



# Anyone can experience domestic abuse

A guide to support available

## What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is defined in the UK as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

Types of domestic abuse you may identify are: physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, coercive control or stalking.

## How do I report it?

Domestic abuse is a crime and should be reported to the Police. **Call 999 if it's an emergency or if you are in immediate danger.**

The Police take domestic abuse seriously and will be able to help and protect you. Contact your local neighbourhood policing team on 101 if it's not an emergency.

### Don't feel that you can report to the Police?

Contact the National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 for some free help and advice. It is a freephone number and operates 24-hours a day.

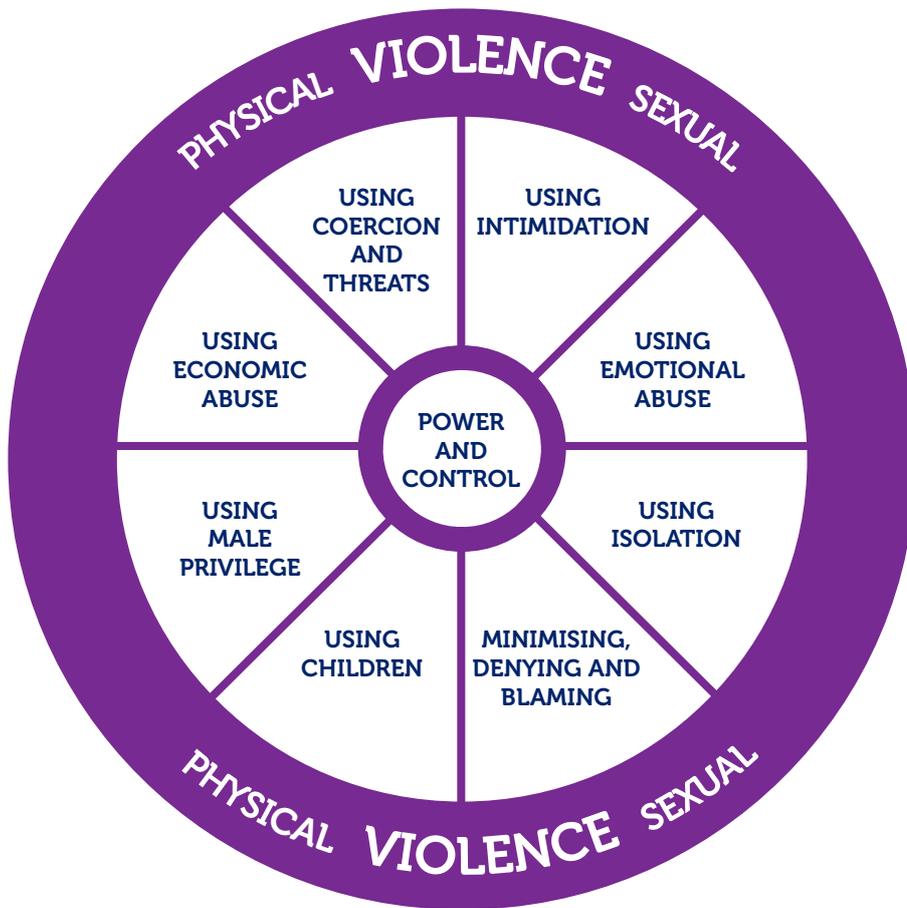
## How do I know if I am being abused?

It's not always easy to know if you're being abused. Abusers may try to persuade you that what they're doing is normal, is a sign of love or that they're really sorry. Some possible signs are:

- **You are scared of them**
- **They have hurt, or threatened to hurt, you or people you care about**
- **They force you to do things you don't want to do, including sexual acts**
- **They stop you from seeing your friends, family or people who you may go to for advice, such as a GP or social worker**
- **They have threatened to take your children away or hurt them**
- **They prevent you from continuing or starting school, college or from going to work**
- **They constantly check up on you or follow you - they may also track you via your mobile phone**
- **They wrongly accuse you of flirting or of having affairs on a regular basis**
- **They get extremely jealous and possessive**
- **They constantly humiliate you or criticise or insult you, often in front of other people**
- **You change your behaviour because you're afraid of what they might do or say to you**
- **They deliberately destroy things that belong to you**
- **They control how much money you have**
- **They blame you for the abuse**
- **They control your daily routine.**

If you're not sure whether something that has happened to you is abuse or not, it can help to imagine if you would be worried if it happened to a friend or a close relative.

The 'power and control wheel' is also a useful tool to help identify signs of an abusive relationship.



### Using intimidation

Making you afraid by using looks, actions, gestures  
• smashing things • destroying property • abusing pets • displaying weapons

### Using emotional abuse

Putting you down • making you feel bad about yourself • calling you names • making you think you're crazy • playing mind games • humiliating you • making you feel guilty

### Using isolation

Controlling what you do • limiting your outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions

### Minimising, denying and blaming

Making light of the abuse and not taking actions seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen  
• shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour

### Using children

Making you feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass • threatening to take the children away

### Using male privilege

Treating you like a servant • making all big decisions • acting like 'master of the castle'  
• defining gender roles

### Using economic abuse

Preventing you from getting a job • making you ask for money • giving you an allowance • taking your money • not letting you have access to family income

### Using coercion and threats

Making and/or carrying out threats to hurt you  
• threatening to leave or commit suicide to stop being reported to welfare • making you do illegal things

## Personal safety planning

You can't stop the abuse, only the abuser can do that. But there are things you can do to increase your own and any children in the household's safety. You're probably already doing some of these things. A personal safety plan is a way of helping you to protect yourself and your children (if you have them). It helps you plan for the possibility of future violence and abuse. It also helps you to think about how you can increase your safety either within the relationship, or if you decide to leave. Below are some tips for safety planning:

- Plan how you might respond in different situations, including crisis situations
- Think about the different options that may be available to you
- Keep with you any important and emergency telephone numbers (for example, your local Women's Aid refuge organisation or other domestic violence service; the police domestic violence unit; your GP; your social worker, if you have one; your children's school; your solicitor; and the Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247)
- Teach your children to call 999 in an emergency, and what they would need to say (for example, their full name, address and telephone number)
- Are there neighbours you can trust, and where you could go in an emergency? If so, tell them what is going on, and ask them to call the police if they hear sounds of a violent attack
- Rehearse an escape plan, so in an emergency you and any children can get away safely
- Pack an emergency bag for yourself and your children, and hide it somewhere safe (for example, at a neighbour's or friend's house). Try to avoid mutual friends or family.

See the suggestions below on what to pack if you are planning to leave the abuser

- Try to keep a small amount of money on you and/or debit card at all times – including change for the phone and for bus fares
- Know where the nearest phone is, and if you have a mobile phone, try to keep it with you
- If you suspect that the abuser is about to attack you, try to go to a lower risk area of the house – for example where there is a way out and access to a telephone. Avoid the kitchen or garage where there are likely to be knives or other weapons; and avoid rooms where you might be trapped, such as the bathroom, or where you might be shut into a cupboard or other small space
- Be prepared to leave the house in an emergency.

### Are you concerned about your own behaviour?

There is also help for those who have recognised their own abusive behaviour or looking for help for a perpetrator. Respect is a national phone line you can contact by visiting [respectphoneline.org.uk](http://respectphoneline.org.uk) or calling on 0800 8024040.

## What can Orbit do?

The Police have a duty to investigate crimes relating to domestic abuse and have specially trained officers who deal with domestic abuse cases. They also have the power to take action against perpetrators and safeguard the public; however, there is some assistance we can provide as your housing provider.

- **Our Community Safety and Anti-fraud team will open a case and you will be allocated a case manager. You can meet with the case manager by appointment in our office or at an agreed safe place. Please let us know if you are more comfortable talking to someone of the same sex and we can arrange this for you when allocating a case manager. The case manager will then carry out a risk assessment and agree an action plan with you.**
- **We can provide you with a translator if needed free of charge.**
- **The information you provide will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed to any third parties without your permission, unless there are serious concerns for you or a child's safety. If there are safeguarding concerns, we do have a legal responsibility to share information with the relevant Safeguarding Authority.**
- **We will give you advice on your housing options. We can give you details of your local authority homelessness team if you need emergency temporary accommodation and details of local refuge accommodation. To find out who your local authority is please visit [gov.uk/find-local-council](http://gov.uk/find-local-council)**

- **We can refer you to our Tenancy Sustainment team who provide a range of support services or to our Better Days service who can provide you with details of other professional organisations that offer advice and support. Visit [betterdays.orbit.org.uk](http://betterdays.orbit.org.uk) for more information**
- **In certain circumstances we may be able to take enforcement action against the perpetrator of the domestic abuse. However, this will depend on the circumstances of the case and other professional organisation's actions.**
- **We may be able make reasonable changes to your property to increase security and this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and we can liaise with local authorities regarding sanctuary work.**



## Be internet safe

It may be necessary to delete your online browsing history if the perpetrator is checking it. There are some good websites that give advice on this, please visit the Woman's Aid website for information that is relevant for everyone, not just women at [womensaid.org.uk/cover-your-tracks-online/](http://womensaid.org.uk/cover-your-tracks-online/)

There are many organisations that offer specialist domestic abuse advice:



For our latest advice on managing domestic abuse, please visit [orbit.org.uk/domestic-abuse](http://orbit.org.uk/domestic-abuse)

Organisation	Telephone or email	Website
<b>English National Domestic Violence Helpline</b>	0808 2000 247	<a href="http://nationaldahelpline.org.uk">nationaldahelpline.org.uk</a>
<b>National Centre for Domestic Violence</b>	0800 970 2070	<a href="http://ncdv.org.uk">ncdv.org.uk</a>
<b>Women's Aid</b>	<a href="mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk">helpline@womensaid.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://womensaid.org.uk">womensaid.org.uk</a>
<b>Men's Advice Line</b>	0808 8010 327	<a href="http://mensadviceline.org.uk">mensadviceline.org.uk</a>
<b>Man Kind</b>	01823 334244	<a href="http://mankind.org.uk">mankind.org.uk</a>
<b>SurvivorsUK</b> Help for men who have experienced sexual abuse	0203 598 3898	<a href="http://survivorsuk.org">survivorsuk.org</a>
<b>National LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline</b>	0800 999 5428 or 0300 999 5428	<a href="http://galop.org.uk">galop.org.uk</a> <a href="http://brokenrainbow.org.uk">brokenrainbow.org.uk</a>
<b>Action on Elder Abuse National Helpline</b>	0808 808 8141	<a href="http://elderabuse.org.uk">elderabuse.org.uk</a>
<b>Respond</b> Support for people with learning disabilities who have experienced trauma and/or abuse	0808 808 0700	<a href="http://respond.org.uk">respond.org.uk</a>
<b>Deafhope</b> Domestic and sexual abuse support for the deaf community	020 3947 2600 07970 350366 (Text only)	<a href="http://deaf-hope.org">deaf-hope.org</a>

Organisation	Telephone or email	Website
<b>Refuge</b>	0800 200 0247	refuge.org.uk
<b>Forced Marriage Unit</b>	020 7008 0151	gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage
<b>Karma Nirvana</b> Advice and support for victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage	0800 5999 247	karmanirvana.org.uk
<b>National NSPCC Female Genital Mutilation Helpline</b>	0800 028 3550	nspcc.org.uk
<b>Rape Crisis England and Wales Helpline for Female Survivors</b>	0808 802 9999	rapecrisis.org.uk
<b>National Stalking Helpline</b>	0808 802 0300	suzylampugh.org
<b>Opoka</b> Helpline for Polish Women who experience Domestic Abuse	0300 365 1700	opoka.org.uk
<b>Childline</b> Information and advice for children and young people affected by domestic abuse	0800 11 11	childline.org.uk
<b>Crimestoppers</b>	0800 555 111	crimestoppers-uk.org
<b>Victim Support</b>	0808 1689 111	victimsupport.org.uk
<b>The Dogs Trust, Freedom Project</b> A free service operating in some areas of the UK to take dogs into foster care from families fleeing domestic abuse	0800 0834322	dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk



This leaflet has  
been approved by  
our customers

## Get in touch:

You can visit our website:

**[orbitcustomerhub.org.uk](https://orbitcustomerhub.org.uk)**

For more information,  
please contact us at:

**[orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/contact-us](https://orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/contact-us)**

Or to talk to us, please call:

**0800 678 1221**

Textphone:

**18001 0800 678 1221**

Take a look on social media:

**f /OrbitHelp**

**@OrbitGroupUK**

Our postal address:

**Orbit,  
PO Box 6406,  
Coventry,  
CV3 9NB**

If you need information in a different  
format please contact us on

**0800 678 1221**

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