

Facts

WHY DOESN'T SHE JUST LEAVE ALREADY?

Most people believe that abuse victims will be safe once they separate from the abuser. They also believe that victims are free to leave their abusers at any time. However, leaving the abuser often does not put an end to the violence. Abusers frequently escalate the violence as way of coercing the victim into reconciliation or as a way of retaliating for the victim's perceived abandonment or rejection of the abuser.

Research confirms that:

- Up to 3/4 of domestic assaults reported to law enforcement agencies are inflicted after the separation of the couple.
- Battered women seek medical attention for injuries sustained as a consequence of domestic violence significantly more often after separation than during cohabitation; about 75% of the visits to emergency rooms by battered women occur after separation (Stark and Flitcraft, 1988).
- Almost 1/4 of women killed by their male partners were separated or divorced from the men who killed them. Another 1/4 of the women killed were attempting to end the relationship when they were killed.
- Women are most likely to be murdered by the abuser when attempting to report abuse or leave the abusive relationship.

WHY DOESN'T SHE GET A RESTRAINING ORDER?

Restraining/protection orders are not that easy to obtain because the legal definition of domestic violence is very specific.

Research confirms that:

- In more than 40% of cases where the abuser has a conviction, he will ignore the order.
- More than 17% of domestic violence homicide victims have a protection order against the perpetrator at the time of the killing.
- In one study, nearly half of the victims who obtained a protection order were re-abused within two years.
- 17% of women with temporary protection orders did not return for a protection order due to inability to serve process.