

CONTINUUM OF CHRISTIAN CARE FOR ADULT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV)

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC

This DV resource guide (front and back) is a screening and resource tool designed to help you, who may have very little training in domestic violence, help a victim decide who she needs to contact and what she needs to do for her safety. The colors below, formerly used by Homeland Security to communicate a terrorist alert, correspond to a similar risk the victim may be experiencing when being verbally or physically abused by her partner. **She has shown great courage in sharing her story with you. Listen and believe her.** Help her determine her level of danger on a scale of 1-10, (1-3 **guarded**; 4-6 **elevated**; and 7-10 **severe**) to select level of care (1-3 **minimum**; 4-6 **moderate**; 7-10 **maximum**) you recommend for her to access listed under the appropriate colored columns. If danger level seems to teeter between 3 and 4 and 6 and 7, use the higher level. The victim often minimizes the danger she's experiencing. When offering care, consider the **Do's and Don'ts on the back**, and always keep her safety in mind and encourage her to do the same.

LEVEL OF DANGER	GUARDED-GENERAL RISK			ELEVATED-SIGNIFICANT RISK			SEVERE RISK			
	Occasional incidents of belittling, name calling, truth twisting. She believes partner is caring but feels like she has to 'walk on eggshells.'			Frequent incidents involving yelling, screaming, hitting, stalking, making threats. She is isolated from friends and family. She is often afraid of her partner.			Repeated incidents of being beaten physically and verbally. Abuser has used a knife, gun, or other weapon, choked her, or destroyed property. She fears for her life.			
LEVEL OF CARE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GOAL OF CARE Safety Planning Always	Help victim become educated about DV and proactive about her safety . Offer any of these education and counseling resources.			Safety is priority. Also help victim become educated about DV. Offer any of these counseling resources, and help her develop a safety plan so that she feels empowered to get safe.			Safety is priority. Offer resources to help victim get to a safe place like a shelter. Recommend she seek help from police or safe friends if she decides to go and gather some of her belongings.			
RESOURCES FOR VICTIM TO ACCESS	<p>Mecklenburg County Community Support Services Women's Commission for Counseling, Support Group, Education & Safety Planning: 704-336-3210</p> <p>Download safety plan from this Christian website and give to victim: www.theraveproject.org, Resources, Would you like to...download a safety plan</p> <p>Offer these websites for the victim to receive <i>Christian education on DV</i>: www.theraveproject.org (Religious and Violence E-learning)</p> <p>www.faithtrustinstitute.org</p> <p>Refer victim to <i>professional Christian counselor</i> trained in DV:</p> <p>Catherine DeLoach Lewis MA, LPC, BCPCC 704-370-0334 www.christiantherapyservices.com</p> <p>www.theraveproject.org, Help Now, Religious Resources</p>			<p>Recommend the victim call Police, 911</p> <p>CMPD – Special Victims Division: 704-336-2811</p> <p>DV Shelter, Safe Alliance, Local 24-hour DV Crisis Hotline: 704-332-2513 Crisis counseling: 704-332-9034</p> <p>National DV Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)</p> <p>Download safety plan from this website and give to victim: www.theraveproject.org, Resources, Would you like to...download a safety plan</p> <p>Other websites for education and resources: www.nnedv.org (National) www.nccadv.org (North Carolina) www.councilforwomen.nc.gov</p> <p>DV professional Christian counselor resources: <i>Focus on the Family Counselors</i>: (Toll-free) 1-855-771-4357 www.theraveproject.org, Help Now, Religious Resources www.aacc.net, Find a Counselor www.caps.net, Online Directory</p> <p>Legal resource: www.womenslaw.org</p>			<p>Recommend the victim call Police, 911</p> <p>CMPD – Special Victims Division: 704-336-2811</p> <p>DV Shelter, Safe Alliance, Local 24-hour DV Crisis Hotline: 704-332-2513</p> <p>Criminal Magistrate's Office for Restraining Order: 704-686-0050</p> <p>Safe Alliance, Victim's Assistance w/Court: 704-336-4126; Safety Planning: 704-332-2513 Crisis counseling 704-332-9034</p> <p>Carolinas Medical Center DV Healthcare Project: Safety assessment &, planning, resource information, crisis counseling 704-446-3999</p> <p>Novant Health/Presbyterian Hospital Project Safe: Medical Care and Community Resources 704-614-7212</p> <p>Charlotte District Attorney's Office: 704-686-0700 (www.charmeckda.com)</p> <p>Lawyer's Referral Service: 704-375-0120</p> <p>Legal Services of Southern Piedmont & Legal Aid of NC 704-376-1600 ext. 207</p>			

DO'S AND DON'TS AND THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN HELPING ADULT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV)

Do's

1. Do remind her that **safety is God's priority for her** (Psalm 55). Please read entire chapter but here are some verses pertaining to God's care in the midst of abuse: "But I call to God, and the Lord saves me." (vs.16) "Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you...(vs. 22). Ps. 118:5-9, 13-14; A Prayer for Safety, Psalm 142. Please visit www.theraveproject.org for other Scripture references.
2. Do **ask what she needs from you** (i.e. Listen, believe, connect her to resources, provide appropriate Scripture for her, pray with her, develop a safety plan with her, or connect her to the resources on the other side to help her with her safety plan and, as you are able, provide continual support as she navigates through this chaos and danger. (Ez. 34:7-10)
3. Do **focus on her and her safety**. If she asks you if she should go back to her husband, continue to hold up her safety and assume that the abuse is probably worse than she is disclosing to you.
4. Do **share that God wants to deliver her** and He will judge violence. (2 Sam.22:49; Ps.10:17-18; Ps.11:5; Ps.18:48; Ez.45:9)
6. Do offer to **pray with her** and *for her* and keep her story **confidential** (**exception** is if there are **children or adolescents in danger**. Then you must report to Dept. of Social Services and let the victim know you are doing so.)
7. Do tell her that **she is never responsible for the abuser's behavior** and if she leaves she is not breaking the covenant of marriage – the abuser does when he abuses her.
8. Do **offer her hope** given to her through Jesus Christ.
9. Do help her connect to **practical help** in her community and church and give her a safety card or safety plan. (Prov.22:3, The Message)
10. Do **write down** some of these resources on a small piece of paper for her to keep hidden and **refer her** when her needs are beyond your training or abilities.

DON'TS

1. **Don't emphasize saving the relationship or marriage at all costs**. This teaching may kill her, literally. All too often the preservation of marriage has been held up as the highest good, even when human life is at stake. Many pastoral counselors point out that her leaving for her safety does not end the relationship, his abuse does.
2. **Don't call 911 for her and don't force her to act** on her own behalf if she is not ready. These are her choices to make, not yours to make for her.
3. **Don't say anything against the abuser**. She is probably conflicted about the relationship and believes she can change him by changing herself.
4. **Don't give her resources for the abuser**. If she gives this information to him, she could be placing herself in great danger.
5. **Don't give her biblical passages on marriage** and the roles of men and women or counsel her to stay in an unsafe, abusive relationship.
6. **Don't suggest that prayer is all she needs**. Prayer is helpful and necessary for her healing and growth but, prayer alone is not an effective boundary against domestic violence.
7. **Don't blame her for his abuse or ask her why she stays or what she did to provoke him**. Her danger level increases if she decides to leave, especially if she does not have a safety plan nor a support system. She often stays because she is terrified to leave and sometimes has no support system or resources.
8. **Don't be neutral about abuse**, because when you are, you side with the abuser. **Do not conduct couples or marriage counseling with them.** Couples and marriage counseling works on relationship issues. **Domestic violence is a criminal act, illegal and solely the responsibility of the abuser.** Violent behavior must be stopped over an extended period of time before couples or marriage counseling can be considered.
9. **Don't isolate from community resources available to you as you help the victim**. Your familiarity with community resources will provide her with the information she needs to act on her own behalf. Take advantage of the expertise of the physicians, counselors, shelter workers, and advocates, secular and Christian, who can help you help the victim to safety. Domestic violence is complicated and can be dangerous to those who become involved in helping the victim beyond their training or ability.
10. **Don't expect her to leave her abuser and if she does, don't make the mistake of believing the crisis is over**. Her crisis may escalate when she leaves him. She also may return to and leave him several times before she is strong enough to leave him permanently for her safety.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Men are also abused by their partners. Refer them to the Domestic Violence Helpline for Men and Women at **1-888-743-5754**.
2. Remind victim to use a computer the abuser cannot access, possibly a trusted friend's computer, one at the church or at the library, and keep all dv information in a safe place.
3. Visit websites and call these phone numbers shown on the other side and familiarize yourself with these resources before the crisis call comes from the victim.
4. Consider placing **safety cards in women's restrooms at your church**. Call Mike Sexton with Meck. County Comm. Support Services Women's Commission, at **704-432-1568**.
5. Resources for **children** are at Meck.Cnty.Comm.Supt.Srvs.Wom Commission, **704-336-3210** and for **adolescents**, **LoveisRespect Teen Abuse Hotline, 1-866-331-9474**.
6. When helping adult victims of domestic violence you are not legally required to report this abuse. In fact reporting without the victim's knowledge may place her in grave danger. She needs to decide when to call 911 and report being abused, especially, if possible, after she has developed a safety plan, established support and received legal counsel. **HOWEVER**, you are required to report abuse or suspected abuse of children or adolescents to the **Care Line, Department of Social Services, and 704-336-2273**.
7. When following up with the victim, ask her how you can contact her. When you call, ask if she is alone and safe to talk with you. Also, do not send information to her home.
8. Pastors, please preach sermons condemning abuse and celebrating violence-free relationships. Your sermon will impact at least half of your congregation, including those who never report the abuse. This website www.theraveproject.org has sermon ideas and Scripture references that condemn violence and promote peace and safety in all relationships. When women who are in unsafe relationships hear their pastor preach sermons condemning abuse, they will feel safer coming to you or someone in your church to ask for help. Also be sure to print in your church bulletin a domestic abuse resource number or website these women can contact.

This tool is compiled by Catherine DeLoach Lewis, MA, LPC, BCPCC, owner of Christian Therapy Services, 704-370-0334, www.christiantherapyservices.com. Donations are gratefully accepted to cover the cost of these DV tools. Please see website for current address, make check payable to Christian Therapy Services, memo line, DV Tool. A list of resources used to compile and update this tool is available.