

What Can You Do To Protect Against Physical Abuse?

How does one person protect himself or herself from being physically abused? What can you do to help your family member or friend from being a victim of abuse?

Family and Friends:

- Get educated! Take part in training classes that may be offered in your community. Learn to spot abuse and how to report it. Educated consumers and families are the best defense! If you can't find a class, ask for one.
- Post phone numbers for calling for help. Make sure everyone knows who to call and when to call.
- Visit the home or day program where your family or friend gets services. You should be polite and respectful and not interfere with work, but you should be welcome at any time.
- People who have close friends or are close with their family are less likely to be abused. Help your friend or family member to have at least one safe adult that they can talk to and trust.
- If your friend or family member does not talk, seek help in getting a way for him or her to communicate better. Some examples are: a buzzer attached to a wheelchair, pictures in a small notebook, sign language, or perhaps an electronic device. People are safer when they can let others know that they need help.

Consumers:

- Stay away from people who use drugs and alcohol. This can lead to trouble like having someone try to take your money or someone trying to get you to do things you don't want to do.
- If someone tries to hurt you, get away from them and try to get help.
- If someone does abuse you or hurt you, tell someone you trust like a teacher, friend or police officer, the first chance you get.
- Know where phone numbers are located to call for help.
- Get educated. You may want to take a class. Ask your counselor or case manager if there is training for consumers about ways to prevent being abused.