Abuse

What is abuse?

The general category of abuse means a deliberate action aimed at causing injury to another person.

The primary survivors (victims) of abuse are women and children.

The three main types of abuse are physical, sexual, and emotional.

PHYSICAL ABUSE is a deliberate act resulting in physical injuries---this includes assault and excessive corporal punishment.

Physical abuse is the easiest to prove, yet fear often keeps the victim from seeking help.

Battered women become psychologically so undermined that they often feel to blame for the abuse and they have difficulty separating from the batterer.

SEXUAL ABUSE includes incest, rape (penetration of vagina or anus), and touching of genital areas and other parts of the body for the purpose of the sexual gratification of the perpetrator.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE can be separated from sexual and physical abuse, but the damage caused by it can be as devastating to the survivor (victim) as any other form of abuse.

Emotional abuse is aimed at harming the target by withholding love, criticizing the target, scapegoating, and other forms of humiliation.

Emotional abuse can also be done by omission, such as neglect and indifference.

Although emotional abuse does not leave physical scars, the psychological scars are deep and can last a lifetime.

The survivors (victims) of all three types of abuse often suffer a further problem: a sense of having been betrayed, especially when the perpetrator was in a position of trust.

Additionally, the victims have difficulty reporting the abuse because they suffer from inappropriate guilt at causing harm to the perpetrator.
What can a survivor (victim) of abuse do about it?

If the injuries are recent, the survivor (victim) of physical or sexual abuse needs to immediately contact the police and/or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Or, on the CSUN campus, contact the Student Health Center: 818-677-3666 (TTY 667-3692).

To start the emotional healing process for any of the three types of abuse, CSUN’s University Counseling Services can be the first step.

UCS’s number is: 818-677-2366 (TTY 667-7834).