

Housing More than just a roof



Advice and support for Victims and Survivors of Domestic Abuse



Hello

We understand that right now you are experiencing a really challenging time and that sometimes it can be difficult to know who or where to turn to. We know that trying to maintain a calm and happier life after an abusive relationship can feel overwhelming and frightening.

This tool kit has been designed with you in mind. It offers advice, information and support to help you navigate the (often rather jargon-filled) world of housing choices.

The most important message we hope to give you is that keeping yourself and your family safe must be your primary concern. Within the tool kit is safety planning advice and details of a number of organisations that can support you. An estimated 1.9 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the last year, according to the year ending March 2017 Crime Survey for England and Wales (1.2 million women, 713,000 men), you are not the only one and you do not have to go through this time alone.

We hope that you find this information useful. If you require further information about our service or the support we can offer please contact us.

Best wishes,



Written by the Housing IDVA Team at FearLess. With special thanks to Claire K.



official definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse Home Office 2015

The definition of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) 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

Controlling Behaviour

Controlling Behaviour is 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

Coercive Behaviour is 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.

It's not
just you

2 women are
killed every week
in England and Wales
by a current or
former partner

Office of National
Statistics 2015

In 2015/16,
28 men were
killed by a current
or ex-partner

Mankind 2017

On average,
a women is
assaulted 35 times
before her first call
to the police

JAFFE 1982

1 woman
killed every
3 days

Most victims
- 85% -
see on average
5 professionals
in a year before they
finally get effective
support

62% of
children in
households where
Domestic Abuse
is happening
are also directly
harmed

Safe Lives 2015

More women
and children were
turned away from
Refuge than
were let in

WA 2016

1 in every 5
victims of forced
marriage is a man

Mankind 2017

On average
high risk
victims live with
Domestic Abuse for
2.6 years before
getting help

Power and Control Wheel

Emotional Abuse

Putting you down or making you feel bad about yourself, calling you names, making you think you're crazy, mind games, humiliating you and making you feel guilty

Physical Abuse

Pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, choking, pulling hair, punching, kicking, grabbing, using a weapon against you, beating you, throwing you, twisting arms, tripping or biting

Isolation

Controlling what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read, where you go, limiting your outside involvement, using jealousy and/or insecurity to justify actions

Minimising, Denying and Blaming

Making light of the abuse and not taking your concerns about it seriously, saying the abuse didn't happen, shifting responsibility of abusive behaviour, saying you caused it.

Sexual Abuse

Making you do sexual things against your will, physically attacking the sexual parts of your body, treating you like a sex object.
Using sexual put downs.

Coercion and Threats

Making and/or carrying out threats to hurt you, threatening to leave you, threatening to commit suicide, to report you to social services, making you drop charges, making you do illegal things

Gender Roles and Stereotypes

Being the one to define gender roles

Making all the big decisions

i.e. Breadwinner

Economic Abuse

Preventing you from getting or keeping a job, making you ask for money, giving you an allowance, taking your money, not letting you know about or have access to family income

Using Children

Making you feel guilty about the children, using the children to give messages, using contact to harass you, threatening to take the children away.

Power and Control Wheel



Impact of Domestic Abuse

The effects of Domestic Abuse go beyond the immediate physical injuries they suffer at the hands of their abusers. Frequently, domestic violence survivors suffer from an array of psychosomatic illnesses, eating disorders, insomnia, gastrointestinal disturbances, generalized chronic pain and devastating mental health problems like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Many victims find it difficult to function in their daily lives because of the effects of domestic abuse. Absences from work, due to injuries or visits to the doctor, often cause them to lose their jobs, making them less able to leave their abusive situations. They may feel ashamed that their partners abuse them, see themselves as unworthy of love and suffer from a significantly diminished self-perception. Because of their feelings of low self-worth, these people become isolated from friends and family and do not participate in social activities common to others with similar backgrounds.

The emotional impact on children who have witnessed DVA is complicated and varied. There are often issues many would consider as 'adult' emotions such as depression and low self-esteem. DVA can impact on every area of a child's life including education, health, development of relationships and social involvement. Every child exposed to DVA will react differently but these are some of the most common reactions that we see regularly. Immediate effects can include: tummy aches, eating problems, concentration difficulties, sleeping problems, struggling with school work and attendance, problems maintain friendships, regression in behaviours, aggression, sadness and withdrawal. Longer term effects can include: self-harm, social isolation, drug and alcohol misuse, mental health disorders, post-traumatic stress, exclusion from education, risk taking and aggressive behaviours.

Please let your child's school know what is happening at home, this way your child can be supported to get through this difficult time. Tool Kits, resources and activities are available, to help rebuild and nurture the relationship that you and your child have.

Ten Myths About Domestic Abuse

There are many myths surrounding domestic abuse. By believing them we allow the problem to continue.

Myth One: Alcohol and drugs make people violent

Many people are violent when they are stone-cold sober. Many people who drink never lay a finger on their partner.

Blaming drink or drugs is an excuse, a way of denying responsibility. Both may be the trigger for a particular attack but they are not the underlying cause.



Myth Two: It only happens in poor families on council estates

Anyone can be abused, no matter where they live or how much money they have. Abused women and men come from all walks of life. You only have to think of the celebrities we hear about in the papers to realise that money cannot protect you from DVA.



Myth Three: More people would leave if the abuse was that bad

It can be extremely difficult to leave an abusive partner. The abused person may fear what their partner will do if they leave, particularly if they have threatened to kill them or their children. The person may believe that staying with their partner is better for the children.

There are also practical considerations to take into account. The person may not have access to money or anywhere to go. They may not know where to turn for help, particularly if English is not their first language. If they are emotionally and financially dependent on their partner, they may be very isolated.

People from different cultures can find it particularly difficult to leave an abusive partner as this may bring shame on both themselves and their family. They may feel as though they are betraying their community if they contact the police.

An abused person's self-esteem will have been steadily worn down. They may not believe they will manage on their own or that they have any other options. They may feel ashamed of what has happened and believe the abuse is their fault.

They may hope that their partner will change. They remember the good times at the start of the relationship and hope they will return. In emotional terms they have made a huge investment in the relationship and they want it to work.



Myth Four: Abusers grow up in violent homes

This is not true. Growing up in a violent home is a risk factor and some children who experience abuse do go on to be abusive in their relationships. But many do not. Instead they are repelled by violence because they have seen the damage it causes. They would not dream of hitting their partner.



Abusers learn to be violent from the society they grow up in. People who blame violence on their childhood experiences are avoiding taking responsibility for their actions. Violence is a choice an abuser makes.

Myth Five: Some people like violence

No-one enjoys violence or finds it a turn-on. Most abused people live in fear and terror. This is a way of blaming the victim for what is happening.

Myth Six: People ask for it. They deserve what they get



A person is often attacked by their partner for no apparent reason. Even if a person has behaved appallingly, they do not deserve to be beaten.

Violence and intimidation are not acceptable ways to solve conflict in a relationship.

Again, this is a way of making excuses for the abuser's behaviour. It allows a violent person to avoid responsibility for their actions.

Myth Seven: Abusive people have a mental illness

The vast majority of people who abuse their partner are not mentally ill. Research shows that the proportion of abusers with mental health problems is no higher than in society as a whole. And if an abusive person were mentally ill, why is it that they only abuse their partner – not their colleagues, strangers or friends?



Myth Eight: They only hit their partner because they are under stress

Some people who abuse their partners do suffer from stress. Again, this is a factor – not the underlying cause of the abuse. Many people who are stressed are never abusive. Similarly, many people who do abuse their partner cannot claim to be under stress.

Myth Nine: They lose their temper sometimes, that's all

People argue that an abusive person 'loses their temper', or is 'out of control'. The truth is that they are very much in control.

Abusers are usually selective about when they hit their partner, e.g. in private or when the children are asleep. They choose not to mark their face or other parts of the body which show. They never 'lost their temper' with other people. This suggests they are very aware of what they are doing.

Many people abuse their partners emotionally and psychologically, without ever using physical violence. This shows the extent of their control.



Myth Ten: DVA is a private matter, you shouldn't get involved

For too long DVA has been allowed to happen behind closed doors. People think what goes on in the home is private, and not their problem. DVA is a crime. It is against the law. We are all affected by DVA, and we all have a responsibility to speak out against it. Only then will it end.





Choices

As a victim of DVA you can approach any local authority and they may have a legal duty to provide temporary accommodation for you and your children while they investigate your case.

They may insist you go into Refuge or out of area but you do not have to, it will depend on your risk.

Private Rent

Housing may be able to offer you rent/deposit in advance if you find a private rent property.

Temporary Accommodation

This offer will depend on what decision your local Housing Authority come too, it may be a bed and breakfast or it may be a travel lodge/hotel, some local authorities have their own temporary accommodation.

You will be charged for the accommodation, speak to your local Housing Authority.





Refuge

Refuge provides temporary refuge to men, women and children who have suffered DVA and offer support and after-care to anyone who has left Refuge.

- Currently there are 19 organisations in the UK offering refuge for male victims
- **Refuge** will encourage service users to determine their own futures and help them achieve this, whether this involves returning home or starting a new life elsewhere
- **Refuge** will recognise and care for the emotional and educational needs of children involved with specialist staff
- **Refuge** will offer support, advice and help to any service user who requests it
- **Refuge** supports the family in a more holistic approach to help keep families safe and relationships healthy
- **Refuge** is often communal living with your own bedroom, it can sometimes be separate self contained units. All are fully furnished including bedding/towels, etc.

The Women's Aid helpline can help you access available space in refuges country wide.

The 24 hour free phone National Domestic Violence Helpline (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) is available on **0808 2000 247**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Refuges will accept self referrals and referrals from outside agencies.

Places of Safety

What can I expect?

Places of Safety provide temporary accommodation to women, men and children who have suffered domestic abuse.

Places of Safety will encourage service users to determine their own futures and help them achieve this.

Places of Safety will recognise and care for the emotional and educational needs of children involved by sign posting to relevant agencies.

Places of Safety supports the family in a more holistic approach to help keep families safe and relationships healthy.

Places of Safety are temporary accommodation in the community; they range from flats to houses. All places of safety are fully furnished and comes with new bedding and towels.

Places of Safety will only accept referrals from Independent, Domestic Violence Advisor's (IDVA's) and you must be engaged with Splitz Support Service.





Making a Safety Plan

A personal safety plan is a way of helping you to protect yourself and your children.

You cannot stop your partner's violence and abuse - only they can do that. But there are things you can do to increase your own and your children's safety.

In this section you will find lots of helpful tips and advice, plus a pull-out Safety Plan for you to complete and keep somewhere safe.

Making a safety plan

- To call 999 in an emergency, if you are fearful of aggressive behaviour from your partner
- To call 101 to report a non-urgent crime for example harassment
- Keep your mobile phone, charged and with you at all times
- Keep important and emergency phone numbers with you
- Keep some money on you at all times
- Think of neighbours or friends who you could ask for help in an emergency
- Know where the nearest phone is or keep your mobile with you

If you think your partner is about to become violent, avoid the kitchen where there are knives and other rooms where you might become trapped - try to stay near to the way out or the phone.

Safety Plan

List all your important numbers

Nearest A+E
Department:

Housing:

Emergency
Housing:

Solicitor:

Social Worker:

Duty Social
Care Team:

Domestic Abuse
Officer:

Domestic Abuse
IDVA:

Missing Person

Don't forget to inform the police that you are leaving so that they don't open a missing person enquiry!

Have you...?

Have you got somewhere to go?

Yes / No

Have you collected all your important documentation?

Yes / No

Have you any spare money?

Yes / No

Have you informed school?

Yes / No

Have you got specialist support?

Yes / No

Have you informed the police?
see missing persons explanation

Yes / No

Have you turned off location services on your phone?

Yes / No

Have you turned off location services on your children's phone?

Yes / No

Have you changed passwords for all accounts/email/PayPal/Facebook/WhatsApp, etc.?

Yes / No

Don't worry if you only have some or none of the above it's not a deal breaker!

*** IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT LOCATION SERVICES ARE TURNED OFF ***



Helpful Numbers

These contacts are available to you

24 Hour Women's Aid Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Men's Advice line: 0808 801 032

Call us Monday - Friday 9am-5pm

Email: info@mensadvice.org.uk

Emergency Injunctions: 0844 8044 999

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Rights of Women Helpline: 020 7251 6577

Legal advice helpline for women

ManKind Initiative: 01823 334244

Confidential Helpline. Weekdays 10am to 4pm

Financial:

- **The Money Advice Service:**
<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/contact-us>
- **CAB:** <https://www.cabdevon.org.uk/>
- **Benefits Entitlement Calculator:** <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/>
- **National Debt Line:** <https://www.gov.uk/national-debtline>
- **Turn 2 Us:** <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Isolation:

- **Local Community Centres**
- **UK Women's Friendship site:** <https://www.togetherfriends.com/>

Health:

- **Register with local GP**
- **Find a local hospital:**
<https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/-Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428>



Legal:

- **Family Law Panel:** <https://thefamilylawpanel.org/>
You can search for Solicitors/Barristers/Mediators near you and enquire about getting a half-hour free consultation
- **National Centre for Domestic Violence: 0800 970 2070**
For emergency injunctions where there's been a physical incident within the last 10 days
<http://www.ncdv.org.uk/>
- **Rights of Women Family Law Legal Advice Line: 020 7251 6577**
Evenings from 7pm-9pm (Tuesday-Thursday or from 12-2pm on Fridays)
<http://rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/>
**You can also get a free child contact handbook when you call this helpline*
<http://rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-information/family-law/child-arrangements-and-domestic-violence-a-handbook-for-women/>
- **Child Law Advice helpline: 0300 330 5480**
<http://childlawadvice.org.uk/home/>
- **Civil Legal Advice: 0345 3454 345**
They can check your legal aid eligibility and if you are eligible, can offer you free legal advice



Protection

If you wish to stay in your own home there are options available to you:

DVPO/DVPN

Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) are frequently issued by police when attending incidents of alleged domestic violence.

It is a two-stage process involving both the police and the magistrates' court. Once the police have served a DVPN on the suspect, an application must be made to the magistrates' court for the DVPO within 48 hours of the DVPN being served. There are strict conditions which apply at each stage. Breach of either the notice or the order carries a power of arrest

Victims should be encouraged to seek information about their options from an **Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA)**, outreach support worker or other specialist domestic abuse support service.

Occupation Order

An Occupation Order is issued by the family court under Part IV Family Law Act 1996 and sets out who has the right to stay at the family home, who can return and who should be excluded.

If this is an emergency protective order usually alongside a Non Molestation Order your partner will not be aware and it will be issued ex parte, this will then lead to a court date and a hearing where the Judge will decide who resides in the house. The person being asked to leave may be given 24 hours to do so.

If this is not an emergency order then your partner will be informed of court date and expected to attend. This is a not a safe option if you are both still living in the property.

Orders that are available to you whether you stay in your home or leave.

Non Molestation Order

This is an order to stop your partner 'molesting' you or your children. Molesting means harassing, pestering or interfering with you or your children in some way and also includes assault.

This is an emergency protective order and will need to be applied for ASAP, within 3 days of an incident.

Restraining Order

Restraining orders are court orders issued by a judge at the end of criminal proceedings to prevent someone from causing harm to someone else, in situations involving domestic violence, harassment, stalking or sexual assault.

Restraining orders put restrictions on the offender, for the purpose of refraining them from causing further trouble to the victim.

In the UK, restraining orders can only be issued during criminal proceedings. In order to get a restraining order against someone, you must take that person to court first.

Legal Help

You may or may not be entitled to Legal Aid, you can access at <https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid>

Civil Legal Advice: 0345 3454 345

They can check your legal aid eligibility and if you are eligible, can offer you free legal advice.

You can search Family Law Panel for Solicitors/Barristers/Mediators near you and enquire about getting a half-hour free consultation: <https://thefamilylawpanel.org/>

For emergency injunctions where there's been a physical incident within the last 10 days, you can ring the **National Centre for Domestic Violence** on 0800 970 2070, <http://www.ncdv.org.uk/> or a local Family Law Solicitor.



How to Plan a Move

A planned move is best case scenario but if it is unsafe to stay then a rapid exit will be the only option. Hence the pre packed/stored items

If you have an IDVA you can work through a planned exit with her. Lots of planning can be done prior to move but some stuff has to be done once the move has been made.

Don't panic it will all get sorted out if it doesn't go to plan.

Things you can do prior to leaving

- Speak with Housing, if possible register on Devon Home Choice
- Speak with a solicitor, find out your rights
Free half an hour appointment
- Check what benefits you will be entitled too
- Check schools out in area you want to move too
- Plan when you want to leave, a date is good it gives you focus
- Plan how you're going to leave, straight from school?
- How are you going to get to where you're going?
- Where are you going?
- If you can save some money in a separate account great!
If not, maybe give some to a friend to look after if you can
- There may be a wait for benefits to come through so have a think about who could help? Family, charities, etc.



What Should I Take When I Leave?

If you are able to gather and store important items then here is a list of what will be useful once you leave.

If you're not able to do this safely see if you can photocopy items and leave at a friend's house.

- Birth certificates *yours and the children's*
- Marriage certificate or proof of Civil Partnership
- Driving licence
- Passports
- Benefit letters *if applicable*
- Utility bills *customer reference numbers*
- Children's red book *if applicable*
- Bank statement
- Debit cards and cash
- Any medical letters, etc., *if ongoing health issues*
- Any prescribed medication and prescriptions
- Immigration letters/certificate, etc.
- Clothes for you and your children
- Car keys/house keys
- Precious things like baby photos, anything you would be sad to lose
- If you have room, a favourite toy for the children

Remember you may not be able to come back, so it's important to gather as much as you can.



Some important things to remember

Even with a planned move there are some things you can only do once you've left:

- Do not use your debit card at the cash point. Go into the bank, change your address and ask that no bank statements are sent to your old address. Withdrawal cash over the counter
- Change your mobile number if you can, if not block your ex-partner and all known numbers of family and friends of your ex-partner
- Turn off 'location' on your phone; close 'Find my Phone' if you're on iPhone and any apps that require location
- Close down all social media, this is a precaution and not forever but you need to be safe
- Register with GP as soon as you can
- If you have no money access a food bank, if you have a worker they can help you with this, if not access the local community centre and they will tell you who and where the food bank operates
- Find the local Children's Centre if you are eligible, they can help a lot
- If you do not have a specialist DVA worker refer yourself to Splitz by calling:

0345 155 1074

They can help you and your family get safe and settled in a new life free from violence and abuse

You don't have to do this alone



Effective Communication Tips

● Stay Calm

Relax your shoulders

Breathe through your diaphragm rather than shallowly through your chest

Take deep breaths and deliberately breathe more slowly

● Be Clear and Polite

Make requests simple and clear

Think about the most important points. Stick to those and take it one at a time

Make sure you have the information you need, and reflect on what would work for you and your family

● Listen

Try to focus so your attention isn't divided

Take your turn to talk, do not talk over others, wait and listen before replying

Leave pauses to allow others to speak

● I Statements

Phrase things in a way that is about what you think or have noted or want or feel

Practice **I Statements** they do not come naturally. Take a script with you if that makes it easier

Example:

I feel scared that I would have to leave my friends and family, I would be very much on my own.

Rather than...

You can't make me leave all my family and friends.

Settling in Checklist

Priority Tasks	Complete ✓	Date
Housing benefit completed and sent		
Homeless application/ options meeting arranged		
Register with GP		
Benefits applications sent		
School admissions contacted		
Children centre referral made		
Utilities informed		
Register with Dentist		
Address changed		
Social Services informed <i>if required</i>		
Vehicles		

Working to end domestic abuse
and sexual violence



Devon Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Service

The LEESAR Partnership is a Devon County Council commissioned service, led by FearLess. The partnership brings together four well known South West charities, within Devon with a passion for ending Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence (SV). By working together we combine our expertise to ensure the best possible outcomes for the families and individuals we support.

Our support

Our teams of specialist staff offer support to victims of DA and SV and their families.

Our services ensure that victims are supported to stay safe and recover.

Every individual referred is offered an assessment so that we can ensure that we meet their needs in the best way.

Accessing Support

No door is the wrong door.

If you are not sure which service you need, or you are worried that you might contact the wrong service, we operate a 'no door is the wrong door' policy. This means we will support you to access the help you need, even if we are not it.

Domestic Abuse Services

Telephone: **0345 155 1074**

Email: **admin@fear-less.org.uk**

Secure email
referrals.Devon@fear-less.org.cjsm.net

Please note that Egress users should use the admin email

Sexual Violence Support:

Telephone:

Referrals **01392 208 756**

Support **01392 204 174**

Email:
support@devonrapecrisis.org.uk

Charity no: **1064764**

Domestic Abuse Support

Our support is focused on crisis intervention and recovery and is provided by qualified specialists in domestic abuse.

Who is it for?

Our support is for families who are experiencing domestic abuse, including:

- ✦ women, men and children of all ages
- ✦ people who want to leave DA relationships or stay together safely
- ✦ people who want to work with the Police and courts and those who choose not to
- ✦ support for people who want to change their harmful behaviour

What can be provided?

- ✦ safe accommodation, including a women's refuge and self contained accommodation for male victims and those with diverse needs
- ✦ children supported in partnership with the non-abusing parent/carer or other involved professionals
- ✦ individual or group work for children and young people
- ✦ young people in their own abusive relationships 14+
- ✦ 1-1 behaviour change support and advocacy for adults (16+) wanting to change their abusive behaviour (currently limited to Exeter and South Devon)

Sexual Violence Support

Our support is focused on recovery and is provided by specialists in trauma.

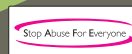
Who is it for?

Our support is for victims who have experienced sexual violence, including:

- ✦ women aged 13+
- ✦ young men aged 13-25
- ✦ childhood sexual abuse or childhood sexual exploitation or rape and assault - recent or historic
- ✦ whether the offences are reported to the police or not
- ✦ family, friends and partners of victims

What can be provided?

- ✦ an anonymous email support service
- ✦ an anonymous telephone helpline
- ✦ specialist trauma counselling
- ✦ advocacy
- ✦ practical support
- ✦ EMDR - a specialist treatment for PTSD





Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.



Registered Office:

Oak House, Epsom Square,
White Horse Business Park, Trowbridge
Wiltshire BA14 0XG

Tel: 01225 777724 | Fax: 01225 774405

Local Office:

1st Floor, Buckland House, Pavilion 3
Park 5 Business Centre, Harrier Way, Exeter
Devon EX2 7HU

Tel: 0345 155 1074 | Fax: 01392 368071

Enquiries: admin.devon@sfear-less.org.uk | Referrals: referrals.devon@fear-less.org.cjsm.net

www.fear-less.org.uk

Charity number: 1064764

