

Do You Know the FACTS About Family Violence?

Decide whether you think each statement below is **TRUE** or **FALSE**, then look on the other side for the **FACTS**.

- T F **1** *It's not against the law to slap your own spouse.*
- T F **2** *"Battering" means beating someone to the point of bleeding or broken bones.*
- T F **3** *Alcohol and drug abuse cause family violence.*
- T F **4** *Battering is passed from generation to generation.*
- T F **5** *Men being injured by women is just as big a problem as women being injured by men.*
- T F **6** *Most victims of family violence are not seriously injured.*
- T F **7** *If a battered women would leave her abuser, she'd be safe.*
- T F **8** *The police can't do much about family violence.*
- T F **9** *Arresting batterers and putting them in jail will end family violence.*
- T F **10** *Violence in someone else's family is not my business.*

Answers ►



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ANSWERS

- 1. False.** A slap is a form of assault. Texas law specifies that assault of another person, *including one's spouse*, is illegal.
- 2. False.** Battering (the same as assault) means causing bodily injury. Under Texas law, that includes causing pain. There does not have to be any visible injury at all.
- 3. False.** Many people who are violent toward family members never drink or use drugs. Others drink or use drugs but never batter. So we cannot say that alcohol or drugs cause family violence. However, about 60% of family violence cases also *involve* substance abuse; and when both are occurring, both are harder to stop.
- 4. True.** Children learn from their experiences—including violence. It is more likely that an adult man who was abused as a child or saw his mother being battered will abuse his wife or girlfriend.
- 5. False.** Of all the abused adults with visible injuries, 95% are women. While it's true that some women do hit men, it's the other way around in most cases.
- 6. False.** Battering causes more injury to women than auto accident, street mugging, and rape combined. More than one-third of women seen in emergency rooms have been recently battered.
- 7. False.** Threats, harassment, and assaults often escalate just after a battered woman leaves her abuser. Leaving can be the most dangerous time in the relationship. That's why it's important for her to go to a safe, secure place such as a battered women's shelter.
- 8. False.** Texas law permits immediate arrest for suspected family violence, and many police departments now make such arrests. An average of 75% of urban police time and 35% of rural police time is spent responding to family violence.
- 9. False.** Arrest and jail alone are not usually enough to make a batterer permanently stop being violent. Counseling is also necessary. However, arresting and jailing batterers is important because it temporarily stops their violence and lets them know that our society does not tolerate battering.
- 10. False.** One-half of American females experience family violence at some time in their lives; your daughter, sister, or neighbor could be next. That makes it your business. Family violence also touches your pocketbook. As a taxpayer, you are affected every time police answer a family violence call or a woman visits an emergency room because of battering.

What You Can Do To STOP Family Violence

- ▶ Call police *immediately* if you are aware of a battering in progress.
- ▶ Don't laugh at jokes that involve adults hitting each other. They're not funny anymore.
- ▶ Support your local battered women's shelter through contributing or volunteering.
- ▶ Tell your local, state, and national elected officials that you support strong laws against family violence and you want those laws enforced.
- ▶ Stay informed by joining the **Texas Council on Family Violence**. Call our office for a membership application.