

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is:

- ◆ any kind of violence in the home between two people who know each other, a husband and wife for example. It includes: yelling or name-calling; kicking or slapping; hitting or punching; forced or unwanted sex.
- ◆ a serious problem that only gets worse over time.
- ◆ physically and emotionally damaging to you and your children.



"He said if I told anyone that he hit me, he would take my children away."

**You and your children
have a right to live
without violence.**

*"I didn't want to have sex,
but he had been drinking
and he made me."*

**You have the right to say
no to sex anytime, even to
your husband.**

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM BEING HURT?

You can:

- ◆ **talk to someone you trust and who will not blame you**, for example a family member, a friend, someone in your church, or your case worker.
- ◆ **talk to someone with professional experience in domestic violence**, a teacher, a doctor or nurse, or someone who works in a domestic violence shelter.
- ◆ **take steps to stay safe**: practice how to get out of the house safely if violence occurs, find a friend you can stay with, discuss safety with your children, keep helpful phone numbers with you at all times.
- ◆ **find yourself a counsellor** to help you develop healthier relationships. Ask your spouse to go separately to counselling for his problem.
- ◆ **access civil or criminal legal systems** to get protection from the violence. Call the police for help.

REMEMBER!

- ◆ Domestic violence is NEVER the victim's fault.
- ◆ You have a right to be safe.
- ◆ You are not alone. An estimated one in eight (1 in 8) women is a victim of domestic violence.
- ◆ There are people who care and who want to help.

*"He took away my credit
cards and refused to give
me any money to buy
necessary things."*

**No-one has the right to
isolate you and control
your life.**