



## Am I in a Healthy Relationship?

- Is my partner kind to me and respectful of my choices?
- Does my partner help when the baby won't stop crying?
- Am I ever afraid of my partner (of being hurt, shamed)?
- Am I ever afraid to leave my baby alone with my partner or boyfriend?

Your partner should help support you being a good parent and help create a safe home for you and your children.

## What About Your Childhood?

- Did you (or your partner) see your mom hurt (beat up) by your dad or her boyfriend?
- Did you (or your partner) experience unwanted sexual touching by someone in your family?
- Did you (or your partner) have injuries or live in fear of being hurt by someone in your family?

If you answered *YES* to *ANY* of these questions you are not alone. Talking about these experiences with a counselor or a friend can help.

## Parenting is Hard Work

**Parenting after being hurt by someone you know and love can make the work even harder.**

Many parents who were abused can be 'triggered' easily, quick to anger, have less patience and have more anxiety.

**These are learned responses to what previously happened to you, but there are strategies to make it better:**

- If you feel frustrated, gently place the baby in the crib while you catch your breath in the next room.
- If you feel unsure about your partner's ability to handle their frustration with the baby, don't leave the baby alone with them.
- Find a safe person that you can call to take a break if you are frustrated with your baby and talk to a counselor for support.



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## How Are My Children Affected?

Children who live in homes where their mother has been hurt or experience harsh punishment are more likely to have learning and behavior problems. Getting help for you is a great first step for them.

### Here are ways to help your children:

1. Let them know that what has happened is not their fault.
2. Ask your child's doctor or a counselor about programs to help children exposed to violence.
3. Stay connected to your children and listen to them. Your relationship with them is the most important thing to keep them on track.

## Let's Talk Pregnancy

1. Does my partner support my decisions about if or when I want to have more children?
2. Does my partner refuse to use condoms when I ask?
3. Does my partner make me have sex when I don't want to?
4. Has my partner ever tried to get me pregnant (recently or in the past) when I didn't want to be?

Unplanned pregnancies, especially if they are closely timed after your first pregnancy--can make it difficult to care for the children you already have.

## Taking Control

*Your partner may see pregnancy as a way to keep you in his life and keep connected to you through a child—even if that isn't what you want.*

### If your partner pushes you to have sex, messes with your birth control or refuses to use condoms:

1. Talk with your health care provider about birth control that you can control and that your partner doesn't have to know about (examples--IUD, Emergency Contraception (EC), Depo, Implanon)
2. Ask a counselor about local and national programs to help women struggling in their relationships with control or abuse.

## Confidential Resources

### If you are feeling frustrated or angry with your child and just need to talk...

#### Child Help

1-800-422-4453 [childhelp.org](http://childhelp.org)

### If you are being hurt by a partner it is not your fault. For help, call:

#### National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233 TTY 1-800-787-3224 [ndvh.org](http://ndvh.org)

#### Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-4673 [rainn.org](http://rainn.org)

#### Teen Dating Hotline

1-866-331-9474 [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org)