

Mehdi Ali is a senior at Irvington High School. He was born in New Jersey, but moved to the Bay Area in 2010. In his free time, he loves to read books and spending time with friends and family.

Despite the growing awareness in today's society regarding the issues of sexual abuse in the workplace with the #MeToo movement, the issue of domestic violence still remains largely

overlooked. This is astonishing, especially considering the huge portion of the population that it affects.

Too often, we view domestic violence as just a women's issue. This is clearly not the case as men, women, youth, and elderly of all racial and cultural groups are affected. Domestic violence is a tragic occurrence that can directly and indirectly affect all community members. So, if we want to solve this problem, everyone must get involved.

Domestic violence is not just physical abuse, it can involve psychological, sexual, financial, emotional, and other forms of abuse and coercion, possibly with even worse effects. This makes the issue of domestic violence even more difficult to identify. To end this problem, first we must acknowledge that intimate partner violence or family violence is prevalent in all communities and we must do something to prevent it. Both men and women should do their best to end it wherever and however they can. As most domestic violence victims are women, it becomes important for us to identify and address social and cultural norms that normalize violence against women. It is important for all of us to learn warning signs of domestic violence to protect ourselves and people around us. Often times, victims do not know who to reach out to if they are being abused. We should all strive to be supportive and make it clear to our friends and family that they can tell us anything. We must take great care not to stigmatize those who face partner abuse or family violence. We must change the culture of victim blaming. Lastly, we can help by volunteering our time or donating to nonprofit organizations like Maitri that helps survivors of domestic violence and abuse.