**October is Domestic Violence**

**Awareness Month**

**Confidential help is available through your AFA EAP-800-424-2406**

**Who is an Abuser?** Anyone can be an abuser. They come from all groups, all cultures, all religions, all economic levels, and all backgrounds. They can be anyone- your neighbor, your friend, your coworker etc. It is important to note that the majority of abusers are only violent with their current or past intimate partners. One study found 90% of abusers do not have criminal records and abusers are generally law-abiding outside the home. .

**Traits Abusers May Have in Common:** There is no one typical, detectable personality of an abuser. However, they may display common characteristics. An abuser often denies the existence or minimizes the seriousness of the violence and its effect on the victim and other family members. An abuser objectifies the victim and often sees them as their property or sexual objects. An abuser externalizes the causes of their behavior. They blame their violence on circumstances such as stress, their partner's behavior, a "bad day," on alcohol, drugs, or other factors. An abuser may be pleasant and charming between periods of violence and is often seen as a "nice person" to others outside the relationship.

**Warning Signs of an Abuser**

Red flags and warning signs of an abuser may include but are not limited to:

* Extreme jealousy and/or possessiveness, even accusations of the victim flirting with others or having an affair.
* Verbal abuse including blaming the victim for anything bad that happens
* Extremely controlling behavior
* Antiquated beliefs about roles of women and men in relationships
* Sabotage or obstruction of the victim's ability to work or attend outside activities
* Controls all the finances
* Control of what the victim wears and how they act
* Demeaning and/or humiliating the victim either privately or publicly
* Harassment of the victim at work

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**\*information for this e-line is provided by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**