



Community plays a vital role in creating safe, supportive environments where individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. Strong communities are built on trust, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for one another’s well-being. When people feel connected, they are more likely to speak up, seek help, and support others in times of need. A healthy community does not ignore harm—it works together to prevent it and respond with care and accountability.

Healthy conversations are the foundation of strong relationships and effective conflict resolution. Open, respectful communication allows people to express feelings, set boundaries, and address disagreements without fear or harm. Conflict is a natural part of human relationships, but how it is handled matters. Learning to listen, communicate calmly, and resolve conflict safely reduces the risk of emotional or physical harm and helps prevent situations from escalating into abuse.

Awareness of interpersonal abuse is essential for both prevention and early intervention. Interpersonal abuse can take many forms, including human trafficking, stalking or harassment, and teen dating violence. These forms of abuse often rely on manipulation, control, and isolation, making them difficult to recognize. Educating individuals—especially young people—about warning signs, power imbalances, and unhealthy behaviors helps break cycles of silence and stigma.

Teen dating violence, stalking, and trafficking can occur in any community and affect individuals regardless of background. Teaching young people what healthy relationships look like, how to recognize red flags, and where to seek help empowers them to protect themselves and others. Awareness creates a culture where abuse is not normalized or dismissed, and where victims are believed and supported.

Knowing is a powerful form of prevention. When communities prioritize education, healthy communication, and awareness of interpersonal abuse, they create safer spaces for everyone. Awareness leads to action—action that saves lives, strengthens relationships, and builds communities rooted in safety, respect, and care.

INDEX	PAGE
Awareness Months	1
What is Human Trafficking	2
Too Good Too Be True	3
Too Good Too Be True	4
HAVEN 2025 Stats	5
Testimonials Save the Date	6
HAVEN Needs	7
Thank you’s	8
Electronic Giving	8

Mission Statement

HAVEN is a champion to people who have experienced abuse. We provide safety, shelter and assistance to victims and survivors in a free and confidential manner. Through education and advocacy, we support their journey of empowerment to achieve economic and emotional independence.

Understanding is Awareness

What Is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a crime where someone forces, tricks, or pressures another person to work or provide services, including paid sexual acts. This pressure can be physical or emotional. Any commercial sex involving a minor is considered human trafficking, even if no force was used.

Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is different from sex work because of **consent**. Sex workers choose their clients, hours, rates, and services. Victims of sex trafficking do **not** have a choice—they are told who their clients are, forced to work long hours, and often get little or no pay.

Labor Trafficking

Labor trafficking is more common than sex trafficking but often goes unnoticed. Victims are tricked with false job offers that promise education, food, housing, pay, or medical care. Once they arrive, the reality is very different.

Traffickers may take victims' documents, like IDs or visas, and demand repayment for everything—food, lodging, travel, even the victim's time. This creates a cycle of debt that traps victims and keeps them from leaving.

Who Are the Victims?

There is no single type of trafficking victim. Victims can be people of any age, race, gender, background, or citizenship status. However, traffickers often target people who are more vulnerable, such as homeless or runaway youth, undocumented immigrants, people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, migrant workers, people with disabilities, and those facing poverty or unstable housing.

How Trafficking Happens

Traffickers often use false promises of love, money, or a better life to gain control. Victims may then be forced to work in unsafe conditions for little or no pay. Victims can be U.S. citizens or people from other countries.

Where Trafficking Occurs

Human trafficking can happen in many places, including homes, farms, factories, restaurants, hotels, nail salons, massage parlors, and online. It happens in communities across the United States.

Who Are Traffickers?

Traffickers can be strangers, friends, family members, or romantic partners. They may act alone or in groups. While many people assume traffickers are men, women can also be traffickers. Only about 20% of traffickers start as strangers.

Supporting Survivors

Survivors need time, patience, and support. They do not need to be “saved,” but helped with basic needs, healing, and rebuilding their confidence.

Too Good to Be True?

We've all seen the movies and heard the songs about whirlwind romances that turn into lifelong soul-mates...but unfortunately in real experience, there's much less chance of a happy ending. We know that people who behave abusively towards their romantic partners are often very charming and can even seem "perfect" in the beginning. For this reason, love at first sight can be a dangerous idea. Below are some red flags to look out for if you're wondering if your partner or relationship might be too good to be true.

My partner wouldn't take no for an answer.

In movies, we often see "romantic" storylines where someone is turned down for a date, but continues to pursue—even harass—the object of their affection until they agree to go out, after which point the two fall deeply in love. This is not only unrealistic, it's also unhealthy and disrespectful. You never owe anyone anything—if you say "no" to a date, that should be the end of the conversation. Someone who doesn't take no for an answer from the beginning is very likely to continue to do so as the relationship progresses, and this can lead to concerns about consent or stalking.

My partner showers me with compliments (love bombing).

It's nice to hear how wonderful you are (because really, you are quite wonderful!) but there's a difference between a genuine compliment and a *tactic* to get you to let your guard down. When the compliments are replaced with criticism and contempt, heartbroken survivors of abuse just want their partner to go back to being the sweet, loving person they were in the beginning of the relationship. Unfortunately, we know that's highly unlikely because abuse is all about maintaining power and control.

My partner acts differently around me than everyone else.

It's definitely normal to see a different side of your partner as you grow to better know and trust each other. However, if you realize your partner is putting on a front for everyone except you, that's when the red flags start waving. There's an expression—when someone tells you or shows you who they are, **believe them**. If you're the only person who ever witnesses your partner's temper, pettiness, or irrational behaviors, that tells you they can choose to control themselves...when they want to. And if no one else ever sees your partner's true colors, that can add to the gaslighting you might also be experiencing. One helpful way to keep the facts straight for yourself is to keep a journal (if it's safe), so you have your own record of what happened, who said what, and how you felt.

My partner is jealous of other people I spend time with.

Although it's a myth that jealousy stems from love, lots of people still think that if their partner *isn't* jealous, that means they don't love them. While jealousy is a perfectly normal emotion, it's crucial to cope with feelings of jealousy in healthy ways. The fact is, it's important for everyone to have friends with all types of people, and to have a life outside their romantic relationship. If your partner gets jealous when your cousin texts you or when you're laughing at an inside joke with an old friend, take note. If they try to control or limit who you talk to or spend time with outside the relationship, that crosses the line into abuse.

We NEVER disagree on anything.

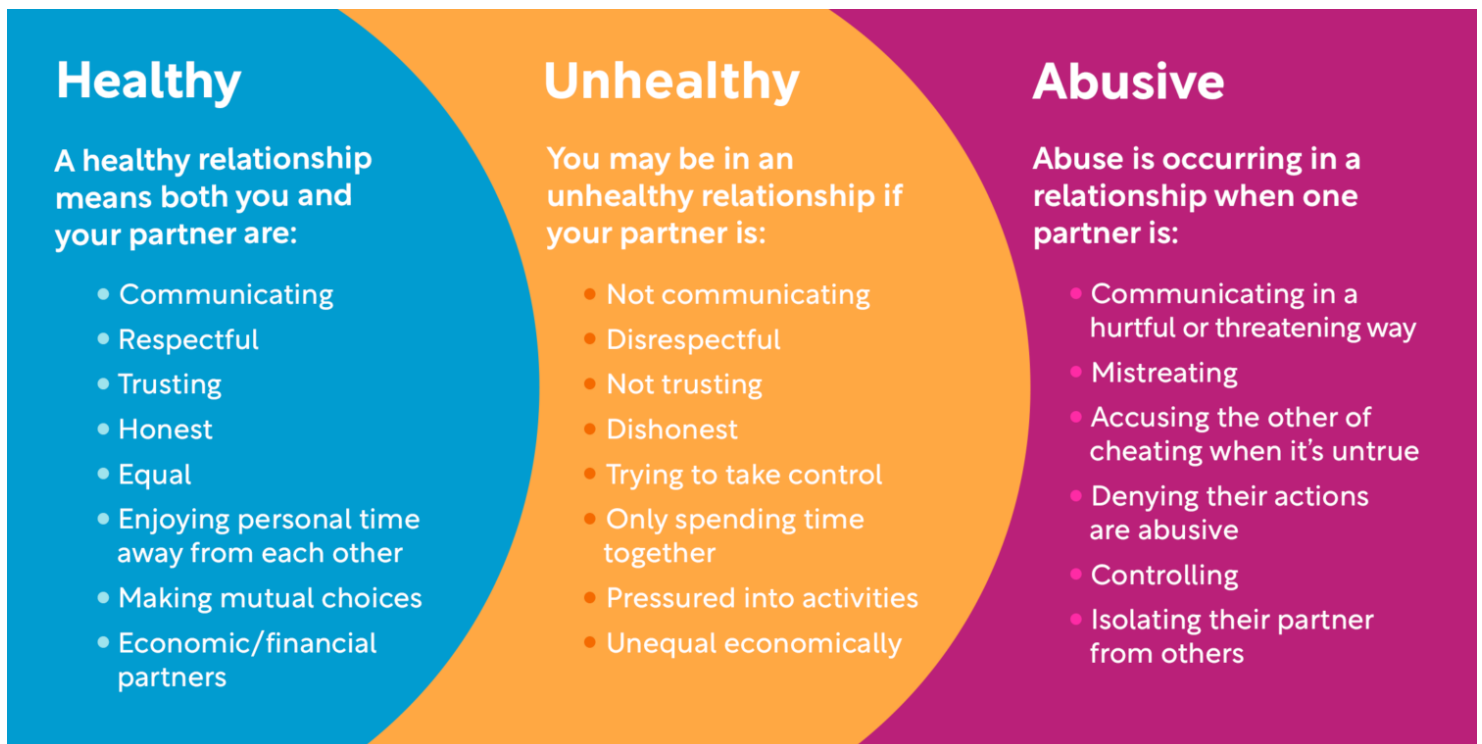
Happy couples never fight, right? Actually, because relationships are made of individual human beings there is *no way* two or more people will ever agree on everything 100%. If your partner always tells you what you want to hear (more love bombing), or if you tell your partner what they want to hear out of fear of upsetting them (appeasement), that is concerning. Conflict doesn't have to be unhealthy. In fact, respectfully handling a disagreement can really strengthen your relationship!

We committed very quickly.

This goes back to love at first sight being an unhealthy idea. Building trust--which is the *foundation* of a healthy relationship--takes time. Because we know that abuse tends to get worse and more dangerous as a relationship progresses from one stage to the next (talking, dating, living together, marriage, kids, divorce, etc.), it's always concerning to hear from people who said "I love you" within days or were engaged within months. No matter what kind of promises you've made to your partner, remember that everyone has the right to end any relationship at any time for any reason.

My partner insists on constant contact through use of technology.

Red flags of controlling or cyberstalking by a partner include: telling you who you can or can't follow or be friends with on social media; sending you negative, insulting, or threatening messages or emails; using social media to track your activities; insulting or humiliating you in their posts online, including posting unflattering photos or videos; sending, requesting, or pressuring you to send unwanted explicit photos or videos, sexts, or otherwise compromising messages; stealing or pressuring you to share your account passwords; constantly texting you or making you feel like you can't be separated from your phone; looking through your phone or checking up on your pictures, texts, and phone records; using any kind of technology (such as spyware or GPS in a car or phone) to monitor your activities.



Information sourced and adapted from www.loveisrespect.org

Take the quiz: <https://www.loveisrespect.org/quiz/is-your-relationship-healthy/?%3E>

HAVEN INC. CLIENT STATISTICS 2025

Total Unduplicated # of Adult Clients: 136

Total Unduplicated # of Child Clients: 50

Total # of Clients Served: 186

Domestic Abuse Clients: 67

Sexual Assault Clients: 18

Clients with both Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault/Abuse Issues: 74

Child Abuse: 20

Elder Abuse: 2

Harassment: 3

Stalking: 2

Lincoln: 137

Out of State: 1

Irma: 6

Gleason: 3

Merrill: 101

Tomahawk: 27

Clark: 4

Manitowoc: 1

Price: 1

Marathon: 19

Taylor: 4

Rusk: 1

Dane: 2

Oconto: 1

Vilas: 3

Wood: 1

Oneida: 4

Racine: 1

Fond du Lac: 3

Winnebago: 1

Langlade: 1

Milwaukee: 1

Nights of Shelter- 2025

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
# of adults	3	4	4	5	3	2	3	4	5	7	4	4	
# of children	10	10	10	10	1	1	1	5	3	4	7	7	
Total Nights	403	373	362	358	82	52	101	102	164	142	289	341	2769

Testimonials of 2025

“I am very grateful to HAVEN, to all its employees and directors. May God greatly bless them, watch over each of their employees and families, and protect them from harm and danger.”

“I will never be able to repay you for everything you do for me.”

“I was so scared through the court process but with the support of my advocate, I could be scared knowing I had someone in my corner.”

“The thought of coming into the shelter because I had no where else to go was horrible. I dreaded the worst but realized quick that the staff are super supportive and provide the resources needed to get on my feet and out of shelter.”

“Thank you for listening and always supporting me. I would not be this strong and calm without you guys.”

Save the Date!

Wear Orange to help support
ending Teen Dating Violence

When: February 11, 2026

Children’s Fest

When: March 30, 2026

Where: Merrill Enrichment Center
Merrill, WI

HAVEN 2nd Annual Benefit

When: June 20, 2026

Where: Normal Park, Merrill, WI

City Wide Rummage Sale

When: May 15-17, 2026

Where: 1106 E 8th Street, Merrill, WI

Merrill Food Truck –a– Palooza

When: May 16, 2026

Where: Lincoln County Fair Ground,
Merrill, WI

NEEDED

VOLUNTEERS FOR:

- FUNDRAISING
- EVENTS
- SHELTER ADVOCATE SUPPORT
- COURT WATCH
- PUBLIC AWARENESS
- TRANSPORTATION
- SEASONAL YARD WORK

*VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CAN
RANGE FROM SHORT-TERM TO
LONG-TERM
TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED*

WISH LIST:

- BODY WASH
 - DISHWASHER SOAP
 - TOILET BOWL CLEANER
 - DIAPERS - SIZE 5/6
 - LIP BLAM/CHAPSTICK
 - TAMPONS - SUPER
 - KLEENEX
 - THERMAL GLOVES
 - NON-PERISHABLE SNACKS
 - JUICE (BOTTLE OR BOX)
- *GROCERY, GAS & PHONE CARDS***

CONTACT US:



HAVEN, INC.
HOUSEHOLD ABUSE VICTIM EMERGENCY NETWORK

TRINA - VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
DROP OFF OR CALL M-F * 8:00AM - 4:00PM
1106 E 8TH ST, MERRILL, WI
PHONE: 715-536-1300



THANK YOU, DONORS

Our sincere thanks to the donors listed below, who made contributions and in-kind donations to HAVEN from 9-25-2025 to 12-31-2025.

We have made every effort to acknowledge these gifts correctly.

Marcia Jannusch
Immanuel Lutheran Church
James Blair
Plant Garden Center
Redeemer Ladies Guild
Z Best Storage
Grace Lutheran Church
Thomas Mueller
PCA
Merrill City Band
Mardell Simon
Randall Zelent
Advanced Solutions
Joanne Opsahl
Diana Smith
Robbin Harder
Anonymous X 18
Dave's County Market
Holly Henrich
Rodney Wright
Catherine LeMay-Brown
Perceptor Alpha Beta
Robert Marlowe
Jane Ann Savaske
Jill Moore
Kathleen Graham
Jan Fredrickson
Ayla Hougard
Dalien Franklin
Peggy Najarian
Trinity Dorcas Society
Patrick Moreland
United Way
Rebecca Flatau
Sisters of Mercy
Our Saviour's Lutheran
Korrine O'Malley
Gleason Area Lions Club

Lincoln County Retired
Linda Semling-Peterson
Jean Perkins
Penny Callahan
Jennifer Kaminski
Jeffrey Hanson
Edward Gruett
Karen Jantz
Shirley Engel
Holy Cross Sisters
United Women in Faith
Rose Skic
Kristen Lonergan
Elizabeth Ostrofsky
Patrick Henderhan
Celeste
Lynn W
Church Mutual
Audrey Voigt
Carrie Anderson
Doreen Shaker
Kim
Yong Mi Preisler
Madison
Amy K
Danette
Cat Vandergeest
Lydia Torres
Marnie Krainik
St. Francis
Branden
Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
Jade Rzentkowski
Shella Winter
Arliss
Ed Welch
Trina DeLasky
United Women in Faith-Tomahawk

Lori Wendt
Merrill Iron & Steel
Ed & Sharon's Restaurant
Four Rivers Quilt
Mary Wydeven
Ulla
Crystal
Mergert's Mouthwatering Mayhem
Tim Zimmerman
Pam Seehafer
Shelly Priebusch

Thank you



SUPPORT US WITH *ELECTRONIC GIVING!*

— FAST & EASY ONE-TIME GIFTS —



HAVEN ADVOCATE



HAVENINC

— SET UP REOCCURING GIFTS THROUGH YOUR BANK —



1. Use your bank's online bill system
2. Add our organization as a payee
3. Schedule your preferred monthly donation

— WHY GIVE ELECTRONICALLY? —

- Secure & convenient
- Helps plan your giving
- Provides consistent support for our mission



**NEED HELP SETTING UP?
CONTACT US AT:**

EMAIL
PHONE

EXECUTIVEDIRECTOR@HAVENINC.ORG
715-536-1300

HOUSEHOLD ABUSE VICTIMS EMERGENCY NETWORK

HAVEN, INC.



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Merrill, WI
Permit No. 63