



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

In these uncertain times and anxiety caused by COVID-19, Domestic Violence is on the rise. When domestic partners are confined to isolated homes with an abusive partner whose coercive and physically violent tendencies are enabled and further inflamed by economic stressors, the outcome can be devastating, especially when outside ties are limited or severed.

The Seattle Police Department alone states that DV response is up more than 20%. What can you do if you are a victim of Domestic Violence? What can you do if you feel someone you know might be abused and what are the signs to recognize? Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound has released these Safety Tips to better protect those victims and aid in removing a victim from an abusive situation.

Here are some tips to think about:

- First and foremost, whether you are the Victim or a Witness to Domestic Violence, if the assault is occurring in real time, **CALL THE POLICE** immediately
- If you are out in a public area, see an actual DV Assault taking place and you feel safe enough, do something radical, like shout **“STOP.... WE SEE YOU.... WE ARE CALLING THE POLICE”**
- If you only hear a heated argument from say your neighbor’s residence and are concerned for the individual’s immediate safety, you do have the right to contact the Police. Make sure you explain the circumstances and ask for a **“Welfare Check”**. If you feel at risk, ask the Police to remain anonymous

Other things to consider doing:

- Speak to the person you believe is at risk, in person, the next day.

1. Tell them what you heard and ask if they are OK
2. Be sure to approach in a safe environment **AWAY FROM** the suspected abuser
3. Never blame or say something like “what did you do to provoke the abuser”. Remember, assault/abuse is **NEVER OK!**
4. Tell them the abuse is not their fault and they deserve support
5. If the victim decides to press charges, your statement may provide the necessary corroboration for impending criminal charges

Even with a “Stay at Home” order in place, in our isolation we can remain vigilant, care for one another and help whenever we can. We are all hoping this Pandemic will end soon and we can all return to our normal way of life. In the meantime, Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound is doing our best to keep you as safe as possible. For more information, please go to www.crimestoppers.com