

The Iceberg of Domestic Violence

One of the most dangerous and insidious truths about domestic violence is it's easy to ignore if it's not visible. Like an iceberg, there's a lot more than what is visible above the surface, and that's true for individuals, communities, and cultures. **In the depiction below, we've listed outward acts that society doesn't accept, where survivors are supported and the offenders are held accountable. Ask yourself: WHY don't we do the same with acts found below the water's surface?**

Socially Unacceptable Domestic Violence





The Iceberg of Domestic Violence

Other forms of Socially Acceptable or Tolerated Domestic Violence

Experienced by victim due to... community's actions *continued*:

- ♦ Assuming good intentions on the offender's part are enough
- ♦ News articles and headlines that sensationalize and/or minimize domestic violence

system's responses actions:

- ♦ "Marital exceptions" to rape laws
- ♦ Virtuous victim narrative / Myth of the "perfect victim"
- ♦ Arresting and/or incarcerating victims for self-defense against violence
- ♦ Holding victims solely responsible for children's exposure to the abuser's violence
- ♦ Asking victim to move or change their actions to avoid abuse
- ♦ Denying DV-based asylum requests

cultural references:

- ♦ Romanticizing intimate partner violence and/or stalking
- ♦ Patriarchy

**If you or someone you know is in an
unhealthy or abusive relationship...**

**Call Virginia's 24-hour Family Violence and Sexual
Assault hotline at 1-800-838-8238**



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
*Awareness
Month* 
OCTOBER 2021

For information and resources around Domestic Violence awareness and prevention in Virginia, visit www.dss.virginia.gov/family/domestic_violence