

Living Well

TOTAL WELLNESS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Eliminate Abuse

You will learn:

- How abuse thrives and fear and silence
- Steps you can take
- Where to get help

Cindy was halfway through a bowl of ice cream when her daughter burst through the back door.

Earlier that evening, Susan has spent a lot of time getting ready for a date with a new guy.

But in the glare of the kitchen light, her eyes brimmed with tears and mascara ran down her cheek. Her blouse stretched awkwardly from a button fastened to the wrong hole.

Startled at seeing her mother, she turned away and got a drink from the sink.

"What are you doing up so late?" Susan asked, staring out the darkened window.

"I was hungry," Cindy replied. "What's wrong, honey?"

"Nothing I can't handle," she said. "Goodnight, Mom," her voice faltering as she rushed up to her room.

Cindy climbed the stairs through waves of fear and anger. What could she do without making a bad situation worse?

From: "I Don't Want to Talk About It!" - a *Being Your Best* story

ABUSE THRIVES ON FEAR AND SILENCE

Abuse has many forms. Maybe it's a date rape, like in this story. Perhaps it's violence or neglect. Or it might be a senior who's being cheated financially, or a child who is suffering.

Anyone can be affected but women, children and the elderly are especially vulnerable.

Abuse thrives when someone is silent - or is too afraid to seek help.

YOU CAN HELP

Although every incident is different, the following steps can help you to address - or eliminate— any kind of abuse.

- **Support victims, and don't blame them**
 - Express your concern and listen.
- **Speak up**
 - The silence of victims, neighbors and/or loved ones permits abuse to continue.
 - Victims have a right to justice, and a fear-free life.
- **Get help**
 - Use the resources on the following page as a starting point to help yourself, or those you care about.



USE THE SATISFACTION SKILLS TO HASTEN THE HEALING PROCESS

- Be *aware* of the warning signs of abuse, as described in the links below
- *Affirm* the strengths of the victim. Remember, abuse is never the victims' fault, so don't blame.
- *Assert* your feelings (e.g., fear, concern). Also, be assertive about the right of the victim for justice and a fear-free life.
- Healing usually requires *acceptance* or forgiveness. But, forgiving a past abuse does not mean that justice is ignored, or that abuse is ever acceptable again.

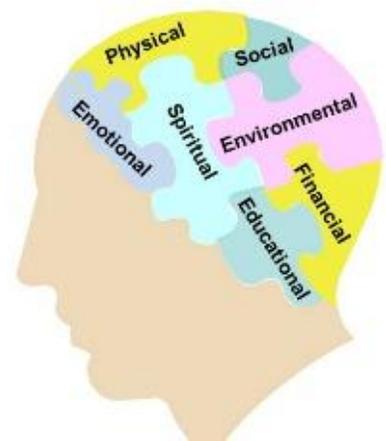


HELP ABUSE VICTIMS WITH ALL THEIR NEEDS

Abuse doesn't harm just one dimension of your well being. Any piece of the Wellness Puzzle might help or hurt the healing process. So you may need a separate plan for each of your needs.

HELP IS AVAILABLE!

These organizations can help you get started. **If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call 911, or the local police.**



Child Abuse

- Learn about prevention, identification and state-specific resources at www.ChildWelfare.gov
- National Child Abuse Hotline 1 800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

Domestic Abuse:

- Call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Visit "Violence Against Women" at www.womenshealth.gov/violence

Elder Abuse:

- Visit the National Center on Elder Abuse at www.ncea.aoa.gov
- Call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116

Sexual Abuse and Rape

- Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673)
- Visit the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network at www.RAINN.org



Call the United Way's local 211 phone number to connect with local agencies that can help

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