

HYDE COUNTY HOTLINE, INC.

We are committed to promoting dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer community.

Visit us at: Website: HydeCounty-Hotline.org Facebook: [Hyde County Hotline](https://www.facebook.com/HydeCountyHotline)

May 2020

COVID-19 Safety Plan

HOPE IS STILL HERE

***Hyde County Hotline is open
and here to help!***

*Serving victims of domestic violence, sexual victimization and
human trafficking*

You are not alone!

***Please call our 24/7 Crisis Line at
252-925-2500***

***to speak with an advocate today
or reach out to the***

***24/7 National Domestic Violence Hotline at
1-800-799-7233***

No one deserves to be hurt!

Don't suffer alone.

Call today. Let us help you safety plan.

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COVID-19 and Domestic Violence

- Even with the North Carolina “Stay at Home” order you **CAN** leave your home to access safety resources.
- Your safety is essential and there are resources available for help.

SAFETY TIPS

Have a plan before the crisis. Most businesses are closed. Know what public places are open in your area. Use a work reason or essential area (Ex: grocery shopping or picking up prescriptions) to leave the home, if needed.

Pay attention to your abuser’s daily routine. Know when he/she normally comes and goes.

Be aware of your surroundings. If an argument begins to escalate while at home, try to move into the living room or other area of your home you can easily exit.

Avoid wearing items around your neck that can potentially be used to strangle you.

Check-in daily with a neighbor, friend, or family member. Make sure this is someone you trust. Develop a code word or signal for when you need help.

Gather essential items. Gather important items that you may need if you need to leave your home in a hurry. (Ex. Your ID, social security card, birth certificate, debit/credit/food stamp cards, an extra set of keys...)

Memorize Hyde County Hotline’s 24/7 Crisis Line number: 252-925-2500

If you are in immediate danger, call 911!



Online Resources

www.thehotline.org

www.myplanapp.org

<http://www.thevigor.org/vigor-safety-planning-tool>

www.smart911.com

Visit us at: HydeCounty-Hotline.org Facebook: [Hyde County Hotline](https://www.facebook.com/HydeCountyHotline)

Abuse Almost Always Escalates

Bad news: If you're trapped in a cycle of abuse, it's most likely going to only get worse

When you ask survivors what their last straw was during domestic violence, their answers will likely range from “the first time they threatened to hit me” to “the first time they put me in the hospital.”

Survivors can pinpoint that moment in time when abuse took a sudden escalation and for many that's their cue to find a way to leave, and fast. Others may feel trapped, either by circumstances like finances or housing that make it seem impossible to leave, or by the hope that they can still change the abuser. Either way, escalation is often a glaringly red flag that indicates a survivor's life is at risk.

What Does Escalation Look Like?

According to [The National Domestic Violence Hotline](#), escalation can happen either gradually or all of a sudden.

Gradual Escalation: Verbal abuse, like insults, slowly become more harmful and degrading. Control goes from “I'd rather you not go out with your friends tonight,” to a more demanding “I'll tell you when you can leave the house.” Threats become more alarming, going from “You make me so mad I could punch a wall,” to “I'm going to punch you if you say that again.”

Sudden Escalation: Abuse abruptly intensifies from, say, threats to physical violence. It's the first time the abuser pushes, hits or strangles a survivor. For the first time, the abuser may threaten, yell at or physically harm pets or children. It may be the first time a survivor can admit to themselves that what's happening is actually abuse.

While an abuser may say they “lost control” or “didn't mean it” when their abuse escalates, that's not true. Escalation is a choice abusers make when they feel like they're losing control of the survivor or when they want to send a very clear message—they hold the power in the relationship. (cont'd)



Why It's So Dangerous

When abuse escalates, an abuser is basically showing that they have a new way to exert power over a survivor. The abuser is becoming more emboldened. They are moving on to the next phase of their plan to trap a survivor.

Escalation is not caused by something a survivor did. A survivor did not make an abuser “more mad” by something the survivor did or said—abusers choose to escalate abuse just as they choose not to deescalate it.

When an abuser has clearly shown that their abusive tactics have gone to the next level, the survivor should know two things: 1) It's only going to get more dangerous to leave later on and 2) Things can escalate even more.

Criminology expert Dr. Jane Monckton Smith [studied](#) 372 intimate partner homicides in the UK and found an eight-stage pattern that almost all the murders had in common:

- A pre-relationship **history** of stalking or abuse by the perpetrator
- The romance **developing quickly** into a serious relationship
- The relationship becoming dominated by **coercive control**
- A **trigger** to threaten the perpetrator's control—for example, the relationship ends or the perpetrator gets into financial difficulty
- **Escalation**, or an increase in the intensity or frequency of the partner's control tactics, such as by stalking or threatening suicide
- The perpetrator has a **change in thinking**, choosing to move on either through revenge or by homicide
- **Planning**—the perpetrator might buy weapons or seek opportunities to get the victim alone
- **Homicide**—the perpetrator kills his or her partner, and possibly hurts others such as the victim's children

After the relationship developed quickly and became dominated by coercive control, there was escalation in almost all of the relationships, at which time the partner's control tactics ramped up. This was followed by planning—the perpetrator might have bought a weapon or planned a time to get the victim alone, and then committed homicide. (cont'd)



Escalation When Things Aren't Physically Violent

For those who are with a psychologically abusive partner, someone who isn't physically violent but who manipulates, degrades and [gaslights](#) a survivor, [escalation can still occur](#). It might look like the abuser....

- Not respecting a survivor's boundaries.
- Blaming the survivor for the abuse and not taking responsibility for his or her choices.
- Isolating the survivor from friends and family.
- Threatening to harm or take away a survivor's children.
- Threatening to harm pets.
- Acquiring a weapon as a means of intimidation.
- Displaying excessive jealousy or paranoia.

Remember that verbal and emotional abuse can, at any time, escalate to physical violence. The most dangerous thing for a survivor is to underestimate what an abuser is capable of. It can be hard when a survivor feels like [they love their abusive partner](#) and, consequently, keep giving them more chances to change.

Where's Your Line?

Even if a survivor isn't ready to leave yet, [creating a safety plan](#) is always a smart idea. Within that safety plan, a survivor should think about what their final straw will be. What is a survivor willing to put up with and what will they not? While no abuse is acceptable, it may be that a survivor needs to tell themselves they can handle someone who yells, but as soon as that person yells at their child, the survivor is out. When their limit is reached, a survivor should have a plan in place of where they're going to go or who they're going to call.

SOURCE: [Abuse Almost Always Escalates](#)



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## DV Homicides in NC

**January 1 - April 20, 2020 (27 homicides)**



# Blame Shifting and Minimizing: There's no EXCUSE for Abuse

## Why do we make excuses?

You tell a friend that you're busy with something else because you'd rather just put your feet up and watch the game. You tell yourself that eating that pint of ice cream was fine because you went running the day before so that cancels it out.

To some extent, everyone makes excuses.

When it comes to people making justifications about their unhealthy actions, it can be difficult to see through these excuses or recognize them for what they are.



Why do we want to believe the excuses a partner makes when they're treating us badly? Sometimes the justifications sound *really good*. Especially when we're looking for something — anything — to help make sense of how the person we care for is acting toward us. It's normal to want to rationalize what's going on, because abuse is pretty irrational.

Abusive partners are also skilled at coercion and manipulation. They use excuses to make you feel like what's happening is *your* fault.

Let's take a look at common excuses that abusive partners use and talk about why these, like all "reasons," aren't justification for violent and hurtful behavior.

- **"I was drunk/I was using drugs."**  
Substance abuse isn't an excuse for abuse. There are people who drink and use drugs and don't choose to abuse their partners. Ask yourself: how does your partner act when they're drunk around their friends? How do they treat you when they're sober?

A statistics teacher would tell you, "Correlation does not imply causation." Just because two things happen together (like drinking and violence), it does not mean that one *causes* the other.

- **"I control you because I care about you."**  
Acting jealous, controlling or possessive is not a way to show someone you care.
- **"You got in my face/made me mad/got me wound up on purpose, and I had no other choice. I can't control it."**  
Stress and anger issues don't *cause* abusive behavior. An abusive partner's actions are always a choice that they make. Ask yourself: how does your partner react when they are angry with other people? Would they fly off the handle at their boss? Chances are probably not, because they know they can't get away with that behavior around others.
- **"I have mental health issues or a personality disorder — ex. I'm bipolar, I have PTSD."**  
There are people who have mental health issues and don't act abusive toward their partners. If an abusive partner *is* dealing with a mental health issue, ask yourself: have they been diagnosed by a professional? Are they seeking help or taking medications? Do they act abusively toward others (friends, family, coworkers), not just you? **"I grew up in a violent home where I experienced or witnessed abuse"**

There are a lot of people who grow up in violent homes who choose not to abuse their partners. Many choose this *because* of how they grew up — they know how it felt to live in that situation and they want healthier relationships for their partner and their family.

Do you find *yourself* making these excuses for how you act toward your partner? Or, on the other hand, do any of these excuses sound similar to what you've heard your partner tell you when they're treating you badly?

Being able to recognize excuses for what they are — blames, minimizations, denials — can be a step toward realizing that abuse is never the fault of the person on the receiving end. Remember: partners who are abusive *always* have a choice about their words and actions. Source: [The Hotline](#)

# Hyde County Hotline

Offers

Crisis Intervention, Advocacy and Prevention

Confidential Emergency Shelter

**24 Hour Crisis Line 252-925-2500**

PO Box 335

Engelhard, NC 27824

Tel: (252-)925-2502

## WHAT WE DO

- Crisis Intervention
- Domestic and Sexual Advocacy
- Human Trafficking Advocacy
  - Survivor Services
    - Safe Shelter
    - Support Groups
    - Referrals
- Programs and Presentations
- Participates with DSS Work First Program
  - And Whole Lot More

## OUR MISSION

The purpose of Hyde County Hotline, Inc. is to work to eliminate domestic abuse, sexual victimization and Human Trafficking and provide safe shelter in Hyde County, North Carolina through the collaborative efforts of a compassionate community. We promote dignity, respect and safety at home resulting in safer communities.

### Wish List for Hyde County Hotline

Free shipping on wish list purchases over \$50.



[Wish List for Hyde County Hotline](#)

[DomesticShelters.org](http://DomesticShelters.org)



Hyde  
County  
Hotline

Serving victims of Domestic Abuse  
and Sexual Victimization

**24 Hour Crisis Line**  
**252-925-2500**

PO Box 335, Engelhard, NC 27824  
Advocacy Office 252-925-2502



## Support Hyde County Hotline.

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com),

Amazon donates.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-4410673>



 Nothing Compares



**FYSB** Family & Youth  
Services Bureau

Family Violence Prevention  
& Services Program

**Thank you to the family Violence Prevention Services Program  
US DHHS, and NC Council for Women for financial support.**