- Listen to the "[Impact on Children](#)" podcast through Military OneSource to learn how to help children who experience or witness family violence.
- Check out the Military OneSource podcast, "[If You See Domestic Abuse Speak Up](#)," for the information you need to know, what to look for and what you can do.

Take action to stop domestic violence in your community. Live by core values, strengthen your family and use these resources to help prevent abuse.