

# CHOOSE YOUR PARTNER WISELY TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD

**No one wants to believe that a loving boyfriend can harm a child.**

But it happens way too much.

Even if you know the signs of an abuser, it may take some time for someone to act that way. It's important for the safety of your child that you know your partner well before deciding to live together.

Did you know that a child in a home with a live-in boyfriend is 11 times more likely to be abused than a child living with married parents?

For younger children the news is even worse. A child under age 5 faces a greater risk of being fatally abused when living with his or her mother and a boyfriend.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF while dating your boyfriend include:

- \* Does he have mood swings?
- \* Is he controlling or jealous?
- \* Does he abuse drugs or alcohol?
- \* Has he behaved violently to you or your child?
- \* Does he try to keep you away from your friends/family?
- \* Does he criticize you?
- \* Is he angry when your child misbehaves or cries?

**If you answer YES at least once, to the questions above, your child has an increased risk for possible harm.**



**How can you best protect your child when choosing a partner? Here are some steps to take:**

- \* Take time getting to know your partner before you introduce him to your child.
- \* Pay for a background check. Check out his social media profiles and activity. Also Google him.
- \* Pay attention to how he interacts with your child. Is he respectful, attentive and loving?
- \* Help your child understand he or she can express any concerns they have with your boyfriend.
- \* Name a neighbor or trusted adult your child can go to if frightened by your partner if you are not home.

**As a single parent, it is natural to seek a partner. Choose wisely. Your son's or daughter's life may depend on it.**