

South Dakota Toolkit

for Domestic Violence
Sexual Assault + Sex Trafficking



**SOUTH DAKOTA
SURVIVOR TASK FORCE**
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

South Dakota Toolkit

for Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault + Sex Trafficking

This toolkit is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Individuals are encouraged to seek professional legal counsel for advice tailored to their specific circumstances. It's important to seek legal advice. **South Dakota laws contain specific definitions and conditions to meet a statutory crime.** Although psychologically damaging and in some cases dangerous, **unfortunately, not all aspects of abuse defined in this toolkit meet those criteria.** If you are a victim of abuse, please, get help.

If you or someone you know is in danger, call 911 immediately.

This toolkit was created by survivors to give the gift of hope to others affected by abuse. As survivors, we learned what abuse was, many of us not recognizing what we were experiencing was in fact abuse.

This toolkit is a compilation of valuable information derived from credible sources (cited respectively) and anonymous quotes shared by actual survivors from South Dakota. Our intention is to provide in-depth definitions of the various elements of abuse with the hope of helping others identify and respond to potential or ongoing circumstances and/or navigate the aftermath of abuse they or a loved one may be experiencing.

It is our goal to also provide a state-wide comprehensive list of available services & support information to victims, survivors, non-advocate agencies and community members.

This Toolkit is a Project by:



**SOUTH DAKOTA
SURVIVOR TASK FORCE**
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

The SD Survivor Task Force is made up of survivors from across the state of South Dakota. Members meet regularly, primarily to discuss and tackle issues of concern regarding domestic violence, sexual assault + sex trafficking in South Dakota. For more information or to get involved, contact them at info@southdakotasurvivortaskforce.com or visit <https://southdakotasurvivortaskforce.com>.

ACCESS ONLINE



This is also an online resource with the ability to print & share.

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[REPORT ABUSE \(p.6\)](#)

[RESOURCES \(p.7-11\)](#)



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NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
GET HELP FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING: 1-888-373-7888

Throughout this document the terms *victim*, *survivor*, *advocate*, *perpetrator*, and *abuser* are frequently used.

The following brings better understanding to what each means for the purpose of this toolkit:

Depending on the context, the term “survivor” focuses on resilience and emphasizes an active, resourceful and creative response to the abuse endured. The term “victim” refers to the person being victimized by someone else and focuses on elements outside a person’s control. It also refers to someone that has succumbed to their injuries.

For the purposes of this document, a “perpetrator” is a person who carries out, commits or is responsible for a harmful or illegal act while “abuser” is considered a person who treats another person with cruelty or violence, especially regularly or repeatedly. An “advocate” is a person who offers support or guidance with the intention of representing another person’s best interests.

References:

South Dakota Network Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault - www.sdnafvsa.com

Merriam Webster Dictionary

Victim Definition & Meaning – <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/victim>

Survivor Definition & Meaning – <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/survivor>

Perpetrator Definition & Meaning – <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perpetrator>

Abuser Definition & Meaning – <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abuser>

Advocate Definition & Meaning – <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/advocate>

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MARKETING MATERIALS

Community Flyers – Flyers are available to post in your community, at your agency or any public establishment or event that allows flyers. Sharing includes posting in visible areas such as common areas/waiting rooms, doors, restrooms, meeting spaces, or providing a copy to those you directly serve. Please also consider sharing this flyer at event tables/booths.



Social Media – Access our Facebook images and templates for the SD Toolkit. Join us in using the hashtag **#SDTOOLKIT** or like our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/SouthDakotaSurvivorTaskForce>) and share our posts directly from there.



Access all of the Toolkit Marketing Materials here:
<https://southdakotasurvivortaskforce.com/marketing-materials>



FEEDBACK SURVEY

We value your feedback. Please help us improve the South Dakota Toolkit by answering this brief survey.

<https://southdakotasurvivortaskforce.com/toolkit-survey>



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- Private funding through the South Dakota Survivor Task Force for the document research and design.

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How to Report Abuse

in the State of South Dakota

You can call or utilize multiple avenues to report abuse for adults, children, and elders. Please use the Table of Contents to locate more detailed information on recognizing, responding, and navigating abuse.

If you want assistance with reporting a crime, seek support from professionals such as domestic violence/sexual assault advocates. Contact information can be found at your local domestic violence shelter or state's attorney's office.

Options to report in South Dakota:

- Medical Exam (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/SANE) at your local Emergency Room or Medical Facility – [see page 57](#)

If you've been sexually assaulted it is recommended to get a medical exam **within 72 hours** for the best results to collect evidence. Tips to help preserve evidence AFTER a sexual assault include: **DO NOT** wash your hands, **DO NOT** brush your teeth, **DO NOT** take a shower, **DO NOT** change your clothes.

- Law Enforcement (Local Police and/or Sheriff)
- Victims Assistance / State's Attorney in your city or county
- Victim Advocate or Shelter Staff at your local Domestic Violence Shelter
- Child Protective Services (CPS) **1-877-244-0864**
<https://dss.sd.gov/childprotection/protective.aspx>
- Contact your counselor or a child's counselor (Parent/Guardian Resource HUB – [see page 97](#))
- For adults 60+ years of age: Department of Human Services (DHS) through Dakota at Home online at <https://dakotaathome.org> or by calling **1-833-663-9673**



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Local & National Resources

South Dakota Service Providers + Helplines

SOUTH DAKOTA RESOURCES/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS

<https://dps.sd.gov/victims-services/victims-services-shelter-map>

This link offers shelter by city in South Dakota. Shelters offer many services such as counseling, advocacy, protection order help, peer support groups, resource referrals, even if you are not staying in a shelter.

(You can enter the name of a South Dakota city once on the website.)

TEXT 9-1-1 IN SOUTH DAKOTA

If you need help in an emergency, but can't speak or safely make a voice call, you can use your mobile phone to **send a text message to 9-1-1.**

SOUTH DAKOTA HELPLINE

Dial 211 www.helplinecenter.org

Download the SD Helpline app on your mobile devices. The Helpline offers help finding statewide resources and 24-hour crisis support.

SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE AND CRISIS / MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINE

DIAL or TEXT 9-8-8 to talk with a trained mental health professional.

SOUTH DAKOTA NETWORK AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

Toll-free Telephone 1-800-670-3989, Office 605-731-0041

www.sdnafvsa.com

The Network is a state-level, non-profit agency comprised of caring people dealing with the concerns of domestic violence and sexual assault victims. Our mission: Working together to promote victim rights for a safer South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA VICTIMS' SERVICES

<https://dps.sd.gov/victims-services>

Victims' Assistance Programs and Crime Victims' Compensation Program

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Local & National Resources

South Dakota Service Providers + Helplines (CONTINUED)

EAST RIVER LEGAL SERVICES

<https://erlservices.org/>

605-336-9230 OR TOLL FREE **800-952-3015**

East River Legal Services (ERLS) is a private, non-profit law firm committed to providing quality civil legal aid to the low-income community in Eastern South Dakota.

DAKOTA PLAINS LEGAL SERVICES

<https://www.dpils.org/>

605-342-7171

Dakota Plains Legal Services is a non-profit legal services organization that provides free legal assistance to low-income individuals, older Americans, and veterans.

BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE OF SOUTH DAKOTA (BACA)

<https://southdakota.bacaworld.org>

[BACA Informational Video](#)

Great Plains Chapter (Lincoln & Minnehaha Counties) **605-215-1848**

Oahe Chapter (Hughes County) **605-223-1166**

Hub Area Chapter (Brown and Surrounding Counties) **605-622-0131**

The Mission: Bikers Against Child Abuse, Inc. is an international 501(c)3 non-profit organization that exists to create a safer environment for abused children. We work in conjunction with local and state officials already in place to protect children.

ELDER ABUSE

SD Department of Human Services for Adult Protective Services

<https://dhs.sd.gov/en/ltss/adult-protective-services>

Dakota At Home — <https://dakotaathome.org> or **1-833-663-9673**

South Dakota's Aging Resources

<https://southdakota.assistguide.net/>



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Local & National Resources

National Providers + Helplines

GET HELP FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

www.humantraffickinghotline.org

National Hotline for Victims/Survivors of Human Trafficking

1-888-373-7888 (TTY: 711), Text: 233733

Live Chat www.humantraffickinghotline.org/chat

En Español <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/es/obtenga-ayuda>

Human Trafficking Referrals: Find social and legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking, and connect with training and volunteer opportunities across the U.S. and its territories.

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/find-local-services>

LOVE IS RESPECT

www.LovelsRespect.org

1-866-331-9474

Text “loveis” to 22522

Contact LovelsRespect if you want to talk to someone, need advice about your relationship or a loved one’s relationship, or if you have legal questions.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

www.thehotline.org

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

En Español <https://Español.thehotline.org/>

The NDV Hotline provides lifesaving tools and immediate support to enable victims to find safety and live lives free of abuse. Call for more resources or information, or if you are questioning unhealthy aspects of your relationship. On the website, you can also find a helpful chat feature in English and Spanish.

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Local & National Resources

National Providers + Helplines *(CONTINUED)*

ONE LOVE MY PLAN APP

www.myplanapp.org

This app can be found in the app store. It can help you determine if a relationship is unsafe and helps create an action plan. Additionally, a friend or family member can use this app to assess the danger of a loved one.

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

www.rainn.org

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

The National Sexual Assault Hotline provides basic information for victims or friends/family of victims, short-term crisis intervention and support, answers to questions about recovering from sexual assault, and resources to assist with the reporting process via hotline or chat.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE HELPLINE

<https://www.stopitnow.org/get-immediate-help>

<https://www.stopitnow.org/help-guidance/resource-guides>

1-888-PREVENT (773-8368)

This Helpline provides free, confidential, and direct support and information to individuals with questions or concerns about child sex abuse.

CENTER FOR RELATIONSHIP ABUSE AWARENESS

<https://stoprelationshipabuse.org>

This site provides a plethora of resources of all types (legal, seeking help, basic information, help in your area, etc.).



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Local & National Resources

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THE TREVOR PROJECT (LGBTQ)

www.thetrevorproject.org

1-866-488-7386

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people.

STRONGHEARTS NATIVE NATIONAL HELPLINE

www.strongheartshelpline.org

1-844-7NATIVE (1-844-762-8483)

StrongHearts Helpline offers free, confidential support services dedicated to serving Native American and Alaska Native Survivors and concerned family members and friends affected by domestic, dating and sexual violence. Advocates are available 24/7 by texting, calling or via online chat at

<https://strongheartshelpline.org/get-help#CallorChatOnline>

*StrongHearts Native Helpline is a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

<https://ncadv.org/resources>

<https://ncadv.org/financial-education>

<https://ncadv.org/>

We are dedicated to supporting survivors and holding offenders accountable and supporting advocates.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

CONSENT

Consent is an ongoing mutual agreement between partners about what they want to experience.

Consent means communication every step of the way and it requires a clear and enthusiastic yes—meaning if someone seems unsure, stays silent, doesn't respond, or says "maybe," they aren't saying yes. Convincing or pressuring someone to say yes, is NOT yes. Instead of framing consent as a reactive measure in response to a partner's actions, think of consent as a proactive expression of what partners are comfortable with and want to do together.

“NO” is a *complete sentence* and *should be respected.*

No does not mean 'convince me.' We can also look at consent beyond "healthy sex." We deserve to be comfortable in the clothes we wear, where we want to eat or what we want to eat, and allowed the freedom and respect to choose what is best for us or within our personal boundaries and/or value system.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CONSENT CONTINUED)

Consent can refer to sexual activities [SDCL 22-22](#). Often, consent is a broader discussion about decision making, capacity, and respect. For example, in South Dakota minors or protected persons, such as some adults with disabilities or older age adults, can consent to sexual assault exams without a parent/guardian's consent.

Specifically regarding guardianship/conservatorship, it is important to remember that a person with these responsibilities does not often have full decision-making authority of a protected person's life. Guardianship/conservatorship is not a one-size-fits all, and each will have parameters around decision making based on the needs of the protected person.

Please seek legal counsel for guidance around decision making of a protected person and their legal guardian/conservator to understand what it covers regarding decision-making responsibility for the protected person.

Current South Dakota Law States that the Legal Age of Consent is 16 Years Old



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CONSENT CONTINUED)

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Tea and Consent
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwvrXVavnQ
- Learn the Basics of Consent
www.youtube.com/watch?v=raDPcy9tkLg
- Understanding Consent In Relationships
<https://www.loveisrespect.org/everyone-deserves-a-healthy-relationship/understand-consent/>
- Understanding Consent
www.rainn.org/understanding-consent
- National Sexual Assault Hotline
800-656-HOPE (4673)
Connect with a trained staff member from a sexual assault provider in your area.
- Youth Sexual Assault Resources
<https://rainn.org/youth-helproom>

References:

www.loveisrespect.org/everyone-deserves-a-healthy-relationship/understand-consent/

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

COERCIVE CONTROL

While all forms of abuse are about power and control, **coercive control** is a strategic form of ongoing oppression and terrorism that invades all arenas of victim's activity by limiting access to money and other basic resources.

Domestic violence comprises a range of behaviors beyond physical and emotional abuse. Abusers often use violence, intimidation, degradation, and isolation to deprive victims of their rights to physical security, dignity, and respect. See these and other signs of coercive control and their examples.

SIGNS OF COERCIVE CONTROL:

- **Isolation** – Cutting off or limiting contact with family and friends, so a supportive network is lost.
- **Denying Freedom/Autonomy** – Controlling freedom of movement and independence.

“

“I was eventually unable to wear what I wanted or go for a walk by myself.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

“

“He was the best boyfriend ever and treated me special, until he moved me away from everyone. Then he told me I needed to have sex this one time with someone to help us or he would be in trouble. That turned into sex every day with other men. He kept promising me we were almost done paying back his debt. That day never came. Plus, he became violent. I am still confused by how I believed he loved me.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(COERCIVE CONTROL CONTINUED)

- **Gaslighting** – Abuser twists a scenario to make themselves right and will force the survivor to question their own memory and apologize.
- **Financial Control** – Abuser withholds or limits access to money.
- **Monitoring** – Wanting to know the survivor's location and whom they are with, calling or texting them excessively, placing cameras or recording devices around or tracking movements with GPS software.
- **Body Control** – Dictating the survivor's clothing, diet, and physical presentation. Extreme cases may involve controlling sleep and medical care.
- **Jealousy/Possessiveness** – Abusers might constantly accuse the survivor of cheating on them, making them feel guilty about spending time away from them or not allowing them to attend social events.

“

“The bids for control that I experienced were so subtle that I didn't fully recognize it until I was out of my abusive relationship. My abuser bought me gifts of expensive clothing that felt so good in the moment. It made me special and noticed. However, it wasn't long and I was asking for permission before I dressed for the day or on occasions. As a couple, we enjoyed doing things with friends and family, but my abuser began backing out and cancelling plans—soon we watched games alone etc. Not until I left, did I realize that I was completely isolated from my friends and family. The control my abuser gained over my life was not forceful. It was manipulation, a tactic used to control me.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

References:

Recognizing the Signs of Coercive Control

<https://www.dva.gov.au/newsroom/latest-news-veterans/recognising-signs-coercive-control>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/coercive-control>

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
SURVIVOR TASK FORCE**
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

CYCLES OF ABUSE

There are many wheels in existence for various intersections of abuse as well as healthy relationships. While these wheels do not represent a chronological order of abuse, rather they highlight the different aspects of abuse that can occur at any time and at any frequency.

The four-stage cycle of abuse is used to describe the way abuse sometimes occurs in relationships. The stages are **tension**, **incident**, **calm**, and **reconciliation** (also known as the honeymoon phase). This cycle then repeats over time.

The stages don't all happen at once and it's not all done the same way in each relationship. Sometimes it can happen within a couple of hours, while other times, it may take up to a year to complete the cycle. While the model of the cycle of abuse has its merit, it isn't the same for everyone.



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CYCLES OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

The Power and Control Wheel (found on page 22) was developed in the 1980's by staff members at the Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs. Survivors shared detailed experiences which informed the development of the concise diagram containing common behaviors they experienced in abusive relationships.

The wheel signifies that abuse is an ongoing cycle. The inside of the wheel represents the goals of abuse: exert power and dominance to remain in control of the relationship. The spokes contain many different tactics to achieve those goals and keep the victim feeling powerless.

Last, the outside of the wheel contains physical acts of abuse including bodily harm or sexual assault. The rim signifies that the abuser manipulates with words and often uses physical aggression to maintain the pattern of abuse.

“

“He showed up at my work and called over and over until I answered. It made doing my job near impossible at times. He said it was because he loved me so much and needed to know I was safe.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

It is important to remember that **abuse happens to anyone** and is not discriminate against age, race, sexual orientation, gender, ability, or any other identifying feature of a person or type of relationship.

References:

Cycle of Abuse - <https://www.healthline.com/health/relationships/cycle-of-abuse>

How to Recognize and End the Cycle of Abuse – <https://www.verywellhealth.com/cycle-of-abuse-5210940>

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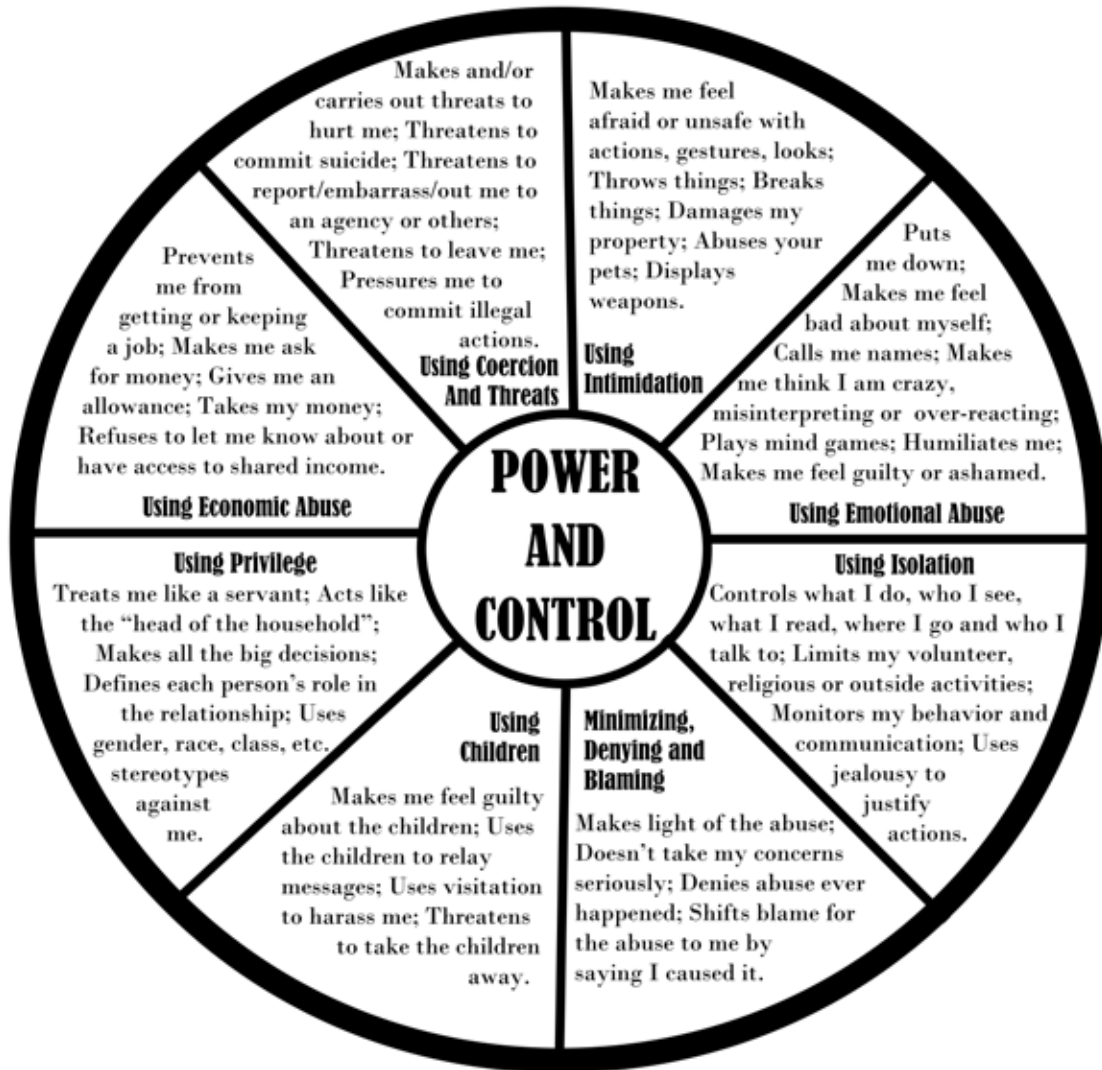
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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CYCLES OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

Power & Control Wheel



References:

Power & Control Wheel

<https://www.thehotline.org/identify-abuse/power-and-control/>



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CYCLES OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

Sex and Human Trafficking – It is important to recognize there is no single method of force, fraud or coercion. The Power & Control wheel presented here is based on the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project's Duluth Model, but it outlines the different types of abuse that can occur in labor and sex trafficking situations.



References:

Human Trafficking Power & Control Wheel

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/resources/human-trafficking-power-and-control-wheel>

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/type-trafficking/human-trafficking>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(CYCLES OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

Healthy Relationships – The Healthy Relationships wheel presents the necessary dynamics of a relationship that create respect. The insides of the wheel are elements that create healthy relationships; when all of these parts are present and working together, we define a healthy relationship.

While this wheel represents all aspects of a healthy relationship, it is important to note that relationships are not perfect 100% all of the time. However, we can all strive toward practicing these healthy behaviors.



References:

Healthy Relationship Wheel

https://rhntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/fpntc_hlthy_rlshp_wheel_spectrum_2019-04-25.pdf



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

DATING VIOLENCE

Dating violence is physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a romantic or sexual partner. It can happen to persons of all races and ethnicities, incomes, and education levels. It can also happen across all age groups, abilities, and in heterosexual and same-sex relationships. Some people call dating violence domestic abuse, especially when you live with your partner.

DATING VIOLENCE INCLUDES:



Emotional & Verbal Abuse – Yelling, name-calling, bullying, isolating you from your family and friends, saying you deserve the abuse or are to blame for it, and then giving gifts to “make up” for the abuse or making promises to change.



Sexual Assault & Rape – Forcing you to do any sexual act you do not want to do or doing something sexual when you’re not able to consent, such as when you’ve been drinking or sleeping.



Physical Abuse – Hitting, shoving, kicking, biting, throwing objects, strangling, or any other aggressive contact.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
www.LovelsRespect.org
1-866-331-9474 | Text “**loveis**” to **22522**.
Peer Advocates are available to talk, text, or chat online 24/7

References:

Dating violence and abuse

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/other-types/dating-violence-and-abuse>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence is a pattern of one person trying to dominate or control another person. It can be the abuse of a spouse or partner, which is also known as intimate partner violence. Or it could be the abuse of a child, older relative, or other family member. This involves different types of abusive ways.

“He accused me of cheating almost daily then threatened violence upon me, my family and my dog if I ever did anything to disrespect him or if I left him.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

Domestic Violence *is not only* physical abuse!

It is a repetitive process of abuse where the perpetrator gets hold of the victim in a consistent manner. Domestic violence comes in different forms. Domestic violence includes beating, pushing, hair pulling, name calling, killing pets, threats, child abuse, rape, stalking, food thrown in your face. It also includes murder.

South Dakota defines “domestic abuse” <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/25-10-1> as “physical harm, bodily injury, or attempts to cause physical harm or bodily injury, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm or bodily injury when occurring between persons in a relationship” and it includes child abuse.

“

“I was afraid to tell my family or friends about the abuse that I was enduring. I felt ashamed because I had made a commitment to God in our marriage ‘for better or worse’ and I felt I should just ‘suck it up’. Growing up, there was physical and verbal abuse in our home. We just ‘sucked it up’. I thought this was normal behavior for most marriages. Turns out, it’s not.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

“

“No matter what I did or said to avoid a verbal attack, I was always told it was my fault.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONTINUED)

TYPES OF ABUSE:



Sexual Abuse – forceful sex, sexual assaults, sexual threats, unwanted sexual touching, sexually explicit comments, unwanted electronic receipt of sexually explicit images/comments/videos and others.



Emotional Abuse – Threats, manipulation, lies, name-calling, put-downs, and humiliation. It can also involve controlling behavior, such as telling the victim how to act or dress and not letting them see family or friends.



Economic/Financial Abuse – Involves controlling access to money and denying access to bank accounts and other financial platforms.



Stalking – Repeated, unwanted contact that causes fear or concern for the safety of the victim. This can include giving unwanted gifts, watching, or following the victim. The stalker may send repeated, unwanted phone calls or texts. Stalking may also include contact from the abuser to the partner being victimized through a third party such as a friend or relative of the abuser.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Domestic Violence Helpline
<https://www.thehotline.org/>
1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or Text **“START”** to **88788**

References:

South Dakota Network Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault – www.sdnafvsa.com
Office on Violence against Women (OVW) – www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence
SD statute 25-10 - <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/25-10>
Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment (CPCM) - <https://sdcpcm.com/our-work/resilient-communities/>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

ELDER ABUSE

In the U.S., elder abuse rates are increasing faster than other victim population rates. Many older adults require care and are vulnerable to violence perpetrated by a caregiver or someone they trust.

According to the CDC, "**Elder Abuse** is an intentional act or failure to act that causes or creates a risk of harm to an older adult. An older adult is someone age 60 or older. The abuse occurs at the hands of a caregiver or a person the elder trusts."

South Dakota's Elder Abuse laws are not identical to the CDC's description; S.D. law also protects adults with disabilities. These laws and definitions can be found here: <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-46> or <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-46-1>.

Abuse, including **neglect** and **exploitation**, are experienced by about **1 in 10** people aged **60 and older** that live at home.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- <https://southdakota.assistguide.net/>
- <https://dhs.sd.gov/en/ltss/adult-protective-services>
- <https://dakotaathome.org>



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(ELDER ABUSE CONTINUED)

COMMON TYPES OF ELDER ABUSE:



Physical Abuse – When an elder experiences illness, pain, injury, functional impairment, distress or death as a result of the intentional use of physical force and includes acts such as hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping, and burning.



Sexual Abuse – Involves forced or unwanted sexual interaction of any kind with an older adult. This may include attempted or completed unwanted sexual contact or penetration or non-contact acts such as verbal sexual harassment.



Emotional Or Psychological – Abuse refers to verbal or nonverbal behaviors that inflict anguish, mental pain, fear, or distress on an older adult. Examples include humiliation or disrespect, verbal and non-verbal threats, harassment, and geographic or interpersonal isolation.



Neglect – The failure to meet an older adult's basic needs. These needs include food, water, shelter, clothing, hygiene, and essential medical care.



Economic/Financial Abuse – Involves controlling access to money and denying access to bank accounts and other financial platforms.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/elderabuse/fastfact.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/elder-abuse/about/>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(ELDER ABUSE CONTINUED)

WHEN TO REPORT ELDER ABUSE:

The South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) provides an exhaustive list to recognize signs that abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be taking place that should be reported that can be found at <https://dhs.sd.gov/en/ltss/adult-protective-services> or call SD DHS at **1-833-663-9673**.

HOW TO REPORT ELDER ABUSE:

Contact your local law enforcement or state's attorney, or you can make a report to DHS through Dakota at Home online at <https://dakotaathome.org> or by calling **1-833-663-9673**.

PREVENT ELDER ABUSE:

We can all do our part to help prevent elder abuse by following suggestions provided by the CDC:

- Listen to older adults and their caregivers to understand their challenges and provide support.
- Educate oneself and others about how to recognize and report elder abuse.
- Learn how the signs of elder abuse differ from the normal aging process.
- Check in on older adults who may have few friends and family members.
- Provide over-burdened caregivers with support such as help from friends, family, or local relief care groups; adult day care programs; counseling; outlets intended to promote emotional well-being.
- Encourage and assist persons (either caregivers or older adults) having problems with drug or alcohol abuse in getting help.



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

FINANCIAL ABUSE

Financial Abuse happens when an abuser takes control of finances to prevent the other person from leaving and to maintain power in a relationship. An abuser may take control of all the money, withhold it, and conceal financial information from the victim. Financial abuse can also happen in elder abuse when a relative, friend, or caregiver steals money from an older person.

Financial abuse happens in **99% of relationships** where intimate partner violence exists.

Often, a partner does not leave an abusive relationship because they fear they will not be able to provide for themselves or their children. One component of financial abuse is when an abusive partner prevents a victim from having any separate or independent income/finances, making it nearly impossible for a victim to save money for basic needs or to leave.

A 2014 study showed that **78% of Americans did not recognize financial abuse** as a form of **domestic violence**.

An abusive partner may prevent a victim from working all together or force a victim to have a joint bank account and then deny the victim access. In doing so, the abuser can track every financial move of the victim. Financial abuse can make the victim feel as if they can't leave.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(FINANCIAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

While there is no perfect way to manage money in a marriage or partnership, financial abuse is about control, power, and manipulation. It can keep the victimized spouse or partner trapped feeling insecure, inadequate, disempowered, and helpless to escape. In this way, it is closely tied to emotional abuse, and it leaves the victim vulnerable to other kinds of harm.

Without access to cash, credit, or assets, they cannot provide basic needs like food, clothes, shelter, and medical care for themselves or their children. There are long-term implications as well. Ruined credit, for example, can make it extremely difficult for the survivor to establish security and independence—which unfortunately can cause them to return to an unsafe situation.

There are many forms of financial abuse. Some are so subtle that the victim doesn't recognize what is happening—they may underplay it or excuse it as a bothersome but "normal" part of the relationship. It may start with minor, seemingly harmless issues and intensify

“

“One of the many struggles in the aftermath of a widely public news story of the attack I endured, though not being named myself in the story, was financial. I believe this highly contributed to why I lost my job after trying to return to work after a few weeks of recovery. My employer said I should go home and recover and not worry about work and would hold my position. Though within a few weeks they told me they filled my position. I was unaware and not given any options for FMLA and unemployment was difficult as my employer fought it. The negative stigma of domestic violence I believe was part of their decision to cut ties with me. This was the worst time for me to lose my job as I was already emotionally at a low and was very pregnant”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(FINANCIAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

gradually. Sometimes it has been going on for years and years; in other cases, it begins when a marriage falls apart, and a split is imminent.

WARNING SIGNS OF FINANCIAL ABUSE:

Your Partner and/or Your Employment...

- Missed work due to: injury, custody, court, hospitalization, child care, perpetrator, stalking
- Negative effects on employment due to perpetrators consistent calling, stalking/showing up at work place
- Monitors your spending and yells at you for every purchase
- Gives you an allowance, and you are only allowed to spend that money on what they need
- Affects your ability to work, such as causing you to be consistently late or preventing you from going to work some days, leading to issues or potential firing
- Receives your public assistance check and refuses to give it to you
- Takes any money earned from you and controls where you spend it
- Feels entitled to your money or assets
- Requires you to account for everything you spend
- Controls how all of the household finances are spent
- Lives in your home without working or helping with household tasks
- Uses funds from children's savings account without mutual agreement
- Prevents you from working by hiding your keys, or offering to babysit and then not showing up
- Limits your access to your own or mutual bank accounts
- Forces you to open lines of credit

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(FINANCIAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

- Steals your identity
- Keeps you out of financial decision-making and spends money without your knowledge or consent
- Coerce you into giving over power of attorney so they can sign legal documents without your consent
- Threaten to cut you off financially for disagreement or pushback
- Inflict emotional or physical abuse when angry about your financial decisions or spending



“When we got married, I wanted us to have a joint bank account because that’s what married people do. My husband kept skirting the idea for years-I finally just accepted it wasn’t going to happen. Boy, am I thankful it didn’t! I was working 2-3 jobs, paying for all our living expenses, including our mortgage, living pay check to pay check, even going to food pantries to fill our cupboards, scrounging for coins to pay for gas to take our kids to school (because my husband told me he didn’t have any money), yet he was secretly gambling, taking his friends out to eat, buying alcohol every night to support his addiction, having our tax refunds deposited into his bank account, and buying things that did not support our family. When I received a bonus for work, he was mad that I wasn’t going to pay for the dental work he supposedly needed. When we divorced I no longer was living paycheck to paycheck. I realized that I COULD support my family all on my own and start saving some money.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

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WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE A VICTIM OF FINANCIAL ABUSE (THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE LIST):

- **Talk To A Financial Expert** – You can get free financial education and advice about dealing with debt, a mortgage, or credit issues from the nonprofit National Foundation for Credit Counseling <https://www.nfcc.org/>. An expert can help you make a step-by-step plan to repair your credit and rebuild your finances.
- **Use Available Resources** – The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers financial education webinars and other resources that help victims to rebuild after domestic violence. <https://ncadv.org/financial-education>. More financial help at <https://www.debt.org/advice/financial-help-domestic-violence-victims>.
- **Resources For Victims Of Crimes In SD** – <https://dps.sd.gov/victims-services/>
- **Protect Your Credit** – By freezing your credit accounts or having a credit bureau issue a fraud alert, you can make it harder for someone to open accounts in your name.
- **Create An Emergency Fund** – Save money by putting it in a safe place where your abuser cannot get to it. Ask a close friend or trusted relative to keep your saved money for you. If you open a bank account, see if you can have correspondence sent to a trusted friend or family member. Be aware that if you get a divorce, any funds you have in a bank will come into play. A creative idea for creating your emergency fund can be as simple as getting \$20 cash back when you pay for groceries.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

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- **Establish Credit In Your Own Name** – If you have no credit card in your name, apply for one, even if it has a very low limit to start. Make small purchases and pay them off consistently in order to build your credit. Having credit can be a lifeline in an emergency and good credit is important if you need a car loan or must go through a credit check for any reason. If you do this before you leave, consider getting any correspondence sent to a family member's address to avoid/prevent an abusive partner from finding this information. Rebuild Your Credit: <https://nnev.org/content/independence-project/>

“My abuser wanted me to be a stay-at-home mom. I was making more money than him and looking back, I think it's possible that he felt less than because of this. What I later identified is that he had more control over what I did if he controlled the bank account. He received our bills and bank statements electronically and if I asked questions, he told me it was insulting and that it showed lack of trust in him. He would give me his debit card, but what I didn't realize is that I had to ask permission to do anything—grocery shop, grab lunch, go to the gym, shopping, etc. He would ask who I was with and give me an amount to spend. For some weird reason, this felt like love. I felt special and I never wanted to over spend. When our relationship became physically abusive, I left. Unfortunately, I had spent a majority of my savings as I was not working and have always been a fairly independent person. I didn't have much to support myself and my children. I still left. If you find yourself in a similar situation, please know that there is always hope and resources available to help you. Some resources will provide housing and food, others will help you re-gain financial stability through education on things like budgeting and retirement planning. I put myself back in college and earned a Master's degree. My kids and I are thriving!”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

“



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(FINANCIAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

- **The Allstate Foundation Moving Ahead Curriculum** – This educational resource has been designed to help domestic violence survivors achieve financial independence and rebuild their lives. Financial topics include: budgeting, managing debt and improving credit and has been proven to help survivors move from short-term security. The curriculum is available online and for download below in English, Spanish, French, and Vietnamese. <https://allstatefoundation.org/what-we-do/end-domestic-violence/resources/>

References:

[https://www.nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Library EJ Financial Abuse Fact Sheet.pdf](https://www.nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Library_EJ_Financial_Abuse_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

Crime Victims in SD - <https://dps.sd.gov/victims-services>

www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/other-types/financial-abuse

allstatefoundation.org/what-we-do/end-domestic-violence/resources/

joinonelove.org/learn/what-is-financial-abuse-these-are-the-signs/

huffpost.com/entry/7-ways-to-help-victims-of-financial-abuse-break-free_b_59e751d3e4b0153c4c3ec41e

<https://www.thehotline.org/resources/what-is-financial-abuse/>

<https://nnedv.org/content/economic-justice/>

<https://nnedv.org/resources-library/moving-ahead-curriculum/>

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
SURVIVOR TASK FORCE**
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Intimate Partner Violence describes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression by a current or former intimate partner. It threatens the well-being of millions of people every day.

It can vary in consistency from one episode of violence to episodes during multiple years. Intimate Partner Violence can happen in partnerships: boyfriends, girlfriends, spouses, dating partners or sexual partners. These could be heterosexual or same sex couples.

More than 158,000 South Dakota residents experience intimate partner violence *in their lifetime.*

28% of South Dakota women and 24% of South Dakota men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner sexual violence, and/or intimate partner stalking.



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE CONTINUED)

TYPES OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE BEHAVIOR:



Intimate Partner Violence can include any of the following types of behavior:

Physical Violence – Pushing, kicking, strangling, or any other physical force to hurt or try to hurt a partner.



Sexual Violence – Forcing or attempt to force a partner into taking part in a sex act, sexual touch, or a non-physical sexual event like sexting when the partner does not or is unable to consent.



Stalking – A pattern of repeated and unwanted attention and contact (phone calls, texts, watching, or following) by a partner that causes fear or concern for one's safety or the safety of someone close to the victim.



Psychological Aggression – Using verbal and non-verbal communication in order to intentionally cause harm to the partner mentally or emotionally and/or exert control over another partner.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Domestic Violence Helpline
<https://www.thehotline.org/> In Spanish: www.Español.thehotline.org
1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or Text “**START**” to **88788**
- National Sexual Assault Hotline
<https://rainn.org/>
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/index.html
<https://medlineplus.gov/intimatepartnerviolence.html>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

GASLIGHTING

Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation of a person usually over an extended period of time where the perpetrators cause victims to question the validity of their own thoughts, perception of reality, or memories. Gaslighting typically leads to confusion, loss of confidence and self-esteem, uncertainty of one's emotional or mental stability, and a dependency on the perpetrator. This makes it more difficult to leave a relationship.

Gaslighting is when your emotions, words, and experiences are twisted and used against you, causing you to question your reality. Once an abusive partner has broken down your ability to trust your own perspective, you may be more vulnerable to the effects of abuse, making it more difficult to leave the abusive relationship.

Love Bombing *is a form* of Gaslighting.

Love bombing is the single most effective gaslighting tactic there is, and it's anything but romantic. You can think of love bombing as a breadcrumb trail of compliments, gifts, and expressions of love that make you feel safe and valued at the start of a relationship.

Love bombing is a common abuse tactic used by abusers to gain power and control over their victim and is typically used in the beginning stages of a relationship. Love bombing can be difficult to identify at this stage in the relationship since it is typically such an exciting time, preceding any red flags. Victims fail to recognize it as an attack on their personal boundaries and/or value system.



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(GASLIGHTING CONTINUED)

Love bombing can be used to regain the victim's trust or give reason for the victim to stay in the relationship after experiencing abuse. This is especially tricky as it often feels good because we are deserving of love and attention, often times, previous abuse could also de-escalate during this time. ([see cycles of abuse pg 20](#)) Once the perpetrator feels secure (they are gaining control) it is typical that love bombing will increase.

Examples of lovebombing include: excessive compliments or gift giving, a need to be in constant communication, rush into a relationship commitment, and getting upset when boundaries are put in place.

“

“Gaslighting was such a huge part of my marriage, that after being married less than 2 years I was minutes away from committing suicide. Nothing made sense anymore and I believed everyone would be better off without me. It wasn't until 10 years later that I read about gaslighting and everything made complete sense. I had lived through every sign and tactic.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

LOVE BOMBING AND CULTS

At its most sinister, love bombing is a form of conditioning used by cults to push their agendas and influence others. In a romantic sense, it is “fake intimacy” that grooms partners for gaslighting and abuse. This behavior sets up an imbalance of power in favor of the abuser and confuses and disorients the victim. By switching between two personalities, the perpetrator can manipulate the victim into doing exactly as they please, especially when they create the right conditions for emotional, financial, and physical abuse. Love

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(GASLIGHTING CONTINUED)

bombing also conditions and distracts victims/survivors from seeing the relationship for what it is. This can cloud judgement on whether the relationship is healthy and should continue.

OTHER TACTICS USED IN GASLIGHTING:

- **Lying** – When an abuser sets a precedent of lying, you have no idea when they are telling the truth and when they aren't. This is meant to disorient you as you begin to question reality. Examples include: "You're making things up. That never happened."
- **Denial** – By denying ever making a statement or agreeing to something, the abuser makes you question your memory. Examples include: "I would not do/say that," "I don't know what you're talking about," "You're just making stuff up."
- **Confusion** – By constantly uprooting your feelings, thoughts, and plans, you stay in a state of stress and confusion, which only they can help alleviate. Examples include: "You can't trust your feelings," "Feelings aren't facts," "You're trying to confuse me," or "You're crazy."
- **Projection** – If you accuse them of something (lying, drinking, stealing) they will turn around and call you a liar, drunk, or thief instead. Examples include: "You're making things up again," "How dare you accuse me of drinking too much, you are the one who is an alcoholic."
- **Discrediting** – By tearing down your credibility, you have a harder time seeking help, speaking up, or defending yourself. You are made to feel less so they can feel bigger. Examples include: "You don't know what you're talking about," "Is that another crazy idea you got



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(GASLIGHTING CONTINUED)

from [friend/family member]?” or “You’re imagining things.”

- **Minimizing** – Minimize how you’re feeling or what you’re thinking & communicate that you’re wrong with statements like ‘calm down’ or ‘you’re overreacting’. Examples include: “You are so sensitive,” or “You’re going to get angry over a little thing like that?”
- **Shifting Blame** – Discussions are twisted so you are to blame. For example, they may claim that if only you behaved differently, they would not treat you the way that they do. Examples include: “If you didn’t burn supper, I wouldn’t have to hit you,” “If you would just listen/ behave, I wouldn’t have to hit/hurt you,” or “What do you mean you didn’t pick up the dry cleaning? I told you about it this morning! Were you not paying attention again?”
- **Rewriting History** – Stories are retold for their favor. You begin to doubt your memory, which can lead to confusion or second-guessing yourself. Examples include: “That’s not how it happened,” or “You are remembering it wrong.”

SIGNS YOU ARE A VICTIM OF GASLIGHTING:

- You wonder if you are a “good enough” partner
- You feel confused, even crazy, and constantly second-guess yourself
- You find it difficult to make simple decisions
- You frequently question if you are too sensitive
- You become withdrawn or unsociable
- You constantly apologize to the abusive person
- You defend or make excuses for the abusive person's behavior

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(GASLIGHTING CONTINUED)

- You withhold information from family and friends so you don't have to explain or make excuses
- You feel hopeless, joyless, worthless, or you can't do anything right
- You have the sense that you used to be a very different person – more confident, more fun-loving, more relaxed

For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Domestic Violence Helpline
<https://www.thehotline.org/> In Spanish: www.Español.thehotline.org
1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or Text "**START**" to **88788**

References:

www.thehotline.org/resources/what-is-gaslighting

www.webmd.com/mental-health/gaslighting-signs-look-for

www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/gaslighting#signs-of-gaslighting

www.verywellmind.com/is-someone-gaslighting-you-4147470

www.healthplace.com/blogs/verbal-abuse-relationships/2018/5/love-bombing-gaslighting-abuse

www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gaslighting



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GET HELP FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING: 1-888-373-7888

Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy relationships bring out the best in you and make you feel good about yourself. A healthy relationship does not mean a “perfect” relationship, and no one is healthy 100% of the time, but the signs below are behaviors you should strive for in all of your relationships.

“Healthy relationships manifest themselves as **healthy communication**; another important part of a healthy relationship is loving yourself.”

HERE ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS & BEHAVIORS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP:

- Comfortable Pace
- Good Communication
- Trust / Honesty
- Independence / Individuality
- Respect
- Equality
- Kindness
- Taking Responsibility
- Healthy Conflict
- Compromise
- Fun

References:

One Love: Learn to Love Better - One Love Foundation www.joinonelove.org/

Massachusetts Department of Public Health: Healthy Relationships Tools and Resources (Commonwealth of Massachusetts)
www.mass.gov/service-details/defining-healthy-relationships

RHNTC Reproductive Health National Training Center
https://rhntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/rhntc_hlthy_rlshp_wheel_spectrum_11-2-2022.pdf

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

INTERSECTIONS OF ABUSE

Intersectionality is a term coined by legal scholar, Kimberle Williams Crenshaw in 1989 that created a metaphor to better understand the many layers of (perhaps societal or cultural) identities a victim has and to demonstrate not all victims are treated the same. Many examples are shown in the image shown but not limited to: Race, Education, Sexuality, Ability, Age, Gender, Language, Class, Culture, Ethnicity, and Class.



It is important to not only be able to identify the signs of abuse, but to recognize the tactics abusers can utilize to maintain power and control over others. With this in mind, we begin to recognize the systemic issues that can create complex challenges in accessibility of services, stigmas, fair legal treatment and representation, access to benefits, etc.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SEVERAL EXAMPLES, WE WILL LOOK AT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND:

- **Gender** – We live in a society that often assumes man as an abuser and female as a victim; this concept is damaging, especially because we know that the term ‘victim’ and/or ‘perpetrator’ is not identified by gender. Because of societal norms and perceptions, a “man” could be viewed as or have the fear of being viewed as “weak” for allowing himself to be abused and as a result he might not report the abuse.



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(INTERSECTIONS OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

- **Victim Blaming** – Victim blaming happens when victims are held accountable for what (crimes) happened to them. This often happens in regards to sexual assault. Example: A victim might be blamed because of the clothing she wore preceding a rape.
- **Sexual Orientation** – Some victims can be blackmailed, or have a strong sense of fear of being blackmailed, because of their sexual orientation if they report the abuse. Furthermore, some victims might be embarrassed or ashamed to publicly disclose details of their gender expression or sexual orientation for fear of rejection, thus putting them at a higher risk of isolation by the perpetrator.
- **Ability** – People who are deaf/Hard of Hearing (HoH) or who have a disability are 5 times more likely to experience sexual violence than hearing people or people without disabilities. **Women with disabilities** experience sexual assault at 4-10 times more than women without disabilities. People who are deaf/HoH or who have a disability also report a larger number of perpetrators and sexual violence is experienced for a longer period-of-time than people without disabilities or hearing people. **Men with disabilities** report higher rates of sexual assault than women without disabilities. Even with these staggering statistics, sexual violence is often unrecognized, underreported, unbelievably, left without a response, or overlooked when it comes to deaf/HoH people or people with disabilities. People with disabilities or who are deaf/HoH are sometimes stereotyped or viewed as less credible, more easily isolated (and therefore seen by perpetrators as low-risk potential victims). Communication is just one example of an additional barrier than some people who are deaf/HoH or who have a disability face when it comes to disclosing/reporting sexual violence.

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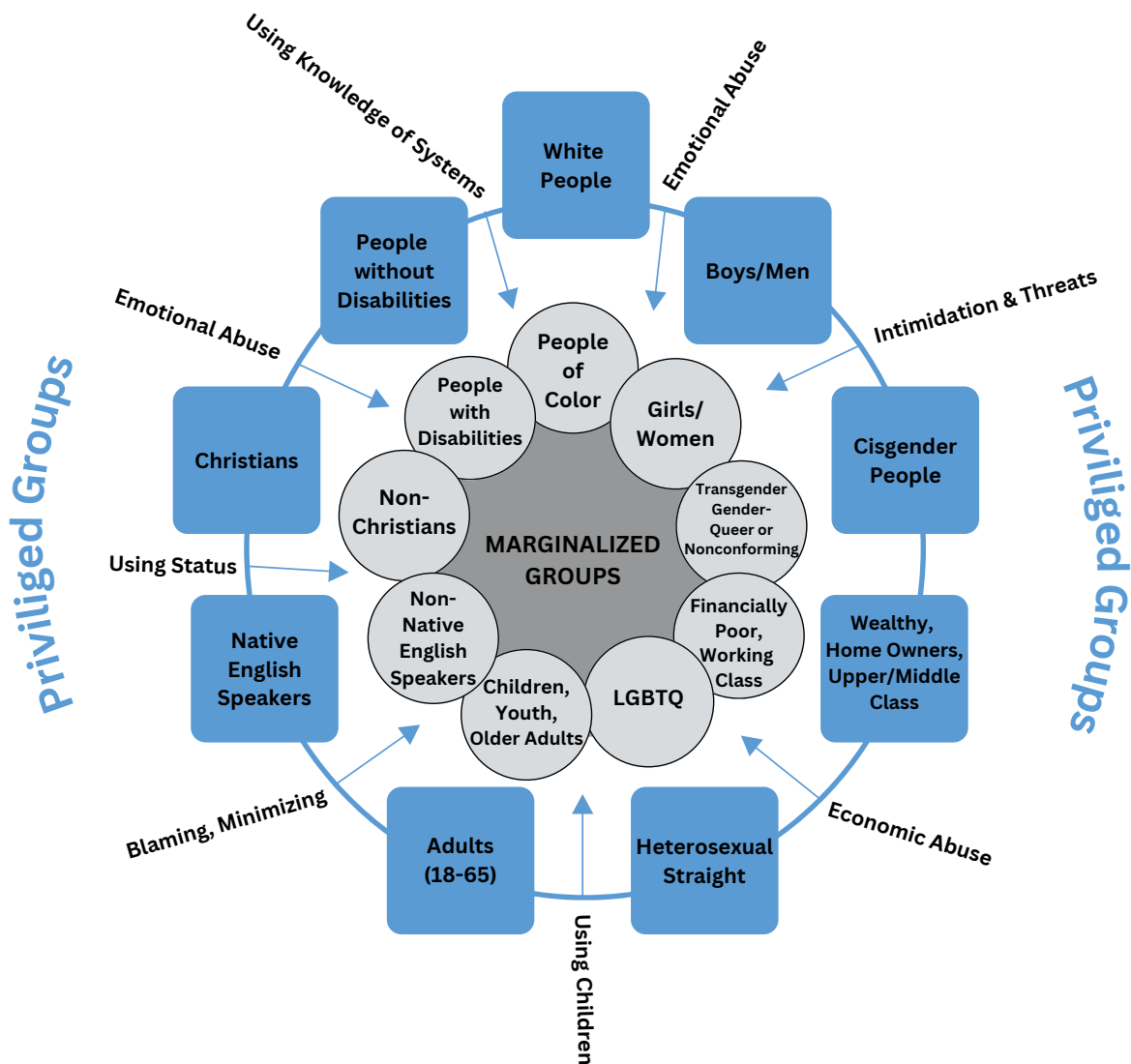
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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(INTERSECTIONS OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

- Immigration** – An undocumented individual that is a victim of abuse will likely face several challenges, most prominently, being reported or deported. Other challenges immigrants face include language barriers including victim services, lack of access to medical or legal help, fear of being perceived as unimportant or weak, and/or fear of authoritative individuals such as law enforcement. As a result they may fear reporting the abuse and often times do not know where to turn for help.



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(INTERSECTIONS OF ABUSE CONTINUED)

The image on the previous page further represents intersectionality in regards to how an individual or group may oppress or maintain power over another individual or group. Oppression in all its forms – sexism, racism, classism, ableism, transmisogyny, homophobia, etc. – promotes significant barriers to equity, respect and mutuality. It relies on social structures wherein one group has power and access to resources at the expense of other groups.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- THE TREVOR PROJECT – www.thetrevorproject.org | **1-866-488-7386**
The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people.

References:

Activating Change – <https://www.activatingchange.org/>

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault

www.mcasa.org/newsletters/articles/sexual-violence-against-people-with-disabilities

Center for American Progress

www.americanprogress.org/article/sexual-violence-disability-community/

<https://www.verywellmind.com/why-do-people-blame-the-victim-2795911>

www.researchgate.net/publication/328756931 Intersectionality immigration and domestic violence

<https://www.cpedv.org/post/intersectionality-privilege-oppression-and-tactics-abuse>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual Assault is any type of sexual activity or contact that happens without your consent. Sexual assault can happen through physical force, threats, or if the attacker gave the victim drugs or alcohol, which is known as a drug-facilitated sexual assault. Sexual assault includes rape and sexual coercion. In the United States, one in three women has experienced some type of sexual violence.

Sexual assault is also called **sexual violence** or **abuse**. Legal definitions of sexual assault and other crimes of sexual violence can vary slightly from state to state. What we consider to be sexual assault or offense might not meet a statutory crime in South Dakota. South Dakota's sex offenses (including those against children) are found at: <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-22>. Definitions of sexual assault / rape in South Dakota are found here: <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-22-1>.

If you've been assaulted, **it is never your fault.**

“

“I didn't know that I could have received an anonymous medical exam after I was sexually assaulted. This can be done up to 72 hours or 3 days after an assault. (You can still get an exam after this time-frame, however, 72 hours is suggested for the best opportunity for DNA collection.) If you're undecided on whether or not to have it done, an anonymous rape kit is kept for 7 years in South Dakota. You can get the exam and decide later if you want to report it. You can find more specifics here to preserve evidence after an assault.” — ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

What Is a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam? | RAINN <https://www.rainn.org/articles/rape-kit>



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTINUED)

SEXUAL ASSAULT CAN INCLUDE BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Any type of sexual contact with someone who cannot consent, such as someone who is underage (as defined by state laws), has an intellectual disability, or is passed out (such as from drugs or alcohol) or unable to respond (such as from sleeping).

- Rape

Sexual penetration of underage victim – the age of consent in South Dakota is age 16; [SDCL 22-22](#).

Through force, coercion or threats of immediate bodily harm to victim or victim's presence accompanied by apparent power of execution.

If the victim is incapable of giving consent to such an act due to physical/mental incapacity, any intoxicating/narcotic/anesthetic agent, or hypnosis.

If the victim is thirteen years of age, but less than sixteen years of age, and the perpetrator is at least three years older than the victim.

- Attempted rape
- Sexual coercion

Sexual coercion is when someone pressures a person in a nonphysical way. Sexual coercion is when a person pressures, tricks, threatens, or manipulates someone into having sex. People who experience sexual coercion may feel they have no option but to have sex. The perpetrator may use guilt or the threat of negative consequences to get what they want. In sexual coercion, a person has sex because they feel they should or must, rather than because they want to participate.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTINUED)

- Sexual contact with a child

In South Dakota, a **child** is considered **under the age of 16 years for purposes of rape and sexual assault**. However, **child pornography and trafficking** still use the “**under 18**” language to describe a minor.

- Fondling or unwanted touching above or under clothes
- Stealthing

A form of sexual violation that is extremely deceptive and dangerous. Stealthing occurs when people are having consensual sex with a protection barrier and one partner damages or removes the protection barrier before/during sex without their partner’s consent immediately before or during intercourse. Consent is informed, specific, and ongoing communication of enthusiastic desires.

Stealthing is not about consenting to sex; the key issue is whether both partners consented to removal or damage of the sexual protection. There are many reasons men may “stealth”. Some may cite the pleasurability of sex without a condom, but there could also be psychological thrills for the perpetrators including dominating/taking advantage of a partner, wanting to pass on genetic material through semen, wanting to impregnate or pass on a sexually transmitted infection so that their partner will not want to leave.

There are huge impacts of stealthing. Physically, stealthing risks pregnancy for a woman. For both partners, it risks sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Psychologically, stealthing disregards a consensual sexual agreement, breaks trust, and violates the victim’s consent. Stealthing can cause lasting physical, emotional, and psychological trauma for a victim.

Anyone who thinks they may have been stealthed should seek medical attention and additional support such as family, friends, or mental health support.



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(SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTINUED)

SEXUAL ASSAULT INVOLVING MINORS AND/OR OTHER PROTECTED PERSONS:

Minors aged 16 and older and other protected persons can provide consent for a forensic medical exam without a parent/guardian's consent. The medical provider will take reasonable steps to inform the minor's parent or legal guardian about the exam, unless the parent/guardian is the suspected perpetrator ([SDCL 22-22-26.4](#)). A physician, hospital, or clinic may provide a forensic medical examination, as defined under [22-22-26](#), without the consent of a guardian of a protected persons (such as some adults with disabilities). (Please see [SDCL 22-22-26](#), & [29A-5-102](#) regarding minor & protected persons and [22-22-27](#) regarding a medical provider's good faith effort/liability regarding patient capacity for informed consent).

Sexual assault can also be verbal, visual, or non-contact. It is **anything that forces a person to join in unwanted sexual activities or attention.**



"I was forcibly raped by a family friend months after finally escaping an abusive relationship. He sensed my vulnerability and lack of self-worth. My self-esteem had been recently shattered and felt I deserved the abuse I endured. Because of this and not understanding my options, I never reported the assault. My justice is raising awareness, building up survivors, and having the strength to be a voice for the voiceless."

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTINUED)

OTHER EXAMPLES CAN INCLUDE:

- Voyeurism, or peeping (when someone watches private sexual acts or watching someone change clothes without them knowing and consenting)
- Exhibitionism (when someone exposes himself or herself in public)
- Sexual harassment or threats
- Forcing someone to pose for sexual pictures
- Receiving unwanted texts or “sexts” (texting sexual photos or messages). Receiving unwanted pictures of nude/private body parts, coercing someone into sending pictures/videos of themselves, and posting or sharing photos/videos of a person's nude body/parts without that person's consent. Sexual assault can also be verbal, visual, or non-contact. In South Dakota, sexting is illegal for juveniles [SDCL 26-10-33](#)
- Threatening to post intimate pictures of victim, if victim does not perform sex/meet demands

Sexual assault is any sexual activity you DO NOT consent to — *no matter whom it is with.*

Sexual assault by an intimate partner (someone you have a sexual or romantic relationship with) is common.

Nearly half of female rape victims were raped by a current or former partner.



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AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

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Seek legal counsel. *South Dakota laws contain specific definitions and/or conditions to meet a statutory crime.*

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CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.

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GET HELP FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING: 1-888-373-7888

Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTINUED)

VICTIMS HAVE A RIGHT TO BE HEARD.

VICTIMS HAVE MULTIPLE OPTIONS TO REPORT A CRIME IN SOUTH DAKOTA (PAGE 6) INCLUDING DIRECTLY TO THESE AGENCIES:

- Medical Exam (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/SANE) at your local Emergency Room or Medical Facility
- Law Enforcement (Local Police and/or Sheriff)
- State's Attorney

If you want assistance with reporting a crime, seek support from professionals such as domestic violence/sexual assault advocates which can be found at your local domestic violence shelter or state's attorney's office.

Victims often disclose abuse to their peers first. However, family, friend, or a professional relationship to a victim, **the initial response to a disclosure can be hugely impactful.** If the response is negative, unsupportive, or that which question/blame the victim, that may be the last time that person shares. **Respond to victims in a trauma-informed way, believe them.** With disclosures, it is important to

SOUTH DAKOTA & NATIONAL STATISTICS

- In 2019, South Dakota had the 3rd highest rape rate in the nation (72.6 rapes per 100,000).*
- In 2019, Rapid City had the 2nd highest rape rate in the nation compared to other metropolitan areas (129.3 per 100,000 people).*
- Rape is a global problem, and the United States is no exception. Rape is a violent crime defined as the unlawful sexual activity (sexual assault) involving sexual intercourse performed without consent (see pg. 15), forcibly or under threat of injury against a person's will. In the United States, about 44% of women and 25% of men have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.**

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honor and respect a victim's choice and empower them to re-build control. **Responding negatively to a victim may discourage them from reporting the crime out of fear they will not be believed.** A victim may disclose to family/friends and simply not want to report to trained professionals; respect the victim and their choices.

Sexual assault can include any type of sexual contact with a person who does not or cannot consent. It is always important to be aware of informed and supportive decision making regarding sexual activity. Individuals with disabilities or who are deaf/hard of hearing over the age of 16 can consent to sexual activities. Individuals over the age of 16 who have a legal guardian or conservator can make decisions and provide consent regarding sexual activities without a legal guardian or conservator.

Please seek legal guidance around decision making of a protected person and their legal guardian/conservator to understand what the guardianship/conservatorship covers regarding decision-making responsibility for the protected person.

OTHER WAYS TO REPORT

- Please note there are multiple options to Report Sexual Assault on [page 6](#), "[How to Report Abuse in South Dakota](#)", that **DO NOT** require the victim to receive medical care.
- Reporting options if a child discloses is also found on [page 6](#).



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REPORTING A SEXUAL ASSAULT AND/OR OBTAINING A MEDICAL EXAM IN SOUTH DAKOTA

A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) is performed to collect evidence after a sexual assault. At the time of a SANE, you can get information about an advocate or speak to an advocate if desired. **A victim can choose to include law enforcement OR make an anonymous / Jane Doe report when receiving a medical exam.** Some language and forms used to collect evidence can differ depending on the location and medical facility. (Example: Anonymous vs Jane Doe.)

South Dakota laws <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/23-5C-2> and <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/23-5C-3> state the following regarding the report of rape or sexual assault and/or medical care / SANE:

A health care facility examining or treating a victim of rape or sexual assault **must give the victim the option of reporting the sexual assault to an appropriate law enforcement agency.**

A health care facility may not require the victim to report the sexual assault in order to receive an examination or treatment. If the victim chooses to report to law enforcement, the sexual assault kit will be released to the investigating law enforcement agency or the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction where the medical treatment occurred. **The kit will be preserved by law enforcement for at least seven years from the date of examination or until the victim reaches the age of 25, whichever is longer.**

If you've been sexually assaulted it is recommended to get a medical exam **within 72 hours** for the best results to collect evidence. Tips to help preserve evidence AFTER a sexual assault include: **DO NOT** wash your hands, **DO NOT** brush your teeth, **DO NOT** take a shower, **DO NOT** change your clothes.

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Making an anonymous report at the time of receiving medical exam/ SANE, South Dakota law states:

If the **victim does not wish to report to law enforcement**, the health care facility will assign a code number to the sexual assault kit and provide the code number to the victim as well as information identifying the law enforcement agency where the kit will be stored. **No identifying information will be affixed to the kit.** The health care facility maintains the identifying code and law enforcement **will preserve the kit for at least seven years from the date of examination or until the victim reaches the age of 25, whichever is longer.** If the victim decides to report within that time frame, the code number will be used to identify the appropriate kit. **A minor age 16 or older may consent to a sexual assault kit, however, no one under the age of 18 can receive an anonymous exam.**

For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Sexual Assault Hotline
<https://rainn.org/>
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

References:

* Sexual Violence in South Dakota 2019 Data Report.

https://doh.sd.gov/media/juvfrj3q/2019_sd_sexualviolencereport.pdf

Report published March 2021 prepared by: Tracey McMahon, Beth Walstrom, & Jenny Kerkvliet.
Population Health Evaluation Center. South Dakota State University

<https://doh.sd.gov/media/fllpeoyc/2021-sexual-violence-report.pdf>

**Rape Statistics by State 2022 -

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/rape-statistics-by-state>

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (Forensic Evidence Collection)

<https://www.rainn.org/articles/rape-kit>

Sexual Assault | Office on Women's Health -

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/sexual-assault-and-rape/sexual-assault>



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SEX TRAFFICKING

Consent is an ongoing mutual agreement between partners about what they want to experience.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations define human trafficking as:

Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age. Source: DOJ, (22 U.S.C. § 7102(9)).

Most common cases of sex trafficking are prosecuted in federal court. However, South Dakota law is found here:

<https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-49>

While the law states age 18, human trafficking can occur and/or continue *at any age*.

A commercial sex act includes prostitution, pornography, exotic dance, escort services, and any sexual performance done in exchange for any item of value, such as money, drugs, shelter, food, or clothes.

COMMON WAYS OF SEX TRAFFICKING:



Force – Torture, physical abuse, rape, confinement



Fraud – Unkept promises, misrepresentation of work, fake romantic relationship

Coercion – Threats, verbal abuse, control of money, psychological abuse

“

“My traffickers wanted me to look young, so I was not allowed to eat much in order to stay small.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

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TYPES OF TRAFFICKERS/PIMPS PREDOMINANT IN THE HEARTLAND USA (BUT NOT LIMITED TO):

- **Romeo Pimp** – The relationship begins with an intended victim, the pimp romanticizes the relationship with gifts and compliments until they have the victim away from safety and help.
- **Gang/Motorcycle Club Pimping** – The victim is initiated into a street gang or an outlaw motorcycle club, generally via gang rape and then becomes property of the gang/club.

“

“My dad was my trafficker. It started so young that I thought it was normal. My mom and my brother knew. It wasn't until I was at my first sleepover when I mentioned that I didn't like having sex with my dad and his friends that I realized it wasn't okay. Everyone got real quiet and I suddenly felt ashamed! Then my friend had me tell her mom. Everything changed after that as my dad went to prison and I was put in a special girl's school. I'm confused on how to feel because I miss having a family.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

- **Familial Trafficking** – Is when the abuse or exploitation of a victim is at the hands of someone they know and refer to as family [90% are family within the home]. The victimization generally begins in early childhood.
- **Familial Sex Trafficking** – This specifically, involves traffickers (who sell victims for profit) giving offenders sexual access to victims or pornography in exchange for drugs, money, or something else of value.



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEX TRAFFICKING CONTINUED)

HOW DOES FAMILIAL TRAFFICKING DIFFER FROM CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

Familial trafficking has a commercial element to it. A child trapped in a trafficking situation could experience repeated, frequent, and ongoing abuse—from which the trafficker will profit. Of course, there's some overlap; child sex trafficking is always child abuse, but not all child sexual abuse is trafficking. A child trafficking charge carries a more severe sentence for perpetrators so it's imperative that it's properly identified.

“My trafficker always made me feel less than human. He constantly degraded me to the point I didn't want to look others in the eyes.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

- **Ring Trafficking** – Organized crime rings that are specifically linked to all forms of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, and are interconnected with other criminal organizations

“

“I was taught that law enforcement officers were my enemy and that they would put me in jail. This made it so that I had no one to reach out to for help.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

WHAT DOES SEX TRAFFICKING LOOK LIKE IN SOUTH DAKOTA?:

South Dakota has two major events that bring in consumers of sex trafficking victims and those are pheasant hunting season and the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Law Enforcement stings have been

successful in catching some would-be buyers before they are able to harm actual victims in these situations. However, sex trafficking continues to thrive due to the money to be made.

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It is important to understand that while pheasant season and the Rally bring in outsiders, South Dakota's human trafficking thrives year-round. It has been noted by Polaris that at some point every county within every state in the USA has had at least one victim call in to report being a victim of human trafficking. This means that our rural areas are no exception. Someone in your county is possibly being trafficked at this very moment.

Trafficking thrives because we cannot see what we do not know. Remaining anonymous is key for the traffickers'

"For the purposes of better understanding the following stats, a trafficking ring is defined as an organized group of individuals coordinating and working together to mutually benefit from the sex trafficking of individuals.

While we can clearly define the differences in types of trafficking, most of our clients have endured more than one form of sex trafficker. In addition to this intersection, many of those sex trafficked were also labor trafficked. As we began to look at our stats, we found that 68% of our clients reported being involved with ring trafficking at some point. Leaving the other 32% involved with other forms but no transition into or out of ring trafficking.

Slightly over 27% of those who received services were solely ring trafficked by organized crime with no other intersection. Of those involved in rings, 29% were familial trafficking rings (families trading/selling children with other families). A surprising notation is that 0% of ring trafficked victims reported being familial trafficked outside of rings.

10% of those who received services reported involvement with cartel trafficking. And 27% reported romeo pimps trafficked them. Only 5% reported being trafficked while in foster care. Motorcycle club trafficking was reported by 10% with the initial involvement as a romeo in most cases. 5% reported solely being cartel trafficked."

— STATS COMPILED FROM THREE SD HUMAN TRAFFICKING ADVOCACY AGENCIES



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very existence. They do not look or behave a certain way in public. Traffickers can be your neighbor, your elected official, your family member, a coach, someone in law enforcement, a preacher, your medical provider, a school teacher, a philanthropist, etc. Pay attention to: who does your child not want to see; is an adult paying too much attention to them; does an adult have private unsupervised access to your child?

WHAT IS GROOMING IN SEX TRAFFICKING?

By definition, **grooming** is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with someone so they can manipulate, exploit and/or abuse them. It is also the process a human trafficker uses to identify and ultimately control someone for the purpose of trafficking them. Traffickers employ a variety of control tactics, the most common include physical and emotional abuse and threats, isolation from friends and family, and economic abuse. They make promises aimed at addressing the needs of their target in order to impose control.

- **Grooming** – The use of diverse combinations of sexual trauma often beginning with subtle touch and kindness; which escalates to torture, threats, and manipulation to break down a victim to a state of compliance. Grooming nearly always begins with someone known to the victim or the victim's family or friends. It is important to know that the grooming process not only applies to children, but adults can also groom other adults – even at work.
- **Grooming Of Children** – Can begin as early as infancy. This grooming can happen outside of a family unit with the parents completely unaware that it is happening. It also happens within the family home with parents or relatives involved.

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- **Grooming Of Teens/Adults** – Is most generally done through a relationship whether romantic, runaway survival, peer pressure, forced drug addiction, or abusive tactics of gangs and clubs.
- **Internet/Social Media Grooming** – Online grooming is a term that describes the tactics abusers deploy through the internet to sexually exploit children. It can happen quickly or over time. It's a process of exploiting trust to shift expectations of what safe behavior is and leveraging fear and shame to keep a child silent. Social media has been used by traffickers to recruit victims, to proliferate their trafficking operations, and to control victims through restricting social media access, impersonating the victim, or spreading lies and rumors online. Social media has overwhelmingly become the favored and most common place for traffickers to solicit buyers. Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat are still the top three social media platforms used by traffickers. Traffickers can protect their own identity while gaining information on their potential victims and potential buyers. They have immediate access to a wealth of information about those victims such as what they look like, what their interests are, whether they are happy or not, where they are, who they spend time with, among other information.

“

“When I was being groomed, it began with special treatment, extreme friendliness and flattery, being bought ice cream/treats. Once it turned sexual and other adults became involved, then the traffickers called it ‘being schooled’ and the niceness turned dirty and threatening,”

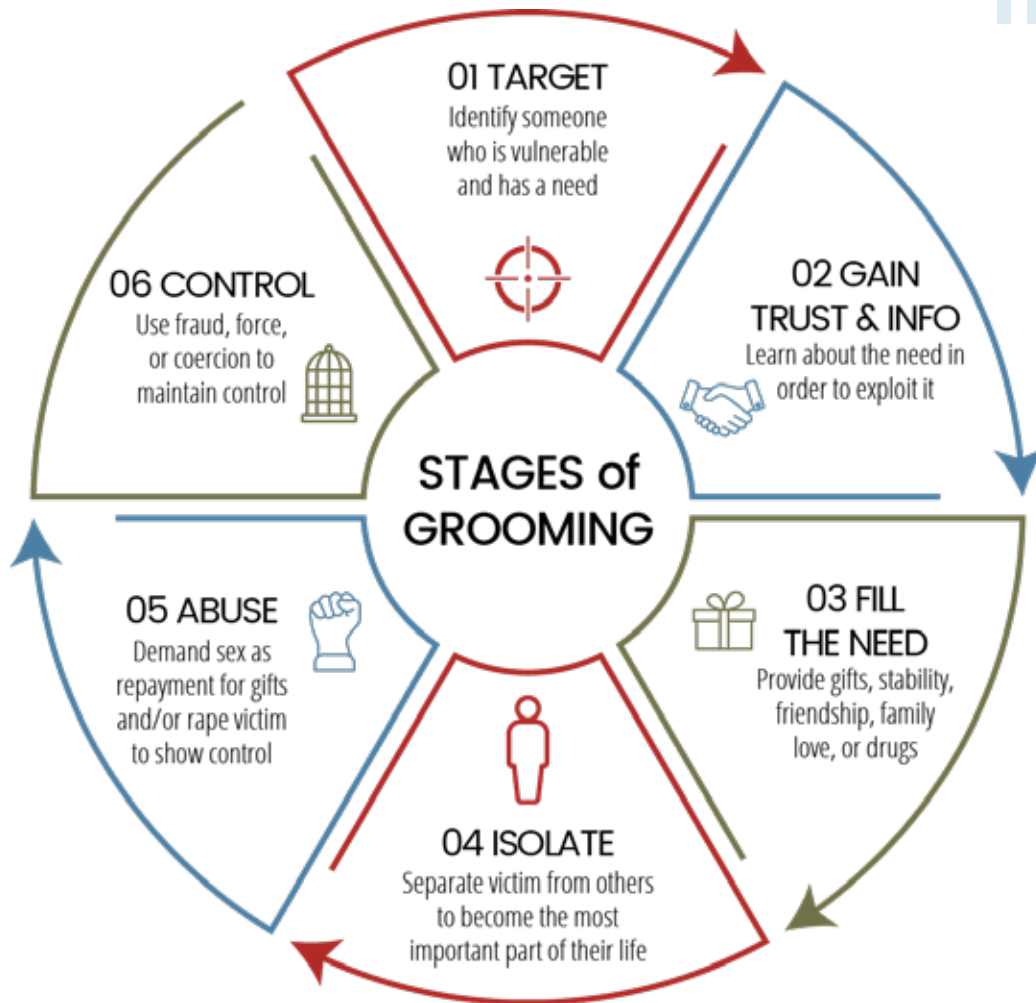
— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEX TRAFFICKING CONTINUED)

- **Smartphones** – Technology today allows traffickers to elude authorities, to communicate with the purchaser, allow traffickers to advertise on the internet and allow traffickers to track their victim's location and actions. Location-tracking applications and use of global positioning systems (GPS) in mobile phones can be used to know the victim's location, while cameras in smartphones used during video calls enable traffickers to see their victims and their surroundings.



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GROOMING STEPS INCLUDE:

- Identify and target the victim. Any child, teen, or adult may be a potential victim
- Gain trust and access
- Play a role in the victim's life
- Isolate the victim
- Create secrecy around the relationship
- Initiate sexual contact
- Desensitize to sexual content and touch
- Control the relationship and maintain control
- Threat and shame to keep the victim silent
- Dehumanize

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM BEING GROOMED - SIGNS OF GROOMING:

- Sends you frequent messages
- Ask you to keep your conversations secret
- Try to find out more detailed information about you
- Start sending you sexual messages
- Get you to share personal information
- Try to blackmail you

IS SOMEONE TRYING TO GROOM A CHILD? LISTEN AND OBSERVE:

- Who don't they want to see?
- Where don't they want to go?
- Is someone showing them too much attention?
- Has their behavior or attitude changed?
- Does an adult (like a coach or volunteer) have private, unsupervised access to your child?



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEX TRAFFICKING CONTINUED)

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING:

The following is an extensive list of some of the signs and symptoms that a trafficking victim in the Midwest/Heartland of the USA may exhibit:

- Rebellion
- Disconnection from family and/or friends
- Depression or Anxiety
- Use of drugs or alcohol – specifically to the blackout phase or to hallucinate (escaping reality)
- Insecurity or self-hatred
- Sleep issues or frequent nightmares
- Sexualized or seductive behavior or attire
- Tattoos related to trafficking (names of pimps, barcodes)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Baffling cuts, bruises, burns
- Secretive relationships or social media contacts
- Unusual interest or attention toward your child by adult(s)
- Inexplicable exhaustion
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)
- Frequent health issues or lowered immune system
- Sudden loss in hygiene or extreme attention to hygiene
- Difficulty making direct eye contact with others (please note it could be disrespectful in some cultures to make eye contact)
- Uncomfortable laughter or smiles (often mistaken for insincerity)
- Deception or secrets surrounding whereabouts
- Dark circles under the eyes or unexplained bloodshot eyes
- Extreme intrigue with sex and/or pornography or increased knowledge of sex that does not align with developmental age (Example: a 5 year old being able to discuss sexual situations using correct terms)
- Relationships with significantly older men and/ or women
- Ties to criminal elements, criminal motorcycle clubs, or street gangs (in the larger communities)

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It should be noted that a single symptom does not necessarily constitute a concern that someone is being trafficked. A combination of any of these may be a danger sign and should not be disregarded.

INITIAL INTERACTIONS WITH A SURVIVOR :

First Thing You Will Encounter Is Shock, So, Interact With A/An:

- Quiet voice and calm demeanor.
- Behavior that projects as though you believe them (after all, when there is shock, there has to be a reason behind it). They have been taught/brainwashed not to trust Law Enforcement; they will be afraid of you.
- Understanding that you may need to repeat yourself several times.
- Knowledge that more details will continue to emerge over time.
- Realization that they have been under extreme control, including brain washing such as psychological control tactics.
- Understanding that no matter what your day has looked like, their day has been exponentially worse, therefore show compassion.
- Knowledge that the victim may have had previous arrests and encounters with Law Enforcement for a variety of offenses. Do not allow this to taint how you treat them. Most victims are forced to commit crimes.
- Realization that they may be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol and they may have addictions. More often than not, these addictions were forced upon them by their trafficker.
- Understanding that they may be hysterical. This does not mean they are uncooperative. They are in PTSD or Complex Trauma and cannot immediately get this under control. (subjected to torture).
- Knowledge that they most likely have dissociation which is a mental process where a person disconnects from their thoughts, feelings, memories or sense of identity after experiencing trauma. This could cause the victim to experience: intense anxiety, memory lapses where common personal information is forgotten,



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a form of amnesia where the trauma they endured is temporarily forgotten. This can greatly change their responses and demeanor within minutes. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/dissociation-and-dissociative-disorders>.

- Realization that being owned and used causes deep shame. Shame stops a person from reporting, from making direct eye contact with you, and from recognizing they are a victim.
- Understanding that victims may be trained by traffickers to not cooperate with law enforcement and/or other helping professionals. As a helper, do not take this personally. The impulse to not cooperate is a person's survival skills kicking in. It takes time to unlearn certain unhealthy thoughts/behaviors and relearn and establish healthy trust.

THE PORNOGRAPHY CONNECTION:

Pornography is increasingly becoming more accessible, affordable, available, and more anonymously consumed year after year. Pornography is also used by traffickers to train sex trafficking victims about various sexual acts and situations buyers prefer.

- Traffickers force victims into pornography for psychological control and greater financial gain.
- Pornography is in and of itself a form of sex trafficking.
- Most trafficked into the porn industry have been sexually assaulted since they were young children.
- Who are the porn "stars"? In many cases, porn is nothing more than sex trafficking/rape on film.
- The average age of minors trafficked into porn production is 12.8 years old.
- These porn "stars" must perform well and be believable as it staves off torture.
- Porn producers sometimes act as pimps on the side, selling their performers as escorts.

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Bad News – The consumption of porn can manifest in more willingness to buy sex, thereby increasing the demand for individuals being trafficked for sex.

Good News – About 70% of porn consumers who do learn about mistreatment in the porn industry take some form of action to combat it.

Bottom Line – if we stop buying it, we stop the victimization of our daughters, brothers, nieces, nephews, friends and neighbors.

8 WAYS YOU CAN HELP COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Know the Signs
- Spread the Word
- Volunteer Locally
- Stay Informed
- Support Anti-Trafficking Legislation
- See Something, Say Something
- Give financially to your local Anti-Human Trafficking Organization
- Use Your Skills (Pro Bono)

NATIONAL SEX & HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATISTICS

- **58,000 Non-Family Abductions Each Year In The USA** (by predators)
- Of these non-family abductions, 65% are minority children
42% African American
23% Hispanic
- 4,000 Attempted abductions and 200,000 Family Abductions each year
- **Abductions often involve children between ages 10-14**
Happens more to female children than male children
Typically occurs when child is going to or from school, and between 2-7pm on weekdays
Usually involve a suspect using a vehicle



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(SEX TRAFFICKING CONTINUED)

COMMON BRANDING TATTOOS:

Often victims are forced to get tattoos of names or numbers next to diamonds, money bags, dollar signs, crowns, barcodes, the terms “Queen” or “Property of”, and the term “King” = the pimp.



For more information, please check out these resources:

- National Hotline for Human Trafficking
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>
Call **1-888-373-7888** (TTY: 711) | Text **233733**
Live Chat <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/chat>
En Español <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/obtenga-ayuda>

References:

Grooming Wheel - https://3rdmil.com/blog/signs_someone_is_being_groomed_for_sex_trafficking/

Kelly R Patterson, “From Trafficked to Treasured”, 2018, Survivor, Founder, Executive Director of Treasured Lives, www.treasuredlives.org

Statistics – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

United Nations Office On Drugs And Crime

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/Webstories2021/the-role-of-technology-in-human-trafficking.html>

Familial Trafficking: A Crime Against Children - The Exodus Road

<https://theexodusroad.com/familial-sex-trafficking-a-crime-against-children/>

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
SURVIVOR TASK FORCE**
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

STALKING

Stalking is a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear, according to the Department of Justice. Stalking is about power and control and it can happen with intimate partners or strangers. Typically a victim of stalking knows their stalker; only 19% of stalkers are a complete stranger to the victim.

Stalking laws and definitions can vary from state to state. **South Dakota stalking laws** include provisions regarding: **second or subsequent convictions, offenses in another state, and protection / no contact orders.** South Dakota legal definitions and laws can be found here <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-19A>. If you discover you are being stalked—either in-person, online, or via technology—it can be unsettling and even dangerous. Consider taking steps to protect yourself or involve law enforcement.

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO STALK One of the ways perpetrators stalk victims is through the use of technology which is sometimes referred to as cyberstalking.

STALKING CAN TAKE MANY FORMS:

- Making threats against someone, or that person's family or friends.
- Non-consensual communication, such as repeated phone calls, emails, text messages, and unwanted gifts.
- Repeated physical or visual closeness, like waiting for someone to arrive at certain locations, following someone, or watching someone from a distance.



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(STALKING CONTINUED)

- Any other behavior used to contact, harass, track, or threaten someone.
- Through third parties (friends, family, different social media accounts, etc.).

SOME USES OF TECHNOLOGY TO STALK INCLUDE:

- Sending persistent unwanted communications through the internet to someone's email or social media platform.
- Sharing threatening or personal information about someone on public virtual platforms or forums.
- Installing cameras that record someone's personal life without their knowledge or consent.
- Using GPS or other tracking systems to monitor or follow someone without their knowledge or consent. (Examples: Using cellphones to track, either by syncing their phones with the victim's phone or through location sharing such as Snapmap, Find My Friends, or hiding a GPS tracker on a vehicle to monitor the victim's location).
- Using someone's computer and/or spyware to track their computer activity.

If you are being stalked, it is common to experience fear and feelings of anxiety, nervousness, isolation, stress, or even develop depression.

You are not alone.

Call law enforcement or advocates for support/assistance with safety planning and next steps.

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(STALKING CONTINUED)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING STALKED:

- Try to avoid the person stalking you; this can be difficult at times, but you should consider: changing the routes you drive or walk, leave at a different time each day, making changes to your daily routines and schedule, where you grocery shop etc.
- If you are being stalked through communication technology, make it clear that you do not wish to be contacted or communicate and do not respond any further.
- Inform those around you about the situation, including teachers/professors, family, friends, supervisors, and/or co-workers.



“Shortly after moving into my new apartment, my neighbor started following me and leaving me gifts. He knew my schedule and knew my route to classes. He would watch me from his balcony while I was in the pool or parking my car. He would watch me in the workout room. There's also evidence he had climbed onto my balcony, from his, to leave me a gift. This continued for several months. My apartment complex could not help me because “he’s just a secret admirer”. It was very frustrating to learn the police could not help me either until “something happened” or I could “prove” it was him. I also was told that until I knew his name, there was no way they could protect me. I still reported most incidents and recorded them on my own. After multiple police reports, I was finally able to obtain his name in order to file an order of protection. Now, he is evicted and I can begin to heal from this trauma, but will never get back my trust in people or believing the good in everyone. What has helped me is becoming educated in self-defense and having that peace of mind in case something did happen, as well as speaking to my victim advocate who was honestly so helpful during and after the process.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



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(STALKING CONTINUED)

- Keep any evidence such as screenshots or printed versions of text messages, voicemails, letters, packages, emails, etc., again, do not respond. It's important to note the dates of each occurrence. You should consider keeping a journal to help you stay organized.
- If you are in danger, call 911 immediately. Contact your local law enforcement by calling the non-emergency number to report the stalking. Be prepared to present your collection of evidence (texts, emails, notes, gifts).
- Call or Text 911 if your stalker approaches you. Tell the dispatch or officer that “it's happening right now”.
- Keep accurate written details, with dates, of all stalking incidents. When safety planning and seeking further action toward safety, the burden of proof that stalking exists rests on the victim. Documenting detailed logs of the incidents are necessary to demonstrate the need for safety measures (protection order, law enforcement intervention, etc.)
- Become familiar with computer safety and ways to stay safe online.

Stalking is often minimized but should be taken seriously; however, stalking is often not the end game. When stalking occurs, there is an increased risk in lethality, and you may be at high risk of further violence.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Stalking Prevention, Awareness, & Resource Center (SPARC)
<https://www.stalkingawareness.org/>
en Español — <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/en-Español/>

References:

This information was adapted from: Stalking | RAINN
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/stalking>

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

STRANGULATION

Strangulation is the ultimate form of power and control, where the abuser can demonstrate control over the victim's next breath. Strangulation can cause devastating psychological effects or a potentially fatal outcome.

Not to be confused with “choking”, strangulation refers to when pressure is applied from the outside, cutting off airflow and/or blood vessels in the neck, preventing oxygen from reaching the brain.

Choking, meanwhile, refers to a blockage inside the throat which makes it hard to breathe. Strangulation can be done with hands, other body parts, or with objects. For example: the perpetrator holds an object

STRANGULATION STATISTICS

- **One in four women will experience Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in their lifetime, and of those, up to 68% will suffer near-fatal strangulation at the hands of their partner.**
- Of the victims,
 - 97% are strangled by hands
 - 38% reported losing consciousness
 - 35% are strangled during sexual assault/abuse
 - 9% are also pregnant, and
 - 70% of strangled women believed they were going to die.
- After a near-fatal strangulation, you are
 - 750% more likely to be killed later by your abuser
 - 1,100% more likely if they have access to firearms



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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(STRANGULATION CONTINUED)

against the victim's neck and applies pressure or the victim is lying down and the perpetrator puts body weight onto the victim to cut off airflow.

- During an incident of strangulation, closing off the airway makes breathing impossible, and a victim may lose consciousness due to the blocking of blood flow to and from the brain. Strangulation may obstruct the carotid arteries in the neck, depriving the brain of oxygen. Unconsciousness may also occur due to the blocking of the jugular veins which prevents deoxygenated blood from exiting the brain.
- The perpetrator strangles as a form of power and control over their intimate partner by controlling their breathing. **This pressure can lead to a loss of consciousness within five to ten seconds and cause death within a few minutes.**
- Because such a thin line exists between unconsciousness and death, strangulation sits just before homicide on the continuum of domestic violence risk assessment.

“

“I remember tears rolling down my cheeks as my husband squeezed his hands tighter and tighter around my neck telling me this was it. Only after my toddler walked in and screamed from fear did he release his grip. This was not the first nor the last time he attempted to end my life. I never believed he would actually kill me until that evening.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

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Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(STRANGULATION CONTINUED)

STRANGULATION CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS:

- Common visible signs of strangulation include petechiae (red spots) in the eyes, blood-red eyes, swollen lips, and cord/rope burns, scratches, and bruising (particularly on the neck).
- Physically, the victim may have difficulty breathing, speaking, and swallowing or experience nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, headache, involuntary urination and/or defecation (common in pregnant victims). In these cases, conducting an immediate medical exam could prove necessary in saving the victim's life.
- Because of the lethality associated with strangulation, seek medical attention as soon as possible. Strangulation often does not leave physically visible injuries, but there is risk of internal injuries such as traumatic brain injury.

Strangulation is a significant predictor of future lethal violence. If you have been strangled, your partner is *7 times more likely* to kill you.

“

“A few years into our marriage he put his hands around my neck. I left. He continuously called me and said it wouldn't happen again. I went back. I wish I hadn't but felt I had to in order to protect the children in our home. He put his hands around my neck many times after that. The last time it happened he told me 'I will end you'. I thought I was going to die. I believe I'm alive today because he was heavily under the influence of alcohol and unable to use his full strength to end my life. I journaled every time he abused me. He was convicted of aggravated assault by strangulation.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



Definitions & Various Elements of Abuse

(STRANGULATION CONTINUED)

STRANGULATION DOES NOT ALWAYS PRODUCE VISIBLE SIGNS OF ASSAULT AND CAN BE HARD TO PROVE:

- A victim may suffer from internal injuries that do not appear on the outside. Immediately after the attack, the person may experience intense pain, vision changes, ringing in the ears, a swollen tongue, cuts in the mouth, swelling of the neck, difficulty swallowing, trouble breathing, or voice and throat changes.
- The victim may also experience neurological damage due to a lack of oxygen flow to the brain. These symptoms can include memory loss, dizziness, headaches, vomiting, and extreme weakness.
- Strangulation may cause long-term health consequences. A person's behavior may become more combative. The victim may also suffer from PTSD, depression, suicidal ideations, memory problems, nightmares, anxiety, severe stress reaction, amnesia, and psychosis. More serious injuries include Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI).
- Death can also occur days or weeks subsequent to the attack due to carotid artery dissection and respiratory complications such as pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), and the risk of blood clots traveling to the brain (embolization).

Because of the lethality associated with strangulation, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

References:

Vital Facts for Victims of Strangulation - <https://www.familyjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Adult-Strangulation-Brochure-Template-2020-.pdf>

Why Strangulation in Domestic Violence is a Huge Red Flag

The Shelter for Abused Women & Children - <https://naplesshelter.org/strangulation/>

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Navigating Abuse

Our purpose is to provide information and tools for victims, survivors, their family members, and our communities to assist you to safely and effectively navigate your unique situation, including the aftermath of abuse.

No matter where you find yourself, ***you are not alone*** and you should not go through this process alone.

CALL OR TEXT 911

TEXT 911

- Now available statewide in South Dakota.
- Use your mobile device (with cellular service) to send a text message to 9-1-1.
- Text your address immediately so the dispatcher knows where to send help.

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Navigating Abuse

COPING STRATEGIES & PRACTICING SELF-CARE

Healing from trauma or abuse can be a challenging journey that requires commitment and a safe space to be successful. It is a gradual, ongoing process that could take months or years for one to come to a point of complete healing.

However, with the right attitude, strategies and support, one can move past the trauma, rebuild their sense of control and self-worth, and come out stronger.

STRATEGIES

- **Positive Self-Affirmation** – These are statements or phrases that one can repeat to self to shift mindset and mood to be more positive and hopeful. (Example: I am grateful for the people I have in my life; I grow and improve every day; I treat myself kindly and with compassion; I am able to find the silver linings in difficult situations.)
- **Physical Exercise** – Studies show that trauma lives in our bodies and minds until we find ways to discard it. It's important to look for an exercise you love. Physical activities are a good stress reliever.
- **Reignite Activities Or Hobbies That Used To Make You Happy** – This could be drawing, writing, painting, photography, dance, making music, or doing arts and crafts. This is a good way to release the trauma in alternate ways that engage both mind and body.

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Navigating Abuse

(COPING STRATEGIES & PRACTICING SELF CARE CONTINUED)

- **Ask For Help** – Find a validating mental health professional or counselor. With their support you will be able to address your trauma triggers in a safe space. Combating the shame/negative societal stigmas of going to therapy can be hard. You don't have to stick with the first counselor/provider you come across. Find the right fit for you.
- **Seek Specialized Trauma Therapy** – Trauma therapy by a trained professional can be very helpful. While there are multiple therapies available, EMDR (Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing) is a technique that was designed to help someone who has experienced trauma or is suffering from PTSD. An EMDR therapist will guide you through a series of sessions of rapid bi-lateral eye movements that aim to help reduce the symptoms of trauma and the way memories are stored. Ask your therapist if they are EMDR trained or learn more here <https://www.healthline.com/health/emdr-therapy#What-is-EMDR-therapy?>
- **Join A Survivor Support Group** – Being around people who have gone through similar experiences can be useful, help you regain confidence in yourself. Sharing your story with other survivors can be incredibly healing and liberating.
- **Take Deep Breaths** – Simply taking just a few moments daily to practice some deep breathing exercises can decrease stress, relax your mind, body, help you sleep better and keep you focused.
- **Set Goals And Track Your Performance** – Set yourself up with realistic, achievable goals. This will keep you focused. Attaining one's goals will bring a sense of achievement and a positive mindset.



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(COPING STRATEGIES & PRACTICING SELF CARE CONTINUED)

- **Keep In Contact With Friends And Family** – Solid friendships help promote brain health. Spend time connecting with friends and building supportive connections.
- **Develop A Realistic To Do List** – This could include time for work, rest, eat, sleep, relationships and recreation. Eat three meals a day and drink enough water.
- **Lean Into Faith** – Connect with a local faith community for spiritual and mental support. Discover your purpose, find healing and develop your faith through a daily spiritual practice.
- **Meditate For 10 Minutes** – Meditation does not need to be complex. Take a few minutes to do some simple breathing exercises, guided meditation exercises (you can google these, find meditation apps, or ask trusted friends/family what they do to meditate), laying down with your eyes closed, journaling, etc.
- **Write A List Of Things You're Grateful For** – Studies show that consistently practicing gratitude can change a person's attitude. The key is to make this a consistent practice so it becomes a normal part of your day. Reflect on three things that brought you joy.
- **Other Resources** – We, as survivors, have found these additional resources beneficial to our healing and growth journey:
Emotional skills based on the work of Susan David, a psychologist and Harvard professor, and her book, Emotional Agility, <https://www.susandavid.com/>
Research on vulnerability and shame by Brene Brown and her books: The Gifts of Imperfection, Daring Greatly, Rising Strong and Dare to Lead, <https://brenebrown.com/>

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Navigating Abuse

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA TRIGGERS

Many people living in abuse and people who have left their abusers experience **trauma triggers** related to what they saw, heard, smelled, touched or tasted during abusive attacks. The trauma triggers are different for everyone, but fortunately, we can handle trauma triggers similarly.

WHAT IS A TRAUMA TRIGGER?

A trigger is any event or object that reminds you of, or subconsciously connects you to, an aspect of your abuse. Triggers cause you to behave in the same way you did during or immediately after the traumatic event because your brain does not differentiate what happened then from what is going on around you now. Your reaction is to simply survive the situation or the trauma trigger. There is no right and no normal way to respond to traumatic events or to triggers.

SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA TRIGGERS

The symptoms of experiencing a trauma trigger vary, but here are some of the most common:

- Sudden or unexplained bouts of crying
- Fear and/or paranoia
- Dissociation or feeling disconnected between a sensory experience, thoughts, sense of self, or personal history
- Anxiety and/or panic attacks
- Sudden physical symptoms such as nausea or fatigue
- Irritability, intrusive thoughts, being easily startled, hyper-vigilance or other signs that your mind is on alert for trouble
- Display of unhealthy coping mechanisms you used during or after the attack(s) such as substance abuse, self-harm, or even going to bed to sleep it off



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(UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA TRIGGERS CONTINUED)

HOW TO HANDLE TRAUMA TRIGGER SYMPTOMS

- Recognize your behaviors or physical symptoms
- Breathe deeply and slowly until your brain gets the message
- Focus on the sights, sounds, smells, textures and/or tastes of the present
- Repeat simple, helpful thoughts to yourself either out loud or to yourself, such as: 'I am safe. I am okay'

REFERENCES:

safespeaks.org/2020/08/04/12-self-care-tips-for-domestic-violence-survivors/

www.healthypace.com/blogs/verbalabuseinrelationships/2014/12/how-to-handle-trauma-triggers-caused-by-domestic-abuse

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Navigating Abuse

PROTECTION ORDER

WHAT IS A PROTECTION ORDER?

Protective orders, also called “restraining orders,” require a named individual (typically, those charged with domestic violence or stalking) to stay a specified distance away from a named victim, for a certain amount of time. They are technically legal documents issued by a judge or magistrate to protect the health and safety of a person who is alleged to be a victim of any act involving violence, force or threat that results in bodily injury or places that person in fear of death, sexual assault or bodily injury.

Any person who is involved in one of the following relationships with another party may be entitled to a protective order upon proof:

- Spouse or former spouse
- Is in a significant romantic relationship
- Has a child or is expecting a child with the abusing party
- Parent and child, including a relationship by adoption, guardianship, or marriage
- Siblings, whether of the whole or half blood, including a relationship through adoption or marriage

If none of these relationships are applied, then a stalking order can be filed. The Respondent and Petitioner can have any form of relationship such as neighbor, coworker, acquaintance, roommate, or friend.



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(PROTECTION ORDER CONTINUED)

PROCESS OF PROTECTION ORDER IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Obtaining A Protection Order:

- Visit the Clerk of Court's office in your county to obtain the forms needed to apply for a protection order. The forms are also available <https://ujslawhelp.sd.gov/protectionorders.aspx>.
- Many counties also provide Victims' Assistance. Contact your local State's Attorney office for more information.
- Some shelters or advocacy centers have the forms available or can assist victims in obtaining them. If you want or need assistance with a protection order, ask advocates for assistance.
- In the protection order, it is helpful to document and include all incidents you can remember, especially incidents where you feared the person would cause you harm or even death. These factors are taken into consideration by judges when determining the need for a protection order.

After Completing The Paperwork:

- Return the forms to the Clerk of Courts.
- The Clerk of Courts will likely assign the protection order application to the same judge if any civil litigation is happening between the parties (ie. divorce, child custody). Parties should make the judge aware of any other proceedings.
- A judge will then review the petition.
- A judge will make one of the following decisions:
 1. Decline the request for a protection order,
 2. Grant a temporary protection order, and/or
 3. Grant a hearing for a permanent protection order

For The Hearing:

- After requesting a protection order and being granted a hearing, be prepared and gather evidence and print copies for submission

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AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT + SEX TRAFFICKING

This toolkit is for informational purposes only.
Seek legal counsel. *South Dakota laws contain specific definitions and/or conditions to meet a statutory crime.*

If you or someone you know is in danger,
CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.



Navigating Abuse

(PROTECTION ORDER CONTINUED)

to the judge such as screen shots, photos, text messages, etc. If there are witnesses to the abuse you have endured, you can ask them to attend and testify. You can also seek legal advice or obtain a lawyer but it is not necessary. **Many times your local advocate can help you with this process.**

- The person who has the protection order filed against them does not have to appear. The judge will listen to evidence and decide if the protection order should be granted.
- If the person who has the protection order filed against them does appear, the judge may ask them what they think about the protection order. The person has a right to speak to why they believe there should not be a protection order. If the person does not object, the judge may grant the order. If they do object, the judge may ask additional questions to determine if the protection order should be granted. The person may appear with or without a lawyer.
- Review information on how to prepare for court <https://ujslawhelp.sd.gov/prepare.aspx>.
- In preparation for the hearing, please be aware that the person may appear for the hearing. This can be a difficult and stressful process. You can bring family/friends with you to the hearing to be a supportive presence and to sit with you. **Advocates may be available to attend the protection order hearing with you. They cannot testify for you, but they can be present in the courtroom.** If you would like someone to be present for emotional support, consider asking an advocate to accompany you to the hearing.



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Navigating Abuse

(PROTECTION ORDER CONTINUED)

During The Hearing:

- The judge may start by explaining the rules to both parties.
- The person requesting the protection order will go first and present their evidence and call witnesses. They will explain to the judge why they need the protection order.
- Once the first person is done, they may be asked questions by the other party.
- Next, the person responding to the protection order will be allowed to provide evidence or their own witnesses. They may also be asked questions by the other party once they have finished.
- The judge may ask questions of either party or witnesses.

After The Hearing:

- The judge will determine if the protection order will be granted and for how long. The maximum time for a protection order is five years. Even though the maximum time for a protection order is five years, you can apply for another one. If you want to apply for another one, you will go through the above process again.
- The judge may also determine outcomes relating to children. This could include visits/exchanges of children between parents. The judge will not use the protection order hearing to address any custody related matters as those will need to be taken care of through family law or civil court.
- The judge may also make a determination regarding firearms. The judge may order no firearms in the possession of the person the order was granted against. It is a federal violation for that person to possess a firearm while subject to the permanent protection order.
- After the order is granted and is put into place, it must be honored. After the judge signs it, it will be served on the other party. Neither party should contact the other. If the protected person contacts the person served, that violates the order and

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Navigating Abuse

(PROTECTION ORDER CONTINUED)

could risk termination of the protection order.

Enforcement:

- All violations of the protection order in place should be immediately reported to law enforcement.
- **A copy of the protection order should always be carried with the person it was granted to. If there is a need to call law enforcement or show law enforcement that there is a protection order in place, they will need to see the document.**
- South Dakota law enforcement should enforce orders from other states and Tribes.
- Violations include in-person violations or technological violations. The served person is not to make contact with the protected person by any means which includes technology or even third parties, such as through friends/family. Report immediately and keep a log/record of the violations. Keep any evidence of violations through the logs and also through screenshots of electronic violations.

Modifications:

- Only a judge may modify the protection order.
- At any time, either party may request to modify the order. The request should be in writing and filed with the clerk.
- The judge will receive the request and decide whether to have a hearing regarding the request. A hearing is not always required.
- At the hearing, whichever party is requesting the modification must present evidence to support the modification request.

Dismissals:

- Only a judge may dismiss the protection order.
- At any time, either party may request to dismiss the order. The

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Navigating Abuse

(PROTECTION ORDER CONTINUED)

request should be in writing and filed with the clerk.

- The judge will receive the request and decide whether to have a hearing regarding the request. A hearing is not always required.
- At the hearing, whichever party is requesting the dismissal must present evidence to support the dismissal request.

Ultimately a protection order is the choice of the person requesting one. If you wish to modify or dismiss a protection order that is in place, that is your choice. Take time to consider the implications to the safety of the protected party(ies) when considering a modification or dismissal of a protection order.

Instructions/Forms For A South Dakota Protection Order:

- ujs.sd.gov/uploads/forms/protection/UJS-090A-ProtOrderInstructionsForm.pdf

For more information, please check out these resources:

- SD Legal Self Help
ujslawhelp.sd.gov/protectionorders.aspx

References:

SD Legal Self Help - ujslawhelp.sd.gov/protectionorders.aspx

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Navigating Abuse


SAFETY PLANNING

These are TIPS to help you make a safe plan as you prepare to leave and to stay safe after you leave. Your local domestic violence shelter or safe house can assist you in making a SAFE PLAN and provide a safe place for you to stay when you leave.

The **MOST** dangerous time for an abusive or unhealthy relationship to turn violent is when you **LEAVE** or when you are pregnant.

PREPARING TO LEAVE

- Practice getting out of your home safely when the other person is not home.
- Hide a bag with important belongings and documents somewhere safe and accessible in your home, or leave a bag with a trusted friend or family member. (Include items such as medications, contact lenses/glasses, emergency phone, or other items that you can't easily replace or find at the store).
- Find important documents and leave them with a trusted friend or family member. (Example: birth certificate(s), social security card(s), bank statements/account #s, financial records, past tax returns, ID cards, list of phone numbers in case you can't access your phone). If you leave important documents with a trusted friend/family, keep copies of these documents for yourself in a safe place where they are accessible to you.

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Navigating Abuse

(SAFETY PLANNING CONTINUED)

- Hide an extra set of house and car keys so you can leave quickly.
- Tell a trusted friend or family member and plan a safe place to go. If in an emergency or staying with family or friends is not an option, call 24/7 crisis hotline or Helpline 211.
- Tell a trustworthy neighbor, friend, co-worker or family member you are leaving and direct them to call or text 911 if there is an emergency or problem.
- Devise at least two code words with your children: one that means to hide or go to a neighbor's house, one to call police/911.
- Devise code words with neighbors, friends, family, or co-worker so you can text them for help.
- If possible, pack any documentation of physical violence: photos of damage, photos of bruises etc.
- Practice your safety plan when the other person is not home.

STAYING SAFE AT HOME / AFTER LEAVING

Even after the other person has left the home, you may still feel unsafe in your home.

- Change locks on all the doors. Most landlords will do this with documentation of domestic violence; ask an advocate to help intervene.
- Consider window and door alarms and/or security cameras.
- Familiarize yourself with every exit in the home so you can exit quickly in an emergency.
- Teach your children how to dial 911 and memorize your address.

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Navigating Abuse

(SAFETY PLANNING CONTINUED)

- Apply for a protection order; an advocate/shelter can help fill out paperwork and process this.
- Add variation into your schedule, driving routes, and places you socialize.
- Practice your safety plan with your children, family, and or roommates/ friends.
- Let trustworthy neighbors know the other person no longer lives there and they can dial 911 if they see them at or near your residence.
- If you have a custody agreement or protection order, talk with your children's school and/or caregiver about the orders. Consider providing copies of the protection order/custody agreement to children's school/daycare.

SAFETY WITH PROTECTION ORDER OR NO CONTACT ORDER

- Make sure to keep a copy of the Protection Order on your person at all times. It can be recommended to make additional copies to leave in your car, work place, daycare, in your purse or pocket, at school so you can obtain no matter where you are. If your abuser attempts to contact you, police will have to see your paper in order to make an arrest.
- Let neighbors, family, friends, co-workers know the order is in place. Show them a photo if necessary.
- Provide a photo to Human Resource(s) personnel or security or your landlord/property manager.
- If the offender attempts or continues to contact you, document it and report it to the police.

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Navigating Abuse

(SAFETY PLANNING CONTINUED)

- If the offender shows up at your house, have a safe plan and place to hide until you can call police and they arrive.
- Stay in contact with friends and family frequently during this time. Check in on a regular basis.
- Keep your doors and windows locked at all times even when you are home. Create a routine to check locks when you leave and arrive back at home.

“

“When I got my protection order I wish someone had told me to keep the paper on my person at all times...not in my car or in my purse. If I saw my abuser, I needed to be able to show the paper to police on the spot in order for them to act or make an arrest.”

— ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Leaving an Abusive Relationship
<https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/domestic-violence/leaving-abusive-relationship>

References:

Adapted from River City Domestic Violence Shelter, Yankton, SD
www.yanktondomesticviolencecenter.com/

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Navigating Abuse

(SAFETY PLANNING CONTINUED)

TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN OR IS BEING ABUSED

Things you should consider while speaking to a victim whether it is an adult or child:

- Show compassion.
- Believe them or let them know why you are concerned for their safety.
- Do not pass judgment.
- Offer to help them.
- Ask them what help or support they need.
- Report the abuse when necessary, especially if a child is involved.
- Educate yourself on how to properly handle a disclosure of abuse, especially if a child is involved.

Tips for talking to **SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS** is on [page 68](#)

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Domestic Violence Conversation Guide
https://allstatefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/TAF-Conversation-Guide_Final-1.pdf
- Tips for Talking with Survivors of Sexual Assault
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/tips-talking-survivors-sexual-assault>
- Responding To Child Sexual Abuse
https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Responding_To-Child-Sexual-Abuse-028.aspx
- Handling Child Abuse Disclosures
<https://www.childhelp.org/what-is-child-abuse/handling-child-abuse-disclosures/>
- The Enough Abuse Campaign - <https://enoughabuse.org/>
- The Mama Bear Effect - <https://themamabeareffect.org/>

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Parent/Guardian Resource Hub

The following is for informational purposes only and **should NOT** replace professional help. Seek legal advice. South Dakota laws contain specific definitions and/or conditions to meet a statutory crime.

If you or a child *are in danger*, Call 9-1-1 Immediately.

For further help, reach out to the child's primary care doctor and/or therapist, call the South Dakota Helpline by dialing 211 or call/text the Childhelp National Abuse Hotline **800-422-4453** <https://childhelphotline.org/>.

Physical and sexual abuse against a child is a crime in South Dakota. There are many statutes that cover the various types of abuse that can happen to children and, depending on the crime, the term “minor” or “child” may be defined by differing ages. Some of these statutes are found here:

- Sexual Assault <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-22-1> and <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-22-1.2>
- Child Pornography <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-24A>
- Human Trafficking <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-49>
- Stalking <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-19A>
- Kidnapping <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/22-19>
- Child Abuse or Neglect <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/26-10> and <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/26-8A-2>
- Domestic Violence (covers parent/child relationship) <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/25-10>

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Parent/Guardian Resource Hub

IDENTIFY, RESPOND, AND NAVIGATE CHILD ABUSE

According to the CDC, “child abuse and neglect are serious public health problems and considered adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)” that have great potential to negatively impact long-term health and well being and even futuristic opportunities in some cases.

This includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a caregiver, parent/guardian, or any person in a custodial role such as teacher, coach, religious leader, daycare provider that results in harm, the potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>
<https://acestoohigh.com/>
- South Dakota Sex Offender Registry – <https://sor.sd.gov/>
This link contains convicted, registered sex offenders living in South Dakota.

References:

Adapted from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>

“

“The information provided here would have changed the outcome of my child's case. As the mom of the victim, I didn't know how vital DNA collection is after a sexual assault. I didn't know how vital disclosures are—make sure you tell law enforcement exactly what the child says, using their exact language/verbiage. Take time to know the facts, grooming signs, and warning signs of child sexual abuse. It could change the outcome of justice for your child. Or prevent it from happening all together. If you think something is “off”, trust your gut feeling.” — ANONYMOUS SURVIVOR



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TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE & MALTREATMENT

- **Physical Abuse** is the intentional use of physical force that can result in physical injury. Examples include hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other shows of force against a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** involves pressuring or forcing a child to engage in sexual acts. It includes behaviors such as fondling, penetration, and exposing a child to other sexual activities. This includes both *touching* and *non-touching behaviors* such as online exposure.
- **Emotional Abuse** refers to behaviors that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being. Examples include name-calling, shaming, rejecting, withholding love, and threatening.
- **Neglect** is the intentional failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. These needs include housing, food, clothing, education, access to medical care, and responding appropriately to emotional needs.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE FACTS

- Only 24% of child sexual assault perpetrators go to prison
- Every 9 minutes Child Protective Services substantiates or finds evidence of child sexual abuse
- 93% of PERPETRATORS ARE KNOWN TO THE VICTIM
- Perpetrators / abusers can be adults or another child.

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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

IDENTIFY CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Warning signs of abuse are not always obvious. Pay attention to physical, verbal, and behavioral cues the child gives you such as these:

- **Physical** – Blood on undergarments or bedding, swollen genitals or genital area.
- **Behavioral** – The child may withdraw from others, may become overly sexual especially age inappropriate, bed wetting, nightmares, sleep disturbances, retro-active behaviors like thumb sucking, excessive bathing or showering.
- **Verbal** – Suddenly less talkative, may talk about inappropriate sexual topics or phrases, may become very quiet.

RESPOND TO CHILD ABUSE

How to RESPOND if a child tells you (discloses) they are being or have been abused:

- **Listen and Talk to the Child** – A child will most often disclose abuse in an indirect way so it is important to pay attention. If a child does disclose abuse, **talk to the child**, but first make sure they are in a safe and comfortable place to talk to you and that the abuser does not have access to them. Speak directly to the child, be supportive and do not judge them. Be sure to reassure the child that you believe them and that you will find someone to help them. It's important that you **do not ask leading questions** which can be perceived to give the child ideas that may not have happened. An example of a leading question you want to avoid would be, "Did this happen at



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school?” Instead, say to the child, **“Tell me about that.”**, **“Tell me what happened.”**. When a child tells you, **do not record audio/video and do not suggest words.**

- **Report It** – ALL child abuse must be reported right away. Please note that trained professionals are required to report once they have been informed about the abuse. The content “Listen and Talk to the Child”, on the previous page, provides information to help make sure the disclosure is properly handled.

You can report the abuse to:

- Law Enforcement (Local Police and/or Sheriff).
Share exact language used by the child.
 - Child Protective Services (CPS)
 - Contact the child's primary care doctor, counselor or therapist
 - Contact your local State's Attorney office
- **Possible Criminal Investigative And Legal Action** – Once you have reported child abuse, the child may have to undergo a forensic interview. This is a structured conversation is used to gather information in a legally defensible and developmentally appropriate manner about what event(s) the child may have experienced. A forensic interview is a key component of child protective and criminal investigations and is conducted at a children's advocacy center (CAC). In South Dakota, a CAC can be found here <https://cac-sd.org/find-a-center>.
 - In some cases in South Dakota, state law allows a child under the age of 16 to provide (court) testimony via closed circuit television. [SDCL 26-8A-30](#). Additional protections for children under the age of 16 allow for provisions that could support a child in court

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proceedings. <https://sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/26-8A-31.1>.

For more information, please check out these resources:

- Get the Facts about child sexual abuse, parents guide, and so much more at <https://enoughabuse.org/get-the-facts/>
- Call or text the Childhelp National Abuse Hotline at **800-422-4453** <https://www.childhelpline.org/>
- South Dakota Child Protection Services (CPS) **1-877-244-0864** <https://dss.sd.gov/childprotection/protective.aspx>

PREVENT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- **Enough Abuse** – provides a thorough guide for parents/guardians to understand and prevent abuse. <https://enoughabuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Print-082223-NationalStraightTalk-Final-Updated.pdf>.
- **Boundaries To Help Keep Children Safe** – Talking to children truthfully, teaching body autonomy, and building trust is a great step in preventing abuse. The Mama Bear Effect offers body safety education for parents by parents, helping protective adults **Rock the Talk**® with children and others to create environments where child safety is prioritized. Free downloadable posters and coloring pages are also available. www.TheMamaBearEffect.org

If you've been sexually assaulted it is recommended to get a medical exam **within 72 hours** for the best results to collect evidence. Tips to help preserve evidence AFTER a sexual assault include: **DO NOT** wash your hands, **DO NOT** brush your teeth, **DO NOT** take a shower, **DO NOT** change your clothes.



Parent/Guardian Resource Hub

(CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

- **Understand Grooming and Warning Signs** – With 93% of perpetrators known to the victims, trust is often already or easily established as well as access to the victim. Grooming can take on many roles, however, it often begins with **knowing and having access to the victim and building trust with the victim. Perpetrators or abusers are very charming, kind, and helpful**, which is generally what we look for and hope for in our friendships and family relationships. Abusers will often isolate victims by fear or psychological tactics and convince them to **keep secrets**, by which the abuser may create fear with threats of harming the victim or their loved ones so the victim does not tell anyone.

Find detailed GROOMING information here:

- Grooming: Know the Warning Signs
<https://www.rainn.org/news/grooming-know-warning-signs>
- Warning Signs for Young Children
<https://www.rainn.org/articles/warning-signs-young-children>
- **Consent Begins At A Very Young Age!** – Consent is giving permission for our self or body and starts in our early years. We can introduce the concept of consent by allowing our children to decide what is comfortable for them such as which pair of shoes or which outfit they feel most comfortable wearing. According to Safe Secure Kids, “Consent means giving someone a choice about touch or actions and respecting their answer. With children, we often use the language “asking for permission.” At this age, we want to lay the foundation for setting boundaries, making decisions about their bodies, asking for permission, and responding appropriately when someone says no to them.” Additional information here <https://www.healthline.com/health/parenting/consent-at-every-age>
- **Safe Touch** – Teach children about safe body touch so they can set boundaries and limits on when and how their bodies are touched and by whom. It is important to avoid good touch/bad touch language.

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(CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CONTINUED)

- **Open Communication** – Keep communication open so your child will come to you with an issue or concern. Remember, a child could disclose abuse in an indirect way so pay attention and ask non-leading questions. See [“Listen and Talk to the Child” on page 96](#). Children’s Home Society of SD has created the “What If... Card Game” as a teaching tool to help children respond to real life situations and is available for purchase here: <https://chssd.org/prevention/what-if-cards>
- **Model Healthy Relationships** – As parent or guardian, you are a role model and best teacher of healthy relationships, healthy conflict, and healthy communication.
- **Healthy Youth and Teen Relationships** – Teach your youth the 10 signs of a healthy vs unhealthy relationship. Visit joinonelove.org for more info on relationships for ages 11 years and up, plus friendship focused tools for ages eight and up.

References:

Children and Teens: Statistics | RAINN - <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/children-and-teens>

Warning Signs for Young Children - <https://www.rainn.org/articles/warning-signs-young-children>

Responding to Child Sexual Abuse - https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Responding_To-Child-Sexual-Abuse-028.aspx

Handling Child Abuse Disclosures

<https://www.childhelp.org/what-is-child-abuse/handling-child-abuse-disclosures/>

Forensic Interviewing - www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/forensicinterviewing.pdf



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NEXT STEPS: HOW TO NAVIGATE THE AFTERMATH OF CHILD ABUSE

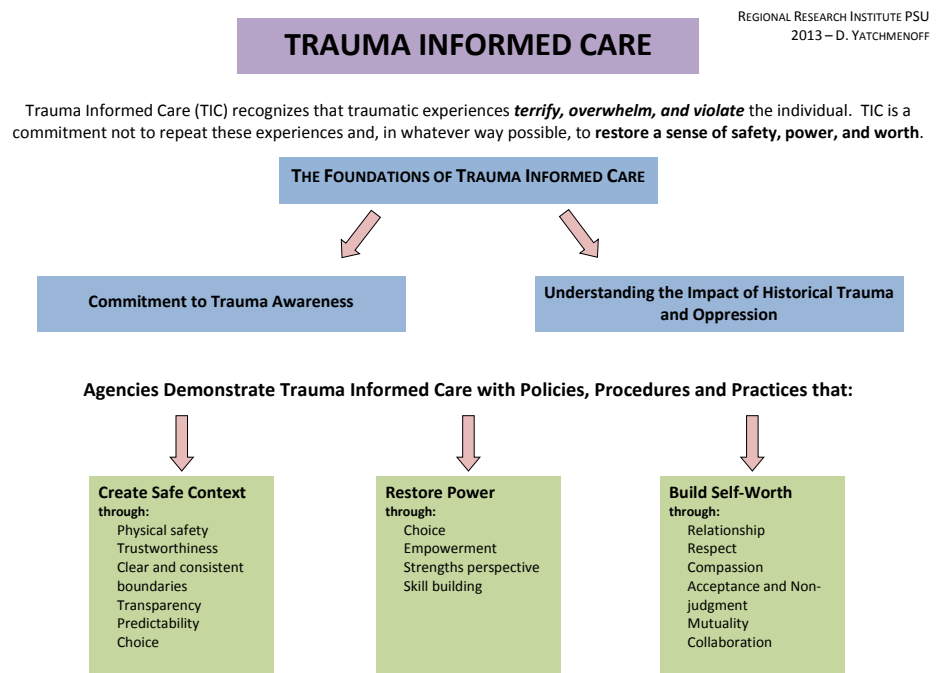
Once abuse has been identified and reported, you can take steps to navigate helping the child and family seek healing.

Seeking a Trauma Informed and/or Play Therapist can be an *important* and *positive* direction to take.

TRAUMA INFORMED THERAPY

Interview your child's therapist to ensure they are trauma informed.

This infographic provides more details.



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PLAY THERAPY

When looking for a therapist for your child, consider play therapy.

GoodTherapy defines play therapy as: “Play therapy is a form of therapy primarily geared toward children. In this form of therapy, a therapist encourages a child to explore life events that may have an effect on current circumstances, in a manner and pace of the child’s choosing, primarily through play but also through language. Play therapy can help individuals communicate, explore repressed thoughts and emotions, address unresolved trauma, and experience personal growth and is widely viewed as an important, effective, and developmentally appropriate mental health treatment”.

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/play-therapy>

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

- **PTSD** – According to National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, “Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a disorder that develops in some people who have experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event.” <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>.
- **Trauma Trigger** – A trauma trigger can be a common occurrence and is often related to sensory such as sight, smell, or touch. It is important to seek to understand what your child might be going through if this happens. Please note that a child may have difficulty explaining or not understand themselves they are experiencing a trigger. Stay calm, take time to pay attention to the child’s actions and behaviors and show the child compassion and understanding and let them know you are here to help.



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According to GoodTherapy: “A trigger in psychology is a stimulus such as a smell, sound, or sight that triggers feelings of trauma. A trigger is a reminder of a past trauma. This reminder can cause a person to feel overwhelming sadness, anxiety, or panic. It may also cause someone to have flashbacks. A flashback is a vivid, often negative memory that may appear without warning. It can cause someone to lose track of their surroundings and ‘relive’ a traumatic event. Triggers can take many forms. They may be a physical location or the anniversary of the traumatic event. A person could also be triggered by internal processes such as stress”.

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/trigger>

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RESILIENT KIDS

The following is for informational purposes only and **should NOT** replace professional help such as counseling. If you or a child are in danger, call 911 immediately. For further help, reach out to the child's primary care doctor and/or therapist. You can also call the South Dakota Helpline by dialing 211 or call or text the Childhelp National Abuse Hotline at **800-422-4453**.

HELPING KIDS OVERCOME ABUSE, DEVELOP SIMPLE HEALING TECHNIQUES AND DEVELOP RESILIENCE

By providing a safe and loving environment, the child's parents and family can boost the child's healing, mental wellbeing, and through it, the child's ability to face adversity through their lives.

IDENTIFY, RESPOND, AND NAVIGATE THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA AND TRIGGERS

- Children that have experienced trauma need to feel safe and loved.
- Don't take behaviors personally, be patient, and do your best to stay calm.
- Common responses to trauma are **FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE** or **FAWN**. Every person reacts or responds to trauma differently. Someone who has a flight response will flee or avoid the situation, while a fight response spurs an individual to stand their ground and fight back in some way. Generally, a freeze response is when the individual pauses to process or the body is not capable of moving away from the danger. Fawn response is not commonly known, but this describes when an individual will attempt to appease and please, thus minimizing or avoiding any further fighting or abuse. Learn how the child in your care reacts to situations, get curious,



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and help them work through what they are experiencing.

- A trigger is something that reminds you of a traumatic experience. This could be but not limited to an event, person, sound, place, smell, feeling, emotion, or taste. Source: Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/resources/parenting-child-who-has-experienced-trauma/>

CALMING AND REGULATION

Help kids with regulation by setting and sticking to a daily routine. You can also help them with regulation by playing games like “Red Light, Green Light” or “Freeze Tag”.

CONSENT

Consent is more than safe sex, rather the concept of consent is simply asking for or giving permission for our own body, what we are comfortable with, what we want, and setting those boundaries! Start talking to your kids about consent at an early age, in infancy if possible. Consent allows children to decide what is comfortable for them and puts them in control of their own body. Allow them to pick clothing or shoes that they feel comfortable in—by doing so you help them develop language and freedom to have control over their body. Ask. Listen. Respect.

- **Talk To A Child About Consent:** Let a child decide if they want to give or receive a hug from a friend or family member. Allow them to say “yes or no” and then respect their answer. Never force a child to give someone a hug. Teach them that consent involves receiving permission from others too by making sure that they ask others first before hugging or touching. For example, “Nana, can I give you a hug?”

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BUILD CONFIDENCE AND SELF-WORTH

Start positive conversations. For example, at meal times each person should take turns and say something positive or what you like about another person or what makes them unique. This also promotes healthy communication skills.

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Boundaries, put simply, are getting clear about what is **OK** and what is **NOT OK**. Help them understand and develop and communicate healthy boundaries as well as respect others' boundaries. Keep in mind that boundaries can be physical, mental, or emotional. Talk with children/youth about what to do if they feel uncomfortable or if a boundary is crossed. Ensure they can talk to a few trusted adults to tell/report.

MINDFULNESS

According to Merriam Dictionary, mindfulness is, "the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis."

Here are several activities that can help a child to cultivate mindfulness:

- Teaching a child to listen to their body and identify where they feel emotions, how emotions affect their thinking and actions or behaviors can bring mindfulness to help them choose a response rather than an uncontrolled reaction or outburst
- Walk outside
- Listen to relaxing music or child's favorite music
- Create art

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- Kids Yoga
- Breathing Techniques. 4-Count Breathing and other ideas: Have the child breathe in for 4, hold for 4, breathe out for 4 counts, pause for 4, then start again
- Play with bubbles or blow bubbles

SHAME – UNDERSTAND & OVERCOME

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, shame is “a painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety.” Someone who experiences shame can live in a constant fear of rejection and/or create strategies to help them avoid feeling the pain of their experiences. It is important to talk to your child and reassure them that the abuse they experienced or witnessed is not their fault. Help them feel loved and valued.

We can begin to shine a light on shame

- Have difficult conversations and strive for open communication with the child. According to the research of Brene Brown, “Shame needs three things to grow exponentially: secrecy, silence, and judgment.”
- Talk to children, believe them, validate their feelings, release judgment, let them know it’s not their fault, and offer to get help.

POSITIVE SELF TALK

Affirmations are intentional thoughts that you create to help calm, encourage, or support your brain and body and influence your thinking, health, and attitude.

Examples: I am safe; I like myself; I believe in my abilities.

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RESILIENT FAMILIES

THERE IS HOPE AFTER ABUSE

Whether a child or youth has experienced abuse or witnessed abuse in their home, there is HOPE for healing. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, resilience means “ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.” The good news is that resilience can be learned!

An abused child or youth needs the presence of a stable and *supportive adult* AND a safe, stable and *nurturing environment* to have a positive future.

It is common to feel overwhelmed, shocked, or numb when your child or a child in your care has been abused or exposed to violence in their home. It is important to remain supportive of the child and provide reassurance so the child can grow in a positive, emotionally healthy direction.

There are numerous ways you can help your family develop skills to increase resilience. A few tips to encourage you as you parent a child that has been abused: practice gratitude, avoid personalizing the issue, lean into faith and/or spirituality, ask for help and/or lean on or develop your support system.



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For more information, please check out these resources:

- Building Resilience After Abuse
<https://www.whiteswanfoundation.org/life-stages/childhood/after-abuse-building-resilience-for-better-emotional-health>
- Caring For Children Who Have Been Abused
<https://www.whiteswanfoundation.org/life-stages/childhood/taking-care-of-children-who-have-been-abused>
- Parenting Abused Child Or Youth
https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/parenting_CAN.pdf
- Support Children Exposed To Violence At Home
<https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2019/10/how-to-support-children-exposed-to-violence-at-home>

References:

Parenting a Child Who has Experienced Trauma

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/child-trauma.pdf>

How to Help Kids with Self-Regulation: 30 Games and Activities - The Inspired Treehouse

<https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/self-regulation/>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/parenting/consent-at-every-age>

<https://themamabeareffect.org>

<https://www.choosingtherapy.com/talk-to-kids-about-consent/>

10 Activities for Kids to Help Build Confidence - Nature's Path

<https://naturespath.com/blogs/posts/10-activities-kids-help-build-confidence>

Yoga for Children - Action for Healthy Kids

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/yoga-and-mindfulness>

10 Calming Breathing Techniques for Kids - The Inspired Treehouse

<https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/calming-breathing-techniques-kids>

The Neuroscience of How Affirmations Help Your Mental Health - The Best Brain Possible

<https://thebestbrainpossible.com/affirmations-brain-depression-anxiety/>

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EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

GET INVOLVED. LEARN MORE.
FIND A COMMUNITY TRAINING IN YOUR AREA.

Each of us has an opportunity to create change in our families, our communities, and future generations. Take this opportunity to do exactly that. There is HOPE.

It only takes one brave voice to create a ripple effect of change!

- **Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) –**
In this training you will learn about what you can do to help stop the cycle of abuse and create a healthier society for generations to come. ACEs is an evidence based study that revealed the direct correlations between childhood traumas + the effect it has on human development and long term health.
- **Enough Abuse –** Community training designed to help identify, respond, and prevent childhood sexual abuse.

Attend or organize a **community training**, inform your child's day care or educators of these and more training **opportunities**.

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

- Contact Children's Home Society of South Dakota for these and more Community Education opportunities. <https://chssd.org/>
- Schedule or attend these and more Community Education Opportunities. <https://chssd.org/prevention/training-events/kks-training-menu>



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