The Voices Against Violence Program provides advocacy services for survivors of sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. Though education and training, the Voices Against Violence Program brings awareness and inspires activism about these issues to the PLU campus community.

Facts on Intimate Partner Violence:

Every 9 seconds a woman is beaten. [1]

Intimate Partner Violence results in nearly 2 million injuries and 1,300 deaths nationwide every year. [2]

Health related costs for Domestic violence exceeds $5.8 billion each year. [3]

52% of all homeless women and children in this country are fleeing domestic violence. [4]

42% of murdered women are murdered by their male intimate partner. [5]

[1] The Commonwealth Fund
[2,3] The Center For Disease Control
[4] *Juvenile and Family Justice Today*
[5] Family Violence Prevention Fund

Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate Partner Violence can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.

- Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

- Domestic violence can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender.

- It can happen to couples who are married, living together or who are dating.

- Domestic violence affects people of all socio-economic backgrounds and education levels.

Help Create A Safe Community

How to take action:

- Arrange for a training or presentation for your workplace or classroom.

- Let the young people in your life know early that violence in a relationship is never acceptable.

- Hold abusers accountable. Don't blame the person who is being abused.

- Stand up against intimate partner violence in your community and professional environment. Challenge other's sexist beliefs and abusive attitudes.

- Volunteer with or donate to a local agency.

- Participate in Domestic Violence Awareness Month events in October!

How to Help A Person Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence:

Suggestive signs of any abusive intimate relationship:

- Bruises or injuries without explanation or no feasible explanation
- Excessive tardiness
- Frequent phone calls from partners
- Unexplained absences/ use of sick time
- Changes in appearance– disheveled, etc.
- Seems fearful, anxious, or depressed
- Intense startle reaction
- Eating or sleeping problems
- Chronic, vague medical complaints
- Preoccupation/ lack of concentration
- Difficulty making decisions

"It wasn't your fault. You are not to blame."

How to approach a person you are concerned about:

- Approach in a private manner
- Explain what you have noticed and that your are concerned- "I am wondering if things are going ok at home… If maybe someone is hurting you."
- "No one deserves to be hurt or controlled by someone else"
- If s/he denies, don't push the issue
- Let her/ him know you felt you needed to ask, since intimate partner violence is so common, and that you are available to talk anytime.

How to be supportive:

- Be patient, be a good listener
- Recognize that s/he is the expert about her/his situation: don't tell her/him what to do
- Encourage her/him to seek help from social services or hotlines- "I am sorry you have been hurt. There are people who can help you."
- Help her/him speak to law enforcement, security, or supervisors- "You are not alone."
- Maintain privacy, be discreet
- Respect her/his decision, regardless of whether or not you agree with it- "I will support you no matter what you choose to do."

Remember, you may be the first person this person has ever had the courage to tell about past or present abuse. How you respond can be very important for her/his further ability to trust others and move on with her/his life.

However, it is not your responsibility to fix the situation alone—
know your limits and access available resources.

PLU Voices Against Violence Program
Jennifer Warwick, Victim Advocate
warwicjl@plu.edu
253-538-6303

Pierce County Domestic
Violence Helpline
253-798-4166
800-764-2420