



**Herts Sunflower J9**  
Resource and  
Information Pack



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# Introduction

## What is Herts Sunflower and J9?

Herts Sunflower is a 'hub' and central branding for coordinated and trusted countywide domestic abuse related services and support. It provides a 'hub' for information, advice, signposting and awareness training and campaigns by bringing together a partnership of local specialist service providers, local fora, and statutory agencies.

This 'hub' contains a number of key elements, primarily:

- Standard/Medium Risk Domestic Abuse Caseworkers
- Specialist Caseworkers – BME and Gypsy/Traveller
- Local Domestic Abuse Helpline
- Sunflower Website (information and advice)
- Sunflower Domestic Abuse Champions' Network
  - Training and management (including the J9 initiative)

## Background

The J9 initiative was established with the primary aim to raise awareness of domestic abuse amongst local business and services in order to provide increased opportunity for those affected to gain timely help, support and access to services in a safe way.

Developed in memory of Janine Mundy, a mother of two killed by her estranged husband in 2003 while he was on police bail, the J9 initiative was started by her family and the local police where she lived in Cambourne, Cornwall.

The initiative got its name from the way Janine used to sign her text messages 'J9'.

**For the public:** where the J9 logo is displayed in a premise it provides victims and survivors with the assurance that they can get help to access a safe place where they can seek information and the use of a telephone.

**For Businesses and services:** the initiative enables staff to become more aware and thus better able to respond, but also improves the capability to provide the support and information needed in order to make more informed decisions about the support someone may wish to receive.

## Information Pack

The information in this pack is intended to be used to 'signpost' victims of domestic abuse to the support services they need. Further related information and leaflets can be found on the Herts Sunflower website:

**[www.hertssunflower.org/information-for-professionals/sunflower-champions/sunflower-champions.aspx](http://www.hertssunflower.org/information-for-professionals/sunflower-champions/sunflower-champions.aspx)**

This Information Pack contains a J9 logo. All organisations which have staff who have attended a J9 training session are asked to display the logo in their premises so that victims know where they can obtain information which will help them to access the support they need.

## Getting Help and Advice

Many of the organisations which provide advice and support for victims of domestic abuse also provide a range of resources to help raise awareness of the issue and to help signpost victims to their services. Details of some of these resources can be found at the end of this Information pack.



## What is Domestic Abuse?





# What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic Abuse can affect anyone, regardless of gender, class, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or lifestyle.

## **The Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:**

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

The Government definition includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Family members are: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister & grandparents; directly related, in-laws or step-family.

**Psychological abuse** is abuse which reduces a person's sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth. This includes:

- Controlling behaviour: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- Coercive behaviour: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.

Physical abuse is abuse involving contact intended to cause feelings of intimidation, pain, injury or other physical suffering or bodily harm. Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, punching, choking, pushing and other types of physical contact that result in physical injury to the victim. Physical abuse can also include behaviours such as denying the victim medical care when needed, depriving the victim of sleep or other functions necessary to live, or forcing the victim to engage in drug/alcohol use against his/her will.

**Sexual abuse** constitutes any situation in which force is used to obtain participation in unwanted, unsafe or degrading sexual activity.

Emotional or mental abuse can include humiliating the victim privately or publicly, controlling what the victim can and cannot do, withholding information from the victim, deliberately doing something to make the victim feel diminished or embarrassed, isolating the victim from friends and family, implicitly blackmailing the victim by harming others when the victim expresses independence or happiness.

**Domestic Abuse** is more common than you may think. In the UK it is known to affect 1 in 6 men and 1 in 4 women in their lifetime, millions each year, and currently claims the lives of at least two people each week.

Only 1 in 5 are known to report to the police.

It is most commonly carried out by men against women but it also happens to men and to people in same sex relationships.

### **REMEMBER!**

Domestic Abuse is a widespread societal issue and is rarely a one-off incident that will usually escalate over time. It becomes a pattern of behaviour that allows one person (or several in familial settings) to establish and maintain power and control over another.

If you recognise any of the behavioural traits mentioned in this guide, try not to ignore the signs and seek help for the sake of you and your children.

If you are in an abusive relationship, there are three important steps to take. Try to:

- Recognise it is happening to you
- Accept that you are not to blame
- Get help and support

**It is not your fault. You are not alone.  
You have the right to live free from fear.**





## Common Myths about Domestic Abuse





# Common Myths about Domestic Abuse

## **Q.Only married women experience domestic abuse**

### **A.False**

Anyone can suffer from domestic abuse. The majority of domestic abuse victims are women but men also suffer. The myth that domestic abuse is a problem only experienced by women may make it more difficult for men to admit that they are suffering from domestic abuse. Do not be ashamed or embarrassed to admit you are suffering from violence and abuse at the hands of your (ex)partner or family members.

Equally, you do not have to be married to suffer from domestic abuse. Abuse can occur in any relationship. Nor does marriage make domestic abuse, acceptable. Violence or abuse by one person against another constitutes a criminal act, regardless of marital status or gender.

## **Q.Domestic abuse only occurs between couples**

### **A.False**

Domestic abuse can occur between any family members, including mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, aunts, uncles, grandparents, in-laws and step family in any combination.

## **Q.Domestic abuse is uncommon**

### **A.False**

The Crime Survey for England and Wales tells us that an estimated 2.0 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2018, equating to a prevalence rate of approximately 6 in 100 adults.

Research also tells us that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will be a victim of domestic abuse at least once in her lifetime, and 3 women a week are killed by their partner or ex-partner. The police receive a call about domestic abuse every minute in the UK - Male victims are over three times as likely as women not to tell anyone about the abuse they are suffering.

**Q.It was a momentary loss of temper**

**A.False**

Research suggests that victims of domestic abuse are victimised over and over again by the same person. Domestic abuse is an ongoing pattern of learnt behaviours that manifest to become core belief systems – often intergenerational and developed from modelling from a young age. Whilst there may be a number of circumstantial factors that affect a situation, these are contributory, not causal factors. Abusers act as a result of their need and want to gain and maintain power and control, and this remains even when additional factors are removed. Domestic abuse is an ongoing experience of abuse and one you do not have to suffer.

**Q.Hitting your partner is the only form of domestic abuse**

**A.False**

Domestic abuse encompasses physical, psychological, sexual, emotional and financial abuse.

**Q.Only poor and ethnic minority groups experience domestic abuse**

**A.False**

Domestic abuse does not discriminate. People of all socio-economic classes, genders, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations and religions can experience domestic abuse.

**Q.Leaving an abusive relationship is easy**

**A.False**

It can be very difficult to leave an abusive relationship and there may be many reasons why you may want to stay. Making decisions about leaving and turning these into action can be extremely complex and challenging.

We know that the majority of victims of domestic abuse are at their most vulnerable at the point of or immediately after leaving an abusive relationship. Help and support is available to you to help make leaving less difficult and to do so as safely as possible. Don't feel guilty about leaving an abusive relationship, you are not 'giving up' on someone, you have the right to a life free of violence or abuse.

**Q.People always stay in violent relationships**

**A.False**

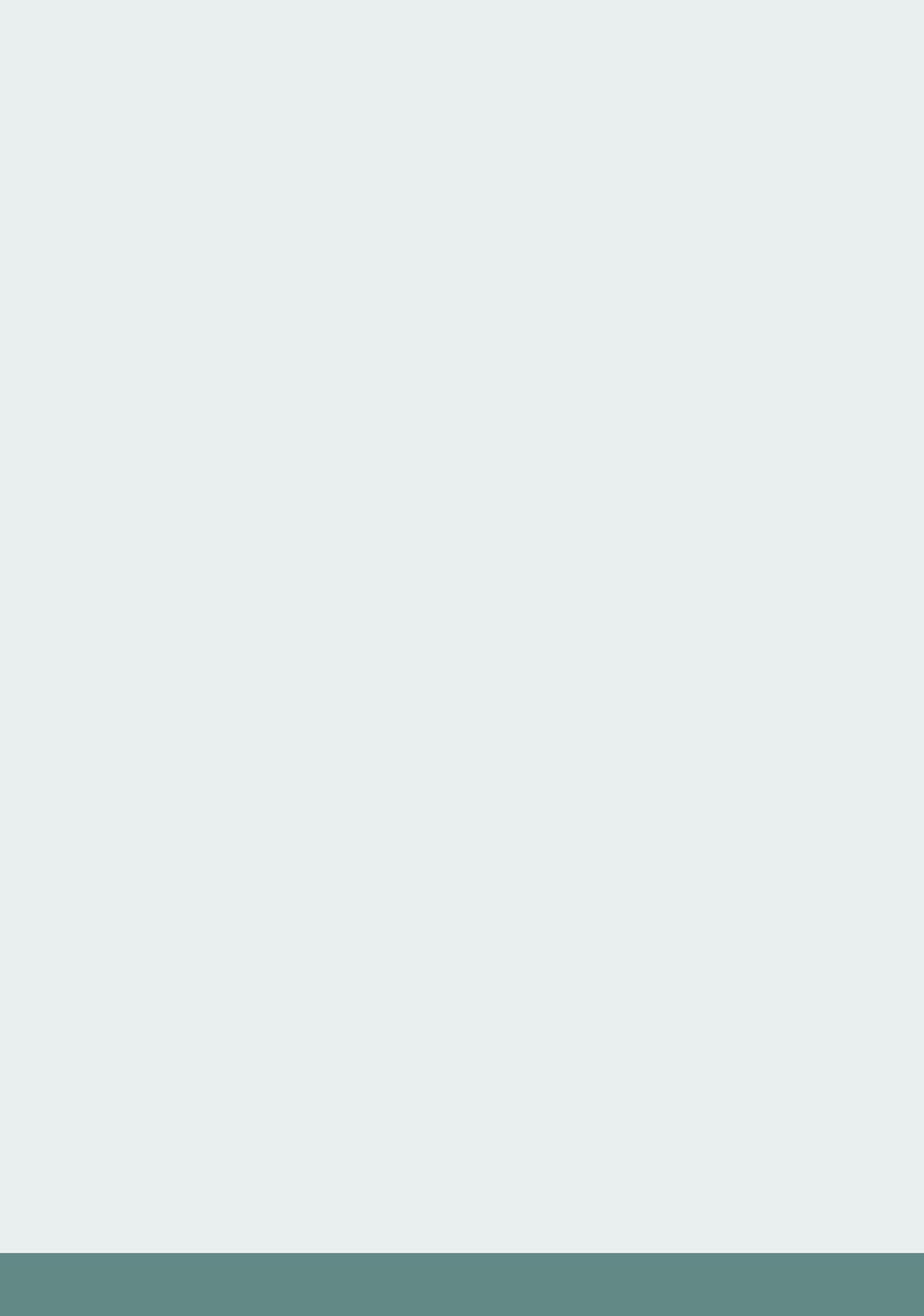
Many women and men who leave violent or abusive relationships go on to build a life free of violence and abuse. Almost all victims of domestic abuse will leave at least once. Remember that you have a right to a life free from fear, violence and abuse. Help and support is available to you.

**Q.People don't get seriously hurt by domestic abuse**

**A.False**

Statistics show that the leading cause of injury for women aged 15-44 is domestic abuse. Almost half of all murders committed in the UK are domestically linked, with one woman murdered by a partner, or ex-partner, every three days.

Figures don't reflect the amount of mental and emotional trauma experienced by victims of domestic abuse, including children who witness domestic abuse or abuse in the home.





## Your Legal Rights





# Your Legal Rights

If you are frightened of your current or former partner, then you have a right to be protected under the law.

Domestic abuse is dealt with both under Criminal Law and Civil Law.

The two systems are separate and are administered by the two separate courts.

## Criminal Law

You have rights under Criminal Law. Being assaulted by someone you know, or live with, is just as much a crime as abuse from a stranger, and often more dangerous.

When the police have been called, their first priority should be the safety and well-being of you and your children, and to protect everyone present from injury or further harm. If you call the police because you are experiencing domestic abuse, they should always give you the opportunity of being listened to and spoken to separately, away from your abuser.

If there are reasonable grounds to justify an arrest, the police should do this without asking your 'permission' or insisting on a statement from you first. The abuser can then be held for up to 24 hours before they need to charge him.

If the police arrest and charge the abuser they will then make a decision whether to keep him in custody or to release him on bail. If they release him on bail, they may attach conditions to this that are aimed at protecting you, your children and any witnesses from further intimidation and abuse.

The police will inform you of any conditions they have placed on the abuser, what these conditions mean and what action you should take if these conditions are broken.

## Civil Law

Civil Law is primarily aimed at protection. A survivor of domestic abuse can make an application for an injunction (a court order).

You could try to gain some protection from your abuser by applying for a civil injunction or protection order. An injunction is a court order that requires someone to do, or not to do, something.

There are two main types of injunctions available and both can have a power of arrest attached by the courts if they believe that you are in any danger.

**A non-molestation order** is aimed at preventing your partner, or ex-partner, from using or threatening abuse against you or your child, or intimidating harassing or pestering you, in order to ensure the health, safety and well-being of yourself and your children. **An occupation order** regulates who can live in the family home and can also restrict your abuser from entering the surrounding area. If you do not feel safe continuing to live with your partner, or if you have left home because of abuse, but want to return and exclude your abuser, you may want to apply for an occupation order.

## Who is eligible to apply for an injunction?

To be able to apply for one of these orders you must be an 'associated person'. This means you and your partner, or ex-partner, must be related or associated with each other in one of the following ways:

- You are, or have been, married to each other
- You are, or have been, in a civil partnership with each other
- You are cohabitants or former cohabitants (including same sex couples)
- You live, or have lived, in the same household
- You are relatives

- You have formally agreed to marry each other (even if that agreement has now ended)
- You have a child together (this can include those who are parents of the same child, and those who have parental responsibility for the same child)
- Although not living together, you are in an 'intimate relationship of significant duration'
- You are both involved in the same family proceedings (e.g. divorce or child contact)

If you are not eligible to apply for an order under the Family Law Act, or if you are being continually harassed, threatened, pestered or stalked after a relationship has ended you can also get civil injunctions under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

## Getting Legal Advice

Although you can apply for an injunction yourself, you might find it helpful to have legal advice. It is best to get a solicitor who has a lot of experience with domestic abuse cases and who is likely to understand all the issues.

You may be eligible for Legal Aid to pay for your legal costs if you are claiming welfare benefits, or are on a low income and have little or no savings. (Your partner's or husband's income is not taken into account if you are taking legal action against him).

You can contact Civil Legal Advice on 0845 345 4345 for free impartial legal advice and information on Legal Aid. ([www.claonlineadvice.justice.gov.uk](http://www.claonlineadvice.justice.gov.uk)).

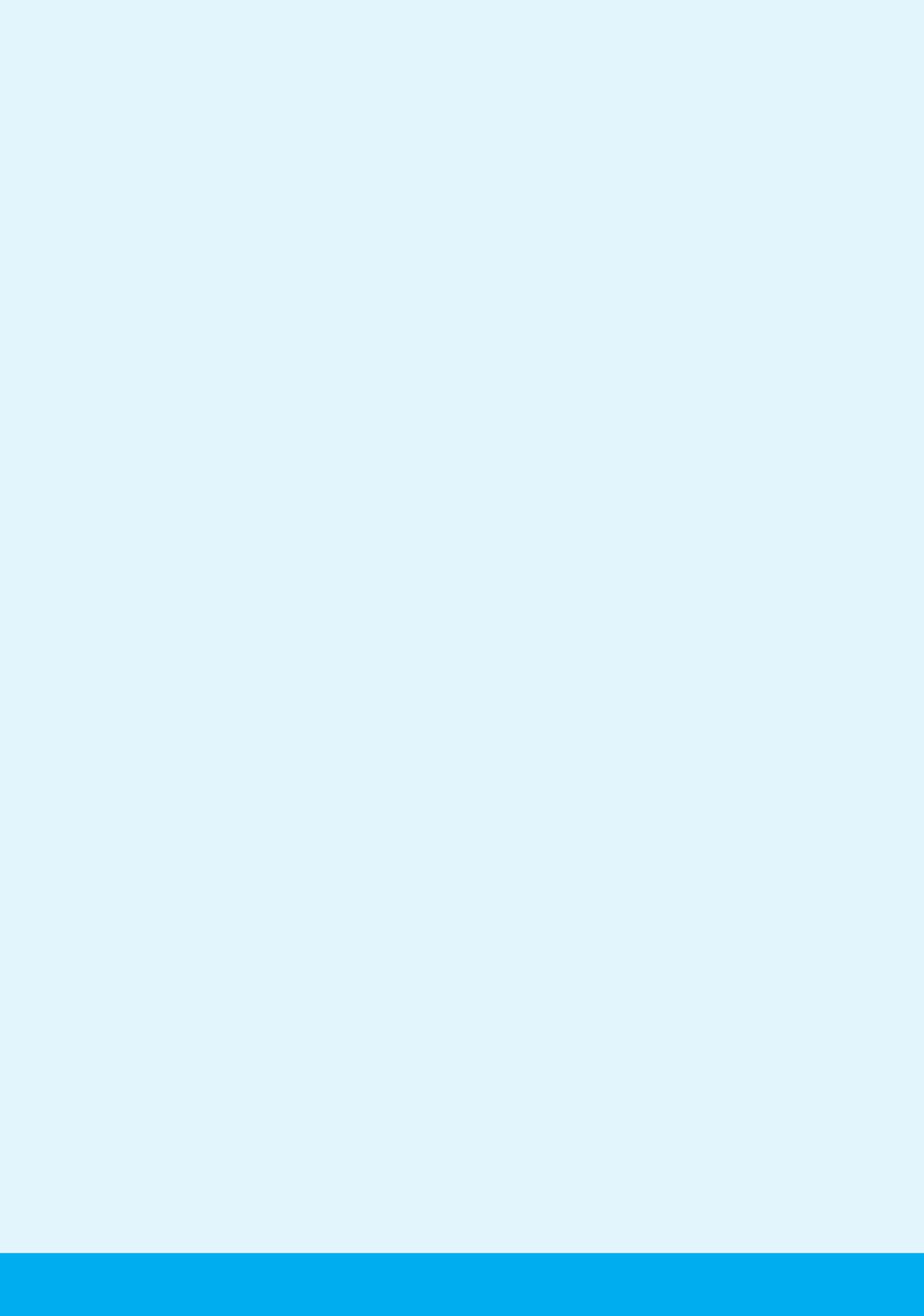
**The National Centre for Domestic Violence** can provide free help with getting an injunction

**FOR EMERGENCY HELP:** Tel: 0844 8044 999 Option 1

**Minicom:** 18001 08009 702070

**Text:** NCDV to 60777 (they will call you back)

**Freephone:** 0800 970 2070





## Crisis Planning





# Crisis Planning

Admitting to yourself and others that you are experiencing domestic abuse may seem very difficult, but it is an important step towards getting protection for yourself and your children.

**It is not your fault. You are not alone. You have the right to live free from fear.**

Keeping a diary of events and incidents is helpful to both the police and you. A record of events can help if any action is taken against the offender. Try to record an incident as soon as possible and include as much information as possible.

Sometimes victims of domestic abuse have to leave home in a hurry, to escape from abuse.

It can help if you have already made some plans.

Making a crisis plan is a way of feeling more in control, more positive and confident. This is a suggested plan of action which you can add to or change to suit you:

- Find somewhere you can quickly and easily use a phone (neighbour / relative / friend)
- Make, and always carry with you, a list of numbers for an emergency. Include friends, relatives and local Police (even well-known numbers can be forgotten in a panic)
- Try and save some money for bus, train or taxi fares
- Have an extra set of keys for your house, flat, car
- Keep the keys, money and a set of clothes for you and the children packed ready in a bag that you can quickly get and take. For safety it may be more appropriate to have this at a friend's house to save keeping it in your premises
- Explain to your children (if they are old enough to understand), that you might have to leave in a hurry. Explain that you will take them with you or arrange for them to join you as soon as possible

If you have more time to plan leaving, do as much as possible of the following:

- Leave when the abuser is not around
- Take all the children with you
- Take your legal and financial papers, marriage and birth certificates, court orders, national health cards, passports, driving licence, address book, cheque book, credit cards and so on
- Take any of your personal possessions which have sentimental value – photographs or jewellery etc.
- Take favourite toys for the children
- Take clothing for at least seven days
- Take any medicine you or your children might need
- If you have any pets and are worried they may not be looked after if left behind, try to arrange for someone to care for them. Pets can sometimes be forgotten in an emergency. An animal charity might be able to help
- If you do leave and realise that you have forgotten something, you can always liaise with the police domestic abuse units, with a view to having the protection of a police escort so that you can return home to collect it.

## How the Police can help

If you or someone you know is the victim of domestic abuse, Hertfordshire Constabulary will deal promptly and positively with any domestic incident that they are called to attend. Hertfordshire Constabulary have trained staff and a specialist domestic abuse unit – Domestic Abuse Investigation and Safeguarding Unit (DAISU) - and who can give advice.

Children can be victims too. Hertfordshire Constabulary have a specialist team working jointly with Hertfordshire Children's Services – the Joint Child Protection and Investigation Team (JCPIT) and HALO teams - and are there to protect the welfare of children who are victims of emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

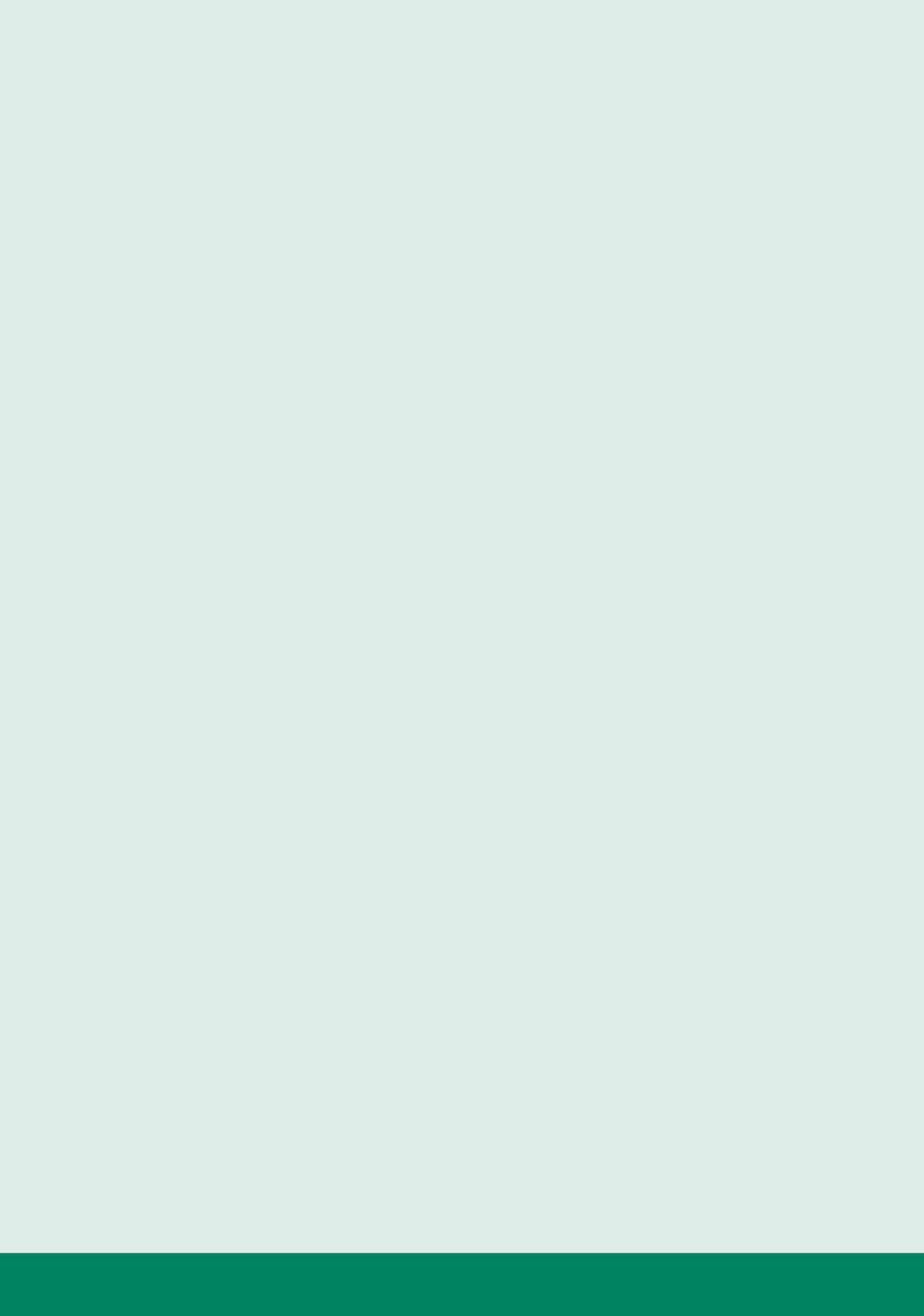
Where it is necessary and appropriate, the person responsible for the abuse will be arrested. Hertfordshire Constabulary will try to take action that will protect you from further abuse, such as recording information relating to your address, in case of calls and installing police linked alarms.

Hertfordshire Constabulary work closely with local and national specialist domestic abuse agencies, other local agencies such as the Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre – Beacon - and housing, and many others in order to get the support you need.

### **What to do if you need help**

In an emergency always dial 999

If the situation you are in is not an emergency, dial 101 for advice and help.





## Sanctuary Schemes





# Sanctuary Schemes

Sanctuary Schemes help families to stay in their homes if they have become victims of domestic abuse or hate crime. The security of the home is improved through a variety of measures. Schemes like this are running successfully in a number of areas across the country.

## How does a sanctuary work?

A Sanctuary Room is created to provide a safe room in the home, where you can call for and await the arrival of police. Every 'sanctuary' is tailored to accommodate the needs and circumstances of the individuals involved. With your agreement, a number of security measures are provided, such as internal fire doors, additional locks and firefighting equipment. You may also be given a means to contact emergency services.

## Does it matter where I live?

Sanctuary Schemes are run by District/Borough councils, so you will need to apply to the Council which covers the area you live in. Schemes are not just for Council tenants, they are also available to homeowners, tenants of registered social landlords and people living in private rented accommodation.

## How will my application be dealt with?

If you want to make a Sanctuary application, an interview will be arranged with a Homeless Prevention Officer. These staff are experienced in dealing with clients who have problems with domestic abuse or hate crime. During the interview, a decision will be made on whether a sanctuary room is a suitable option for you. If your application is progressed, all your personal details will be dealt with in a confidential manner. The relevant Council, Police and Fire and Rescue will hold your personal details. Officers from these organisations will visit you at your home to carry out an assessment of your property.

They will work in partnership with you to make sure everyone is satisfied that a safe sanctuary can be provided. You will then be asked to sign a form agreeing whether or not the application should proceed.

## How can I make a Sanctuary application?

Contact your local council for information and to see if the sanctuary scheme is available in your area.

## Herts Home Security Service

The countywide Hertfordshire Home Safety Service (HHSS) provides a range of free and low cost services, using proceeds of crime monies (POCA). This means money recovered from criminals will go directly to helping secure your home and make you feel safer.

The home security service provides:

- Advice on home security including rogue trading advice.
- Free home fire safety visit online form.
- Fitting/maintaining locks on external doors.
- Fitting/maintaining locks on external windows.
- Fitting/maintaining locks on side or rear gates.
- Fitting/maintaining locks on external garage doors.
- Fitting prikka-strip panels on fencing or walls.
- Provide advice on how to register with utility companies' priority services for vulnerable customers.

## Who provides this service?

The HHSS is part of the Safe and Well service managed by Hertfordshire County Council's Joint Protective Services through joint working between Community Protection, Public Health and Adult Care Services departments.

The service is available and free to people meeting certain criteria wherever they live in Hertfordshire. One qualifying criteria is being a victim of domestic abuse.

## How to contact HHSS

To find out more about how the service can help you contact:

Email: [HHSS@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:HHSS@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01707 292344



## Housing Options





# Housing Options

One of the biggest decisions for any victim of domestic abuse to make is whether to leave your home.

If you decide to leave, then you will need to consider where you/your family will live.

If you do not have anywhere to safe to stay or are in any doubt about your housing options, then you should seek housing advice.

## Homelessness

If you need to leave your home due to domestic abuse, you should contact your local Council (see contact details at the end of this leaflet). Councils have trained officers who will give you advice and an opportunity to talk through the options available to you. The options may vary from making a homelessness application, applying to go on the housing register, a women's refuge or looking into applying for private accommodation.

It is always best to contact the Council at the earliest opportunity in order to allow plenty of time to look at your options and to prepare for any changes.

## Council Tenancy

Anyone can apply to their local Council's for re-housing, regardless of their current circumstances. If you are already a council tenant and are going through a relationship breakdown, you can approach your local Council to discuss your housing options. If you are experiencing domestic abuse, a specialist officer will take time to discuss your needs and explain the options that are available. The advice offered will be determined by your personal circumstances, family composition, tenure and rent history. The options available to you may range from taking action against the perpetrator to transferring you to alternative council housing, possibly in another local authority area.

## **Refuges (Safe Accommodation)**

A refuge is a temporary safe haven for victims and their children fleeing domestic abuse.

There is a large national network of specialist organisations running a range of refuge-type services. Predominantly, these are run by women and available for women to provide a wide range of practical advice and support for women and their children.

There are also a small number of organisations providing refuge provision for male victims across the country.

Access to refuge provision is not solely determined on your local area, as you may feel or need to go further away for a variety of reasons.

Refuge addresses and telephone numbers are kept confidential. The aim is for residents to feel safe and supported.

Remember that if there are spaces available, you don't have to feel pressured to stay in your home area.

Information on refuges in Hertfordshire can be found at the end of this pack.

## **Refuges in Hertfordshire**

### **St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge**

Tel: 03301 025811 (24-hour emergency line)

E-mail: [info@sahwr.org.uk](mailto:info@sahwr.org.uk)

Website: [stalbandsandhertsmerewomensrefuge.org.uk](http://stalbandsandhertsmerewomensrefuge.org.uk)

### **Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge**

Tel: 0330 102 5811 (24-hour emergency line)

E-mail: [admin@whwr.org](mailto:admin@whwr.org)

Website: [www.whwr.org.uk](http://www.whwr.org.uk)

## **Safer Places**

Tel: 0330 102 5811 (24-hour emergency line)

E-mail: [info@saferplaces.co.uk](mailto:info@saferplaces.co.uk)

Website: [www.saferplaces.co.uk](http://www.saferplaces.co.uk)

## **Friends and Family**

Another option is for you to stay with friends or family, but only if you consider that you and your family / friends are not in any danger, as the perpetrator may know where you are. This may be a useful option for the short term, while you look at other options.

Whatever housing option you are considering, it is always worthwhile talking to a housing adviser at your local Council. They will be able to help you find the best option.

### **Broxbourne Borough Council Housing**

Tel: 01992 785555

Email: [housingneeds@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:housingneeds@broxbourne.gov.uk)

### **East Herts District Council Housing Team**

Tel: 01279 655261

Email: [housingoptions@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@eastherts.gov.uk)

### **Dacorum Borough Council Housing**

Tel: 01442 228000

Email: [homelessnessprevention@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessprevention@dacorum.gov.uk)

### **Hertsmere Borough Council housing**

Tel: 0208 207 2277

Email: [housing.options@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:housing.options@hertsmere.gov.uk)

### **North Hertfordshire District Council**

Tel: 01462 474000

Online: Housing Assistance Referral Portal

([www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice))

**Stevenage Borough Council - Housing Advice Team**

Tel: 01438 242242

Email: [housing.advice@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:housing.advice@stevenage.gov.uk)

**St Albans City and District - Housing Advice**

Tel: 01727819355

Email: [housing.options@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:housing.options@stalbans.gov.uk)

**Three Rivers District Council - Housing Advice**

Tel: 01923 776611

Email: [housingenquires@threerivers.gov.uk](mailto:housingenquires@threerivers.gov.uk)

**Watford Borough Council - Housing Advice Service**

Tel: 01923 226400

Email: [housing@watford.gov.uk](mailto:housing@watford.gov.uk)

**Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Housing Needs team**

Tel: 01707 357 613

Email: [housingallocationsteam@welhat.gov.uk](mailto:housingallocationsteam@welhat.gov.uk)



## Benefits





# Benefits

Deciding to leave an abusive relationship is daunting enough on its own, but when there are financial concerns, things may appear even harder. It is therefore very important to seek advice as soon as possible on benefits which you might be entitled to claim.

## Universal credit

Universal credit is a new means-tested benefit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It is gradually replacing the majority of means-tested benefits and tax credits currently paid to people under pension age.

The following benefits (known as legacy benefits) will eventually be replaced by universal credit:

- income support
- income-based jobseeker's allowance (IBJSA)
- income-related employment & support allowance (IRESA)
- housing benefit
- child tax credit (CTC)
- working tax credit (WTC)

Many benefits will remain including:

- contribution-based JSA
- contributory ESA
- pension credit
- state pension
- carer's allowance
- child benefit and guardian's allowance
- social fund maternity grant, funeral payments, winter fuel payments and cold weather payments

- health benefits
- statutory sick pay
- statutory maternity/ adoption/paternity pay/  
shared parental pay
- attendance allowance
- personal independence payment (PIP)
- disability living allowance (DLA for children)
- bereavement support payment
- council tax support

Universal credit may be paid on top of some other benefits, for example, contribution-based JSA, contributory ESA or carer's allowance, to bring you up to a specific level which is determined by your circumstances.

## **Local Council Tax Support**

You can apply for Council Tax Support if you are:

- Liable to pay Council tax and
- On a low income

For more information on Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support, contact the Benefits office of the District / Borough Council for the area you live in:

### **Broxbourne Borough Council Benefits**

Tel: 01992 785577

Website: [www.broxbourne.gov.uk/resident-benefits/benefits](http://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/resident-benefits/benefits)

### **East Herts District Council Benefits**

Tel: 01279 655261

Website: [www.eastherts.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/benefits)

### **Dacorum Borough Council Benefits**

Tel: 01442 228000

Website: [www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/benefits](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/benefits)

### **Hertsmere Borough Council Benefits**

Tel: 020 8207 2277

Website: [www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Benefits--Council-tax/Benefits/Benefits.aspx](http://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Benefits--Council-tax/Benefits/Benefits.aspx)

### **North Hertfordshire District Council Benefits**

Tel: 01462 474000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Website: [www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/benefits](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/benefits)

### **Stevenage Borough Council Benefits**

Tel: 01438 242440

Website: [www.stevenage.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/benefits)

### **St Albans City and District Benefits Advice**

Tel: 01727 819220

Website: [www.stalbans.gov.uk/housing/benefits/default.aspx](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/housing/benefits/default.aspx)

### **Three Rivers District Council Benefits Advice**

Tel: 01923773138

Website: [www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/benefits](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/benefits)

### **Watford Borough Council Benefit Advice Service**

Tel: 01923 226400

Website: [www.watford.gov.uk/info/20229/benefits](http://www.watford.gov.uk/info/20229/benefits)

### **Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Benefits Service**

Tel: 01707 357 000

Email: [contact-whc@welhat.gov.uk](mailto:contact-whc@welhat.gov.uk)

Website: [www.welhat.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/benefits)





# The Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children





# The Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children

Quite often a victim will stay with their abuser because they feel that it is necessary for the sake of any children. Even in situations where the child is not targeted directly with abuse and is 'only' witnessing abuse, it can lead to very serious psychological trauma with possible long-term effects. These can affect not only the child's well-being during or shortly after the abuse, but also have adverse effects on a child's ability to grow, thrive, achieve positive outcomes or build and maintain healthy relationships in his/her adult life.

Children who live with domestic abuse can be affected in many ways.

Each situation will be different but many children are known to be affected in some of the following ways:

**Emotional issues;** short temper or tantrums, aggressive, withdrawn, internalise distress, anger, guilt, blame, isolation, confusion, or regression – *out of character or cut off from networks.*

**Anxiety or depression;** nervous or easily startled;  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

**Difficulty sleeping;** nightmares or flashbacks; bed-wetting, tiredness, insomnia.

**Physical symptoms;** tummy aches, pains, headaches, nausea, bruising.

**Problems with development/school;** delayed development – language and milestones, low attainment, low achievement, truancy or absenteeism. Relationship or attachment issues. Withdrawal from education/non-return after holiday. Surveillance by siblings/cousins.

**Low self-esteem and –worth;** self-blame, minimalism/normalise - *including general appearance/confidence.*

**Substance misuse Self-harm or destructive behaviour;** suicidal, low level Anti-Social Behaviour or abusive/bullying behaviours – start to condone abuse or the threat of abuse to resolve conflict in relationships; building of repeat cycles or normalising.

**Problems eating Appearance;** changes or inappropriate clothing – heavy/full clothing in hot weather.

**Changes to routines;** sudden absence/‘secret’ holiday – shorter/longer periods at school, indulging more deeply to detract or as fear of returning home.

**Emotional stress can harm brain development and impair cognitive and sensory growth.**

There are specialist help available, locally and nationally. More detail can be found at the back of this pack but you may like to seek immediate advice from:

**ChildLine: national confidential telephone and online counselling for children and young people.**

Tel: 0800 11 11

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**The Hideout**

A website offering safe space, advice and support for children and young people suffering abuse.

[www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk)

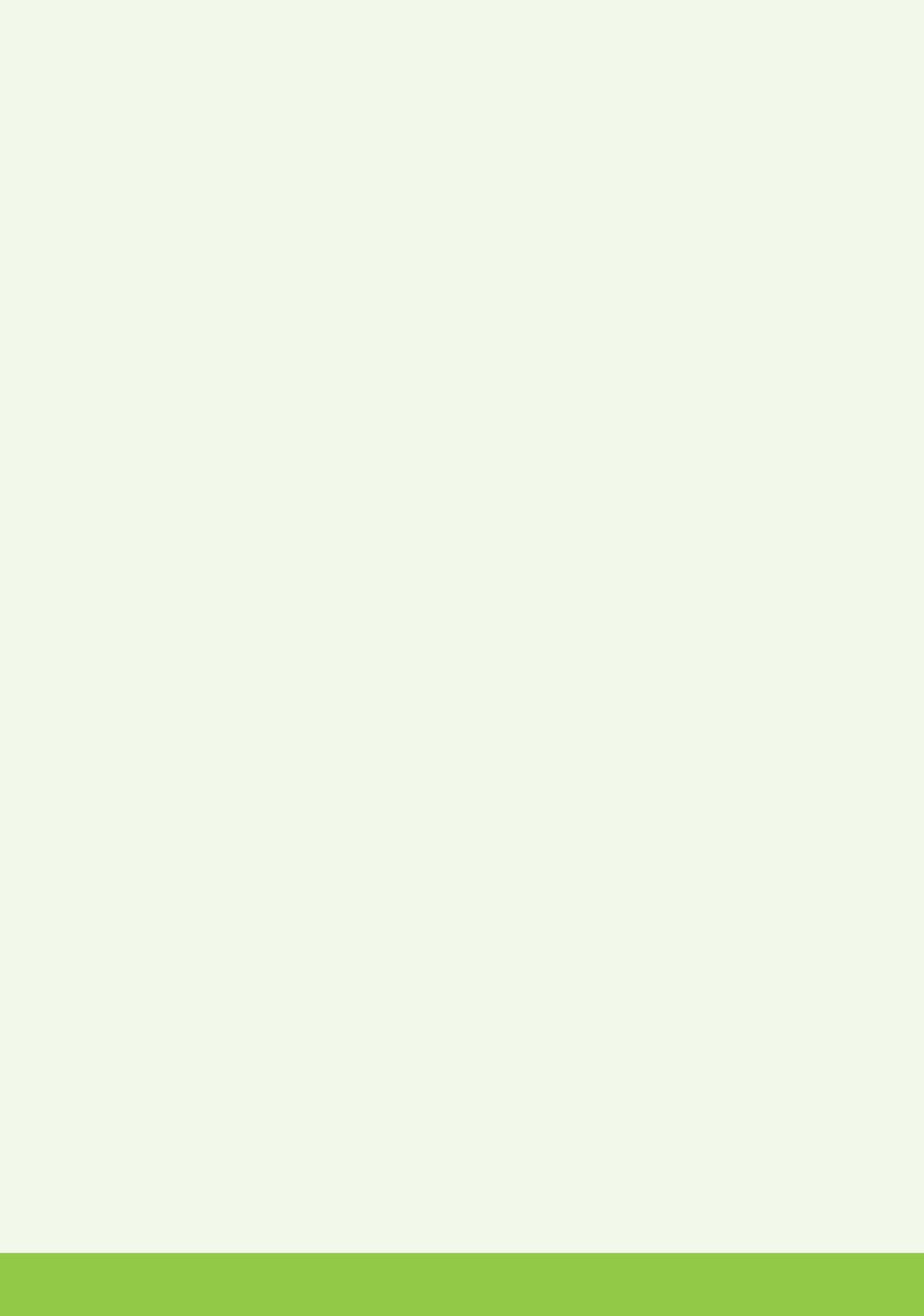
**Hertfordshire Children’s Services**

Hertfordshire County Council’s Children’s Social Care

department are available to help support families experiencing difficulties through a range of services and specialist teams in order to safeguard all children from harm or abuse; from early help and prevention interventions right through to child protection.

Call any time on: 0300 123 4043

Website: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Childrens-social-care.aspx](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Childrens-social-care.aspx)





## Teenage Healthy Relationships





# Teenage Healthy Relationships

A recent survey by the NSPCC showed that a quarter of girls and 18 per cent of boys have experienced some sort of physical abuse from their partner in a relationship. Abuse in a relationship is never okay. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect from their partner.

## What behaviour counts as abuse?

It can be if someone constantly puts you down, threatens you or forces you to do something you don't want to. It's not always physical abuse; it can be sexual and / or emotional. Abuse in relationships can happen to anyone regardless of the type of relationship. Abuse can harm you physically and emotionally as well as leave you feeling isolated and lonely. The abuse comes from your partner trying to control you and your actions.

## How to recognise the signs of abuse in a relationship

Here are some signs of controlling or violent behaviour by a boyfriend or girlfriend:

- They may get extremely jealous
- They may monitor your calls and emails and get angry if you don't reply instantly
- They may have trouble controlling their emotions, particularly anger
- They may stop you from seeing or talking with friends and family as much as you would like
- They may use force during an argument
- They may blame others for their problems or feelings
- They may be verbally abusive, or show threatening behaviour towards others

## **How to recognise the signs that someone may be in an abusive relationship.**

Here are some signs that may point to someone experiencing abuse:

- No longer hanging out with their circle of friends
- Not doing as well at school, or skipping school altogether
- Constantly checking their phone
- Being withdrawn and quieter than usual
- Being angry, becoming irritable when asked how they are doing
- Making excuses for their boyfriend or girlfriend
- Having unexplained scratches or bruises
- Showing changes in mood or personality
- Using drugs or alcohol



## Staying Safe on the Internet





# Staying Safe on the Internet

The internet is a very useful source of information. However, if you are a victim of domestic abuse, you need to take particular care when using the internet, as there are a number of ways in which being online could provide information to your abuser. The safest way to find information on the internet is to do it in a safe place. This could be at a local library, a friend's house, or at work. However, as this is not always possible, the following is a simple guide which can help increase your safety when using the internet.

## Other users can look at the history of websites you've visited

As a rule, internet browsers will save certain information as you surf the internet. This includes images from websites visited and words entered into search engines (known as the 'cache') and a trail ('history') that reveals the sites you have visited and passwords.

All Internet browsers have a method for deleting such information. However, if you and your abuser share a computer, **it is important that you are aware that there is a risk involved in removing data from your computer.** For instance, if you share any device (e.g. Personal Computer) with your abuser and they use online banking and have a saved password, then if you clear the cookies on your device, your abuser will realise you've done so, because their password will no longer be saved. Also, your abuser may notice if the address history on the device has been cleared, and this may raise suspicion.

## Deleting your browser history;

3 tips to keep your browsing history private: Hide your visit to a website completely:

1. Close your browser by clicking on the 'X' or 'exit' button on your page (often in the top left or right hand corner)
2. Clear your internet history and cookies ('Cache')
3. Use your browser's private or 'incognito' browsing mode. There are different ways to do this depending on what device and browser you're using. Make sure you check out how to keep yourself safe on the browser(s) you use.

There's full instructions on how you do this using some of the most common browsers in the 'How to delete your browser history' section of the Herts Sunflower website:

[www.hertssunflower.org/how-to-delete-your-browser-history/how-to-delete-your-browser-history.aspx](http://www.hertssunflower.org/how-to-delete-your-browser-history/how-to-delete-your-browser-history.aspx)

## Toolbars

Toolbars such as Google, AOL and Yahoo keep a record of the search words you have typed into the toolbar search box. In order to erase all the search words you have typed in, you will need to check the individual instructions for each type of toolbar. For example, for the Google toolbar all you need to do is click on the Google icon, and choose "Clear Search History".

## E-mail

If an abuser sends you threatening or harassing e-mail messages, they may be printed and saved as evidence of this abuse.

Be aware of how records of your emails can be accessed:

- Any email you have previously sent will be stored in 'sent Items'. Go to 'sent items' and delete emails you don't want anyone else to see.

- If you started an email but didn't finish it, it might be in your 'drafts' folder. Go to the draft folder to delete it.
- If you reply to any email, the original message will probably be in the body of the message. Delete the email if you don't want anyone to see your original message.
- When you delete an item in any email program (Outlook Express, Outlook, Thunderbird, etc.) it does not really delete the item - it moves the item to a folder called 'Deleted Items'. You have to delete the messages in 'Deleted Items' to remove them permanently.
- If there's a risk that your abuser may know how to access your emails, it's a good idea to set up a new email account. Use a provider like Hotmail or Yahoo for an account you can access from anywhere and use a name that is not recognisable as you. Keep this email account secret.





## Supporting Friends and Family





# Supporting Friends and Family

Here are some suggestions about how you can support someone experiencing domestic violence (including forced marriage and so called 'honour' based violence and/or sexual violence).

If there is a risk of harm, call the police or contact one of the organisations listed in this leaflet.

Please note that in section below we have largely referred to the abuser as 'he' and the victim as 'she'. This is not always the case – a man can be the victim of domestic abuse and a woman can be an abuser. Domestic abuse also happens in same sex relationships and between family members who are not a 'couple'.

## Signs of an abusive relationship:

### He...

- puts her down
- does all the talking and dominates the conversation
- tries to suggest he is the victim and acts bewildered that she isn't grateful to be in a relationship with him
- tries to keep her away from you
- acts as if he owns her
- pretends he has no faults or tries to make himself good
- acts as if he is superior and works more than others in his home

### She...

- may be apologetic and make excuses for his behaviour
- is nervous about talking when he's there
- seems to be sick more often and misses work
- tries to hide her injuries/wears long sleeves & high necks in the summer

- makes last minute excuses about why she can't meet you or avoids you in public
- seems sad, lonely, withdrawn and is fearful
- uses more drugs or alcohol to cope

**If you see these warning signs, your family member/friend/colleague may need help.**

## **Signs of a forced marriage or 'honour' based abuse:**

- Family history of relatives gone missing, self-harm or suicide
- Relatives making decisions on behalf of victim
- Victims may truant or have extended absences from school
- Victims may report that they are being kept at home against their will
- Decline in academic/work performance
- Victim may report family has made threats to kill
- Victims may report they are being emotionally blackmailed
- Victims may be isolated due to physical, financial or cultural barriers
- Victims may suffer from depression, self harm or attempt suicide
- Emotional and/or physical abuse

## **Raise the issue**

- Try to bring the subject up when the abuser isn't around. Let them know you are concerned and want to help.
- Try not to criticise their abuser or the relationship. Instead, focus on the abuse and their safety. Listen to what they say and then see how you can be supportive.

## **Giving support**

- Your family member/friend/colleague needs to be supported and not judged. Maintain contact with them and help them explore all options, such as finding appropriate specialist support.
- This is a big challenge. You don't want to see your friend get hurt, but may have to watch them stay with their partner or family when you think she should leave or go to the police.
- It's important that they don't feel like you're telling them what to do.

## **What to say**

- Sexual or domestic abuse is totally unacceptable
- It's common
- Sexual or domestic abuse is about power and control, not sex
- The abuser is 100 per cent responsible for the abuse it's not your fault, regardless of what you say, do, or wear
- An abuser can choose to stop if they want to
- You can't change them, but you don't have to put up with it
- Help is available

## **Questions you can ask**

- What can I do to help?
- How has his/their behaviour made you feel?
- How is it affecting you?
- How have you been coping with the abuse?
- What can you do to be safer?
- What are you afraid of if you leave/stay do you know when it is going to happen?
- Is there a pattern?

- What do you already do to protect yourself/your children?
- Can I help you find support?

## **Responding to forced marriage/'honour' violence**

- do not mediate between the victim and any of their family members – this can put the victim at risk
- things can rapidly escalate to serious violence ending in murder if nobody intervenes
- Be aware of how serious the danger is and the immediacy of the risk – you must act quickly. The victim may need immediate protection away from the family or care setting. Siblings, boyfriends and girlfriends may also be at risk. Make urgent contact with the Police or the Forced Marriage Unit (see contact details below).

## **Leaving an abusive partner**

- Leaving can be difficult, particularly if the abusive partner promises to change.
- Leaving a violent partner or abusive family is often only the end of the relationship – not the end of the abuse.

Around 12 women a year are killed in so-called 'honour' based abuse and others are killed by abusive family members. Of these, most were trying to leave a violent relationship, or had recently left one.

## **Practical help**

### **You could:**

- Agree a code word or action your friend can use to signal that they are in danger
- Offer to keep copies of important documents etc. for them, in case they have to leave in a hurry

- Find out information about local services and encourage them to seek support before they leaves the relationship
- Offer help, e.g. use of your phone or address for information/ messages, keeping spare sets of keys etc.

**Get support for yourself – and don't give up them. You may be their only lifeline.**

## **Forced Marriage Unit**

The Forced Marriage Unit provides advice for anyone who needs help leaving a forced marriage or who is trying to stop a forced marriage from taking place.

Tel: 0207 7008 0151 (Weekdays 9am - 5pm)

Email: [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk)

Website: [www.gov.uk/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage)





## Advice for Employers





# Advice for Employers

## Domestic abuse is your business!

- Domestic abuse currently costs UK businesses over £2.7 billion a year.
- In the UK, in any one year, more that 20% of employed women take time off work because of domestic abuse, and 2% lose their jobs as a direct result of the abuse.
- 75% of women who experience domestic abuse are targeted at work – from harassing phone calls and abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced, to physical assaults.
- Domestic abuse impacts the workplace through absenteeism, poor performance, tardiness, lost productivity, turnover, and recruitment and training costs in the cases of both victims and perpetrators.

## What can Employers Do?

- Ensure regular 121 supervisions with all members of staff, and use these meetings to create a positive environment that allows employees to approach with matters that may concern them.
- Recognise the problem
- Look for sudden changes in behaviour and/or changes in the quality of work performance for unexplained reasons, despite a previously strong record.
- Look for changes in the way an employee dresses i.e. excessive clothing on hot days, changes in the amount of make-up worn.

## Respond

- Be sensitive, listen to the individual and remain non-judgemental, know how to support your employee.
- Believe an employee if they disclose experiencing domestic abuse - do not ask for proof.
- Do not try to dictate what action any member of staff should take. Be there to listen and support them in their choices and their decisions.

- Reassure the employee that the organisation has an understanding of domestic abuse and takes the issue seriously.

## Provide support

- Agree with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if their ex/partner telephones or visits the workplace.
- Consider reasonable time off for related appointments (such as solicitors, GP's etc.), and signpost the individual to other specialist services or support.
- Advise the individual of any confidential professional advice and support provided through your organisation's employee assistance programme.
- Treat unplanned absences or temporary poor timekeeping sympathetically.
- Keep a record of any incidents of abuse in the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the workplace.
- Consider and discuss with the employee what arrangements could be made at work which may assist the employee, for example;
  - Flexible working arrangements such as changes in working patterns in instances where the perpetrator knows the address of the workplace, as well as the time the employee leaves work
  - Diverting calls/emails or changing the individual's work telephone number in instances where unwanted phone calls are being received.
  - Consider if a change of work place could be facilitated as a temporary measure.
  - Ensure the employee does not work alone or in an isolated area and check that staff have arrangements for getting safely to and from home.
  - Refer to the appropriate help - Provide information for the employee on external sources of help and advice



## Getting Help and Advice





# Getting Help and Advice

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, getting help and advice is one of the most important things you can do.

**In an emergency, call 999**

Domestic abuse is treated very seriously by the police, and they will take action to protect you. There are many people and organisations you can turn to if you are suffering from domestic abuse.

## Local Services That Can Help You

If you are currently experiencing domestic abuse and need help, advice, guidance or protection and support, there are a variety of specialist domestic abuse teams and services to support you. Many can help with risk management, safety planning as well as emotional and practical support for you and your children. The following agencies have a wealth of expertise including fully qualified specialist staff to provide this support.

### Hertfordshire Constabulary

If you want to contact the local police and talk to a specialist in a non-emergency, you can call, text or visit the website:

Tel: 101

Text phone: 18001 101

Website: [www.herts.police.uk/Information-and-services/Advice/Domestic-abuse/Domestic-abuse](http://www.herts.police.uk/Information-and-services/Advice/Domestic-abuse/Domestic-abuse)

### Herts Sunflower

Hertfordshire has a large and varied number of services, to support victims. These services are collectively known as and represented by the overarching 'Herts Sunflower' partnership across the county and underpinned by the Herts Sunflower Website, providing information and support services for everyone affected or concerned by Domestic Abuse in Hertfordshire.

Visit: [www.hertssunflower.org](http://www.hertssunflower.org)

## **Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline**

The Sunflower 'hub' is supported by the helpline; The Helpline is a confidential, free, support and signposting service for those affected by or concerned about domestic abuse. Well trained volunteer call takers listen carefully to callers' concerns before signposting them to any of up to 170 principally Hertfordshire-based organisations that could help. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-9pm and Sat-Sun 9am-4pm.

Tel: 08 088 088 088

Email: [support@hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org](mailto:support@hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org)

Website: [www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org](http://www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org)

**Always dial 999 in an emergency.**

## **Safer Places**

Safer Places is an independent charity which provides a range of services for adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse and family conflict. The charity offers services including refuge accommodation, outreach support, counselling and training. Safer Places currently hold the countywide contract for these services, working with St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge in the West of the county and Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge in Welwyn Hatfield area.

Tel: 03301 025811 (24-hour emergency line)

E-mail: [info@saferplaces.co.uk](mailto:info@saferplaces.co.uk)

Website: [www.saferplaces.co.uk](http://www.saferplaces.co.uk)

## **St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge**

St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge provide a safe comfortable, conflict free environment for women and women with children who are suffering domestic abuse, through 'refuge' accommodation and community outreach across the West area of Hertfordshire. These services are delivered as part of arrangements in place with Safer Places, as well as their own wider service provision and local arrangements. They give advice and support on available options so as to enable a woman to make informed choices, feel more confident and take control of her and her children's lives and future.

Tel: 03301 025811 (24-hour emergency line)

E-mail: [info@sahwr.org.uk](mailto:info@sahwr.org.uk)

Website: [www.stalbansandhertsmere womensrefuge.org.uk](http://www.stalbansandhertsmere womensrefuge.org.uk)

### **Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge**

Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge provide safe accommodation and help and support in the community to women and children who have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused across the Welwyn and Hatfield area of Hertfordshire. These services are delivered as part of arrangements in place with Safer Places, as well as their own wider service provision and local arrangements. This includes local advice, information and support across the Welwyn and Hatfield area via direct contact Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

Tel: 03301 025811 (24 hour emergency line)

01707 373743 (local advice, information and support)

E-mail: [admin@whwr.org](mailto:admin@whwr.org)

Website: [www.whwr.org.uk](http://www.whwr.org.uk)

### **The Refuge-Hertfordshire IDVA service**

The Hertfordshire Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service provides specialist high level confidential, non-judgmental, independent specialist support to women and men who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Call 0300 790 6772 to refer yourself or someone else.

They're open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Email: [hertsidva@refuge.org.uk](mailto:hertsidva@refuge.org.uk) or [herts.idva@refuge.cjism.net](mailto:herts.idva@refuge.cjism.net)

### **For Baby's Sake**

For Baby's Sake is a programme provided by the Stefanou Foundation across Stevenage, North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield for expectant parents, whether they are together as a couple or not. The service help mothers and fathers to make changes in their lives and end hurtful or harmful behaviours that make them feel scared or bad, so that they can feel safe and good about themselves. This then helps them to give their babies the best start in life.

Tel: 07702 538080 (duty phone: whoever answers it will be ready to listen and talk with you)

Email: [Welcome@forbabysake.org.uk](mailto:Welcome@forbabysake.org.uk)

Website: [www.forbabysake.org.uk](http://www.forbabysake.org.uk)

### **Watford Women's Centre Plus**

Watford Women's Centre Plus offer a range of services and support for women. For those affected by domestic abuse this includes face to face or telephone appointments, outreach caseworker for BME communities, 'My Life' domestic abuse awareness programme and workshops, free appointments with family law solicitors, low cost counselling services, careers advice, courses to improve English and readiness for work, and personal development courses.

Tel: 01923 816229

In person: 83 Market Street, Watford, WD18 0PT

Email: [general@watfordwomenscentre.org.uk](mailto:general@watfordwomenscentre.org.uk)

Website: [www.wwcplus.org.uk](http://www.wwcplus.org.uk)

Facebook: Watford Women's Centre Plus (@WWCPlus)

### **Future Living Hertford**

Future Living Hertford is a registered charity (number 1155145) and an independent emotional wellbeing centre providing services for those in recovery from addiction and domestic abuse, in a safe, non-judgemental, therapeutic environment. The service offers face to face and telephone appointments to men and women affected by domestic abuse, outreach domestic abuse caseworker, run Monica domestic abuse awareness programme and workshop, which includes substances misuse, offer free appointments with family law solicitors, low cost counselling service, careers advice, access to Women's Centre that includes variety of social meet up opportunities, life course coaching, reduced rate gym membership programmes and yoga classes. Onsite community cafe with drop in centre and Job Club.

In person: Vale House, 43 Cowbridge, Hertford SG14 1PN

Tel: 01992 537344 or 07775 107520

Email: [info@futurelivinghertford.co.uk](mailto:info@futurelivinghertford.co.uk)

Website: [www.futurelivinghertford.co.uk](http://www.futurelivinghertford.co.uk) or  
[www.progressforwomen.co.uk](http://www.progressforwomen.co.uk)

Facebook: Future Living Hertford

### **Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA)**

SADA is a dedicated domestic abuse service offering support to anyone affected by domestic abuse across the areas of Stevenage and North Hertfordshire. SADA provide volunteer led sessions and drop in services held at discreet locations across Stevenage and North Herts, a 'Safe Space' for those needing emergency accommodation and breathing space for up to 7-days, and caseworkers to support, advise and guide victims and their children. The service is managed through the Community Safety Team at Stevenage Borough Council.

Tel: 01438 242666

Email: [domesticabuse\\_gcsx@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:domesticabuse_gcsx@stevenage.gov.uk)

Website: [www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555/](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-stevenage/so-safe/187555/)

### **Cherished**

Cherished provide a range of free services for women living in Hertfordshire who have suffered abuse, are vulnerable due to substance misuse, offending, or mental health; or who have involvement with Children's Social Care. Based in Hemel Hempstead Cherished offer those affected opportunities to attend 'Coffee, Cake and Chat' drop ins, recovery courses, parenting courses, and assistance with legal, debt and employment advice.

Tel: 01442 767390

Website: [www.iamcherished.co.uk](http://www.iamcherished.co.uk)

Email: [enquiries@iamcherished.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@iamcherished.co.uk)

## **Mind**

Mind deliver essential mental health support in Hertfordshire, providing a diverse range of services from seven Wellbeing Centres and other venues across all ten districts of the county. As well as a range of peer support, counselling, practical and emotional support, and housing and employment advice, they also provide a domestic abuse caseworker service for anyone 18 years or over, male or female, living in the Three Rivers area or individuals who are living in a Watford Community Housing Trust tenancy.

Tel: 01923 727141 (domestic abuse caseworker service)  
or 020 3727 3600

Email: [dac@hertfordshiremind.org](mailto:dac@hertfordshiremind.org) (domestic abuse caseworker service)

Website: [www.hertsmindnetwork.org](http://www.hertsmindnetwork.org)

## **Herts Help**

Herts Help is a network of community organisations in Hertfordshire working together. They offer a service that listens to then help you find the independent support, guidance and information you need to get the most out of life. Help finding the right care and support services. Offering a brokerage support service they can help you to make a support plan and choose the services you need from an extensive directory of local services and established referral pathways.

Tel: 0300 123 4044

Email: [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)

Website: [www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx](http://www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx)

## **Youth Talk**

Youth Talk is committed to helping and supporting young people. It operates in the District of St Albans and offers a wide variety of services including one-to-one counselling, group work, and information services relating to a variety of issues such as; Family problems, racism, sexism, bullying, abuse, self-image, self-esteem and confidence.

Tel: 01727 868684

Website: [www.youthtalk.org.uk](http://www.youthtalk.org.uk)

### **Young Pride in Herts**

Young Pride in Herts offers support, info and advice to the young LGBTQ community and those who may be struggling with their sexuality or gender, in Hertfordshire.

Website: [www.youngprideinherts.org](http://www.youngprideinherts.org)

### **YC Hertfordshire**

YC Hertfordshire provides youth work projects and programmes, information, advice, guidance, work related learning, outdoor education and support for young people aged 13-19 (to 24 for young people with learning disabilities). For young people leaving care, support is provided to the age of 21.

Website: [www.ychertfordshire.org](http://www.ychertfordshire.org)

### **Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre – Beacon**

Managed by Catch 22, the Beacon Victim Care Centre is Hertfordshire's gateway to victim services for any victim of crime – whether reported to police or not. The service's main focus is to help victims of crime cope and recover from their experience with crime. If needed, the team of dedicated and trained professionals can provide support through every step of the criminal justice system.

Tel: 03000 11 55 55 (option 3)

Email: [info@hertfordshirebeacon.org](mailto:info@hertfordshirebeacon.org)

Website: [www.hertfordshirebeacon.org](http://www.hertfordshirebeacon.org)

### **The Change Project**

The Change Project are a charity specialising in delivering RESPECT accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes. Through the behavioural change of the abuser they aim to increase the well-being of people who are, or have been, living with conflict or domestic violence & abuse. Based in Essex they operate in Hertfordshire from a base in Stevenage – covering Stevenage and neighbouring areas.

Tel: 0845 3727701 / 01245 258680

Text: 07872 541982

Email: [tcp@thechange-project.org](mailto:tcp@thechange-project.org)

Website: [www.thechange-project.org](http://www.thechange-project.org)

### **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

Herts SARC offers free support and practical help to anyone in Hertfordshire who has experienced sexual violence and/or sexual abuse. The service is completely confidential and you do not have to give any personal information in order to get help. If you would like to speak to someone, the service is available 24/7. Either phone or send a message via the contact page on their website.

Tel: 0808 178 4448

Email: [Herts.SARC@nhs.net](mailto:Herts.SARC@nhs.net)

Website: [www.hertssarc.org](http://www.hertssarc.org)

### **Hertfordshire Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre (HARCSAC)**

Hertfordshire Area Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre is a free and confidential telephone and face to face counselling and information service for women who have experienced rape, sexual assault or sexual abuse at any time in their lives. The helpline is open on a Thursday 7.30pm - 9.30pm. This line has an answerphone at all other times and is checked regularly. Calls are normally responded to within a few hours. The counsellors see women over the age of 18 either at the centre in Hatfield or in their own homes, by appointments.

Tel: 01707 276539 or 01707 276512 (Helpline)

E-mail: [admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:admin@hertsrapecrisis.org.uk)

Website: [www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.hertsrapecrisis.org.uk)

### **Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service (HCAS)**

Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Services (HCAS) seeks to promote and develop the provision of advice giving services to the citizens of Hertfordshire. There are ten Citizens Advice services in Hertfordshire and whilst each is a separate charity they will all offer a similar service from a variety of locations and offices across the county. Where possible they collaborate on projects in order to deliver a more efficient service.

Your local office will provide you with information & advice on Debt, Benefits, Housing, Family, Employment, Public Law and help you with many other general areas of advice.

As well as an Advice line (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm) they also offer drop in services at each location. For further information and to locate your nearest service, call or visit their website.

Tel: 03444 111 444 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm)

Website: [www.hcas.org.uk](http://www.hcas.org.uk)

### **Hertfordshire County Council**

You can call Hertfordshire Children's and Adult Care Services for help, advice or information for you or for another adult or child, any time:

For advice regarding a child, call: 0300 123 4043

For advice regarding an adult call: 0300 123 4042

Website: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home.aspx](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home.aspx)

### **Local Authorities**

Your local District / Borough Council can give advice on housing issues relating to domestic abuse.

See section 6. 'Housing Options' for contact details.

# National Organisations That Can Help

## **Women's Aid**

Women's Aid is a national charity which works to end abuse against women and children. The organisation is a grassroots federation working together to provide life-saving services and build a future where domestic abuse is not tolerated. As well as running the national 24hr helpline in partnership with Refuge, their aim is to build 'change that lasts' through campaigning and influencing national policy and practice, educating and raising awareness, and providing training to improve the response to domestic abuse.

Tel: 0808 2000 247 (Freephone 24 hr)

Email: [helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk)

Website: [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

## **Refuge**

Refuge is a national charity that run a range of specialist services to help and empower survivors to access safety and rebuild their lives free from violence and fear. This includes refuges provide emergency temporary accommodation for women and children fleeing abuse, outreach workers supporting women in their homes or in a safe place within the community, independent domestic, sexual and gender violence advocates, and the National Domestic Violence Helpline - run in partnership with Women's Aid.

24 hr national helpline: 0808 2000 247

Website: [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

## **National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV)**

The NCDV specialises in providing free legal support to survivors of domestic violence, usually by helping individuals obtain injunctions from their local court.

Tel: 0844 8044 999 Option 1 (emergency helpline)

Minicom: 18001 08009 702070

Freephone: 0800 970 2070

Website: [www.ncdv.org.uk](http://www.ncdv.org.uk)

### **Forced Marriage Unit**

The Forced Marriage Unit provides advice for anyone who needs help leaving a forced marriage or who is trying to stop a forced marriage from taking place.

Tel: 0207 7008 0151 Weekdays 9am - 5pm

Email: [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk)

Website: [www.gov.uk/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage)

### **Karma Nirvana**

National charity supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage. They run a national helpline offering direct support and guidance to victims and professionals, provide training to the Police, NHS and Social Services and act as expert witnesses in court, speak out in schools and attend various awareness raising events.

Tel: 0800 5999 247 weekdays 9am-5pm

Email: [info@karmanirvana.org.uk](mailto:info@karmanirvana.org.uk)

Website: <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/>

### **The Freedom Charity**

The overall aim of Freedom Charity is to raise awareness and prevent child abuse, keeping children safe. Their aim is to provide tools, educational packages and awareness campaigns around 'Dishonour' Based Abuse, Forced Marriage, and Female Genital Mutilation. They seek to achieve this through campaigns and programmes that empower young people to feel they have the tools and confidence to support each other and have practical ways in which they can help their best friend.

They also operate a 24 hour, seven days a week Helpline to help victims of forced marriage and their friends who are seeking help, support and advice.

Tel: 0845 607 0133

Text: '4freedom' to 88802

Website: [www.freedomcharity.org.uk/](http://www.freedomcharity.org.uk/)

## **NSPCC**

The NSPCC is the UK's leading children's charity fighting to end child abuse. Working with practitioners, volunteers and children and families they offer a range of advice, information, support and services to protect children across the UK.

Tel: 0808 800 5000 (24 hr Child Protection Helpline)

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## **ChildLine**

The UK's free and confidential helpline is not just for children. They also offer help to young people up to the age of 19 who are in distress or danger.

Tel: 0800 11 11 (24 hr helpline)

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **The Hideout**

A website offering safe space, advice and support for children and young people suffering abuse.

Website: [www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk)

## **Action on Elder Abuse**

Action on Elder Abuse works to protect older people from abuse and neglect. They support those experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, as well as raising awareness and advocating effective prevention.

Helpline: 0808 808 8141 (Freephone – Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

E-mail: [enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk)

Website: [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk)

## **Galop**

Galop has provided advice, support, research and lobbying around the issues of LGBT+ policing for over 30 years. They offer emotional and practical support for LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender) people experiencing domestic abuse via a helpline and on-line chat facility. The helpline is open 10am-5pm Monday/Tuesday/Friday and 10am-8pm Wednesday/Thursday. 1pm-5pm Tuesday is Trans specific service

Tel: 0800 999 5428

Online chat: 5pm - 8pm Wednesday/Thursday

Email: [help@galop.org.uk](mailto:help@galop.org.uk)

Website: [www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/](http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/)

## **Suzy Lamplugh Trust.**

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust was set up to in honour of Suzy Lamplugh, a 25-year-old who disappeared during the course of her work as an estate agent while showing a client round a house in Fulham in 1986 and later declared dead – presumed murdered – in 1993 after the non-recovery of her body. The Trust's mission is to help and support people to stay safe from violence and aggression through the provision of free safety tips, managing the National Stalking Helpline (see below) and delivering community projects.

Website: [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

## **National Stalking Helpline**

The National Stalking Helpline is run by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and provides guidance and information to anybody who is currently or has previously been affected by harassment or stalking.

Tel: 0808 802 0300

Email: [advice@stalkinghelpline.org](mailto:advice@stalkinghelpline.org)

Website: [www.stalkinghelpline.org](http://www.stalkinghelpline.org)

## **Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre**

Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centres offer a range of services for women and girls who have been raped or experienced another form of sexual abuse.

National Freephone helpline: 0808 802 9999  
(12 noon – 2:30pm and 7pm – 9.30pm daily).

## **Respect**

Respect is the UK domestic abuse charity providing the national voice on perpetrators, male victims and young people's violence in close relationships. They run behaviour-change programmes for male perpetrators and support services for female perpetrators, male victims and young people. Their free phone line offers confidential advice, information and support to help people stop being violent and abusive to their partner.

Tel: 0808 802 4040 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)  
Email: [info@respectphoneline.org.uk](mailto:info@respectphoneline.org.uk)  
Website: [www.respect.uk.net](http://www.respect.uk.net)

Respect's help line providing advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse – Men's Advice Line is available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

Tel: 0808 801 0327 (Freephone)  
Email: [info@mensadvice.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadvice.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

## **Relate**

Relate are the UK's largest provider of relationship support, and help over two million people of all ages, backgrounds, sexual orientations and gender identities to strengthen their relationships. Services include advice, relationship counselling, sex therapy, workshops, mediation, consultations and support face-to-face, by phone and through their website.

General enquiries: 0300 003 2324  
Booking Line: 0300 003 0396  
Website: [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk) or  
[www.relate.org.uk/london-north-west-and-hertfordshire](http://www.relate.org.uk/london-north-west-and-hertfordshire)  
Email: [Info.lnwh@relate.org.uk](mailto:Info.lnwh@relate.org.uk)

## **The Dogs Trust – Freedom Project**

The Dogs Trust Freedom Project is a dog fostering service for people fleeing domestic abuse, running in Greater London, Herts, Essex, Yorkshire, the North East and the Central Belt of Scotland. As many refuges aren't able to accept pets, Dogs Trust offers a specialist dog fostering service to allow people to flee and get to safety, knowing that their beloved pet is safe and well cared for, until they are in a position to be safely reunited with them. In order to run this vital service, we are always looking for volunteers to foster these dogs in their own homes.

Dogs Trust covers all the dog's food and veterinary bills, whilst also providing the foster carer with regular support from their friendly team.

Tel: 0800 298 9199

Email: [freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk](mailto:freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk)

Website: [www.dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk](http://www.dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk)

