The Violence Against Women Program at Alabama State University
The purpose of the VAW Program is to create and foster a campus environment that is protective, compassionate and helpful to victims while providing “zero-tolerance” towards the offenses and offenders.
DOMESTIC AND DATING VIOLENCE

Domestic violence, also known as domestic abuse, is a pattern of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family or cohabitation. Domestic and dating violence have many forms, including, but not limited to, physical aggression, assault, restraining, slapping, criminal mischief or threats. Other aspects of domestic and dating violence can include sexual abuse, sexual assault, emotional abuse, controlling or domineering behavior, intimidation and economic deprivation. In addition it often is made up of acts of endangerment, criminal coercion, kidnapping, trespassing, stalking and unlawful imprisonment.

The OVW-DOJ definition of domestic violence points out that the actions of the abuser are meant to maintain power and control over another intimate partner and that it includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, and control the victim.

10 teen dating abuse facts …

Posted by Violence Against Women Online Resources (VAWOR)

1. Physical and sexual abuse are the most often talked about aspects of dating abuse.

2. 1 in 5 teens that have been in a serious relationship report being hit, slapped or pushed by a partner.

3. 1 in 3 teens report knowing a friend or peer who has been hit, punched, kicked, slapped, choked or physically hurt by their partner.

4. 1 in 4 teenage girls who have been in relationships reveal that they have been pressured to perform oral sex or engage in intercourse.

5. Dating abuse doesn’t have to be physical. It can include verbal or emotional abuse or controlling behavior.


7. One-third or more of teens in relationships have been with a partner who frequently asked where they were and whom they were with.

8. 1 in 4 teens in serious relationships have been prevented from spending time with friends and family or pressured to only spend time with their partner.

9. Nearly 1 in 5 teenage girls in a relationship said a boyfriend threatened violence or self-harm when presented with a break-up.

10. Technologies like cell phones and social networking can also be used to abuse and control. 1 in 3 teens (30%) say they are text messaged 10, 20 or 30 times an hour by a partner inquiring where they are, what they’re doing or who they’re with. 68% of teens say boyfriends/girlfriends sharing private or embarrassing pictures/videos on cell phones and computers is a serious problem. 71% of teens regard boyfriends/girlfriends spreading rumors about them on cell phones and social networking sites as a serious problem.
frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure or wound someone.

Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It affects people of all socio-economic backgrounds and education levels. Domestic violence occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can happen to intimate partners who are married, living together or dating.

Domestic violence not only affects those who are abused, but it also has a substantial effect on family members, friends, co-workers, other witnesses and the community at large. Children who grow up witnessing domestic or dating violence are among those seriously affected by this crime. Frequent exposure to violence can predispose children to numerous social and physical problems, and can increase their risk of becoming society’s next generation of victims and abusers.

STALKING

Stalking is a term commonly used to refer to patterns of unwanted and obsessive attention by an individual or group towards another person. Stalking behaviors are related to harassment and intimidation and may include following the victim in person and/or monitoring them via the Internet. The National Center for Victims of Crime states that unwanted contact between two or more people that directly or indirectly communicates a threat or that places the victim in fear can be considered stalking. The word stalking is used, in Alabama as a term for a felonious criminal offense and carries with it criminal penalties. Stalking may include:

■ Repeated, unwanted, intrusive and frightening communications from the perpetrator by phone, mail and/or email.
■ Repeatedly leaving or sending a victim unwanted items, presents or flowers.
■ Following or lying in wait for the victim at places such as home, school, work or recreational venues.
■ Making direct or indirect threats to harm the victim or the victim’s children, relatives, friends or pets.
■ Damaging or threatening to damage the victim’s property.
■ Harassing the victim through the Internet (i.e., cyber-stalking).

Stalking is often a precursor of more violent behavior by the perpetrator, either against the victim or the community.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that:

1 in 4 stalking victims reported some form of cyber stalking such as e-mail (83%) or instant messaging (35%).
About half (46%) of stalking victims experienced at least one unwanted contact per week, and 11% of victims said they had been stalked for five years or more.

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Women are at greater risk than men for stalking victimization; however, women and men are equally likely to experience harassment.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. It is any involuntary sexual act in which a person is threatened, coerced or forced to engage in against their will. Falling under the definition of sexual assault are sexual activities such as forced sexual intercourse, forcible sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, and attempted rape. In Alabama, the criminal laws that would fall under this term would include rape, sodomy, sexual misconduct, sexual torture and sexual abuse.

Lack of consent can be construed from either the forcible compulsion involved in the assault or the lack of the victim’s ability, due to age, competency, or consciousness, to give consent. It has been reported that in the United States, approximately 300,000 women are raped each year and 3.7 million women are subjected to other forms of unwanted sexual activity. It is also estimated that approximately 80,000 American children are subjected to sexual abuse annually and that one in six American women has been or will be sexually assaulted during her life. Roughly ten percent of reported rape victims are male.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

Acts of date rape, gang rape, acquaintance rape, marital rape, stranger rape and all sexually based offenses are punishable by Alabama criminal statutes. Both men and women can be either victims or perpetrators of sexual assaults.

Whether or not the victim chooses to involve law enforcement officials immediately, the victim is urged to contact Student Affairs, the Family Justice Center or any other campus resource for assistance with coordinating services, accessing resources, and other accommodations, and to help the victim engage in safety planning, exploration of options, and considerations.
of the correct methods of preserving evidence in case the victim chooses to pursue legal prosecution at a later date.

- Friends and family should encourage victims to report and fully disclose incidents(s) of domestic or dating violence, stalking or sexual assault to the police. This will assist the victims in gaining the protections of the legal system and in the prosecution of any offenders.

- As a matter of public safety, members of the community should notify law enforcement authorities immediately to request police response whenever they witness dangerous or criminal acts in progress.

- Students, faculty or staff who have legal protection orders are encouraged to inform and provide a copy of such order to the Campus Police.

- The use of alcohol and other drugs in conjunction with an incident of sexual assault does not mitigate accountability for the commission of this crime or diminish the seriousness of the crime.

- Healthy sexual activities involve mutually expressed consent. Consent is defined as follows:
  
  Both individuals are legally and physically free and capable to act;
  Both are clear about their intent to engage in sexual activities and their willingness to do so;
  Silence may not in and of itself constitute consent;
  Past consent of sexual activities does not imply ongoing future consent.

**RESPONDING: WHAT YOU SHOULD DO**

If the incident occurs on campus, as soon as possible after an incident, victims/survivors of sexual assault and/or domestic, or dating violence should:

- **Get to a safe place.**

- **Contact Campus Police as soon as possible at 229-4400 or call 911 if danger is still immediate.** Law enforcement officers will assist you in any way possible, including escorting you to the nearest healthcare facility if immediate medical care is needed or to the Family Justice Center for treatment. Involving law enforcement personnel is also important so that evidence can be preserved and any crime scene secured.

- **Contact a friend, family member or someone you trust to come and stay with you.** In the University’s Residence Halls, contact your Resident Advisor or the Resident Director directly.

- **Seek medical attention unless you are sure that the physical assault caused no injuries.** Go to the closest emergency room for a full physical examination. Discuss with the hospital’s health care provider the extent of your injuries. If you suspect that you were given any drug, such as
GHB or Rohypnol, ask for blood and urine tests to detect the presence of such chemicals. If you were sexually assaulted, try to preserve collectible evidence: refrain from bathing, douching, changing clothes, eating, drinking or cleaning up the area where the assault occurred. If you were physically assaulted, try to refrain from touching any possible evidence.

■ **As soon as possible, write down as much as you can remember about the assault,** including the circumstances of the assault, the description of the accused and the physical environment where the assault occurred.

■ **Make an appointment with a counselor, who is trained to assist sexual assault and relationship violence victims/survivors, to discuss the emotional and physical impact of the assault.** Counseling is available through the Family Justice Center (334-262-7378) and the ASU Student Counseling Center (334-229-4382) (The after-hours crisis line number is 224-6592).

■ **If you choose to file charges, you can start to pursue them at the Alabama State University Police Department, (334-229-4400).** If the offense took place off campus, you may contact the Family Justice Center at 334-262-7378 or the Montgomery Police Department (located at 320 North Ripley Street) at 334-241-2651. If you are not sure whom you should call, you may contact the VAW coordinator by calling the Campus Police and asking for him or her directly.

■ **Assess your need for a Protection Order.** The Family Justice Center can assist you in getting additional legal, court-ordered protection.

■ **If you choose, and the accused is an Alabama State University student, you may contact the University Judicial Affairs Officer to obtain an explanation of the process for filing judicial charges against the student.** The Judicial Officer may be contacted at 334-229-5104.

**IN CONCLUSION…**

The goal of the Violence Against Women program is to assist any victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or sexual assault. The program is designed to help people by empowering them with information and avenues for behavior to create an environment that is protective and helpful to any possible VAW victims and inhospitable to any VAW offenders. It is important to empower not only victims, but also community members to be able to take a stand that is both preventative and reactive to these types of offenses and behaviors. Involvement is essential, and the community at ASU can combine to prevent and react to VAW issues on or near the ASU campus.
THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAM
at Alabama State University

ASU Student Counseling Center 334-229-4382
After Hours Crisis Line 334-224-6592

ASU Department of Public Safety/VAWP 334-229-4400

ASU Judicial Affairs Officer 334-229-5104

ASU University Health Services Center 334-229-4438
After Hours Emergency Line 334-318-9797

EMERGENCY 911

Family Justice Center 334-262-7378

Montgomery Police Department 334-241-2651

Montgomery County District Attorney’s VAW Prosecution Unit 334-832-2550

Secret Witness 334-215-7867 (334-215-STOP)