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OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month is an annual designation observed in October. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that 1.3 million women and 835,000 men are victims of physical violence by a partner every year. Every nine seconds, a woman in the U.S. is beaten or assaulted by a current or ex-significant other. Here's another shocking statistic: the number of U.S. troops killed in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2012 is 6,488. The number of women that were murdered by current or ex-male partners during that same time frame is 11,766, according to the Huffington Post. That's almost double the number of people that were killed fighting in war.

People who are in an abusive relationship will stay with their partner for a number of reasons. Sometimes, people don't know if they are really in an abusive relationship because they're used to their partner calling them crazy or making them feel like all the problems are their own fault. Here are a few ways to help you recognize if you are in an abusive relationship that you need to get out of.

- Your partner has **hit you or strangled you** in the past.
- Your partner is **possessive**. They check up on you constantly wondering where you are; they get mad at you for hanging out with certain people if you don't do what they say.
- Your partner is **jealous**. A small amount of jealousy is normal and healthy; however, if they accuse you of being unfaithful or isolate you from family or friends, that means the jealousy has gone too far.
- Your partner **puts you down**. They attack your intelligence, looks, mental health, or capabilities. They blame you for all of their violent outbursts and tell you nobody else will want you if you leave.
- Your partner **threatens** you or your family.
- Your partner **physically and/or sexually abuses you**. If they EVER push, shove, or hit you, or make you have sex with them when you don't want to, they are abusing you (**even if it doesn't happen all the time.**)

The Sioux County Sheriff's Office hopes the important discussions brought to the forefront this October about domestic violence's horrific repercussions will continue and help the many victims affected by tragedy. If you need to leave an abusive setting, please seek the help of an area shelter. One area resource is the Family Crisis Center; they can be reached at 712-722-4404. If you need immediate help or are in danger, please call 911.

