

# "ARE YOU SAFE AT HOME?"

## Virtual Celebrations and the Pandemic

Holidays can be a time of joy and relaxation for victim/survivors, but may also be a source of stress and anxiety. This year, family and friends may gather virtually to celebrate and catch up with loved ones. Family and friends can take note of several cues that may indicate a loved one is being hurt in their relationship and might need help.



### DURING A VIRTUAL VISIT OR CELEBRATION

Possible cues to watch out for before or during virtual celebrations:

- A loved one's agitation, fear, or a startle response around a partner;
- Visible injuries and inconsistent explanations for those injuries;
- A loved one's sudden and unexpected excuses for not being able to attend the visit;
- A partner appearing to coerce a loved one into drinking more than they would like;
- A partner making unkind remarks about what a loved one is eating or has cooked;
- A partner listening in on the meeting and "monitoring" conversations or answering questions for your loved one without giving them a chance to speak;
- Yelling, slamming doors, breaking dishware, or signs of property damage in the background of the call.

If you notice some potential warning signs before or during a virtual holiday get-together, there are some simple steps you can take, keeping in mind that conversations about abuse or unhealthy relationships should occur one-on-one, not in front of friends, family, or partners.



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VIOLENCE FREE  
MINNESOTA

## TIPS FOR HELPING A LOVED ONE:



- Ask your loved one if they would like an individual “catch-up” call after the holidays.
- At the end of the visit, find a few minutes to talk with your loved one alone to let them know that you’re concerned about some of the things you’ve noticed.
- Find a few minutes alone to ask if your loved one is interested in being connected with a domestic violence resource such as a hotline.
  - If yes, ask them what the safest method for sharing this information is - via the chatbox? Verbally so they can write it down, add it under a different contact name in their phone, or memorize it? Via text?
    - Minnesota's DayOne 24/7 Crisis Hotline:  
Call: 1.866.223.1111      Text: 612.399.9995
- Let your loved one know that you care about them, miss them, and are looking forward to seeing them again. Oftentimes, people in abusive relationships may be insulted or criticized frequently, and a caring word can make a big difference.
- Share information about how to clear the browser history on their device(s).



While we can't all be together physically this year for the holidays, virtual celebrations are a great option. For victim/survivors who may be more isolated than ever, they offer a critical opportunity to share kindness, warmth, and support during what may be a very stressful time of year.