



October is *Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM)*.

This month provides an excellent opportunity for Wayne County residents to demonstrate their commitment to ending domestic violence and support survivors in our community.

It is urgent that we raise awareness about the widespread prevalence of domestic violence in our community and educate ourselves on how to prevent it. In Ohio, 38% of women and 33.0% of men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner rape and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetimes. Intimate partner violence accounts for 20% of all violent crime. From July 2022-June 2023, there were 112 intimate partner violence related homicides in Ohio. Key homicide risk factors are abuser unemployment, strangulation, stalking, and gun ownership, which collectively account for 74% of all national domestic violence deaths.

<https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Fatality-Infographic-2023.pdf>

Domestic violence hotlines are a lifeline for victims in danger, providing support, information, safety planning, and resources. The OneEighty 24 – Hour Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Hotline (800.686.1122) serves an average of 59 callers per month.

Abusers are not what you expect. They may look and act like your friends and neighbors. They may be funny, charming and kind, caring and considerate – *right up until they aren't*. This explains why many times victims aren't believed when they disclose abuse. It may seem impossible to imagine, based on the abuser's public persona. There is no typical victim or perpetrator. Anyone can be abused, regardless of age, race, nationality, sexual orientation, educational background, and income. Following is a list of signs of a battering personality. If a person exhibits three or more of these behaviors, there could be a strong potential for physical violence. (Walker, L.D., "Getting a Firm Foundation" Training, 1981)

- Jealousy
- Controlling Behavior
- Quick Involvement
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Isolation
- Blames Other for Problems
- Blames Others for Feelings
- Hypersensitivity
- Cruelty to Animals and/or Children
- "Playful" Use of Force in Sex
- Verbal Abuse
- Rigid Sex Roles
- Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde Personalities
- Past Physical Abuse

- Threats of Violence
- Striking or Breaking Objects
- Any Force During an Argument

Local services include free victim advocacy through both the justice system and community agencies such as OneEighty and the Wayne County Children's Advocacy Center, which support survivors with navigating recovery from victimization. The Wayne County Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Coalition is comprised of professionals from non-profit and government agencies that work to 1.) improve services and outcomes for those in danger, 2.) expand public awareness of sexual and domestic violence, and 3.) locate outreach opportunities to educate the community on sexual and domestic violence.

OneEighty is the primary service provider in the area for individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault with a domestic violence shelter in Wooster, professional mental health counseling for adults and children who are victims and survivors of domestic violence, and victim advocacy services. The main office is located at 104 Spink Street in Wooster. Stop in or call during regular business hours M – F from 8am – 5pm to schedule an appointment with a healthcare professional or victim advocate at 330.264.8498

To learn more about domestic violence and how you can support survivors, please access the *Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities Calendar* at [www.one-eighty.org](http://www.one-eighty.org), which includes a reading list of subject matter non-fiction/fiction books available from the Wayne County Public Library and the Clevnet system.