



Pat Walker Health Center – University of Arkansas – 525 North Garland – Fayetteville, AR 72701

(479) 575-7252 or (479) 575-7722

website: www.health.uark.edu/STARCentral

Forms of Abuse

Often when we think of abuse, we think of the big three: physical, emotional, and verbal. However, there are other forms of abuse that are just as harmful as the big three. When several of these forms of abuse are used in combination, as they often are, they become even more hurtful than just one alone.

Physical Abuse

Includes hitting, shoving, pushing, throwing objects, kicking, spitting, choking, etc.

Sexual Abuse

Includes rape, forcing unwanted forms of sex, manipulation in order to get sex, insisting partner dress in a more sexual way, forcing partner to strip, forcing partner to have sex with others or watch others having sex, or committing sadistic sexual acts

Verbal Abuse

Includes shouting, name-calling, comparisons with previous partner(s) or others, ridiculing, insulting, criticism, threatening, etc.

Social Abuse

Includes isolating partner from family and friends, confining partner to the home, constant calling to check up on spouse, insulting partner in front of friends, abandoning partner in a dangerous place, spreading false rumors about partner

Economic Abuse

Includes prohibiting partner from having a paying job, having total control over finances, taking money away from partner, keeping partner so poor that she/he must ask for essential items

Emotional Abuse

Includes ignoring feelings, threatening to leave, threatening to kidnap children, punishing children or pets when angry with partner, abusing pets to hurt partner, manipulating with lies, telling partner about current or past affairs, withholding approval or affection

Information adapted from the PEI Justice System Research Team (www.isn.net/~tha/womanabuseresearch/), retrieved 6/1/2006, "Six Forms of Abuse" (<http://home.alphalink.com.au/~anderson/isu/abuse.htm>), retrieved 6/1/2006, and The National Domestic Violence Hotline, Austin, Texas

STAR Central – Office of Support, Training, Advocacy, & Resources on Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence
a program of



Updated: June 2006