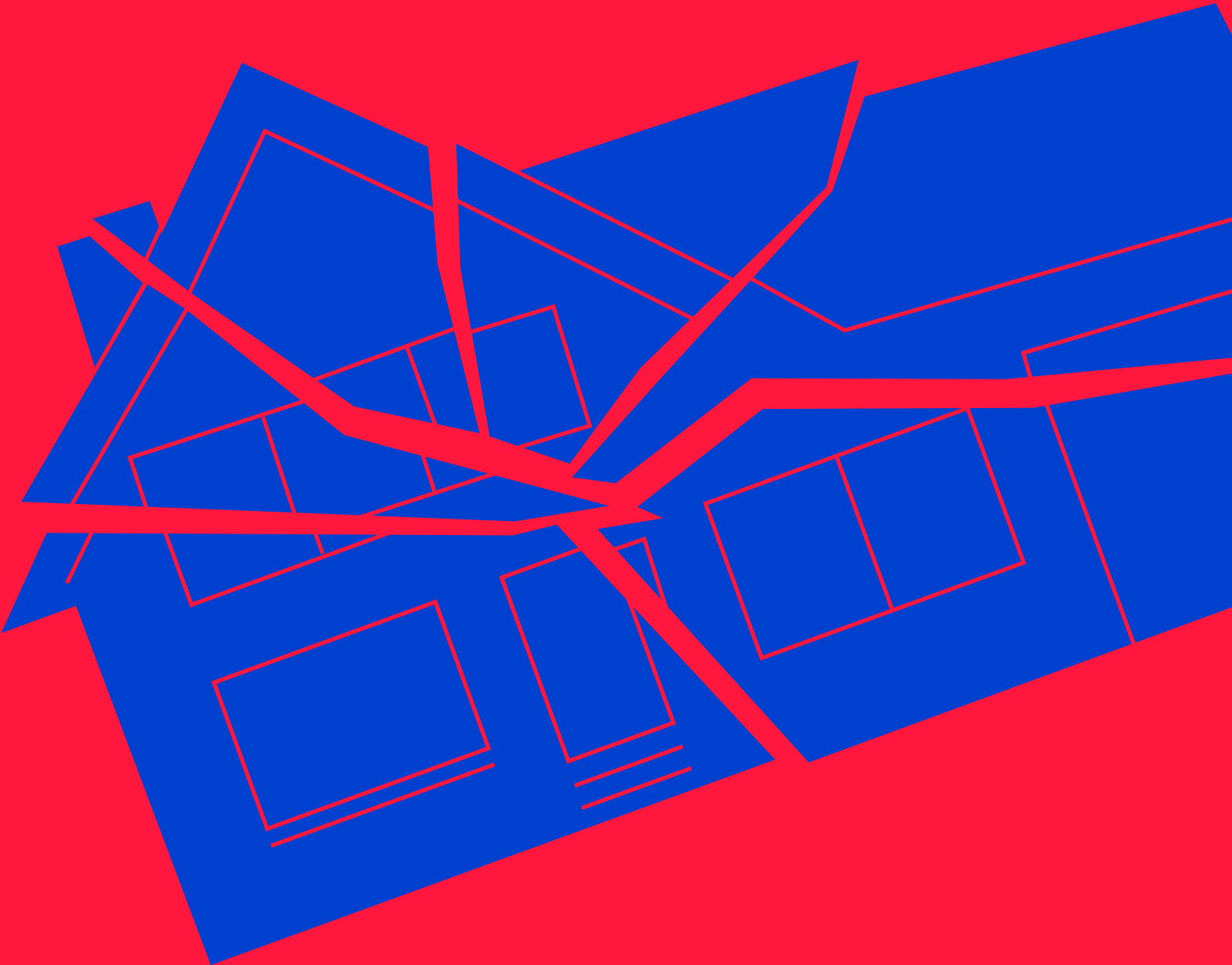


Domestic Violence: A Major Public Health Problem

American College of Surgeons
Committee on Trauma
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM

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WHAT IT IS

- Exertion of control over another (physical, sexual, psychological)
- Leading cause of serious injury to women
- Repeat occurrences common

WHO IS VULNERABLE

- Elderly
- Domestic partners
- Children
- No diagnostic profile
- Crosses all boundaries

WHEN TO SUSPECT

- Nontraumatic complaints (headaches, ulcers, pelvic pain)
- Inconsistent history
- Physical signs (bruises in various stages over thighs, perineum, breasts; belt marks; burns)

HOW TO IDENTIFY

- Asking these 3 questions will identify 65%–70%:
 1. Have you been kicked, hit, punched, or hurt by someone in the last year?
 2. Do you feel safe in your current relationship?
 3. Is there a partner from a previous relationship who makes you feel unsafe now?

WHAT TO DO

- Immediate care of injury
- Reassure
- Determine immediate threat
- Treat related medical problems
- Document (photos, body maps)

SAFETY PLAN

- Isolate victim from abuser
- Develop alternate destination
- Provide referral phone numbers/agencies
- Respect difficulty to leave partner