

## Definition of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, which adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners.

### Key elements of domestic violence:

- Conduct perpetrated by adults or adolescents against their intimate partners in current or former dating, married or cohabiting relationships of heterosexuals, gay men, and lesbians.
- A pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks as well as economic coercion.
- A pattern of behaviors including a variety of tactics - some physically injurious and some not, some criminal and some not - carried out in multiple, sometimes daily episodes.
- A combination of physical attacks, terrorist acts, and controlling tactics used by perpetrators that result in fear as well as physical and psychological harm to victims and their children.
- A pattern of purposeful behavior, directed at achieving compliance from or control over the victim.