



VIOLENCE FREE MINNESOTA

There are so many ways we can each take action to end relationship abuse – as friends, as parents, as employees, as spiritual people and faith leaders, as elected officials, and as active members in our communities. Here are just a few ways you can take action to help end relationship abuse and make Minnesota a safer place for all:

If you are a friend or family member of someone who might be experiencing abuse, ask a question. Listen. Believe. Stay connected. Reach out to a domestic violence program in your community to learn more about what resources you may be able to offer.

If you are a friend or family member of someone who engages in concerning or abusive behavior and you feel safe enough to approach them, let them know how you view their behavior. Ask a question. Listen. Stay connected.

If you are an employee, does your workplace provide materials – such as the Violence Free Minnesota brochure, a calling card for Minnesota's 24-hour domestic violence hotline (866.223.1111), or information on relationship abuse – at the front desk or in the bathroom? Does your workplace have domestic violence and safety policies in place for employees experiencing abuse? Visit www.workplacesrespond.org to find more information on how you can take action at work.

If you are a parent, attend a school board meeting and ask questions. Schools have protocols for active shooters, but do they have protocols for responding to domestic and sexual violence? What happens when a student experiences domestic or sexual violence? Or faculty? Or staff? Children are screened for early childhood education, but are they screened for exposure to violence?

If you are a member of a faith community or a faith leader, you can promote education and resources to proactively address relationship abuse and to respond to both victim-survivors and people who are abusive. Some faith communities create taskforces of volunteers to help develop programming to address abuse and support survivors in their community.

If you identify as a man or masculine person, connect with the [Men and Masculine Folks Network](#) and learn more about the role you can play in the movement to end relationship abuse.

If you are concerned about the use of firearms by people who abuse, contact your state legislator and ask them to lift the restrictions on the Minnesota Department of Health to research and collect data on firearms. We know that firearms are the most frequent weapon of choice in domestic violence homicides and that access to firearms by an abuser can significantly increase the risk of lethality, but we often don't know how abusers gain access to firearms. Legislators - and the public - need information on how perpetrators access firearms in order to make informed and effective policy changes to prevent future domestic violence homicides.

These are just a few ways to get involved and take action to change our culture of violence. There are even more suggestions in Violence Free Minnesota's 30 Year Intimate Partner Homicide Retrospective, which can be found at www.vfmn.org.

When we take collective action, we can make movement.

Together, we can end domestic violence.