



Domestic Violence

About domestic violence

Domestic violence “is the abuse of one partner within an intimate or family relationship. It is the repeated, random and habitual use of intimidation to control a partner,” according to Refuge, the national charity for women and children against domestic violence.

Domestic violence is the result of an abuser’s desire for power and control. The abuse can be physical, emotional, psychological, financial or sexual. If you are forced to alter your behaviour because you are frightened of your partner’s reaction, you are being abused.

Even if they are not physically harmed, children may suffer lasting emotional and psychological damage as a result of witnessing the violence.

It is important to remember that you are never to blame for someone else’s abuse and the safety of you and your children is the number one priority. The first, and most important step, is to speak to someone and get the help you need. We have listed people you can talk to in our signposting section.

The organisation Refuge (www.refuge.org.uk) offers this useful advice:

If you are being abused, it may help to remember this:

- You’re not alone. One woman in four is abused during her lifetime
- You don’t have to deal with this on your own
- The abuse is not your fault
- You cannot change your partner
- Domestic violence is against the law

Children can witness domestic violence in a variety of ways

They may be in the same room and get caught in the middle of an incident risking getting hurt, perhaps in an effort to make the violence stop. Children may be in another room but can hear the abuse or see physical injuries following an incident of violence. Or children may be forced to take part in verbally abusing the victim.

Effects of domestic violence on children and young people

All children witnessing domestic violence are experiencing emotional abuse. Children will react in different ways to being brought up in a home where there is violence. Most children, however, will be affected in some way by tension or by witnessing arguments, distressing behaviour or assaults - even if they do not always show this.

Children may:

- Have conflict including shouting and fighting
- Develop stress-related illnesses, become anxious or depressed
- Feel frightened, powerless or confused
- Feel the violence is their fault or that they ought to be able to stop it
- Have difficulty sleeping
- Have nightmares or flashbacks
- Feel unable to invite friends round out of shame, fear, or concern about what their friends may see
- Complain of physical symptoms such as tummy aches
- Start to wet their bed
- Have temper tantrums
- Feel ambivalent feelings both towards the abuser and towards the non-abusing parent
- Have problems at school or refuse to go to school, this can be in an effort to protect the non-abusing parent
- Become aggressive, violent and antisocial
- Develop or increase risky behaviour, including the use of alcohol or drugs
- Withdraw from other people
- Develop low self-esteem
- Self-harm by taking overdoses or cutting themselves

IDVAs

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates offer support to high-risk victims – both women and men - based in a range of settings such as refuges and support groups in the UK.

What can an Independent Advocate help you with?

- Creating safety plans and undertaking risk assessments
- Accompanying you to court or arranging pre-trial visits
- Supporting you to give evidence and write victim impact statements
- Requesting special measures in court including, for example, screens in court to conceal survivors so they don't have to face their abuser
- Access to refuge accommodation
- Improving security in your property so you can continue to live safely at home
- Providing emotional support and referring you to counselling or mental health services
- Liaising with social workers on child protection issues

An IDVA's role often begins at the point of crisis – for example, just after a police call-out, or when a woman goes to hospital for medical help after a violent attack.

What can help? What to do next

These are some things that can make a difference:

1. Seek help for yourself and your children. Their safety and yours are the number one priority.
2. Report incidents of violence to the police and Children's Services.
3. Contact the NSPCC (contact details in our signposting section)
4. Help your children to cope by enabling them to talk when they need to, whether it's to you, a family member, a friend, teacher or counsellor.
5. Believe that you are never to blame for someone else's abuse. It is natural to worry about what will happen when you report the violence, but it is the first and most important step to getting help and keeping you and your children safe.
6. Talk to someone you trust about your experience of domestic abuse – a family member, a friend, your GP.
7. Agree on code words when you talk if it helps you to feel safer.
8. Seek advice from professionals about housing, finances and schooling if these are issues.

Finding support

All resources listed on this sheet are for information only. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, YoungMinds cannot accept responsibility for changes to details made by other organisations.

<p>Refuge www.refuge.org.uk Offer a range of services providing support to women and children who are experiencing, or have experienced, violence or abuse - including a national domestic abuse helpline.</p> <p>Freephone helpline (open 24/7): 0808 2000 247</p> <p>Email: helpline@refuge.org.uk</p> <p>Call the helpline to find out more about their local services, including emergency temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>Women's Aid www.womensaid.org.uk Supports women and children who are experiencing, or have experienced, domestic abuse.</p> <p>Online chat support (open Monday-Friday 10am-12pm): https://chat.womensaid.org.uk</p> <p>Email (response within 5 working days): helpline@womensaid.org.uk</p> <p>Survivors forum: https://survivorsforum.womensaid.org.uk</p> <p>Survivors handbook: www.womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook</p>
<p>NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk Information and advice for adults concerned about the safety of a child.</p> <p>Open Monday to Friday 8am-10pm, and 9am-6pm at weekends.</p> <p>Phone: 0808 800 5000</p> <p>Email: help@nspcc.org.uk</p> <p>Online form: https://forms.nspcc.org.uk/content/nspcc---report-abuse-form</p> <p>If you are deaf or hard of hearing and have a webcam, you can contact them via SignVideo using British Sign Language.</p>	<p>Family Rights Group www.frg.org.uk/advice Support and advice for families whose children are in need, at risk, or in the care system.</p> <p>Open Monday-Friday 9.30am-3pm.</p> <p>Freephone helpline: 0808 801 0366</p> <p>Textphone: 18001 0808 801 0366</p> <p>Online discussion board for parents, family friends and carers: www.frg.org.uk/need-help-or-advice</p>
<p>Men's Advice Line www.mensadviceline.org.uk Advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence or abuse.</p> <p>Open Monday and Wednesday 9am-8pm, and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm.</p> <p>Helpline (free from landlines and most mobiles): 0808 801 0327</p> <p>Email: info@mensadviceline.org.uk</p>	<p>Victim Support www.victimsupport.org.uk Free and confidential support for anyone affected by a crime, including victims and witnesses and their family and friends.</p> <p>Open 24/7, every day of the year, including Christmas.</p> <p>Support line: 0808 1689 111 Textphone: 18001 0808 1689 111 Online contact form: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline/email-supportline</p>

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<p>Child Law Advice (at Coram Children's Legal Centre) www.childlawadvice.org.uk Provides free legal advice and information on child, family and education law to parents, carers and young people.</p> <p>Open Monday-Friday 8am-6pm.</p> <p>If you are calling about family or child law the number is 0300 330 5480.</p> <p>To email about family or child law, go to www.childlawadvice.org.uk/email-advice-family</p> <p>Online information about child protection: www.childlawadvice.org.uk/family/child-protection</p>	<p>Rape Crisis Centre www.rapecrisis.org.uk Support for girls and women who have experienced rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.</p> <p>Freephone helpline for girls and women aged 13+ (open daily 12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm): 0808 802 9999</p> <p>Live chat service open daily during varied hours, for women aged 16+: https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/live-chat-helpline/about-the-live-chat-helpline</p> <p>Find your local Rape Crisis Centre: https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/find-a-rape-crisis-centre</p>
<p>Barnardo's www.barnados.org.uk Provides a range of services to children, young people and families across the UK, including around domestic violence. A list of their services can be found on their website.</p>	<p>Citizens advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse Website offers information and practical and legal advice about domestic violence.</p> <p>Adviceline open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, outside of public holidays.</p> <p>Adviceline: 03444 111 444</p> <p>Text-phone: 03444 111 445</p>
<p>Childline www.childline.org.uk If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small.</p> <p>24/7 helpline: 0800 1111</p> <p>Chat 1:1 with an online counsellor: www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat</p> <p>To email: Sign up on the website, so you can send your message without needing to use your name or email address, at www.childline.org.uk/registration</p>	<p>The Mix www.themix.org.uk If you're under 25 you can talk to The Mix about anything that's troubling you over the phone, email or webchat. You can also use their phone or online counselling service.</p> <p>Helpline open daily 4-11pm: 0808 808 4994</p> <p>Email: www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team/email-us</p> <p>Webchat open daily 4-11pm: www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team</p> <p>Counselling service: www.themix.org.uk/get-support/speak-to-our-team/the-mix-counselling-service</p>

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Youth Wellbeing Directory

www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/youth-wellbeing
Lists local services for young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Youth Access

www.youthaccess.org.uk
Offers information about advice and counselling services for young people aged 12-25 years.

YoungMinds

www.youngminds.org.uk

Parents Lounge

www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-lounge

Our Parents Helpline experts answer questions on having difficult conversations with your child.

#Take20

www.youngminds.org.uk/take20

Ideas and suggestions to help parents find 20 minutes to do something together with their child to support confidence, self-esteem and resilience.

Top Tips

www.youngminds.org.uk/take20/top-tips-for-you-and-your-child

Supporting a child through a time of difficulty or change



MindEd

e-learning to support young healthy minds

www.minded.org.uk/families/index.html

MindEd for families is a website where you can hear about other parents' experiences and find clear, helpful guidance on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

If you, or someone you are caring for, is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can text the YoungMinds Crisis Messenger for free, 24/7 support.

Text YM to 85258.

Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.