



# APOC Newsletter

Abused Persons Outreach Center, Inc.  
www.apocnd.org

160 2<sup>nd</sup> St NW, Valley City ND 58072  
24-Hour Crisis Line: 701-845-0072

August 2022



## APOC Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser

Monday – August 15<sup>th</sup> 5:00-7:00pm  
Eagles Valley City - Free Will Offering



### **Empowering Survivors**

*DomesticShelters.org*

Why domestic violence advocates say the best way to help survivors is to give them back control

Abusers control. That's their number one tactic to keep domestic abuse survivors simultaneously afraid of them and yet reluctant to leave them. Be it controlling a survivor's ability to go places, hold a job, access money, see friends or family, keep their children, what sexual decisions to make, or by using some other form of mental control to make the survivor feel dependent on their abuser, they are all tricks of the abuser's trade.

That's why, when a survivor decides it's time to speak out about his or her situation and get help, the last thing they need is someone else telling them what to do.

As a result, domestic violence advocates say that using an empowerment model, or empowerment philosophy, is more successful in helping survivors escape abuse than by simply telling them to get out.

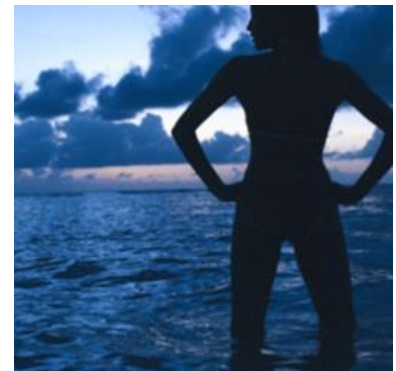
Empowerment centers on the belief that women and children can break the cycle of domestic violence through supportive intervention because they possess the ability to make decisions that foster healthy, violence-free relationships.

According to the Best Practices Manual of the Arizona Coalition of Domestic Violence, "Historically, domestic violence service providers and the community have responded to domestic violence by coaching victims on how to leave and how they should respond to the abusive relationship. Over time we have learned from survivors that what they need most is support, encouragement and the resources to achieve their goals."

Tami Sullivan, Director of Family Violence Research and Programs, Yale University, agrees. "This is why domestic violence service providers are so critical. They know about options for victims—sometimes it's shelter and sometimes it's developing a safety plan. But it's all about empowering the victim."

Survivors often are told things by their abusers like they're useless, worthless or a horrible parent. "They come to think it's true," says Sullivan. That's why empowering a survivor is so healing. "The empowerment model provides an environment in which each individual is responsible for his or her actions by supporting his or her right to make choices about themselves and how she or he lives their life," reads the Coalition's manual.

If you're with an abusive partner, start your journey of empowerment today by learning about escaping violence and/or contacting APOC or any domestic violence crisis center.



## 10 Ways to Validate a Survivor DomesticShelters.org

These phrases can reassure survivors that you believe them and support them

When someone comes forward with a confession of abuse, or even lightly dances around the topic, it's vital to listen. You could be that person's only trusted lifeline.

Below, 10 responses you can give that show you believe and support them. Sometimes, it's important to say them all:

- "This is not your fault."
- "You're not alone. I'm here for you. Thank you for telling me."
- "I'm so sorry he or she did this to you."
- "I believe you."
- "Nothing you did contributed to this. Abuse is a choice your partner made."
- "No one has the right to hurt you, no matter how angry they are."
- "You aren't being dramatic. You have every right to feel what you feel."
- "Your emotions are valid."
- "There's a way out of this. I can help you find resources."
- "You are worthy and deserving of a safe and healthy life."

After validating someone's experience, you can refer them to resources to help them better understand the cycle of abuse and to show them there's a safe way out. Start by encouraging them to reach out and talk to an advocate at APOC or another crisis center.

**988 (replacing 211) responds 24/7 to calls, chats or texts from anyone who needs support for suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, and connects those in need with trained crisis counselors.**

[www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov](http://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov)



# Why We need to Let Boys Cry DomesticShelters.org

## Teaching young men not to show emotion can lead to violence

*Don't cry. Walk it off. Man up.* These common phrases can be heard at the playground, on the football field and in our backyards, and they're usually directed at boys. But it's not just men hurling them. In a survey by [SheKnows](#), 76% of men and 84% of women admitted to using such phrases as "man up" and "you throw like a girl."

Society is constantly telling boys and young men not to express their emotions in order to preserve a view of what it is to be masculine—strong, tough and stoic. The problem is, of course, that boys have the same emotions girls do, so telling them not to express them is not only unfair but futile.

In order to keep from looking weak, boys and men can keep their feelings bottled up, and when they do come out, they're sometimes expressed in negative ways.

"Young ladies are trained to be more empathetic and in tune with their feelings, and they tend to express them in healthier ways," says Joshua Bailey, program manager of youth development at Men Can Stop Rape, a nonprofit organization dedicated to redefining masculinity in an effort to prevent men's violence against women. But as Bailey points out, many times, boys learn to show emotion through anger, aggression and violence. The key to preventing violence against women, he says, is teaching boys about empathy.

"We believe when young men are more in tune with who they are and able to express empathy and love toward not only women but also their male counterparts, they're less likely to commit acts of violence," he says. "Once you understand empathy, you can understand the harmfulness of violence."

### 5 Things You Can Do as a Parent

Widespread change will take a societal shift in how we view masculinity and how it's portrayed in the media, but parents, teachers, coaches, youth worship leaders and other authority figures can make a difference on an individual level. Here's how:

- **Ban "don't cry" from your vocabulary.** Instead, help boys find the words to describe what they're feeling, whether it be sadness, embarrassment, fear, jealousy, anger, etc., and help them work through it without dismissing the emotion.
- **Be a role model.** Teaching boys empathy isn't just about what you tell them. It's about what you show them. Tell your male friends how you feel, ask them how they're coping with X, Y or Z, and be understanding. Boys will learn from observing how you treat others.
- **Be available.** When a boy wants to talk about his feelings, stop and listen. He may not try again.
- **Try a feelings chart.** Young children are not equipped with the vocabulary to truly express all their emotions. A feelings chart, which allows them to point to a picture describing how they're feeling, can help them learn and help you understand what's going on inside.
- **Read together.** There are plenty of children's books on the market to help little ones learn about emotions, like *Glad Monster, Sad Monster*, which comes complete with expression masks to wear while you're reading, and *The Way I Feel*, which explores a broad range of emotions, including pride and thankful. When they get older, check out this list of "5 YA Novels About Dating Violence Teens and Parents Should Read."





### Trauma Nugget #1

Trauma is **ubiquitous**. In the general population, **67% of us have experienced at least one Adverse Childhood Experience**. In people of color, that is more likely to be 83%.

### Trauma Nugget #2

Trauma is **intergenerational unless resolved**. We transmit trauma at an epigenetic (cellular) level.



### Trauma Nugget #3

People who have experienced trauma as a child are **statistically more likely** to experience sexual assault in later life. (Loss of danger cues, inability to recognize 'unsafe' relationships).

### Trauma Nugget #4

Once we've experienced trauma, our nervous system gets easily '**stuck on high**' (hypervigilant, panicky, manic, angry, nerdy) or '**stuck on low**' (depressed, numb, lethargic) or oscillates between the two.

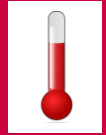


### Trauma Nugget #5

Our bodies react to longterm stress hormones by knocking out some of our stress hormone receptors – **people feel 'blah'**. They often create drama or engage in **risky behaviors** just to feel something.

### Trauma Nugget #6

Because we have fewer receptors, we go from **0-60 really quickly** and it takes longer to calm down.



### Trauma Nugget #7

We respond to threat with stress hormone-driven survival responses (**fight, flight, or freeze**) or for women the oxytocin-driven '**appease**' survival response.

### Trauma Nugget #8

Many parts of the brain are affected by longterm trauma – the **hippocampus** (memory) shrinks; the **amygdala** (survival response) enlarges; the **temporal lobes** (impulse control) are not well developed; and the **prefrontal cortex** (executive functions) is impaired.



### Trauma Nugget #9

Trauma memory is stored in a different part of the brain (amygdala) to regular memory (neocortex). **Trauma memory is fragmented, nonlinear and very vivid**. It is not until we can create a '**coherent narrative**' that the memory can be transferred and stored in the neocortex.

### Trauma Nugget #10

**Our amygdalas communicate with each other** – we can benefit by tuning into the calm amygdalas of large mammals, which is why dogs and horses are used for trauma therapy. It is also why a group of traumatized people can implode!



## What is an engaged bystander?

“Engaged bystander”, “active bystander”, or “bystander intervention” are terms used to describe a situation where someone goes from simply being a “bystander” to being aware of what is happening around them and then taking action to distract or diffuse a potentially unsafe situation relating to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or child abuse.

- For example, an active bystander may:
- Notice a heated argument between two people
- Observe harassment or intimidating behavior
- Become aware of someone pushing drinks on another person who does not want them

Be present when a sexist or racist joke is being told

Actions that passively normalize and condone violence in a community lead to increased incidents of sexual violence and abuse. By becoming an active bystander, you will not only have a positive impact in someone’s life, but you will also help challenge the social norms around the tolerance of violence.



Ways you can show that violence is not tolerated in your community, and everyone is expected to do their part in making the community safer:



Posting comments or sharing content on social media that communicates intolerance of violence



Signage hanging in your home or work space that supports prevention



Including talking points about violence prevention if you are a community leader, business owner, or supervisor.



Adding a violence prevention message to your email signature or out of office message



Talking to friends, family, and coworkers about the issue



Telling a good bystander intervention story and having discussions about what others would have done

*Monetary Donations – Thank you!* Thank you to the donors who chose to remain anonymous

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APOC’s crisis line operates 24 hours, every day of the week & provides crisis intervention & advocacy services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault & stalking. **Crisis Line: 701-845-0072**

**EVERY1  
 KNOWS  
 SOME1**

**DONATION FORM**

Your donation will help us continue our work to end intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Your donation is tax deductible.  **I wish to remain anonymous**

**Donor Information:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please make checks payable to: APOC  
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Thank you for your support!