



Domestic Violence Awareness Month Spotlight

Beyond Bruises: What you need to know about financial abuse

For 25 years, Alpha Chi Omega has worked to combat domestic violence through our national philanthropy. As champions fighting against this public health crisis – which affects one in every four women in their lifetime – we’re working to prevent unhealthy relationships and build healthy relationships.

This October, Alpha Chi Omega is raising awareness of a lesser-known form of domestic violence: financial abuse. Domestic violence isn’t isolated to physical abuse and aggression – at its heart, it’s about maintaining power and control over a partner. And unfortunately, financial abuse is the number one reason women who are victims can’t “just leave” their unhealthy relationship.

According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, 98 percent of abusive relationships involve financial abuse, where abusers control victims by preventing access to money or other financial resources. Financial abuse might include controlling how money is spent; withholding money or “giving an allowance;” stealing from the other person – their identity, money, credit, or property; not allowing a partner to work or earn money; preventing the other person from going to school; controlling or not allowing access to financial information like tax returns, checking account statements and credit card statements.

If you’re in a relationship, you can protect yourself and your financial security and independence by:

- Knowing your personal credit score and keeping a good credit score. According to Experian a good credit score is at or above 700.
- Having a credit card in your name, and building up credit history by using and paying in full and on time
- Having a driver’s license or state ID card
- Having a checking account in your name or, at a minimum, in both names while ensuring you have access
- Keeping copies of all bank account numbers, credit card numbers, and any other financial account
- Keeping copies of your birth certificate and social security card
- Having independent control of cash (not after approval of your partner)
- Ensuring your paychecks go into your own personal account or a joint account you can access
- Keeping copies of documents proving ownership, such as a car or home
- Having your own passwords for all online accounts and not sharing them with anyone



If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence, make sure to provide support without judgment or criticism, respect their decisions even if you don't agree, help them recognize the signs of domestic violence and financial abuse, tell them you are concerned for their safety, and connect them with resources such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-SAFE (7233).

As Alpha Chi Omega continues our 25-year commitment to domestic violence prevention, we hope you join us in raising awareness about this important issue throughout the month of October, and year-round.

To learn more about our domestic violence awareness month initiatives, visit <https://www.alphachiomega.org/dva/>.