

How to Help and Be Helped: Recognizing Unhealthy Relationships and Finding Support

Abuse is a pattern of behaviors that one person uses to gain and maintain power and control over another person in a relationship.

Demographics

Domestic abuse happens to people regardless of their age, gender, income, level of education, country of origin, religion, culture or other aspect of their identity.

Domestic Abuse is Not Caused By...

Anger
management
issues

Substance
misuse

Stress

“Co-
dependency”

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Emotional/ Verbal/ Psychological Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Financial Abuse

Cultural/ Identity/ Spiritual Abuse

Technological/Digital Abuse

Common Perceptions of...

ABUSER

Monster Myth

Nice person

Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde

Charming/Charismatic

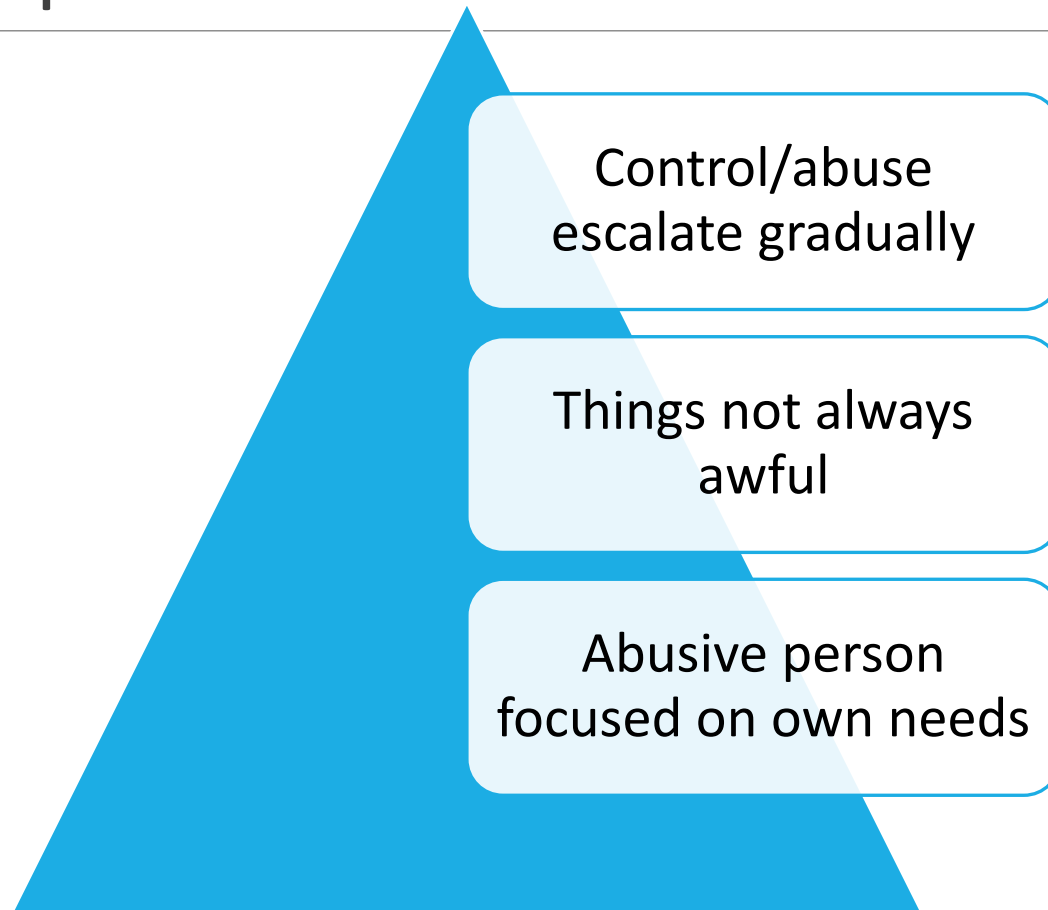
SURVIVOR

Keeps to themselves


May not feel like you know them as well

Blame: Must have provoked incident


Common Dynamics of an Abusive Relationship




#whyistayed


 **RedLoved** 🙄🙄🙄 @RedLoved3 · Jan 29
I didn't think I could survive alone [#WHYISTAYED](#)


 **Beverly Gooden** 🍷🍷🍷 @bevtgooden
I tried to leave the house once after an abusive episode, and he blocked me. He slept in front of the door that entire night. [#WhyIStayed](#)
11:47 AM · Sep 8, 2014


 **Annaleise Dearing** @Dearing007
I stayed because I was sure he would stop if he only understood how he was hurting me. [#WhyIStayed](#)
9:56 AM · Sep 9, 2014


 **Jennifer Gilmour** @JenLGilmour · Jan 8
Because it felt there was no way out.
[#WhyIStayed](#)

 **feral something or other** @brassiest · Sep 8, 2014
He made me feel absolutely worthless. I thought he was the best I'd ever get. I thought that if I tried harder, he'd change. [#WhyIStayed](#)
5 68 58

 **Jessica Merrell** @jmillermerrell
I was told marriage is forever. I didn't want to be a failure [#whyistayed](#)
7:07 AM · Sep 9, 2014

 **Ann Brown** @abannbrown · Jan 2
I thought I had no friends and nobody would help or support me if I left. [#WhyIStayed](#)

 **Doctor Oddfellow** @DoctorOddfellow
[#WhyIStayed](#) because I thought it was me letting her down
12:39 AM · Sep 9, 2014

 **Emma Jane Stanley** @EmmaJaneStanle2 · Jan 9
I thought they wouldn't believe me if I told anyone what really went on behind closed doors. (As it was, they all knew & were waiting for me to say something so they could help...)
[#WhyIStayed](#)

 **Charlotte Budd** @BuddCharlotte · Dec 22, 2020
I had no money a 3 month old baby and he controlled money I was scared my baby would go hungry [#whyistayed](#) [#domesticabuse](#) [#coercivecontrol](#)

Considering Whether to Leave or Stay

- Fear of retaliation
- Love /Concern
- Hard to let go of the idea of happy, intact family
- Being alone or alone with children
- Concern about never having another relationship
- Isolation
- Embarrassment/shame
- Not wanting to be disloyal to partner
- Financial/housing/credit issues
- Custody issues
- Family pressure to stay together/cultural norms and values
- Lack of support from family and friends
- Caregiving/disability issues
- Immigration issues
- Issues related to substance misuse

Things to Notice



Examples of Things You Might Hear

I wish things were different, but it's just not worth the argument.

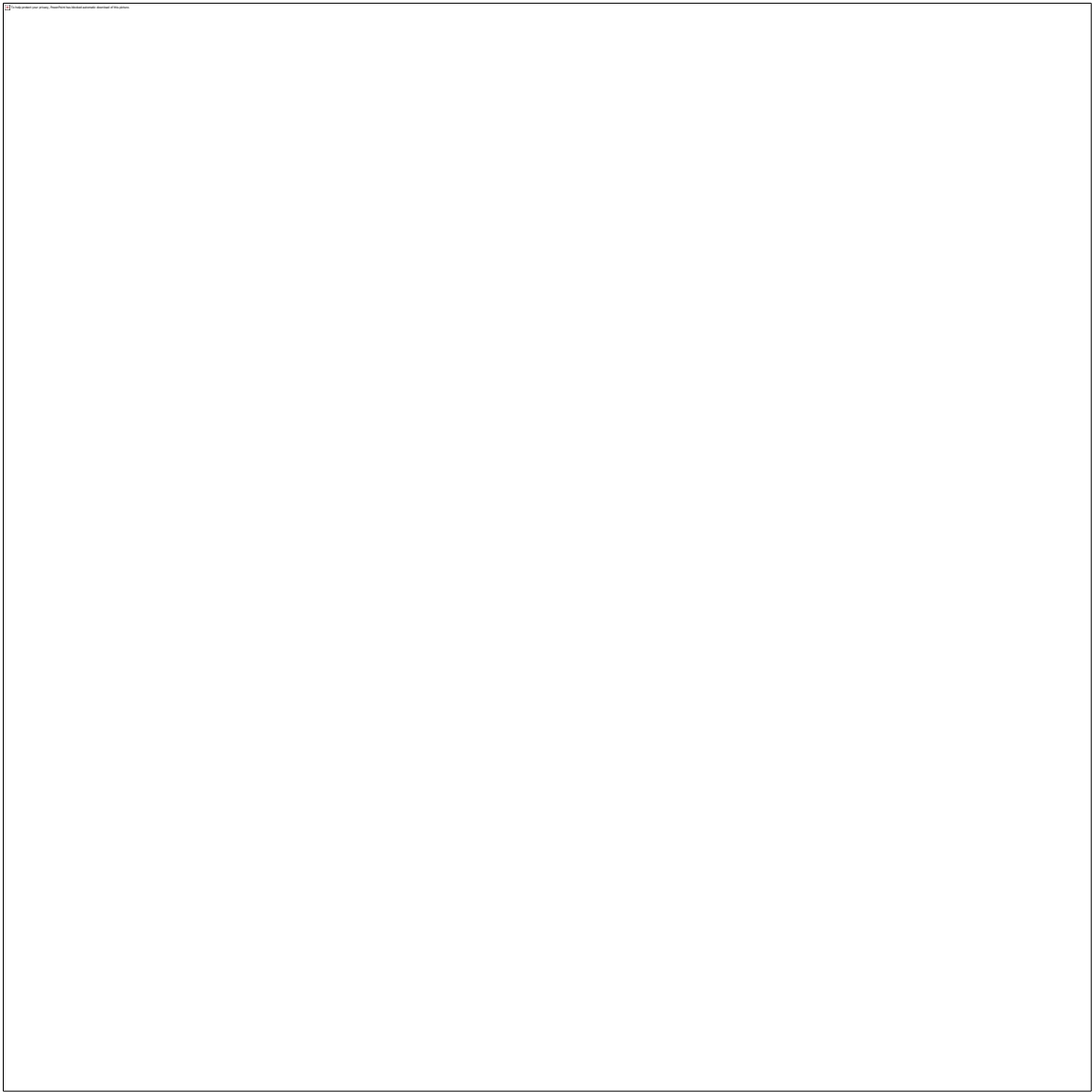
My partner says I'm an awful cook.

We used to see my family more often, but my partner really hates it when we spend time with them.

"My partner didn't mean to say/do that. It happened after a couple of drinks. No big deal."

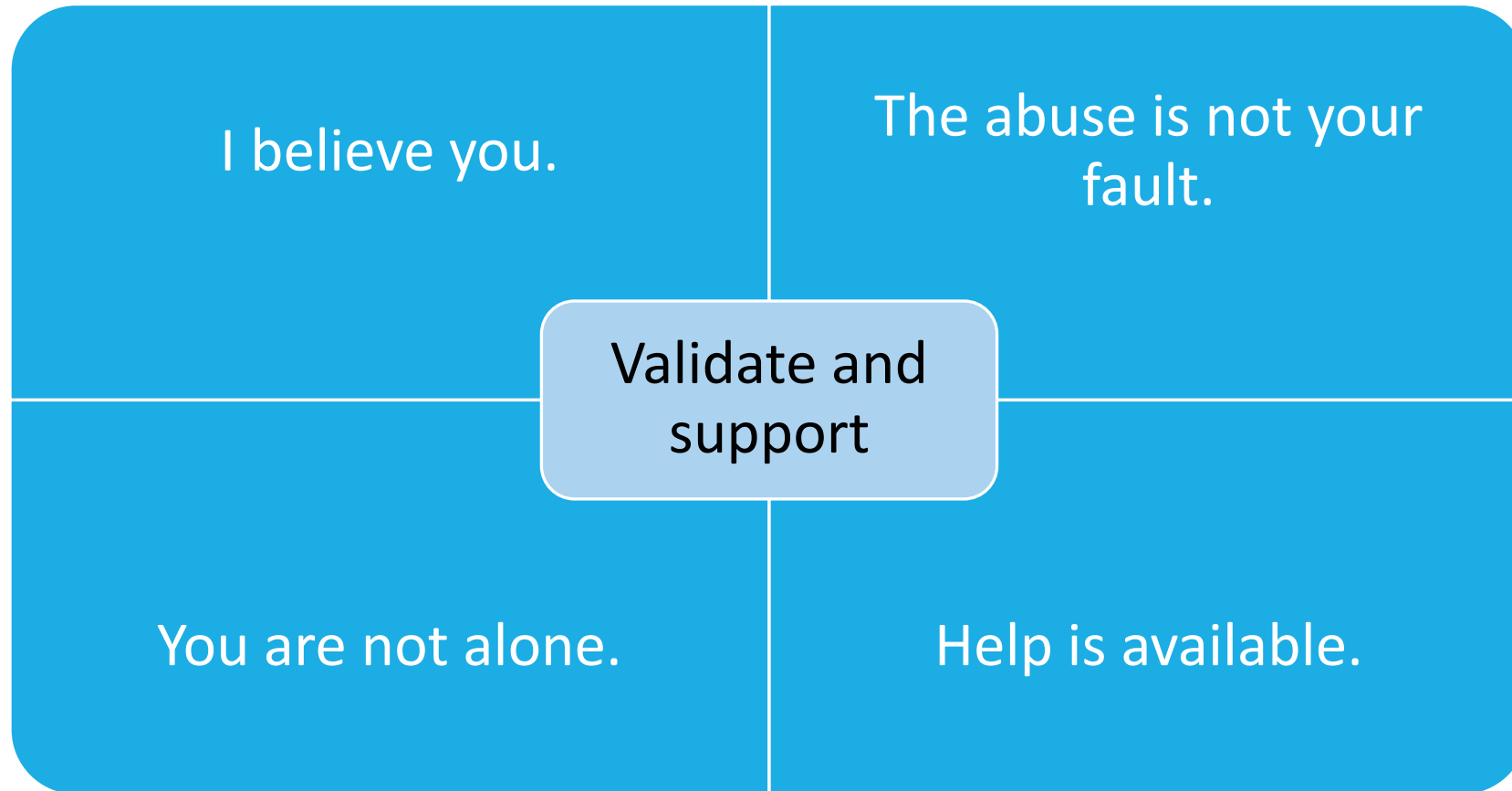
My partner will be the first to tell you that I'm terrible with money.

Supporting Survivors



TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE NOW, CALL REACH AT 1-800-899-4000 OR CHAT LIVE AT
WWW.REACHMA.ORG

Key Messages



Advice Vs. Options

Advice	Options
You need to break up with her.	How are you feeling about the relationship moving forward?
You're experiencing abuse. You should call REACH's hotline.	I'm concerned about what you're telling me. Have you thought about calling REACH to talk through your experience?
You should get a restraining order.	What do you think you would need to feel safe?

Express concern, not judgment.

WHAT TO DO, WHAT TO SAY?

TIPS ON REACHING OUT



Prepare



What are your first reactions?
Is there any immediate danger to you or to those involved?
If you want to talk to someone, do you have a safe place to do that?
What are the potential risks and benefits?

Action



Is what you are about to do helpful, supportive, understanding?
Could you do something that may build the relationship and open communication?
Are there other supportive people you can contact?

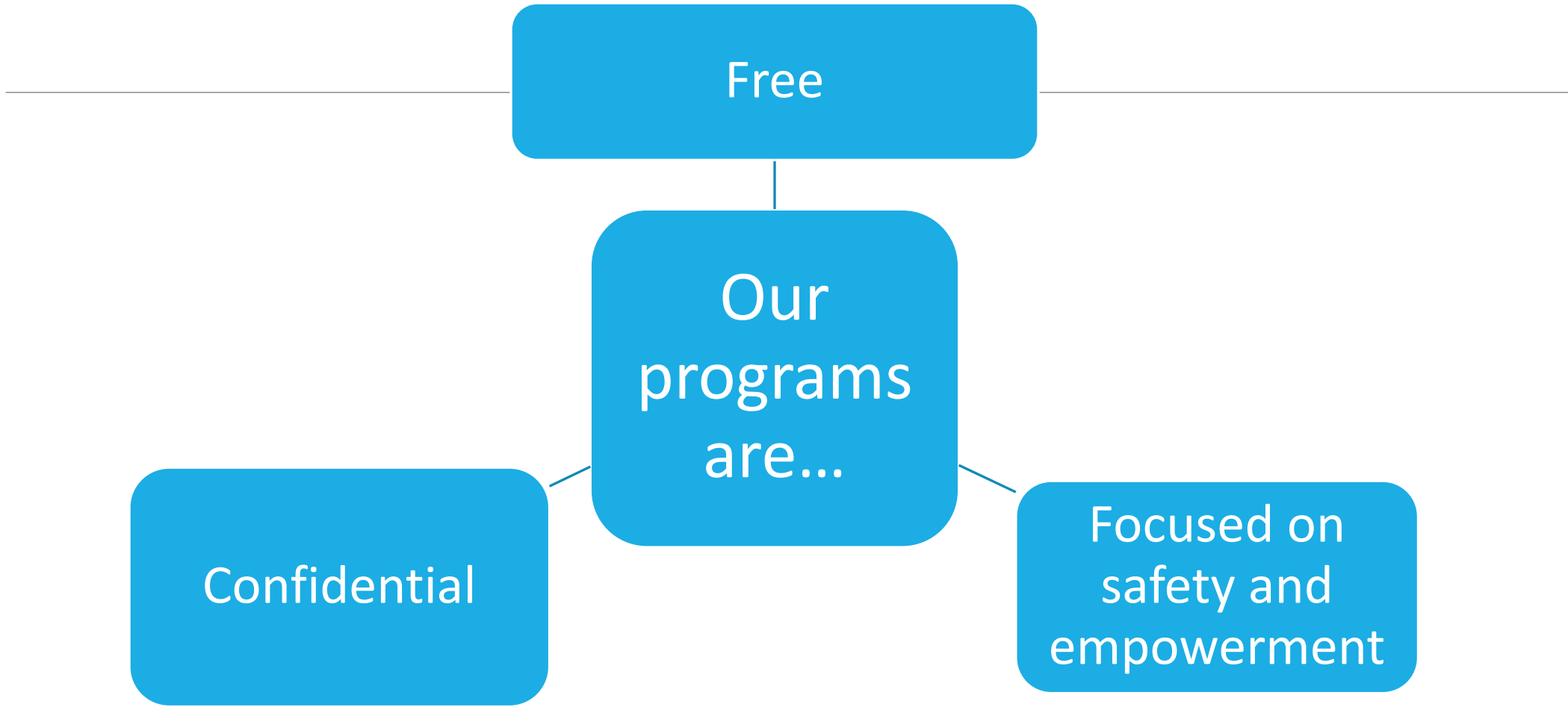
Follow Up



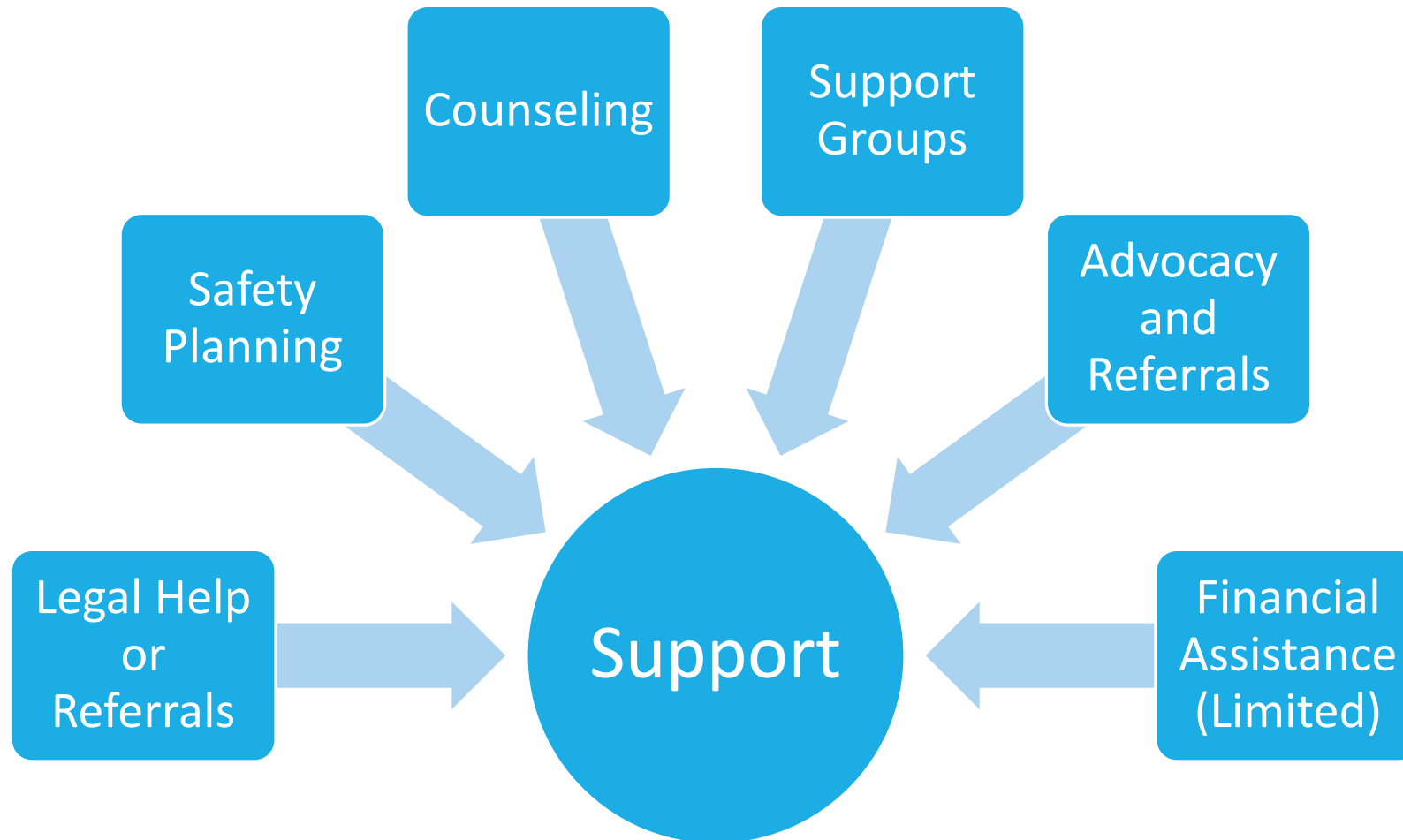
What are other action steps you may be able to take?
How can you create more opportunities to show your support and build trust?
Do you have information or resources to share?

Connecting a Person with Support and Help

“I know about several local programs that support and help people who have a controlling or abusive partner.”



Our Programs Offer...



Taking action

- Hang posters with helpline numbers in public and private spaces (like restroom stalls and dressing rooms)
- Help to get the word out by liking and sharing our messages on your social media accounts
- Include helpline numbers on webpages and in newsletters and bulletins
- Host an awareness-raising program at your place of business, congregation, civic organization or social group
- Ask that helpline information be posted on the Human Resources section of your business or organization's employee information website
- Encourage clergy to preach and write about domestic abuse and to include words of prayer or support for survivors of abuse and their children
- Learn more about volunteer opportunities at any of our programs
- Collect money, gift cards and/or donations for any of our programs and use that opportunity to raise awareness about the issue in your community

Local Programs

Shelter

- Safelink: 1-877-785-2020

Community-Based Programs

- The Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Program at Newton-Wellesley Hospital: 617-243-6521
- Jewish Family & Children's Service Journey to Safety program: 781-647-JFCS (5327)
- REACH Beyond Domestic Violence: 800-899-4000 (24/7) or chat online at www.reachma.org Monday-Friday, 1:00 – 8:00 PM
- The Second Step: 617-965-3999

Additional Culturally-Specific Programs

- Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence: 617-338-2355
- The Network/La Red (specializes in services for people who identify as LGBTQ+): 617-742-4911
- Saheli (specializes in services for South Asian and Arab women): 866-472-4354

Protective Services

- Elder Abuse Hotline: 800-922-2275
- Child-at-Risk Hotline at the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families (DCF): 800-792-5200