

# Be A Change Maker: Action Guide

## Recognizing And Responding To Domestic Violence As An Aesthetician



### As An Aesthetician, You Are Uniquely Positioned To Help

Whether you do hair, make-up, brows, lash extensions, nails, hair-removal, skin care, etc., you are often in a unique position to receive your clients' stories. As you provide services, you may notice cuts, bumps, or bruises under a client's hair or makeup and/or to observe patterns of behavior that may indicate that your client is a survivor/victim.

### Recognizing Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship. Abuse may include any combination of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, reproductive, spiritual, and financial abuse or control. Some abusive relationships never include physical violence, but the effect on survivors/victims can be as or more severe. When you are aware of the potential warning signs and you spot them, it may be appropriate to ask your client if they are safe. You may notice any of the following:

- Cuts, bumps, or bruises under a client's hair, makeup, or clothing
- The client is stiff or uncomfortable as they are sitting in your chair
- They are getting a lot of text messages or calls in a short period of time
- They mention that they would like to wear a certain style or make a change, but their partner would not allow it

### Starting The Conversation

- If you suspect someone is experiencing abuse, their safety and the safety of their children is the most important thing.
- Be discreet. Speak with the survivor/victim privately, away from their partner and children.
- Disclose limits of confidentiality (see more on your duty to report child abuse/neglect and Mandatory Reporting [here](#)).
- If a survivor/victim is yet to disclose their abuse, begin a conversation by simply stating your concern and the reasons you are concerned. Aim to be a supportive and trustworthy resource whom your clients can talk to. If and when they feel comfortable, offer information and resources.
- If a survivor/victim discloses abuse, work with them to create a safety plan (whether they are staying or leaving). It may be helpful to make a joint call to the advocate in your county. Connecting survivors/victims to domestic violence advocates is a great way to support their unique safety needs.
- Leaving an abusive relationship is not always the safest option at any given moment in time. Do not tell them to leave or to stay with the abuser.
- Ask about immediate safety and about safety upon returning home.
- You may start by calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. The advocates can help you find local experts and give you confidential advice.
- Survivors/Victims have had their voice taken away, they need to be heard and believed and to hear that the abuse is not their fault.
- They also need to feel empowered. Help by asking what they need and meeting those needs if possible.
- Mirror their language. Some clients will identify with and use words like abuse, survivor, victim, violence, rape, etc. and some will not.
- Provide resources and referrals but not advice.
- Beware of minimizing the danger to the survivor/victim. They are the expert on their own safety.

## Example Scripts

### **Tailor To Your Style And The Situation.**

1. "When I see an injury like this, I wonder if someone is hurting you. Can you tell me what happened?"
2. "I'm wondering is everything is OK at home?"
3. "I noticed you are getting a lot of messages and you seem frightened. I'm afraid for your safety. Do you feel unsafe?"

### **Know The Resources**

- [NCCADV](#)
- [Domestic Violence Support | National Domestic Violence Hotline \(thehotline.org\)](#)
- [Cut It Out](#) - CUT IT OUT® is a program dedicated to mobilizing licensed professionals, students, and others to fight the epidemic of domestic abuse in communities across the United States. They offer training and free materials to aestheticians and salon professionals.

### **Communicate That Survivors/Victims Are Safe At Your Business By:**

- Placing flyers, brochures, and other resources in restrooms, in newsletters, on social media, and wherever your community may see it.
- Have a security plan for your location in case of any immediate risks to safety.
- Participate in trainings and educate yourself about domestic violence.
- Develop and share a statement that your business will believe and support clients who disclose abuse.
- Publicly call for the end of domestic violence and justice for survivors/victims.
- Support all survivors/victims of all forms of abuse.
- Partner with [local DV agencies](#) for resources and help.

**To view the resources referenced in this guide and to connect with your agencies, please visit <https://nccadv.coalitionmanager.org/resourcemanager/resourcefile/details/689> or scan the QR code below.**

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