# Definitions to Consider

Domestic Violence or Intimate Partner Violence:

A pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual intended to exert power and control over another individual in the context of an intimate or family relationship.

pattern: Domestic violence involves more than one incident of violence. It includes a wide variety of abusive behaviors and usually increases in frequency and intensity over time.

abusive behaviors: Abusive behaviors may include, but are not limited to, physical assaults, verbal assaults, threats, intimidation, use of weapons, destruction of property, violence towards other people or pets, sexual violence, and control over economic resources.

intended to exert power and control: This pattern of behaviors is not a matter of coincidence or the result of a time-limited crisis. Rather, it is an ongoing pattern in the relationship by which one person attempts to control how the other person thinks, feels, and acts.

intimate or family relationship: A relationship between two people intended to provide emotional and physical intimacy.

Healthy Relationship:

A connection between people that increases well-being, is mutually enjoyable, and enhances or maintains each individual’s positive self-concept.

Sexual Violence:

Conduct of a sexual nature which is non-consensual, and is accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and/or power of authority.

conduct of a sexual nature: Sexual violence includes a wide range of sexual behaviors and sexual activity. Some examples include rape, forced sodomy, incest, child sexual abuse, unwanted sexual contact or touching, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and sex trafficking, sexual harassment, public masturbation, and voyeurism.

non-consensual: Sexual violence occurs when someone experiences sexual activity that she or he *did not consent to* or *did not want*. Consent cannot be given if a person is underage, drunk, high, unconscious, or physically or mentally incapacitated. A person can change her or his mind about sexual activity at any time and withdraw consent.

Healthy Sexuality:

Healthy sexuality is the capacity to understand, enjoy, and control one’s own sexual and reproductive behavior in a voluntary and responsible manner that enriches individuals and their lives. Sexuality is an integral part of the human experience with physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions. Healthy sexuality is often characterized by: communication, individuality, trust, understanding, respect, empathy, honesty, self-confidence, equality, mutual support, choice, and enjoyment.