ABUSE:
To intentionally or unconsciously injure or damage someone physically, psychologically/ emotionally, or sexually, with intent to dominate, intimidate, control and/or exercise power over them. Abuse can be isolated or habitual, premeditated or spontaneous. The one who inflict the abuse is typically called the abuser; the one who is abused is typically called the victim.

TYPES OF ABUSE
PHYSICAL: Actions that cause humiliation, physical pain, or injury such as kicking, pushing, or punching
PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL: Actions that cause loss of self-esteem and/or loss of self-determination such as name calling, isolation, or criticizing
SEXUAL: Actions of a sexual nature that are unwelcome, uncomfortable, or forced, including rape
CHILD ABUSE: All of the above definitions, as well as neglect. This includes not providing for a child’s basic needs, such as food and clothing, and abandonment.

ABUSE IS WRONG BECAUSE:
IT DESTROYS THE BODY
“To do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17

IT ROBS CHILDREN OF THEIR INNOCENCE
“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matthew 18:6

IT LOWERS SELF-ESTEEM
“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Ephesians 4:29

IT WARPS THE PERCEPTION ABOUT GOD
“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” 1 John 3:1

IT IS NOT GOD’S PLAN FOR FAMILIES
“... The Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts.” E.G. White, Counsels on Health, p. 101

IT IS NOT GOD’S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES
“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

ABUSE OF ANY KIND, WHETHER PERPETRATED AGAINST WOMEN, MEN, GIRLS OR BOYS, IS EVIL.
Besides gender, abuse crosses all cultural, racial, socioeconomic, and religious or denominational boundaries. If you sense someone is facing abuse, offer empathetic help and hope. If you are the victim, seek help. You are not alone.

WOMEN’S MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA
Ph: 1-301-680-6636
WWW.ADVENTISTWOMENSMINISTRIES.ORG

“Breaking the Silence
You can stop the violence

“To heal the broken hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
To set free those who are oppressed.”
Luke 4:18
YOUR PARTNER MAY BE ABUSIVE IF HE OR SHE:
- Constantly accuses you of having an affair
- Bits, slaps, punches, or kicks you
- Throws things at you or breaks objects during an argument
- Belittles you in front of your friends and family
- Makes you feel afraid to express your opinions or wishes
- Monitors who you speak to and whom you go out with
- Blames you for his/her appearance
- Threatens you or swears at you
- Criticizes all you do
- Disrespects you, your family, and your friends
- Refuses to let you use your own money or handle your finances
- Forces you to have sex
- Demonstrates extreme possessiveness or jealousy

HAS YOUR CHILD BEEN ABUSED?
- Respect the child's privacy; find a quiet and comfortable place and carefully listen to what he/she is saying.
- Believe the child and take him/her seriously. Let the child know that the abuse was not his/her fault.
- Report the abuse to the authorities.
- Do not confront the abuser yourself.
- Take the child to the doctor for immediate medical attention.
- Find a licensed therapist who specializes in child abuse.
- Pray with the child and reassure them that Jesus loves them; create a safety net around the child so that he/she will feel protected.

SAFETY MEASURES FOR PARENTS
- Network with your child's friends and their parents.
- Explain to children that people who want to keep secrets from their parents are not safe.
- Encourage children to tell you if they are frightened or disturbed.
- Instruct children to always check with you before going anywhere—even if it is with someone they know.
- Teach children how to say "no" to anyone who tries to touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Show them how to phone emergency personnel.
- Screen baby-sitters very carefully.
- Question the motives of adults and older children who constantly want to spend time alone with your child.

FAKE THEORIES ABOUT CHILD ABUSE
- Parents will be able to tell if their child has been sexually abused.
- Children need to be physically disciplined to learn to respect their elders.
- Boys cannot be sexually abused.
- Playing with a child's genitalia is harmless.
- Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other.
- Only strangers molest children.
- Boys cannot be sexually abused.
- Contact the authorities, your pastor, doctor, family member, or friend and let them know that you have been abused.
- Call the Domestic Violence Hotline to get help and to find out about the laws in your area.
- The abuse may have left you with many emotional scars. Try to schedule regular counseling sessions with a licensed therapist.
- You may have been hurt physically; ask your doctor for a thorough examination.

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