What is family violence?

Family violence goes beyond being hit or kicked. Violence includes verbal threats, rape or other unwelcome sexual acts, and emotional or psychological torment between family members or intimate partners.

You may be a victim if someone is

- keeping you isolated,
- making you feel like a prisoner,
- threatening or scaring you,
- taking control over your life,
- shaming and belittling you ,
- forcing you into sexual acts, or
- hitting, slapping, kicking, choking or in any way hurting you physically.

If you are a victim of family violence, you are not alone. Many people in North Carolina and across the nation have this problem and need help.

Help is available

If you are a Work First participant and a victim of family violence, talk to your Work First worker. He or she can help you

- plan what to do,
- find counseling for you or your children, and
- help you deal with the violence.

Safety first

As you know, Work First has time limits, work requirements, and requires child support cooperation. Teen parents are required to live at home and attend school. Sometimes family violence or the threat of violence keeps you from meeting these requirements.

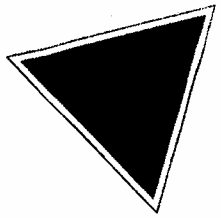
Talk to your Work First worker if you have family violence concerns. If family violence is keeping you from meeting your Work First requirements, your worker may be able to excuse you from some of them and still keep your benefits:

- If you are on Work First's 24-month time clock, your worker could take you off it temporarily.
- If giving information about the other parent of your children puts you or your family in danger, your worker could allow you to keep that information private.
- If you are a teen parent and living at home is unsafe for you or your child, your worker could allow you to live away from home.
- If family violence keeps you from meeting any other Work First requirements, talk to your worker about it. There may be other kinds of help you can get.

We respect your privacy, but child safety comes first

It is your decision to tell about your abusive relationship. If you decide to tell us about the abuse, that information will not affect your Work First check or be used against you in any way. All information is considered confidential and will be kept within the Work First system.

If children are in danger, please call the police or Child Protective Services in DSS right away. If you tell us that a child is being abused, we must, by law, report that information to Child Protective Services.



"It will never be by violence constrained to do anything."
Queen Elizabeth I

" The most potent weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."
Steve Biko

"Love is kind."
Ecclesiastes

The first step

The first step in getting out of a violent situation is to ask for help. Below are some numbers to call. Please, if you are fearful of your safety or the safety of your children, take the first step and ask for help.

- Crisis Hotline
- Family Violence Shelter
- Counseling
- Law Enforcement
- Legal Services
- Local DSS

State of North Carolina
James B. Hunt Jr., Governor
Department of Health and Human Services
H. David Bruton, MD, Secretary
NC Division of Social Services

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Attachment 2

Is violence keeping you from working?

Ask your Work First worker about

The Family Violence Option

and Work First

DSS-6967 04/2000
Economic Independence