



# HERE TO HELP DOMESTIC ABUSE

If you are experiencing abuse or using abusive behaviours there is help and support available.

Everyone has the right to live without violence, intimidation and fear.

# What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse or violence is any abuse that happens in a family or in a personal relationship. It can also happen when the relationship has ended. It may be that you don't live with the person abusing you - if abuse is happening within your personal, intimate relationship **this is domestic abuse.**



# Domestic abuse is not just about violence, it can involve many different types of behaviour and ill treatment such as:

- Physical abuse - for example, hitting, punching, kicking, pulling hair, biting, burning, choking or anything that hurts you or makes you feel afraid.
- Emotional abuse - this might be constant criticism, blaming, threatening to hurt you, your children or your family, putting you down in front of others and humiliating you.
- Sexual abuse - this might be rape, doing or saying things of a sexual nature that make you feel uncomfortable, or that physically hurt you or someone else. Refusing to practice safe sex or controlling contraception is also abusive.
- Financial abuse - this might include stealing money from you, running up debts in your name, not allowing you access to your money, spending all the money that should be for food and bills.
- Control and manipulation - this could include tracking your movements and telling you where you can go, who you can see and what you can wear. Keeping you isolated from family, friends and taking control of your life.
- Forced Marriage - being forced to marry someone you do not choose is domestic abuse and many of the different abusive behaviours might be used against you, perhaps by more than one person.
- 'Honour' based violence - if someone in your family is abusing you and defending their actions because of 'honour' this is domestic abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation - this is the damage of, removal or partial removal of female genitalia for none medical reasons. It is included as a form of domestic abuse because it is about coercive control, physical abuse and emotional trauma.

# You are not alone

**You may feel very alone in your situation and not even realise that you are experiencing domestic abuse.**

Anyone can experience domestic abuse, any age, social background, education level, working or unemployed, any ethnic background, married, single, same sex partnerships, any level of physical ability, with or without children. And anyone can be a perpetrator of abuse.

**Domestic abuse can happen in any sort of close relationship such as:**

- Married men and women in heterosexual, lesbian or gay relationships
- Unmarried partners, living together or apart
- Boyfriend and girlfriend, boyfriend and boyfriend, girlfriend and girlfriend
- Transgender relationships with women or men
- Young people who are using abusive behaviours against parents
- Adult children using tactics of abuse against their elderly parents.
- Anyone in a family being hurt or controlled by other family members

## Domestic abuse and children

If you have children, or have children living in your home, they will be affected by the domestic abuse that is happening. Even though you may be doing your very best to protect them, children who see or hear abuse can feel very frightened and confused. Children may get caught up in the middle of an assault and get hurt, or may see you being hurt and not know what to do.

**Children react to domestic abuse in many different ways depending on their age and the situation. Some common signs that a child is affected by the abuse are:**

- Becoming withdrawn, quiet or upset
- Not sleeping or eating well, starting to wet the bed again
- Wanting to stay home from school because they are too worried to leave you
- Feeling like the abuse is their fault and trying hard to 'fix' things
- Becoming aggressive, and lashing out.

**If there are children in your home it is important that you get help to protect them and you. Children want you to be safe.**

# Can I get help?

Yes, help is available. Making the decision to get help may be difficult, you may decide to visit a website or call a helpline before getting in touch with a local service.

## Do what feels right for you.

In an emergency please call the Police on 999

- For non- emergencies call the Police on 101
- National Domestic Violence Helpline for Women  
Provided by Women's Aid and Refuge  
Freephone: 0808 2000 247  
Websites: [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)  
[www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)
- Wakefield District Domestic Abuse Service  
A comprehensive local support service  
Phone: 0800 915 1561  
Website: [www.wakefield.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/domesticabuse)
- Men's Advice Line  
For men who are victims of domestic abuse  
Phone: 0808 801 0327  
Website: [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

- Broken Rainbow  
Domestic abuse support for LGBT people  
Freephone: 0800 999 5428  
Website: [www.brokenrainbow.org.uk](http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk)
- Honour Network Helpline  
For those worried about or experiencing forced marriage and honour based crimes.  
Phone: 0800 5999247  
Website: [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)
- Social Care Direct  
For those worried about the safety of a child, vulnerable adult or older person.  
Phone: 0345 8 503 5031
- Victim Support  
Help, support and information for victims.  
Phone: 0300 303 1971  
[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Female Genital Mutilation Helpline  
Run by the NSPCC, if a girl or woman is in immediate danger of FGM call the Police on 999.  
Phone: 0800 028 3550  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)



# Here are some useful actions you can take:

- Tell someone you trust about the abuse - this could be a friend, family member, teacher, or an organisation.
- Tell your doctor about the abuse so there is a record of what has happened and so they can support you.
- Talk to family and friends about staying with them in an emergency.
- Think about escape routes to make sure both you and your children can get away safely in an emergency.
- Pack an emergency bag - include clothing, medication, money, keys, important documents, personal valuables. A mobile phone with charger will be useful.
- If you live in social housing, speak to Wakefield and District Housing about your situation, they can help you. Call them on 03458 507 507 or visit: [www.wdh.co.uk](http://www.wdh.co.uk)
- You may want to contact a solicitor about a separation, child contact or for other legal advice.
- You may need to talk to your bank if you have left your home or have joint accounts with the person who has abused you.

## **The services listed in this leaflet can help you make a safety plan.**

There may be a lot of practical things for you to sort out if you decide to leave an abusive relationship, you do not have to do it alone - the organisations listed can help you.

When you are away from the abuse and are safe, feeling better about yourself and your life can take time. You could think about the benefits of having counselling or getting emotional support from a local group. This can help you move on and reclaim your life.

**There is life after  
domestic abuse.  
You do not need  
to live in fear.**



# I am using abusive behaviours - Can I get help?

**Yes, there is help available.**

It can be really hard to admit to yourself that your behaviour is abusive and will be hurting the very people you love the most.

It takes a great deal of courage to make the decision to ask for help. No one can make the changes for you, but there is help available to support you.

Living a life free from abuse is possible; the services below can help you take the first steps.

- **Wakefield District Domestic Abuse Service**  
A comprehensive local support service for men, women and young people who are using abusive behaviours.  
Phone: 0800 915 1561  
Website: [www.wakefield.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/domesticabuse)
- **Respect**  
Help for men and women who abuse their partners.  
Phone: 0808 802 4040  
Website: [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)
- **This is ABUSE**  
A website that might be useful for you to take a look at as it clearly identifies abusive behaviours for you to think about <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

