



JUNE 2008

Helping Organizations Retain Their Most Valuable Asset

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Summer Safety Tips

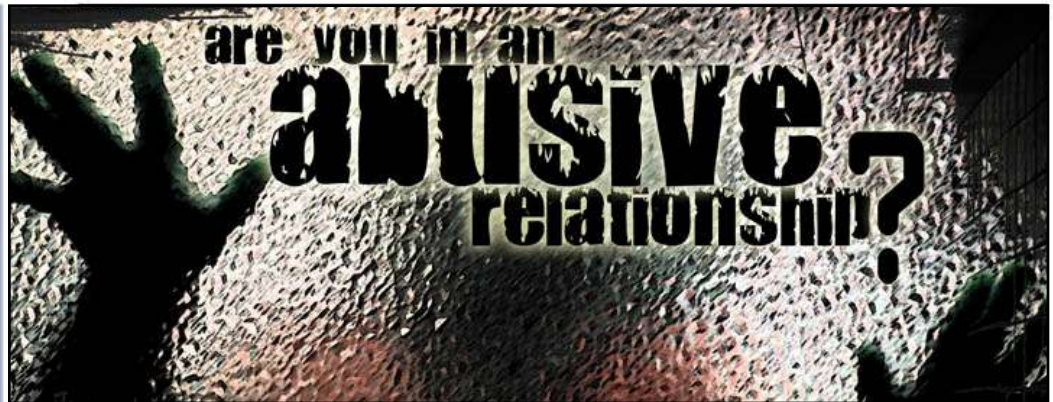
#### POOL SAFETY

- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Install a fence at least four-foot high around all four sides of the pool.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool.
- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.

#### BUG SAFETY

- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on your child.
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate, such as stagnant pools of water, uncovered foods and gardens where flowers are in bloom.
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card or your fingernail.
- Insect repellents containing DEET are the most effective.
- To protect your children from ticks have them wear a long-sleeved shirt, and tuck their pants into their socks. Also have them wear a hat to help keep ticks away from the scalp and wear enclosed shoes or boots. After your children come indoors, check for ticks.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



All relationships have their ups and downs, but there are certain types of behavior in any relationship that are unacceptable and abusive. If you think that your partner is abusive, or you suspect that someone you know is in an abusive relationship, review the information below. Recognizing the signs of an abusive relationship is the first step to breaking free.

#### What is relationship abuse?

Relationship abuse is a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors used to maintain power and control over a former or current intimate partner. An abusive relationship means more than being hit by the person who claims to love or care about you. Abuse can be emotional, psychological, financial, sexual or physical and can include threats, isolation and intimidation. Abuse tends to escalate over time. When someone uses abuse and/or violence against a partner, it is always part of a larger pattern to try to control him/her.

#### Self-test: Is your relationship abusive?

Do you wonder if your relationship may be abusive? Ask yourself the questions below. The more "yes" answers, the more likely it is that you're in an abusive relationship.

#### Does your partner:

- humiliate, insult, criticize, demean or yell at you?
- ignore or put down your thoughts, feelings or accomplishments?
- treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends and family to see?
- blame you for all the problems in your relationship,

- or for his/her own abusive behavior?
- see you as property or a sex object, rather than as a person?
- act excessively jealous and possessive?
- control where you go or what you do?
- keep you from seeing your friends or family?
- check up on you all of the time to see where you are, what you're doing and who you are with?
- accuse you without good reason of being unfaithful or flirting?
- limit your access to money, phone, or the car?
- have a bad and unpredictable temper?
- destroy your belongings or things you value?
- hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you?
- threaten to take your children away or harm them?
- threaten to commit suicide if you leave?
- force you to have sex?

#### Do you:

- feel afraid of your partner much of the time?
- avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner?
- feel that you can't do anything right for your partner?
- believe that you deserve to be hurt or mistreated?
- wonder if you're the one who is going crazy?
- feel increasingly trapped or powerless?
- feel emotionally numb or helpless?

#### What to do if you're being abused

If you are in an abusive relationship, you may feel confused, afraid, angry and/or trapped. What should you do? Taking the wrong step could escalate tensions or may destroy the relationship permanently.

24 Hours a day: 800-343-2186 [www.hmsincorp.com](http://www.hmsincorp.com)

The following information can help. Obviously, the level of your response will depend on the degree of seriousness with which the abuse is inflicting emotional or physical injury.

**1. Acknowledge the reality of abuse.**

The first step toward changing things is recognizing that your situation is abusive. Even if your partner says he/she cares about you and you care about your partner, it's not okay to be put down, pushed around, scared or intimidated into things that make you feel uncomfortable, unhappy or unsafe, just because you are in a relationship. And it is never okay for your partner to use physical violence. Once you acknowledge the reality of the abusive situation, then you can get the help you need.

**2. Meet with a professional therapist or counselor.**

For your health and safety, and the security of any children who may be involved, it is vitally important that you utilize the help of a professional therapist or counselor who can help you assess your situation and advise you with solid principles and practical information. You may need to go several times to address the variety of issues that may be involved in your relationship.

**3. Confide in a trusted friend or family member.**

Talk to someone who can be an objective listener to help you separate your emotions from reason in sorting through the issues involved in an abusive relationship. Share your concerns with a person who knows both of you, but who can maintain an impartial perspective. Sharing your feelings with a trusted friend or family member can also help you feel less isolated and relieve stress.

**4. Find out about local support programs.**

Ask your counselor, use the yellow pages, or research online to learn about local services that you may need if you break off your relationship with the abuser, including: shelters/safe homes, 24-hour emergency hotlines, support groups for victims of abuse, and advocacy programs offering help in obtaining medical care, legal protection, housing, furniture, clothing, training and educational services, employment, social services, and emergency transportation.



**TEEN ABUSE**  
of prescription drugs...

Prescription medication misuse by teens is a growing problem in the U.S. According to The Partnership for a Drug-Free America:

- 1 in 6 teens has abused a prescription pain medication*
- 1 in 10 report abusing prescription stimulants and tranquilizers*
- 1 in 11 has abused cough medication*

Many teens think taking prescription medications are safe because they have legitimate uses, but taking them without a prescription to get high or "self-medicate" can be as dangerous – and addictive – as using illicit drugs.

**What parents can do**

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America recommends the following for parents:

1. □ Educate yourself about the prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines □ that kids are abusing.
2. □ Communicate with your kids:
  - Discuss the subject with your teenagers. See what your kids know about □ peers using medications without a doctors' prescription.
  - Warn your teenagers that taking prescription medications without a doctors' □ supervision can be just as dangerous and as potentially lethal as taking illicit drugs.
  - ● Set clear expectations with your teenagers, letting them know that under no □ circumstances should they take any medications without your knowledge.
3. □ Safeguard medications at home and other places.
  - Take an inventory of prescription and over-the-counter medications in your home.
  - Pay attention to quantities.
  - Keep medications out of reach – and out of easily accessible places like the medicine □ cabinet.

(Source: Partnership for a Drug-Free America, www.drugfreeamerica.org)

**Contact HMS**

Human Management Services (HMS) is always available to help you or your immediate family members with most-any type of personal, family or work-related concern. We offer FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling, referrals and information. If you need help, why not call an HMS counselor today? We're here to help.

*HMS is here to help*

If you need help dealing with a stressful relationship, or breaking free of relationship abuse or violence, contact Human Management Services (HMS) for FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling, information and/or referrals. A professional HMS counselor can help you assess your situation and develop an appropriate plan of action. If domestic violence is involved, your HMS counselor can help you develop a personalized safety plan and refer you to people and resources that can empower you with support, advice and information to help you break the cycle of abuse. If you need help, why not contact a professional HMS counselor today?

**RESOURCES**

National Domestic Violence Hotline: If you are being abused, call this free hotline for assistance: 1-800-799-7233 / 1-800-SAFE

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474

**HUMAN  
MANAGEMENT  
SERVICES (HMS)**

**800-343-2186**

**www.hmsincorp.com**

