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Domestic Violence Awareness Month



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The Monthly Brief

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DV AWARENESS MONTH

Don't stay silent. Join us as we speak up all month long.

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship.



Domestic violence does not discriminate. Anyone of any race, age, sex, religion or gender can be a victim – or perpetrator – of domestic violence. It can happen to people who are married, living together or who are dating. It affects people of all backgrounds and education levels.

Domestic violence includes behaviors that physically harm, arouse fear, prevent a partner from doing what they wish or force them to behave in ways they do not want. It includes the use of physical and sexual violence, threats, intimidation, emotional abuse and economic deprivation. Many of these different forms of domestic violence abuse can be occurring at any one time within the same intimate relationship.

Every October, we rededicate ourselves to breaking the cycle. Here are just a few ways to [learn more about DV](#) or get help:

In Seminole: [Safe House of Seminole](#)

In Brevard: [Serene Harbor](#) (321) 726-8282

Nationally: [The Hotline](#) (800) 799-7233

State Attorney Advocates:

Seminole (407) 665-6116

Brevard: (321) 617-7510 x52775

*TheHotline.org

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Robotexts Are Rising

If you have a cell phone, you've probably noticed an increase in text messages from people you don't know. According to call-security firm RoboKiller, Americans are receiving 18% more spam texts, also known as smishing, compared to last year. The FTC reported \$330 million in losses last year to fraudulent texts. Likely this is just a fraction of losses, given vast underreporting by fraud victims. **What you should know:**

Be suspicious of any unsolicited text message, especially if it claims there is an issue [with your bank](#), retail accounts, or a package delivery problem. Also a government agency reporting DMV issues or missed court. Beware of any free prizes, gift cards, or coupon deals. In all these you'll be asked to click a link to learn more, but don't do it!

Crooks use caller ID spoofing to pose as the real or trusted source. The links lead to fake websites like a bank, and try to get you to "log in" to steal your account credentials. Sometimes the links will install malware on your device. **What to watch out for:**

#1:Check for misspellings or grammar mistakes in messages **#2:**Watch for fake or generic names that don't match. **#3:**Never click links in unsolicited messages-verify the info by contacting the company independently. **#4:**Forward scam texts to your wireless provider at 7726 or "SPAM" **#5:**Report scams to the [Federal Trade Commission](#) or the [Consumer Protection Agency](#) for your state. Learn more about [scams and fraud from the AARP](#)

*AARP

MORE PUPPY & PET SCAMS!



Pet scammers post fake litters online or [pretend to be someone they're not \(usually an existing breeder\)](#) to take advantage of shoppers. Too often victims will find the perfect pet, send the 'breeder' money, but never receive an animal or any communication in return. Not only is this a nationwide problem, but locally in [Flagler County](#) during the pandemic, and now a Brevard County couple have reported an incident. Click [here to watch the WKMG News Report](#).

Typically these crooks will operate on Craigslist and social media platforms, posting stock photos of animals like the one above. Sometimes a quick image search on Google or [TinEye](#) will reveal the deception. But there are other red flags to look for.

No phone calls: The seller communicates by email, avoiding the phone. This is typically to hide their real location. A reputable breeder will always communicate with you via phone or video chat (if not in person) before selling you a puppy. **Copycat Descriptions:** In addition to photos, ad text will often be copied across multiple websites. Google the text looking for other matches. **Untraditional payment requests:** Beware if the seller asks for wiring of money or payment by gift cards. Avoid payment apps, as credit cards and PayPal offer greater fraud protection and a chance to recover your money. Finally and most important **The price is too good to be true.**

Learn more visit [BBB Pet Scams](#), and how to identify legitimate breeders at [American Kennel Club](#) online, or call them at 919-233-9767. * Source AKC, BBB, WESH, FCSO, WKPRC