

behind closed doors...

Domestic Abuse

an information handbook

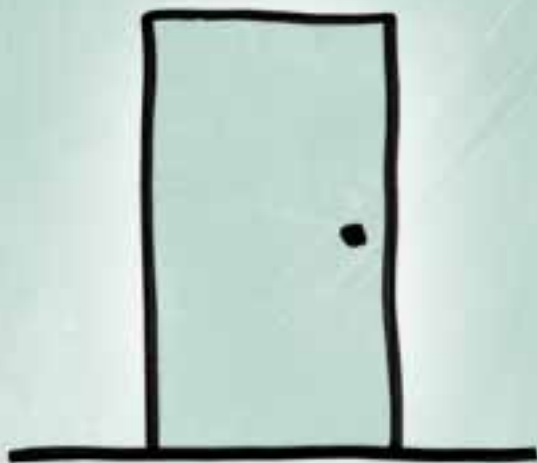
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This publication acknowledges the support and contributions of the following



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Foreword

“All human beings – women, children and men have the right to develop to their highest potential and to be treated with dignity and respect at all times”.

Not every form of *domestic abuse* leaves visible marks and many are not even a violation of current criminal law. Abuse of any type erodes an individual's confidence, esteem and self-worth and is hugely damaging to the victim. It diminishes their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and the negative effects often affect others associated with the immediate victim.

Every type of abuse creates complex personal challenges, social problems and where there is any form of domestic abuse there is a high risk of injury or death. *Domestic abuse* consumes our community's human and financial resources at an alarming rate but is still under-reported, minimised and misunderstood.

Domestic abuse is legally, morally and culturally unacceptable and to stop it will require community institutions to increase the services available to victims and their dependants and hold perpetrators fully accountable.

Those suffering abuse deserve to be believed, to receive an early and effective professional multi-agency intervention and to have access to the most appropriate follow up services.

For those perpetrating abuse, there is no excuse for your actions. You are totally responsible for how you think and behave and you can choose to learn non-abusive interpersonal skills.

To those suffering any form of abuse, know that you are not responsible for your partner or ex-partner's behaviour. Many sources of help for you and your children are described in this booklet.

This publication is the result of much cooperation between individuals and agencies on a local, national and international level. I compliment and commend everyone involved in the process of making a positive difference.

We invite you to join our efforts as we continue to work in partnership to change attitudes, values and structures – creating an atmosphere of equality, dignity and respect throughout our homes, schools, agencies and communities. Only in this way will we succeed in making great strides in ending domestic abuse and improving the quality of life for every member of our community.

With best regards

Glenna M Trout



Foreword – Kent County Council

In Kent, domestic abuse can destroy the lives of the victims and families who have lived or are still living in abusive relationships.

The ***Domestic Abuse handbook*** is part of a co-ordinated approach in Kent to raise awareness and provide helpful information for people experiencing domestic abuse, and also for those practitioners working within the field.

It is clearly important that we give partnership working a high priority when it comes to addressing *domestic abuse* in its many forms, and this handbook is an example of statutory and voluntary agencies working together in Kent to improve the information made available to people across our county.

Working together we can make a difference



Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart



Foreword – Kent Police

As Chief Constable of Kent Police I am happy to lend our support to edition 3 of the **Domestic Abuse handbook**. *Domestic abuse* makes up a significant proportion of violent crime for the county and we endorse the multi-agency approach to responding to this important issue.

Kent Police are involved in a range of *domestic abuse* initiatives throughout the county and we will continue to play an active part in reducing its detrimental effects on the community. Working with our partners we have made great steps forward but it is vital that we maintain our momentum to ensure that the issues of *domestic abuse* remain at the forefront of everyone's agenda.

Kent Police and its partners will continue to encourage victims to come forward so that we can continue our strategies against domestic abuse. I am confident that the **Domestic Abuse handbook** will prove to be an important link in the process of education and awareness and both a useful tool for practitioners and source of advice for victims.

Michael Fuller QPM
Chief Constable



Kent Police

Any form of abuse is unacceptable and those who choose to use abuse must be held legally, socially, morally and culturally accountable.

Legally, *domestic abuse* is defined as any action involving abuse between family, or household members (including current and former partners). *Domestic abuse* occurs when a person causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause emotional, sexual or physical harm to an intimate partner or other family or household member.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive behaviour used by an individual to establish and maintain power and control over another (relationship as defined above). This type of cruelty takes many forms, including physical, sexual, economic and emotional abuse, isolation and the selective destruction of property and pets.

Without early and effective intervention, the abusive behaviour becomes more frequent and severe. Both adults and adolescents commit acts of *domestic abuse*. While we recognise that domestic abuse has both male and female victims and perpetrators, it is important to note that the majority of all *domestic abuse* related incidents reported are female victims of male offenders. Therefore, throughout this book, we refer to perpetrators of abuse as male and to victims as females.

Abuse, no matter who is perpetrating it, is unacceptable. Those choosing to use any form of violence and abuse must be held fully accountable, and all victims of abuse must be offered resources for support and safety.

Myth: Domestic violence is about couples getting into a brawl on a Saturday night, beating each other up and totally disrupting the neighbourhood.

Fact: Domestic violence is not mutual combat. In these cases, one partner is beating, intimidating and terrorising the other. It is all about one person dominating and controlling the other.

It is very important to understand the various forms of abuse, which define hierarchy and an unequal balance of power within the relationship. A violence continuum describes the progression of abuse. The following model is presented as a tool for recognising and investigating incidents of domestic abuse, not as a measuring device to determine the level of risk to victims. In every case of domestic abuse, there is a high risk of injury or death. Domestic abuse is not caused by the behaviour of the victim, but is a choice made by the abuser to control his partner. There is no excuse for domestic abuse.

Possible progression of various forms of abuse include among other behaviours:

Emotional abuse

- withholds approval/emotional support as punishment
- jokes, insults, name-calling
- ignoring or minimising feelings
- yelling, blaming and accusing
- targeted and repeated insults
- belittling and private humiliation
- public humiliation
- demands all attention
- resentful of children and/or marriage
- threats against children and/or marriage
- degrading her as mate, lover, or partner

- giving mixed signals
- questions her sense of reality
- depression, despair, nervous breakdown
- complete isolation, with-drawl or mental illness
- death (by homicide, suicide or accident)

Physical abuse

- refusal to meet physical needs of dependants
- push, shove, jerk, slap, bite, pinch
- choke, beat
- shaking, bruising
- hit, punch, kick
- targeted and repeated hitting
- use of objects as weapons
- throwing victim
- restraining while hitting or punching
- abuse during pregnancy
- sleep deprivation
- lacerations, burns, internal injuries
- broken bones
- disabling or dis-figuring injuries
- using weapons (knives guns or household items, etc)
- murder

Sexual abuse

- sexual jokes or demeaning gender remarks
- criticism of sexuality
- jealousy, assumes you are/will be with others sexually
- unwanted touching
- name calling with sexual epithets
- forced to look at or engage in pornography

- demands monogamy from victim despite promiscuous behaviour by abuser
- coercive/demanding sex
- forced sex (rape)
- forced, uncomfortable painful sex
- coercive/demanding sex following pregnancy or surgery
- rape resulting in permanent injury
- rape with imprisonment
- child abuse/incest
- rape with murder

Social/Environmental

- degrades culture, religion, nationality, profession, gender
- uses gender “myths” and roles
- destroys or damages victim’s property
- controls major decisions
- forced economic dependence
- controls money/finances
- denies victim’s ability to work/gets victim fired
- threatens to hurt victim’s extended family
- humiliation
- alienates victim’s family/friends
- eliminates victim’s support systems
- destroys/maims family pet(s)
- tells victim that (abuser) is always in control
- deprives her of food, medicine, sleep
- complete isolation
- convinces victim she is hysterical, paranoid, psychotic, mentally ill, suicidal, homicidal
- death by suicide, murder or accident

Myth: When there is violence in the family, all members of the family are participating in the dynamic, therefore, all must change for the violence to stop.

Fact: Only the perpetrator has the ability to stop the violence. Abuse is a behavioural choice. Changes in family members' behaviour will not cause or influence the abuser to be non-violent.

Simply being female is the single greatest factor that increases one's risk of becoming a victim of domestic violence. Aside from this phenomenon, there is no clear method or list of characteristics that will determine a future victim. The problem of domestic violence crosses all socio-economic, ethnic, age and religious boundaries.

Warning Signs of Abuse – Victim

The following are warning signs to be aware of in a relationship that may indicate potential abuse. The Dominator refers to spouse, lover, someone you are dating or whoever applies in your situation.

If you think your partner is abusing you, seek help now by calling the Police, your local refuge/Women's Aid, and/or other service agencies that are aware of issues surrounding domestic abuse. *(refer to resource section on pages 49 and 50)*

The graphic on page 12 has been reproduced with kind permission from Pat Craven's Freedom Programme. For agencies wanting to know more about this programme, which helps women explore their partners behaviour, see www.freedomprogramme.co.uk or telephone **0151 630 0651** ▶

The Dominator

The dominator is his name, **controlling women is his game**



The Sexual Controller

- Rapes you.
- Won't accept no for an answer.
- Keeps you pregnant OR
- Rejects your advances.



The Bully

- Glares
- Shouts
- Smashes things
- Sulks



The Jailer

- Stops you from working and seeing friends.
- Tells you what to wear.
- Keeps you in the house.
- Seduces your friends/family.



King of the Castle

- Treats you as a servant/slave.
- Says women are for sex, cooking and housework.
- Expects sex on demand.
- Controls all the money.

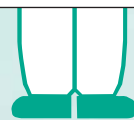


The Dominator



The Headworker

- Puts you down.
- Tells you you're too fat, too thin, ugly, stupid, useless etc.



The Badfather

- Says you are a bad mother.
- Turns the children against you.
- Uses access to harass you.
- Threatens to take the children away.
- Persuades you to have "his" baby, then refuses to help you care for it.



The Liar

- Denies any abuse.
- Says it was "only" a slap.
- Blames drink, drugs, stress, over-work, you, unemployment etc.



The Persuader

- Threatens to hurt or kill you or the children.
- Cries.
- Says he loves you.
- Threatens to kill himself.
- Threatens to report you to Social Services, Benefits Agency etc.



Reasons many women stay

3

Women stay in abusive relationships for many reasons. Often there is no clear motive. Not all women recognise or label what is happening to them as domestic abuse. The following is a list of contributing factors that may cause an abused woman to remain with, or return to, her abusive partner:

Frequency and severity – The abuse may occur over a relatively short period of time. He may tell her and she may be convinced, that this incident was the last violent episode. Generally, the less severe and less frequent the incidents, the more likely she is to stay.

Her childhood – She may have lived in a home where her father beat her mother and accepts abuse as normal. She learned early in life that it is okay to hit those you love when they've done something "wrong". She, or one of her siblings, may have been a victim of child abuse or incest.

Economic dependence – She may be economically dependent on the abuser and see no real alternative. Economic conditions today afford a woman with children few viable options. Her partner may control all their finances, leaving her no access to cash, cheques, or important papers. She may be afraid that if she reports the crime or tells of the abuse, her partner might lose his job – often the only source of income for the family.

Fear – She sees no real way to protect herself from her abuser. Many of her fears are justified. If she, or even a neighbour, reports him to the police, she often faces retaliation. Often she is so terrified, she will deny abuse when questioned. She is afraid of incurring the wrath of the extended family if she reports or breaks up with her partner. She fears he may follow through with threats to commit suicide, take the children away, or have her deported.

Isolation – Often her partner is her only psychological support system, after he has systematically destroyed her other friendships. Other people feel uncomfortable around violence and usually withdraw from it. She may have no idea services are

available to her and therefore feel trapped. He frequently threatens to kill her, the children, and anyone else she involves if she reports him. Often relatives tire of helping her out repeatedly. They become unwilling to be a resource for her. Having no one to talk to, she has no support system or potential helpers.

Low self-esteem – She learns her behaviour has no effect on the outcome of a situation, since she is repeatedly abused and he has not faced any consequences from preceding incidents. Severely depressed people cannot take action. Often he is violent only with her so she concludes there is something wrong with her. She may accept his excuse that she “deserved” the punishment or that he was too drunk to know what he was doing. She believes that if she could improve or stop making mistakes the abuse would stop because this is what she has been told by her partner after every assault.

Social stigma – Because others cannot understand why any “self-respecting woman” would stay in that situation, she may be embarrassed to admit that the abuse occurs. She believes she has no power to change her situation.

Beliefs About Marriage – Religious and cultural beliefs, or the “eyes of society”, demand she maintains the façade of a good marriage. Often she stays for the sake of the “children needing their father”. She may believe abuse is part of every marriage. She was raised to believe in the importance of a good relationship with a man, and the belief that good relationships are her responsibility, not his.

Beliefs About Her Partner – She often still loves him and is emotionally dependent. She believes him to be all-powerful and able to find her anywhere. Many of her fears and beliefs about him are based on the reality of previous experience. Often motivated by pity and compassion, she feels she is the only one who can help him change.

Safety plan check list for victims

3

The most important step you can take for yourself, if you are a victim of domestic abuse, is to build a safety plan to protect yourself and your children from the abuser. When physical, emotional or sexual abuse has occurred once in a relationship, it is likely to happen again. Since you know the abuser's actions and behaviours, you can use this knowledge and plan ahead.

During an incident of abuse or violence, get out if you can. Call 999 for the police if you feel it is safe. If you cannot get out, stay away from the kitchen, bathroom, garage or other potentially dangerous rooms. Call for help; if your neighbours hear, they may call 999.

If your abuser has left the home, you might change the locks and the telephone number and you might need to reinforce doors and windows. Have a plan in case you encounter your abuser. Here are some things to consider in your safety plan:

- Teach your children how to call 999.
- Tell trusted friends, family members, and neighbours, what is going on.
- Arrange to have a safe place to go. A women's refuge is one option. It is best if the abuser is not aware of the location you go to.
- Prepare a bag of clothing, medication, and other essentials for yourself and your children to use if you have to leave quickly. Hide the bag where you can get to it in a hurry.
- Make several copies of your important papers and keep one set in the bag (other copies could go to trusted friends or family members). You may need things such as your identification, birth certificates, passports, financial/insurance information, social security cards, court orders....
- Keep your address and appointment books with you.
- If you have a car, make an extra set of keys and hide them where you can get to them if needed.

Is there abuse in same-sex relationships?

3

Women living within same-sex partnerships experience less violence within the relationship than do women living with male intimate partners. However, men living in same-sex relationships experience violence at nearly twice the rate of men living with female intimate partners.

Even though there are similarities – in that battered lesbians and gays suffer from the same emotional, physical, sexual and economic abuse, isolation tactics and selective destruction of pets and property as their non-gay counterparts – there are additional complications confronting them. Abused lesbians and gays must, in addition to dealing with the abuse from their partner, face the probability of added victimisation by a community, legal system and service providers, which are homophobic.

One common threat used by an abusing partner to intimidate and control his/her partner in a same-sex relationship is to threaten him/her with “outing” (disclosure of his/her sexuality to family members, friends, employers, community, etc). Depending on the individual’s situation, outing could potentially result in loss of support, community standing, job, and possibly even child custody.

When a woman leaves her abusive lesbian partner and enters a refuge, there is a danger that her abuser will be able to gain access. Most refuges carefully screen any males attempting to make contact with anyone staying there, but not all refuges use the same degree of caution with females who are trying to make contact.

There is some help and support available, but many more resources are needed.

Cycle of abuse

3

Myth: Domestic abuse is usually a one-time event, an isolated incident.

Fact: Abuse against a partner is an ongoing pattern of behaviour. Without early and effective intervention, it may get worse and more frequent over a period of time.

As the abuse pattern progresses in a relationship, the degree to which victims are affected by the various forms of abuse may increase. The frequency and severity of the violence tends to get worse (although this happens in an intermittent and unpredictable manner). In order to survive, victims develop coping strategies and survival techniques in an attempt to avoid more harm and injury. Many victims resort to acts of appeasement and forgiveness. However in reality, victims are unable to stop the violence because they do not cause the abuse. Only the abuser has control of his behaviour.

The phases below describe many cases of domestic abuse. This may be made clearer by imagining a diminishing downward spiral leading to despair, depression and possible death (by murder, suicide or accident). As time progresses, the phases are shorter, the violence intensifies and the episodes of abuse become more frequent. It should be noted the abuse cycle varies depending upon circumstances and individuals. Not everyone experiences these three distinct phases.

Tension

This stage is characterised by emotional and verbal attacks. The victim often uses appeasement and patience as coping strategies. As time progresses, the tension increases and coping techniques are less successful. At the same time, the verbal assaults become more hostile and prolonged. Incidents involving minor physical assaults, such as pushing or slapping, become more frequent.

Crisis

As the tension reaches its climax, the escalation may be in the form of a series of minor assaults over a period of time or one major assault. The duration of the outburst can vary from minutes to several hours. During this time, victims attempt to protect themselves, but may constrain their resistance out of fear of prolonging the assault. The combination of physical and emotional abuse forms a lasting impression on abused women and their children.

Calm

Following the crisis, the abuser is the most manipulative. The victim is convinced the abuser's rationale is legitimate and that she is ultimately responsible for his behaviour. Consequently, the victim may feel obliged to forgive her abuser and remain in the relationship. Among many tactics an abuser will use to persuade his partner to remain with him are to:

- 1 revere the sanctity of love and marriage;
- 2 question the well-being of the children should the relationship end;
- 3 promise to change and get help;
- 4 threaten to harm himself and/or others if she leaves him.

Breaking the Cycle/Leaving the Relationship

This can be the most dangerous time due to the abuser's ultimate loss of control over the victim. It is important that attention is focused on safety planning for victims and their children. Women seeking help are encouraged to contact the police, a women's refuge or service provider, to gain information regarding safe shelter, support, resources and options.

Specialised group intervention programmes are needed for perpetrators of domestic violence to encourage and facilitate changes in attitudes and behaviours.

Q Is *domestic abuse* a learned behaviour?

A Yes, abusers have often witnessed *domestic abuse* as children. Also, there is widespread tolerance of gender/racial/religious/cultural inequality and violence which also teaches that abusive, controlling behaviour is acceptable. However, abusive behaviour that is learned can be unlearned, and positive behaviour can then be learned in a healthy and constructive way.

Q How can our community stop *domestic abuse*?

A The whole community must send the message that it will not tolerate *domestic abuse*. We can do that by providing education, a strong consistent law enforcement response, and comprehensive services for victims, children and appropriate accountability for perpetrators of *domestic abuse*.

Q What does an abuser look like?

A An abuser looks like any other person you commonly come into contact with. He can be of any race, socio-economic class, age, religious affiliation, geographical background and sexual orientation.

Q Can an abuser change?

A Yes, abusers can change, but the process may be slow. It may take a while for the abuser to see the need for reform since it may have taken many years for him to develop and rationalise his behaviour.

Q Am I to blame for his violence?

A **Absolutely not.** Abusers make the choice to hurt, where to hurt and how to hurt, to accomplish their ends. Men in treatment groups, when they become honest with themselves, admit they use arguments or stress as an excuse to use abusive tactics to control their partner.

Q What if he is sorry?

A Most abusers are sorry about the violence afterwards. In fact, remorse is part of the pattern of abuse or violence. The abuser may promise to end the violence, to have treatment, buy presents – anything to get things back to “normal” again. Yet, when the victim returns, the abuser begins his pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour again. His statements of apology and remorse in many cases are just another way to maintain control. The way the abuser can change is if he takes full responsibility for the violence, stops all forms of abuse and enrolls in an approved domestic violence group intervention programme.

Q How do I know when he has changed?

A Change comes slowly. Trust your gut feelings regardless of other signs. If the abuser says he is fine but you still feel uneasy, you are right. There is no magic cure, but you may ask yourself these questions:

- Has he completely stopped saying and doing things that frighten you?
- Can you express anger toward him without being “punished” for it?
- Does it feel safe to bring up topics that you know upset him?
- Will he listen to your opinion and respect it, even when he disagrees?
- Can he argue without being abusive or domineering?
- Does he respect your wishes about sex and physical comfort?
- Has he stopped expecting you to do things for him?
- Can you spend time with your friends without being afraid that he’ll retaliate?

- Are you comfortable with the way he interacts with the children?
- Do you feel safe leaving the children alone with him?
- Is he being supportive and giving compliments and encouragement?
- Does he listen to you?
- Does he do his share of the housework and the childcare?

Q What are some signs that he is not changing?

A • Does he use his attendance at his intervention programme against you in any way?

- Does he tell you that you are abusive?
- Is he pressurising you to go to therapy for yourself or couple's counselling for the two of you?
- Does he tell you that you owe him another chance?
- Does he say that he cannot change without your support?
- Does he try to get you or the children to feel sorry for him?
- Does he instil fear in the children about the future, or finances, or where they will live, etc?
- Do you have to keep after him to attend his intervention sessions?
- Is he making his abuse sound less than it really is?
- Does he expect something in return from you for the fact that he is attending a perpetrator intervention programme?
- Is he pressurising you to make up your mind about the relationship or to move back together?
- Is he pressurising you to drop any legal proceedings?

Q Should I stay?

A Your first consideration needs to be for the safety of you and your children. We encourage you to get support for yourself, if it is safe to do so, (local support organisations are listed at the back of this book). Your partner may pressure you to stay with him while he attends an intervention programme, as this is a tactic of abuse and control designed to keep you from making up your own mind. If he is serious about changing his attitudes and behaviour, he will respect your wishes about the relationship.

The following is a list of personality traits that *may* indicate a potential abuser. It is not the purpose of the listing to imply that every person with some of these attributes is an abuser or potential abuser.

Jealousy – At the start of the relationship, an abuser will equate jealousy with love. He will question the victim about who she talks to, accuse her of flirting, or become jealous of time spent with others.

Controlling behaviour – In the beginning an abuser will attribute his controlling behaviour to concern for his partner (for example, his partner’s safety or decision making skills). As this behaviour progresses the situation will worsen. He may assume all control of finances or prevent his partner from coming and going as she wishes.

Quick involvement – An abused woman often has known or dated her abuser for less than six months before getting married, engaged or living together. He will pressure his partner to commit to the relationship. Later, a victim may feel guilty for wanting to slow the pace or end the relationship.

Unrealistic expectations – An abuser expects his partner to meet all of his needs, to take care of everything for him emotionally and domestically.

Isolation – An abuser will attempt to isolate his partner by severing her ties to outside support and resources. The abuser will accuse others, such as the victim’s friends and family, of being “*trouble makers*”. He may block his partner’s access to use of a vehicle, work, or telephone service in the home.

Blames others for problems – An abuser will blame others for his shortcomings. Someone is always out to get him or is an obstacle to his achievements. The victim or potential victim will be blamed for almost anything that goes wrong.

Blames others for feelings – An abuser will use feelings to manipulate his victim. Common phrases to look for are *“You’re hurting me by not doing as I want.”* *“You control how I feel.”* *“If you truly loved me....”*

Hypersensitivity – An abusive person is easily insulted. He perceives the slightest setbacks as personal attacks.

Cruelty to animals or children – This is a person who punishes animals brutally or is insensitive to their pain. He may expect children to perform beyond their capacity (for example, whipping a 2 year-old for wetting a nappy or teasing children or siblings until they cry).

“Playful” use of force in sex – This behaviour includes restraining partners against their will during sex; acting out fantasies in which the partner is forced to be helpless; initiating sex when the partner is asleep; or demanding sex when the partner is ill or tired. He may show little concern for his partner’s wishes and will use sulking and anger to manipulate compliance.

Verbal Abuse – This behaviour involves saying things that are intended to be cruel and hurtful, cursing or degrading his partner, or minimising/criticising his partner’s accomplishments.

Rigid gender roles – He views the victim’s role as to serve. For instance, a male abuser will see women as inferior to men, responsible for menial tasks, stupid, and unable to be a whole person without a relationship.

Dual personality – “*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*” – Explosive behaviour and moodiness, which can shift quickly to congeniality, are typical of people who abuse their partners.

Past abuse – An abuser will beat any partner he is with if the individual is involved with him long enough for the cycle of abuse to begin; circumstances do not make a person an abusive personality.

Threats of violence – This consists of any threat of physical force meant to control the partner. Most people do not threaten their mates but an abuser will excuse this behaviour by claiming “*everyone talks like that*”.

Breaking or striking objects – This behaviour is used as punishment (breaking sentimental possessions) or to terrorise the victim into submission.

Any force used during an argument – This may involve an abuser holding down his partner, physically restraining his partner from leaving, or pushing or shoving. Holding someone back in order to make demands, such as “*You will listen to me!*” is also a show of force.

Myth: Victims provoke their abuser

Fact: Those who abuse have learned that using violence or other forms of abuse is a successful strategy for establishing and maintaining power and control.

Regardless of what his partner does, an abuser's response is totally his decision. "*She provoked me*" is a way to shift blame and responsibility away from the abuser to his victim. No one can "make" him behave abusively.

Abusers follow a belief system that legitimises their behaviour. While some of these lessons may have been learned at home, others have been promoted by society. The belief that anger causes violence is largely fed throughout society and continues to be digested by children and adolescents.

Subscription to a belief that validates the use of violence in order to control another individual is a primary characteristic of an abusive personality. An abuser may not like his partner's behaviour or may even disagree strongly with something she says. However, nothing she does or says gives him permission to commit a crime against her.

There is no excuse for domestic abuse.

Warning signs that **you** are an abuser

6

The following are warning signs to be aware of in your relationship that may indicate potential abusive tendencies. The word “partner” refers to spouse, lover, someone you are dating, or whoever applies in your situation.

- You check up on your partner frequently. For example, you listen to your partner’s phone conversations, make your partner accountable at all times for her whereabouts, or check her car mileage.
- You frequently put your partner down. For example, you call your partner names, frequently criticise her, or humiliate her in public or in private.
- You try to exercise control over your partner. For example, you tell your partner whom she can or cannot see to keep her from going to work or school.
- You attribute acts of jealousy or possessiveness to love.
- You destroy or threaten to destroy your partner’s belongings.
- You threaten to hurt your partner, her family members, her friends, or pets.
- You touch your partner in a way that hurts or scares her.
- You blame your partner or others for your problems and shortcomings or you get angry in a way that frightens her.
- You belittle your partner’s fears or concerns about your relationship.
- You avoid places, circumstances, people, and/or topics of conversation that remind you of past acts of violence.
- You spend a significant amount of time and energy making up for things you have done in anger.

The graphic on page 28 has been reproduced with kind permission from Pat Craven's Freedom Programme. Details on page 11 with The Dominator



Not a saint that we are seeing, **just a decent human being**



The Lover

- Shows you physical affection without assuming it will lead to sex.
- Accepts your right to say no to sex.
- Shares responsibility for contraception etc.



The Friend

- Talks to you.
- Listens to you.
- Is a companion.
- Has a sense of humour.
- Is cheerful.



The Liberator

- Welcomes your friends and family.
- Encourages you to have outside interests.
- Encourages you to develop your skills at work or at college.



The Partner

- Does his share of the housework.
- Shares financial responsibility.
- Treats you as an equal.



Mr Right



The Confidence Booster

- Says you look good.
- Values your opinions.
- Supports your ambitions.
- Says you are competent.
- Values you.



The Goodfather

- Is a responsible parent.
- Is an equal parent.
- Supports your dealings with the children.



The Truthteller

- Accepts responsibility.
- Admits to being wrong.



The Negotiator

- Takes responsibility for his own wellbeing and happiness.
- Behaves like a reasonable human being.

Immediate ways for abusers to stop the violence/abuse

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To prevent the cycle of violence/abuse from repeating itself. Here are some immediate ways to cool down:

Leave the scene

No matter what the situation is – LEAVE! Go somewhere safe and peaceful to calm down, collect your thoughts, and consider the consequences of your actions.

Slow down – cool down

Focus on something else. Take a brisk walk, listen to music, or exercise.

Talk

Talk to someone outside of the situation, such as a counsellor at a help line. Tell them that you need to cool down and that it helps to have someone to listen to you.

Tell a friend

Tell a friend you trust what you are doing to slow down and cool down. Remember that alcohol and drugs get in the way of making responsible decisions.

Get help

Take responsibility for changing your own behaviour. Make contact with groups that may be able to assist you with this.

Myth: Once an abuser always an abuser.

Fact: “Abusive behaviour” is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned. However, behavioural changes require intervention as it is unlikely an abuser will change by sheer willpower.

Groupwork specifically designed for perpetrators of domestic violence is the most widely accepted form of re-education. It allows individuals to practise expressing and sharing their emotions with others in a non-threatening environment. When abusers admit their abuse before a group of peers, they take the first step in holding themselves accountable for their behaviour. Group therapy also encourages abusers to lend support to others without anticipating anything in return.

What about couples’ counselling?

Victims are alerted that marriage counselling, as a form of abusers’ accountability or re-education, may be ineffective and dangerous. Marriage counselling can re-inforce the illusion that abuse is a marital problem.

A therapeutic environment may also create a false sense of security for the victim to express her thoughts. Unfortunately, this openness may be “punished” with more abuse at home.

Of additional importance is the idea suggested by marriage counselling that couples may improve relations if at least one individual changes. This is the same message the abuser gives his victim. “If you change, the violence will stop.” Despite the opposite intentions, there is too high a risk that marriage counselling (in cases where there is domestic abuse) serves to reinforce the misbelief that the victim is responsible for the abuse.

What about substance abuse?

While there exists a relationship between domestic abuse and substance abuse, using or misusing alcohol or other drugs is not the cause of abusive behaviour. It is important to remember that substance abuse is primarily harmful to the user while domestic abuse is primarily harmful to the individual(s) being targeted for abuse.

When a substance abuser becomes sober, problems associated with domestic abuse do not automatically disappear – for the abuser or for the victims. Therefore, perpetrators of domestic abuse who participate in treatment programmes for substance abuse must also be required to attend approved programmes specifically designed to address their attitudes, beliefs and behaviours around all forms of abuse, power, control, gender issues, etc.

In establishing services for families affected by violence and substance abuse, it is important that safety issues for victims remain a priority. Also, it is helpful if recovery for the substance abuse is implemented before beginning intervention programmes for domestic abuse issues. Finally, on-going support is necessary to maintain sobriety, to eliminate any form of abusive behaviour, and to assist victims in overcoming the effects of long-term victimisation.

What about “anger management” programmes?

It is now known that domestic abuse is not about anger, but is instead about the abuser’s desire to control his partner through any means that will work. Men in intervention programmes often say they have used anger as a way to intimidate and control their partner. Anger management programmes do not usually last long enough to address the fundamental causes of domestic abuse or safety and accountability issues. Therefore, they are not appropriate alternatives to approved domestic abuse perpetrator programmes.

Violence against women will cease when men renounce the thinking and practice of domination. We can begin to do this on an individual basis at home, at work, and in our community. When we begin to speak up, other men will listen and the seeds of change will be planted. I hope men will take the initiative and work with other men to confront sexism and violence, not to get approval from women, but because it is the right thing to do for women and for men.”

Michael Paymar

Training Co-ordinator,

Duluth *Domestic Abuse* Intervention Project

Myth: Only children directly experiencing abuse are harmed by growing up in an abusive household.

Fact: Children, regardless of whether they have experienced abuse directly, are affected by abuse in the home. Children who witness abuse display the same emotional responses as children who have been physically and emotionally abused.

Abusive behaviour is learned behaviour. At an early age, children raised in an abusive environment may develop patterns in their conduct that mimic the types of behavioural characteristics of abusers and victims. The lessons they learn from experiencing or observing abuse accompany them into adulthood. As adults, females often develop distrust of males, negative attitudes towards marriage, and/or accept violence or other forms of abuse as natural. Some boys (many will have intervened on at least one occasion to stop the abuse) identify increasingly with the abuser and adopt many of the same beliefs about women, sex roles, and the use of manipulation and control tactics.

Children of domestic abuse stand a greater chance of experiencing neglect. Depression, fear, frustration, helplessness, and anger may serve as obstacles for some abused women who are trying to foster nurturing relationships with their children. After having had their foundation destroyed by domestic abuse, children from abusive households find it difficult to develop trust, self-confidence, or positive self-image. They often become ambivalent and desensitised to abuse. Many times the children's initial sympathy for the victim eventually wanes out of disrespect. This occurs especially in cases when defensive measures taken by the victim are not apparent to the children. Unless they learn healthy interpersonal and other social skills, children from domestic abuse households are at a greater risk of becoming the next generation of abusers and abused.

Yet, despite the increased risk, not all children of domestic abuse become abusers or tolerate abuse. Children react to their environment in several different ways. The following are four factors that help determine children's response to abuse:

- their interpretation of the experience
- how they have learned to survive and cope with stress
- the availability of support people (friends, relatives, other adults); and
- their ability to accept support and assistance from adults.

Additionally, children's responses differ with age and gender. Younger children in an abusive environment, including those used as pawns by perpetrators in custody and visitation disputes, have a tendency to regress in their development of behavioural skills. Children may become aggressive or throw temper tantrums or, by contrast, may become withdrawn, "too perfect", passive, or anxious.

Refuges for victims of domestic abuse may also provide services for children or referrals to children's services outside the refuge. (In the event the child is receiving care or treatment outside the refuge, the provider must be trained in effective techniques in domestic abuse cases.) Whether receiving treatment within or outside the refuge, the following three conditions need to be considered:

Group therapy

Many children of domestic abuse benefit most from group therapy. Group therapy provides a supportive environment. Such a surrounding can ease the common feelings of isolation and the stigma of abuse.

Structure

The programme must be structured in order to act as a stabilising influence in the child's life.

Goals

Goals must be identified. Among them should be the development of the child's social skills (this includes verbal communication, non-violent methods to resolving conflict, and creative problem-solving techniques). A central goal needs to be the development of the child's ability to identify and appropriately express her/his emotions.

Effects of *domestic abuse* on children

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It is normal for a child of domestic abuse to manifest a multitude of symptoms. Outlined below are some common emotional, cognitive, behavioural, social, and physical effects of abuse experienced by children from violent households. *(Please remember that each child is unique and will be affected and act differently.)*

Emotional

- feel guilty for the abuse and for not stopping it
- grieve for family and personal losses
- confusion about conflicting feelings towards parents
- fear... of abandonment, expressing emotions, the unknown, personal injury
- angry about the violence and chaos in their lives
- depressed, feelings of helplessness and powerlessness
- embarrassed by the effects of abuse and dynamics at home.

Cognitive

- blame others for their own behaviour
- believe it is acceptable to hit people they care for in order to get what they want, express their anger, feel powerful, or to get others to meet their needs
- have a low self-concept originating from a sense of family powerlessness
- do not ask for what they need, let alone what they want
- do not trust
- believe that to feel angry is bad, because people get hurt
- rigid stereotypes: to be a boy means... to be a girl means... to be a man, woman, husband, wife means....

Behavioural (often seen in opposite extremes)

- act out or withdraw
- over-achiever or underachiever
- refusal to go to school
- run away
- caretaking, more concerned for others than self; parent substitute
- aggressive or passive
- rigid defences (*aloof, sarcastic, defensive, “black and white” thinking, highly judgemental*)
- excessive attention seeking (*often using extreme behaviour*)
- bedwetting and nightmares
- out of control behaviour, not able to set own limits or follow directions
- aggression towards Mum.

Social

- isolation from friends and relatives
- relationships are frequently stormy, start intensely, and end abruptly
- difficulty in trusting, especially adults
- poor anger management and problem-solving skills
- excessive social involvement (*to avoid home life*)
- may be passive with peers, or bully peers
- engage in exploitive relationships, either as perpetrator or victim
- play with peers gets exceedingly rough.

Physiological

- somatic complaints (*headaches, stomach-aches*)
- nervous/anxious/short attention span (*frequently misdiagnosed as being Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder*)
- tired, lethargic
- frequently ill
- poor personal hygiene
- regression in development tasks (*bedwetting, thumb sucking/depending on age*)
- desensitisation to pain
- high risk activities
- self abuse.

Myth: Teens do not experience relationship abuse

Fact: During adolescence, children begin to develop intimate relationships outside their families and can practise the communication and life skills they have learned. For some teens, this is the beginning of abuse within their own dating relationship.

Teens often find themselves subjected to the same emotional, physical, verbal and sexual abuse from known partners as their adult counterparts. However, many of us may find it difficult to understand why a teen victim would remain in an abusive relationship. For the same reasons her adult counterpart finds it difficult to leave her abusive partner, the following create additional barriers for teen victims of relationship abuse:

- Excessive pressure to conform to peer norms and pressure from the sexual intensity of adolescence; being generally inexperienced in relationships, adolescents may have difficulty managing the complexity of feelings, decisions and conflicts that arise and tend to have rigidity in conforming to female gender expectations (specifically that her status depends on her attachment to a male and on his status).
- Often romanticise about love and relationships, they sometimes interpret jealousy, possessiveness and abuse as signs of love.
- As adolescents struggle for independence, they may have conflicts with their families and/or become isolated from them to the extent that they may not expect, ask for, or receive support in dealing with frightening aspects of their dating relationships.
- Adults do not always take adolescents seriously and may

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assume the youths are over-reacting, acting out, or “going through a phase” and therefore end up treating the abuse too lightly.

- There is additional risk of abuse to pregnant or parenting adolescents because they have usually been further ostracised or marginalised and have fewer resources and legal protections than their adult counterparts.
- Those in same sex relationships often lack healthy relationship role models; are threatened with “outing”, ridicule and further isolation.
- Young women from families and cultures where dating and sexuality are restricted and possible sources of shame may find it exceedingly difficult to confide in others or seek assistance.
- If racism and discrimination have been a repeated part of a young woman’s experience it can make her more vulnerable to victimisation in a relationship. ie – if a young woman feels her opportunities to succeed are limited by racism, she may count on the relationship to define her future and may be unable to leave that relationship if it becomes abusive. Also, there is a protectiveness that comes from understanding the struggles of her boyfriend in a racist society that interferes with her willingness to seek help.

Not all teens growing up in abusive homes fit this pattern. Some take additional responsibilities to keep the peace and provide safety for their families and may protect younger siblings during violent episodes and offer reassurance in the aftermath of violence. These adolescents may feel they cannot leave home because they must protect their mothers and siblings. Obviously, such responsibilities are a heavy burden for these youngsters.

Characteristics of adolescent relationship abuse

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Diversity Adolescent dating abuse, like adult abuse, is prevalent in all communities. It is not unique to one class, race or culture.

Gender Practitioners report they see only female victims; however, research indicates both male and female teens experience relationship abuse.

Invisibility The subject of dating abuse is not commonly addressed by adolescents.

Normative Confusion Young people do not seem to identify dating abuse as a problem.

Patterns of Abuse The adolescent abuse pattern follows adult domestic abuse forms and methods. The same mechanics of control, coercion, manipulation and jealousy are at work in abusive adolescent relationships.

Sexual Abuse In addition to date rape, young victims of dating violence also describe continuous forms of “sexual slavery”. Adolescent abusers may physically force sex upon their victims, threaten, or manipulate them by use of other coercive tactics, such as accusations that attack their acceptability as women or lovers. Feelings of worthlessness, degradation, humiliation, and shame, usually follow. Over time, these emotions gradually undermine the victim’s ability to escape. Since victims of dating abuse are relatively young, inexperienced, and their sense of themselves as sexual beings may be new or fragile, their vulnerability at this time is magnified.

Substance Abuse Substance abuse, though not the cause of dating abuse, may increase the chances of abuse. Alcohol and other drugs reduce inhibitions and the capability to demonstrate self-control and good decision-making skills. For victims, alcohol or other drugs may act as a substitute for positive and effective coping strategies. Substance abuse and violence must be confronted simultaneously.

Domestic abuse has multiple health consequences for women and their children. The most obvious effects are the physical injuries and deaths due to victims being punched, kicked, burned, choked, beaten, pushed, shaken, thrown, and/or stabbed.

However, there are less visible but equally damaging consequences for individuals being subjected to various forms of abuse by their partner or family member. These include a wide variety of physical and emotional health problems such as miscarriages, sleep disturbances, poor nutrition, digestive disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, depression and despair. Their partner's controlling tactics may also directly impact or aggravate the victim's existing health conditions (*ie-cardiac problems, diabetes, asthma, etc*).

Often the health care system is the first (and only) place women go to for help. Every speciality and health care setting sees abused women. Treating the injuries or other obvious medical consequences of domestic abuse without responding to the cause of the problem often results in inadequate care. Victims continue to be injured and will often require more medical intervention in the future. Over time, their physical and mental health deteriorate and health care costs increase.

To provide appropriate care to patients suffering abuse from a partner or family member, health care providers must be able to identify, assess and intervene in culturally appropriate ways which directly address both the problem of domestic abuse and its immediate health consequences. In addition to providing medical care, health care professionals must make referrals and appropriate resources available to their patients. Additionally, it is essential that health care professionals are an active part of community multi-agency intervention schemes.

Domestic abuse is a public health issue. It is a quality of life issue. Stopping it requires the co-ordinated efforts of all community institutions:

- to increase the safety of victims and children
- to hold perpetrators accountable for stopping the abuse
- to make domestic abuse legally, socially and morally unacceptable.

Identifying and intervening in *domestic abuse* is another way to save a life

Crisis intervention in Accident & Emergency with patients experiencing domestic abuse is essential and should include:

- 1 Identification through direct screening.
- 2 Gathering details of abusive history.
- 3 Description of past and present history.
- 4 Application of patient's history to patient's overall view of abusive relationship.
- 5 Exploration of treatment options.
- 6 Documentation of the process to promote future victim identification and continuity of care.
- 7 Maintaining medical evidence for legal procedures.
- 8 Participation by staff with inter-agency work and training.
- 9 Confidentiality and safety procedures.

Domestic abuse and pregnancy

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Domestic abuse is reported by around one in four women and is an important health issue.

- represents serious threat to physical and emotional health of women and their children (*before and after birth*).
- few incidents reported to doctors, mainly because doctors never ask specific questions (*ie – “did your partner/spouse do this to you?”*).

Physical abuse may begin/escalate during pregnancy

- numerous studies document increased rates of miscarriage, premature births, low birth weight, foetal injury and foetal death, premature labour and chorioamnionitis.
- maternal infections and poor weight gain.
- pregnant women may be prevented by their partners from seeking or receiving proper antenatal or postnatal care.
- abused women are likely to present for antenatal care significantly later than non-abused women.
- developing foetus may be further damaged by secondary effects of domestic abuse.
- women attending Accident & Emergency departments with physical injuries are more likely to be pregnant than women attending with accidental injuries.
- prevalence of repeated physical (*often directed at abdomen*) and sexual violence (*many pregnancies result of rape by partner*).

- many studies indicate an increase in frequency and severity of domestic violence assaults in the postpartum period (*19% antenatal, 25% postnatal*).
- women reluctant to disclose violent and abusive domestic experiences.
- rates of reported physical abuse by intimate partner or parent appear to be higher in teen pregnancies.
- victim is often accompanied by abusive partner (caution against using male partner as interpreter)...interview victim away from partner.
- in some relationships, physical assaults may reduce during pregnancy, therefore some women try for pregnancies in succession.

Information adapted from the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, May, 1997, Vol 104, pp .528-531

Checklist for steps to end abuse against women

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Domestic abuse identification and intervention for health care providers

Ask

Ask direct questions about behaviour,
“Did someone do this to you?”

Acknowledge

Acknowledge that you heard what the patient said

Assess Patient Safety

Is it safe to go home today?
Encourage patient to make a safety plan

Refer

Domestic Violence National Helpline – 0808 2000247

Assure Medical Follow-Up

Arrange for patient to be seen again

Record (*Document in Chart*)

Patient reports that...
“include name of assailant and relationship to victim.”

Assess Danger

Do you feel safe to go home?

Do you have an escape plan if it happens again?

Do you have access to money, transportation, a safe place to go, medication, credit cards, identification and items your children need?

Has the abuser ever threatened to kill you, your children, your friends or relatives or him/herself?

Are there weapons in the home, especially guns?

Does your partner abuse drugs or alcohol?

Is your partner violent outside the home?

Does your partner harm or mutilate family pets?

Has your partner ever beaten you when you were pregnant?

Is your partner obsessive about his/her relationship with you?

Does he/she try to control your daily activities?

Does she/he express constant jealousy?

Has the violence increased in frequency or severity over the past year?

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Health care professionals

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Health care professionals are in the critical position of providing services to victims of abuse as the first contact point for many of these victims. It is crucial that health care professionals recognise their potential to intervene appropriately. Immediate recognition of the problem and the provision of medical care and referrals to appropriate resources within the community can make all the difference. Leaders in the field have identified the following strategies to make interventions by health care professionals more effective.

Incorporate training into curricula

Support the incorporation of *domestic abuse* and assault in medical, nursing and associated health care professional education curricula.

Make resources available to patients

Make resource materials available in waiting rooms and toilets. Include National Women's Aid telephone numbers.

Support incorporation of protocols into accreditation process

Support efforts to ensure that domestic abuse and sexual assault protocols are addressed through accreditation process.

Encourage education on violence against women issues

encourage a portion of continuing medical education requirements to include abuse against women and related issues.

Involve medical organisations and societies in increasing awareness

Collaborate with health care professional organisations and societies in your area to increase medical school and health care professional involvement in addressing abuse against women.

Feature abuse against women on meeting agendas

Give awards, citations and certificates to exceptional organisations and individuals for their continued commitment to addressing abuse against women.

Develop a standard intake form

Develop a standardised intake assessment form for health care professionals who interact with victims of domestic or sexual abuse. This assessment form would ensure that certain information regarding these incidents is identified and proper resources utilised.

Ensure employee assistance programmes are responsive to victims of *domestic abuse*

Determine whether your health care facility's employee assistance programme includes domestic abuse services or referrals. If it does not, speak with your human resources director or the appropriate manager about the possibility of expanding the programme to address the needs of employees facing abuse in their homes. All human resource personnel should receive domestic violence training and have an understanding of the dynamics and effects of domestic abuse.

Volunteer

Provide a health care service on a volunteer basis to community organisations that serve victims of domestic and sexual abuse.

(Adapted from paper produced by Advisory Council on Violence Against Women, 1995)

How others can help

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The following intervention methods are listed according to the individual's relationship to the victim or abuser.

Family member, neighbour, or friend of someone who may be affected by domestic abuse

If you suspect a person you care about is being abused, you can help. Your offer of help could make the difference to someone living in an abusive situation. While there is no right way to help someone, here are important steps to bear in mind:

- Talk in a safe, private place.
- Take the time to listen, and believe what you hear.
- Do not underestimate the danger.
- Express your concern for the person's safety
- Do not expect change overnight; be patient and continue to offer your support.
- Do not judge or criticise the person's decisions.
- Encourage the person to make his/her own choices, but urge them to talk with someone who knows about *domestic abuse*.
- Let the person know that many other people are in abusive situations and tell them about agencies that can help.
- Learn as much as you can about domestic abuse and encourage others to, also.

Employer or co-worker of someone who may be affected by domestic abuse

If you suspect that a person with whom you work is being abused, you can help. Your offer of help could make the difference for someone living in an abusive situation. While there is no right way to help someone, here are important steps to keep in mind:

- Managers and supervisors should understand the laws that restrict employers from asking employees about certain health or home issues. If you need information about these laws, seek out someone in your company who can help you.
- Learn as much as you can about *domestic abuse*.
- If you observe warning signs, let the person know you notice a problem and are concerned.
- If the person wants to talk to you, ask what help (if any) would be most useful to the employee (*for example, time off for court appearances, security escorts to the car, not transferring phone calls from the abuser to the employee, etc.*).
- Do not allow the situation to become the topic of office gossip.
- Do not tell the person what to do or judge her/his decisions.
- Get help from human resources or personnel department, an employee assistance programme, or other resources in your company or organisation.
- If there are no domestic abuse policy and procedures within your organisation, be involved in establishing and implementing them.
- Ensure commitment from senior management that internal domestic abuse policies and actual practice are consistent and that they address how their agency can assist in the overall goals of the inter-agency domestic abuse forum and specify employees to be formally released and resourced to actively participate in that work.
- ensure that representatives to each forum are in position to facilitate change within the agency and/or local community.
- build multi-agency domestic abuse work into employee job descriptions – address how to deal with perpetrators and/or victims of domestic abuse amongst their staff or clients.

Service Providers who suspect that a customer, client or patient is being abused or is abusive

Your response will vary based on the type of service you offer. However, the following is a list of suggestions and guide-lines for intervention:

- Learn as much as you can about domestic abuse.
- Routinely ask every client or patient about being hurt by a partner or hurting others. Asking everyone removes the stigma from domestic abuse and helps us overcome our own stereotypes of who might be abused or abusers.
- Ask questions in private.
- Ask questions that help a person tell you what is going on. Ask an injured person “Was this done by your partner?” rather than asking “How did you get hurt?” The second question makes it easy for both the client and the professional to deny abuse.
- Assess an abused person’s safety and help reduce the danger. Express your concern that the person may get hurt again. Help the person explore options for safety.
- Encourage an individual who is being abusive to seek help from a specialised perpetrator programme treatment agency. (If none exist in your area, begin exploring how to set these services up.)
- Don’t agree with any statements that suggest the victim brought on the abuse. There is no excuse for violent behaviour.

In every instance:

- Get involved in the work of your local domestic abuse coalition/forum
- Donate time, money, resources, or services to your local women’s refuge or domestic abuse forum
- Take every opportunity to raise awareness and encourage accountability, working toward changing attitudes and making it morally, legally, socially and culturally unacceptable to use any form of abuse.

The way forward includes efforts to develop and strengthen community-wide inter-agency cooperation. Every aspect of this work must be to protect women and children, improve services and resources, and hold perpetrators fully accountable in every way possible, socially, legally, morally and culturally.

This type of approach leads to:

- early recognition of abusive relationships
- consistent response to each incident of domestic abuse
- effective intervention into each case
- mutual awareness of (and access to) existing resources
- joint efforts to identify, develop and implement needed resources.

Effective intervention prevents repeated and escalating growing intolerant attitudes toward domestic abuse. Ideally, one telephone call or personal contact alerting any individual or agency to the existence of a domestic abuse situation will result in a coordinated, comprehensive, consistent and effective multi-agency response. This needs to involve all disciplines and agencies across human, legal and social services aspects, including the media, medical and mental health, education systems, religious institutions, as well as voluntary, private and statutory agencies.

All members of the civil and criminal judicial system have a duty to conscientiously enforce existing laws, ensuring immediate and long-term safety for all victims of domestic abuse. They must also make certain that every abuser is held accountable in the most appropriate way. Much work is necessary to bring about consistent, helpful and effective intervention, enforcement and the prevention of incidents of *domestic abuse*.

The media has a crucial role in informing/educating the community about all aspects of domestic abuse....the reality, causes, consequences and solutions. It also has the responsibility to change a long history of glorifying violence against women and children and promoting unhelpful gender and racial stereotypes. Using the media, much pressure can be exerted by exposing and condemning abuse, inequality, inconsistencies and lack of resources.

Partnership work requires commitment, trust and cooperation from all parties. It is essential to establish effective inter-agency communication and develop transparency to remove competitiveness and improve cooperation. It is essential to address women's experiences on an on-going basis when developing/improving services. All members must be treated equally, irrespective of the size and power of the organisation they represent.

To stop abuse, it is necessary for us all to challenge beliefs, behaviours and systems where there exists any form of inequality and abuse of power. Each individual deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Warning signs that someone you know may be being abused

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- Frequently has bruises or injuries.
- Her partner appears to make all the decisions for both of them.
- Her partner exhibits quick and inappropriate anger and/or jealousy.
- Becomes unusually quiet or withdrawn.
- Avoids being around others, increased fatigue and/or anxiety, sudden change in weight or appearance. Receives frequent telephone calls, emails or text messages from her partner checking up on her.
- Is frequently late or absent from work or unexpectedly quits their job.
- Stops talking about their partner.
- Takes blame for all that is uncomfortable in her relationship, becomes frightened when her partner is angry.
- Wears concealing clothes even in warm weather.
- Increased use or abuse of prescription medication, alcohol or illicit drugs.

How victims can assist when Police respond

- 1 Try to stay calm** – Though this may be difficult in a crisis situation or if you are panicked or emotional, it is nonetheless important. You will receive more timely assistance if you are able to be understood.
- 2 Do not hesitate to ask that a report be made** – In every domestic abuse case law enforcement responds to, the officers are encouraged to file an official report, even if no other police action is taken.
- 3 Describe the incident in detail** – No one knows what took place better than you. Facts are needed for the police to take an accurate report. Think of yourself as the key witness. Do not be intimidated when the officers ask for a statement. A statement is simply a way of documenting the incident in the victim's words. A statement does not obligate you to press formal charges or assist in a prosecution. You will be asked to proof-read what the officer has written for accuracy. You have the right to change the statement until you are completely satisfied with it.
- 4 Show the police any injuries, bruises, or damaged property** – this is evidence! Visible proof provides more facts the police will take into consideration. If there is not physical proof (for instance, you were being threatened), simply explain, clearly and calmly, the incident in detail. Request photographs are taken of your injuries and of damage that has been done to your property.
- 5 Inform the officers of any witnesses** – Witnesses help to substantiate the fact that something has taken place.
- 6 Tell the officers about other violent incidents** – Past abuse is part of an abusive cycle. Previous assaults help explain the danger involved in your situation.

- 7 Show the officers any court documents you have** – It is recommended that you keep copies of any court order with you at all times.
- 8** Ask the officers for community resources such as refuges, help lines, counselling, and Victim Support. A list of community organisations will be given to you by the responding officer. As a general rule, do not dispose of anything that the police, prosecutor's office, or the courts give to you.
- 9** Ask the officers for the case number of the report and a phone number if you want to follow up on the case. As long as the incident in question is still being investigated by law enforcement, direct any concerns or questions to the police. Victim Support may also be of assistance to you.

Dove Project

01702 300006

Provides information on refuge vacancies

Women's Support Service

01622 761146

Advocacy support and information for women affected by domestic abuse in Maidstone, Medway, Swale, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

Limited counselling available for women and children affected by domestic abuse.

Rethink Sahayak

01474 364837

Asian Counselling Service based in North Kent.

KCA

01795 590635

Provider of substance misuse services.

Kent Police Domestic Abuse Officers

01622 690690

Canterbury Rising Sun Domestic Violence Project

01227 452852

Support, information and counselling for women and children living in Canterbury area, who are affected by domestic abuse.

Kent Domestic Abuse Information Line

0845 603 6813

Information on local services.

Mankind

0870 794 4124

Helpline for male victims of Domestic Abuse.

Broken Rainbow

07812 644914

Information and support for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender victims of domestic abuse.

Kent Lesbian Line Thursday (7.30-10pm)

01622 763573

East Kent Rape Line Monday-Thursday (6.30-9.30pm)

0800 4582818

National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 2000 247**

24 hour service offering advice and support to anyone experiencing domestic violence or abuse.

Childline **0800 1111**

The Samaritans **08457 909090**

Parentline Plus **0808 800 2222**

National Child Protection Helpline (NSPCC) **0808 800 5000**

Shelterline **0808 800 4444**

Information regarding housing and homelessness issues.

Victim Support **0845 3030900**

Emotional and practical support.

Relate **0845 4561310**

Can offer individual counselling for people who have experienced domestic abuse.

Respect Phonenumber **0845 122 8609**

Information and advice on domestic abuse perpetrator issues.

Men's Advice Line **0808 8010327**

Advice and Support for Men in Abusive Relationships.

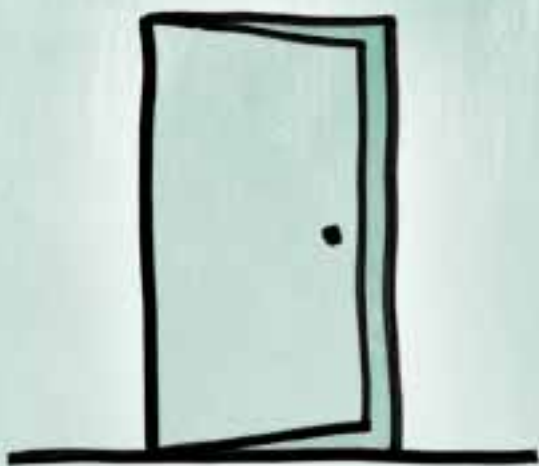
Elder Abuse Response Helpline **0808 808 8141**

Foreign and Commonwealth Office **020 7008 0135/0151**

Advice on Forced Marriages.

For further information and other useful telephone numbers and website links please see the following website -

www.kent.gov.uk/domesticviolence



the first steps to opening the door...

Albanian

Te shkosh ne shtepi nuk duhet te jete e dhimbshme. Nese ju vuani nga dhuna ne familje ju lutem na kontaktoni ne nje nga numrat e meposhtem dhe lini mesazh.

Arabic

ذهابك الى البيت يجب أن لا يسبب لك ألماً. إذا كنت تعاني من العنف المنزلي نرجو الاتصال بواحد من الأرقام
النااه واترك رسالة صوتية.

Bengali

ঘরে ফিরে যাওয়া কষ্টকর হওয়া উচিত নয়। আপনারা যদি ঘরে নির্ধাতনের শিকার হন তাহলে দয়া করে
নীচে উল্লিখিত যে কোন নম্বরে ফোন করবেন ও ম্যাসেজ রাখবেন।

Cantonese

家，應是和睦甜美。

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Farsi

درخانه نباید آزار به بینید. اگر در خانه از خشونت خانوادگی رنج میبیرید، لطفاً با یکی از شماره تلفن های
زیر تماس گرفته و پیغام بگذارید.

Gujarati

ઘરે જવામાં હાનિ - નુકશાન થવું ન જોઈએ. જો તમે ઘરે હિંસા સહન કરતા હો તો, પછી કૃપા કરી
નીચેના કોઈ એક નંબર ઉપર સંપર્ક સાધી અને સંદેશો છોડી દેશો.

Punjabi

ਘਰ ਜਾਣ ਵਿਚ ਤਕਲੀਫ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਕੁੱਟ-ਮਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਪੀੜਤ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖਿਆ
ਨੰਬਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਛੱਡੋ।

Urdu

گھر جانا تکلیف دہ نہیں ہونا چاہئے۔ اگر گھر میں آپ کے ساتھ تشدد کیا جا رہا ہے تو براہ کرم درج ذیل میں سے کسی نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے
اور پیغام چھوڑ دیجئے۔

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