





## **Introduction**

### **Background**

The J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative is named in memory of Janine Mundy, who was killed by her estranged husband while he was on police bail. The initiative was started by her family and the local police in Cambourne, Cornwall, where she lived and aims to raise awareness of domestic abuse and assist victims to seek the help they so desperately need. In Essex, the initiative was started by Epping Forest District Council. It expanded to Harlow and Uttlesford soon afterwards. Training is now available across the county and a list of Community Safety Partnerships delivering J9 training is available under Further Information and Resources below.

### **Training**

The training sessions provided by Safer Places are intended to raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse for staff in public and voluntary sector organisations. In the course of their work, these staff may come into contact with someone they suspect is a victim of domestic abuse, or a client may reveal that they are suffering abuse. The training aims to ensure that staff are equipped to respond appropriately and effectively.

### **Information Pack**

The leaflets in this information pack are intended to be used to 'signpost' victims of domestic abuse to the support services they need. The leaflets can be photocopied and copies can also be downloaded from:

[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/home/file-store/category/405-j9-domestic-abuse-initiative](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/home/file-store/category/405-j9-domestic-abuse-initiative)

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.

For visiting staff there are lanyards and badges available

The website, supporting literature and the central mailing list of people who have been through the training are currently maintained by Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership.

Contact – Caroline Wiggins on 01992 564608 or via email at [safercommunities@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:safercommunities@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)



## **Further Information and Resources**

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.

## **Community Safety Partnership Contacts**

### **Epping Forest**

Caroline Wiggins

Tel: 01992 564608

Email: [safercommunities@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:safercommunities@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

### **Harlow**

Tel: 01279 446190

Email: [safer@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:safer@harlow.gov.uk)

### **Uttlesford**

Tel: 01799 510555

Email: [mford@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:mford@uttlesford.gov.uk)

### **Chelmsford**

Tel: 01245 606233

Email: [communitysafety@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@chelmsford.gov.uk)

### **Basildon**

Paula Mason

Tel: 01268 206833

J9 leads – Julie Hennessey / Katie Wilson

Tel: 01268 208073

### **Castle Point**

Contact: Helen Collins

Tel: 01268 882461

Email: [hcollins@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:hcollins@castlepoint.gov.uk)

### **Rochford**

Contact: Graham Browne

Tel: 01702 318103

Email: [graham.browne@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:graham.browne@rochford.gov.uk)

### **Tendring**

Contact: Leanne Thornton

Tel: 01255 686353



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## 1. What Is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is very common and currently claims the life of two women per week and affects millions of people. One incident of domestic abuse is reported to the police every minute.

***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.

**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 happens in all cultures; people of all races, ethnicities, religions, ages and backgrounds can experience domestic abuse.

It is most commonly carried out by men against women but it can happen to men and to people in same-sex relationships. It applies to married couples, co-habitees, boyfriends/girlfriends, ex-partners and teenage children. It can be linked to other offences such as elder abuse and child abuse.

### **REMEMBER!**

Domestic abuse is far more widespread than you may think and is rarely a one-off incident and will usually escalate over time. It becomes a pattern of behaviour that allows one partner to establish and maintain power and control over the other.

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 important steps you must take:

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



## **2. Common Myths About Domestic Abuse**

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

#### ***False***

Anyone can suffer from domestic abuse or abuse. The majority of domestic abuse victims are women but men also suffer from abuse by their partners. 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 at the hands of your partner.

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, or abuse, acceptable. Violence by one person against another constitutes a criminal act, regardless of marital status or gender.

### **Domestic abuse only occurs between a couple**

#### ***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.

### **Domestic abuse is uncommon**

#### ***False***

Research by the British Crime Survey shows that 1 in 4 women is a victim of domestic abuse at least once in her lifetime. The police receive a call about domestic abuse every minute in the UK.

### **It was a momentary loss of temper**

#### ***False***

Research suggests that victims of domestic abuse are victimised over and over again by the same person. Domestic abuse is an ongoing experience of abuse and one you do not have to suffer.

### **Hitting your partner is the only form of domestic abuse**

#### ***False***

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





### **Only poor and ethnic minority groups experience domestic abuse**

#### ***False***

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

### **Leaving an abusive relationship is easy**

#### ***False***

It can be very difficult to leave an abusive relationship for many reasons, but help is available to you.

Many victims of domestic abuse are at their most vulnerable immediately after they leave an abusive relationship. Help and support are available to victims of domestic abuse to help make the process of leaving a violent or abusive relationship less difficult. 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.

### **Women always stay in violent relationships**

#### ***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.

### **People don't get seriously hurt by domestic abuse**

#### ***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.



### 3. 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 1996, or if you are being continually harassed, threatened, pestered or stalked after a relationship has ended you can also get a civil injunction 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 for free impartial legal advice and information on legal aid. (<https://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice>.)

Tel: 0345 345 4345

Minicom: 0345 609 6677

text 'legalaid' and your name to 80010 (they will call you back)



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

**FOR EMERGENCY HELP:**

Tel: 0207 186 8270 - Option 1  
Text: NCDV to 60777 (they will call you back)  
Freephone: 0800 970 2070 – Option 1



## **4. 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**

Domestic abuse is treated seriously by the police. If you or someone you know is the victim of domestic abuse, the police will deal promptly and positively with any domestic incident that they are called to attend. The police have domestic abuse units and staff who can give advice.

Children can be victims too. The police have Child Abuse Investigation 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.

The police will take action that can protect you from further abuse, such as recording information relating to your address, in case of calls and installing police linked alarms and consider all safeguarding measures.

The police work closely with other local agencies such as Victim Support, 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

Non-emergency contact:

Essex Police Domestic Abuse Central Referral Unit

Tel: 101 Ext 180340

Domestic abuse non-emergency number: 0800 358 0351

Minicom: 01245 452828



## 5. Sanctuary Schemes

### **What is a sanctuary?**

Sanctuary Schemes may 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. **Not all properties are suitable for a sanctuary scheme to be fitted.**

### **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 Housing Officer. They will be experienced in dealing with clients who have problems with domestic abuse or hate crime. If your application is progressed, all your personal details will be dealt with in a confidential manner. The relevant council, Essex Police and Essex 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?**

If you live in the Epping Forest District, contact:

Homelessness Prevention Team at Epping Forest District Council

Tel: 01992 564165

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

If you live in Harlow, contact:

Call Contact Harlow on 01279 446655, or email: [contact@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:contact@harlow.gov.uk)

You can also speak to an adviser at the Civic Centre, Water Gardens, Harlow, Essex CM20 1WG during office hours (Monday to Friday, 9am-4.45pm)





If you live in Uttlesford, contact:

Housing Department at Uttlesford District Council

Tel: 01799 510510

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

If you live in Tendring, contact:

Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator

Tel: 01255 686452

If you live in Castle Point, contact:

Helen Collins

Tel: 01268 882461

Email: [hcollins@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:hcollins@castlepoint.gov.uk)

If you live in Rochford, contact:

Graham Brown

Tel: 01702 318103

Email: [graham.browne@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:graham.browne@rochford.gov.uk)

If you live in Chelmsford, contact:

Contact Housing Options (Homelessness Team)

Tel: 01245 606400 in hours 01245 606644 out of hours

Email: via website [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housing](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housing)

If you live in Basildon, contact:

Contact Sanctuary liaison officer

Tel: 01268 206726



## 6. Housing Options

As a victim of domestic abuse, one of the biggest decisions for you 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 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 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.

### **Women's Refuges**

A refuge is a temporary safe haven for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. They are run by women and provide a wide range of practical advice and support for both women and children.

Refuge addresses and telephone numbers are kept confidential. The aim is for residents to feel safe. Remember that if there are spaces available, you don't have to feel pressured to stay in your home area.

Information on refuges in Essex can be found at the end of this leaflet.



### **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.

### **Epping Forest District Council**

Housing Options Team

Tel: 01992 564165

Emergencies out of hours: 01992 564000

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

### **Harlow Council**

Call Contact Harlow on 01279 446655, or email: [contact@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:contact@harlow.gov.uk)

You can also speak to an adviser at the Civic Centre, Water Gardens, Harlow, Essex CM20 1WG, during office hours (Monday to Friday, 9am-4.45pm).

### **Uttlesford District Council**

Tel: 01799 510510

Email: [housingadmin@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:housingadmin@uttlesford.gov.uk)

If you are made homeless unexpectedly, out of hours you can call 01799 510510 and follow the instructions on the answerphone.

### **Castle Point**

Tel: 01268 882200

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

### **Rochford**

Housing Advice and Homelessness

Tel: 01702 318052

### **Tendring**

Book an appointment via the website at

[www.tendringdc.gov.uk/housing/housing-options-advice/housing-homelessness-advice](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/housing/housing-options-advice/housing-homelessness-advice)

### **Basildon**

Tel: 01268 533333 Option 5, Option 1

### **Chelmsford**

Tel: 01245 606400 in hours 01245606644 out of hours

Email: via contact form online at [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housing](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/housing)



## **Women's Refuges in Essex**

### **Safer Places**

Contact: Saferplaces for details of Refuges in Essex

Tel: 0845 0177 668 (24-hour support line)

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

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



## 7. Safer Places

Safer Places is an independent domestic abuse charity dedicated to supporting adults and children affected by domestic abuse. We are able to provide a wide range of services to support you and respond to your individual needs and circumstances, whether it is in our refuge accommodation or in the community. All our services work in a holistic and empowering way to help enable you to live independent lives free from domestic abuse.

### **Our Services**

Safer Places aims to ensure the safety, improve the quality of life and reduce repeat victimisation of adults and children fleeing from or living with domestic abuse, by providing a comprehensive service of support. This involves offering advice and information, safe refuge accommodation, community-based floating support, counselling, legal services, training and access to work. We have specialist support for young people, the over 60's, the LGBT and the BMER community and for victims/survivors with substance misuse or mental health problems.

### **Refuge Accommodation Services**

We have refuges in West Essex, Mid Essex, Hertfordshire and the Southend district, providing supported accommodation for male or female victims/survivors and their children who have experienced domestic abuse. This accommodation includes a combination of large and small communal buildings where residents have a private bedroom and share other rooms i.e. bathrooms, kitchens. There are also self-contained flats in West Essex and Hertfordshire (Hertfordshire subject to local authority nomination). In all projects there are play areas and self-help/computer spaces.

Our support service on all projects includes:

- Risk assessment and safety planning
- Assessment and support planning
- Weekly reviews
- Supported signposting and support in accessing specialist agencies e.g. mental health teams, drugs/alcohol support
- Free counselling
- In-house legal surgeries
- Information and support on applying for benefits, debt counselling, housing
- Family fun sessions, trips and activities

Training opportunities, i.e. IT, assertiveness

After leaving Safer Places accommodation, families are referred to our Outreach Team for continued support.

### **Contact Us**

If you require safe accommodation or support around domestic abuse please contact our 24-hour support line on 03301 025811.

If you are in danger or in the event of an emergency always dial **999**.



## 8. Changing Pathways

Changing Pathways (formerly known as Basildon Women's Aid) is a domestic abuse charity working across the areas of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford and Thurrock. We provide free and confidential services to support people who are currently experiencing, or have previously experienced domestic abuse. We offer a range of needs led services including refuge accommodation, outreach/community based support, advocacy services for high risk victims, including those experiencing stalking and harassment, therapeutic/counselling services and a range of group programmes. We focus on listening to our service users and decide together the support required to take the first step on a pathway to a new life journey.

### **Our Services**

We have a dedicated Children and Young People's service which ensures access to age appropriate individual and group based therapies, practical and emotional support, opportunities to participate in a range of activities which are supported by domestic abuse experts, and we operate an Ofsted registered pre-school for the children of women accommodated in our Basildon refuge site.

Additionally, Changing Pathways support male adult victims/survivors of domestic abuse via telephone support, individual outreach support and therapeutic sessions.

### **Refuge Accommodation Services**

The Refuge Service provides safe accommodation to adult women and their children who are experiencing domestic abuse and are unable to stay in their own homes or access alternative safe accommodation. Changing Pathways provides refuge accommodation for up to 43 women and their children, including 16 self-contained flats for women and their children who are ready to move on from the refuge or who have older male children or have a level of needs which requires self-contained accommodation.

All Changing Pathways accommodation provides your own private room/s and we have a mix of private and shared bathrooms, kitchens and living areas. You will be provided with ongoing support, advocacy and information on issues such as housing, benefits, safe child contact, police and court processes, safety planning and access to other specialist services that may be of help to you. You will also receive ongoing emotional support from the team of Refuge Practitioners and can access other Changing Pathways services, including the Counselling Service. Children and young people living in the refuge can access the specialist groups and activities for children and young people affected by domestic abuse including art therapy, a children's recovery group, play-based activities, fun events, access to creative arts and one of our refuge sites hosts an Ofsted registered pre-school for pre-school children.

Refuge accommodation is a temporary solution until your own accommodation and tenancy options are safely put into place. We aim for an average length of stay not to exceed six months so that we can seek more permanent housing for women and children as soon as is feasible. However, this will depend on many circumstances



and the Refuge Practitioners will support you through each stage of your move into a new, safer pathway for your life.

**Contact Us**

Advice Line

Tel: 01268 729 707

Email: [referrals@changingpathways.org](mailto:referrals@changingpathways.org)

If you require safe accommodation please call 01268 581 591.

A Refuge referral form can be downloaded at [www.changingpathways.org/refuge/](http://www.changingpathways.org/refuge/)

If you are in danger or in the event of an emergency always dial **999**.



## 9. 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.

### **Housing Benefit**

If you are worried that you won't be able to afford to pay rent on a property on your own, then you may be eligible for housing benefit. This can be paid if you are a:

- Council tenant
- Housing Association tenant
- Tenant of a privately rented property
- Hostel resident
- Bed and breakfast/hotel resident

Housing benefit is usually paid at one home only at any one time. However, victims of domestic abuse can be classed as an exception. If a claimant has left the property where housing benefit is paid, due to fear of abuse, benefit can be paid on both the former home and the temporary home providing that the Benefits Officer finds it reasonable. In these circumstances payment can only be made for an absolute limit of 52 weeks.

### **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 Council for the area you live in:

#### Epping Forest District Council

Tel: 01992 564157 (surnames beginning A-L)  
01992 564156 (surnames beginning M –Z)

E-mail: [benefits@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/residents/benefits](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/index.php/residents/benefits)

#### Harlow Council

Tel: Contact Harlow on 01279 446655

Email: [hdc.benefits@harlow.gov.uk](mailto:hdc.benefits@harlow.gov.uk)

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





Uttlesford District Council

Tel: 01799 510335

Email: [benefits@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@uttlesford.gov.uk)

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

Chelmsford Council

Tel: 01245 606400

Further information is available online at [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/contact/counciltax](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/contact/counciltax)

Basildon Council

Tel: 01268 533333 Option 4, Option 2

Castle Point

Tel: 01268 882200

Email: [info@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:info@castlepoint.gov.uk)

Rochford

Tel: 01702 318197 or 01702 318198

Email: [revenues&benefits@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:revenues&benefits@rochford.gov.uk)

Tendring

Tel: 01255 686811 to speak to an adviser

Visit [www.tendringdc.gov.uk/benefits/apply-help-pay-rent-or-council-tax](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/benefits/apply-help-pay-rent-or-council-tax) to complete an online claim application form

**Income Support**

You can apply for Income Support if you are:

- Aged 16 years or over
- Not working on average more than 16 hours per week
- On a low income

**Job Seekers Allowance**

You can apply for Job Seekers Allowance if you are:

- Under pensionable age
- Not working, or working on an average of less than 16 hours per week

**Universal credit.**

This came into effect on the 01.2.16 and replaces JSA, this is currently only available for single People who are non-home owners, there are quite a few exclusions, please follow the link for more information - <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/what-youll-get>

**Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**

ESA is replacing Incapacity Benefit and can provide:



- Help if you are unable to work
  - Help to work if you are able
- You can apply for ESA if you are already working.

### **Child Benefit**

You can apply for Child Benefit if you are bringing up a child or children. Benefit is paid for each child.

### **Child Tax Credits**

You could get Child Tax Credit for each child you're responsible for if they're:

- under 16
- under 20 and in approved education or training

You don't need to be working to claim Child Tax Credit, but if you are working and on a low income, it can help with child care costs.

### **Working Tax Credits**

You can claim Working Tax Credits if:

- you're aged 16 or over
- you work a certain number of hours a week
- you get paid for the work you do (or expect to)
- your income is below a certain level

The amount of Tax Credits which you can get depends your age, how many hours of paid work you do a week, your income and other circumstances, such as whether you have children.

For more Information on the above benefits and other benefits which you may be able to claim, go to **[www.gov.uk/browse/benefits](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits)**. This website gives full details of how to make a claim.

### **Child Maintenance Service**

You can apply for help with the cost of bringing up a child, especially if one of the parents is a non-residential parent and claiming Income Support or income-based Job Seekers Allowance. For more information, go to <https://www.gov.uk/child-maintenance/overview>.

### **Essential Living Fund** (formerly called the Social Fund)

The ELF is a grant system of one-off payments to help vulnerable people to live independently in the community. Grants can be made for items such as furniture, household equipment, clothing and general living expenses. In Essex, the scheme is administered by Southend Borough Council. For more information, go to **[www.southend.gov.uk/elfforessex](http://www.southend.gov.uk/elfforessex)**.



## **Easement**

The easement is a complete relaxation of the Jobseekers Allowance and Universal Credit conditionality rules. This means that for the period of the easement, claimants do not have to:

- be available for work
- be actively seeking work
- enter into a Claimant Commitment or be bound by the content of any existing

### **Claimant Commitment**

- attend work search reviews
- attend any form of intervention; participate (or be referred to) the Work Programme or other employment scheme of any description

There are two elements to this easement:

1. An initial 4 week period starting on the day the person notifies the Jobcentre in the required way that they have been threatened with or subject to actual domestic violence and abuse; and

the facility to extend the initial easement to 13 weeks upon receipt of written evidence by the claimant during the initial 4 week period. If the evidence is provided, the 13 week period will begin on the same date as the 4 week period.

2. Once the claimant fulfils the requirements for the award of the easement, it is their right to have it granted. The award of the easement is not at the discretion of the Jobcentre.



## 10. 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 the child's ability to build and maintain healthy relationships in his/her adult life.

Children who live with domestic abuse can be affected in many ways. They may experience any of the following problems:

**Emotional Problems:** crying, anxiety and sadness, confusion, anger, depression, suicidal behaviour, nightmares, fears and phobias. In younger children and babies, eating and sleeping disorders are common. Children can also suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

**Behavioural Problems:** aggression, becoming troublesome at home or at school, withdrawing into or isolating themselves, regressive behaviour (such as baby talk, wanting bottles or dummies, etc.), lower academic achievement.

**Physical Problems:** bed-wetting, nervous ticks, headaches or stomach aches, nausea or vomiting, eating disorders, insomnia. Older children will often feel that they are responsible for the abuse, or feel guilty as they are unable to help prevent the abuse. Children living in an abusive environment may also start to condone abuse or the threat of abuse to resolve conflict in relationships.

*Children who live with domestic abuse need support. The following organisations can help:*

**Childline** provides confidential telephone and online counselling for children and young people. Tel: **0800 11 11**.

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

A website offering advice and support to children and young people suffering abuse.

**Essex County Council Learning and Social Care Direct:**

Monday to Thursday 5.00pm – 8.45am:

Friday and bank holidays 4.30pm – 8.45am

Tel: **0345 6061212**

Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.00pm

Friday and bank holidays 8.45am - 4:30am

Tel: **0345 6037634**



## 11. 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

**These organisations can help you if you're being abused:**

### **Safer Places**

If you require safe accommodation or support around domestic abuse please contact our 24-hour support line on 03301 025811.

If you are in danger or in the event of an emergency always dial **999**.



### **Refuge**

Refuge is a charity that offers help and advice to women and young girls who are in abusive relationships.

24-hour national helpline: 0808 2000 247

### **Respect**

Respect is a charity which runs support services and programmes for those who inflict abuse in relationships, including young men and women.

Respect Phoneline: 0808 802 4040 (Freephone), Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

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

Website: [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk) (incl. an online chat service)

Textphone users dial: 18001 0808 802 4040

Respect also provides an advice line for men who are victims of an abusive relationship.

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 (Freephone), Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Helpline for male victims of domestic abuse

Email: [info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk) (incl. an online chat service)

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

Textphone users dial: 18001 0808 801 0327

Telephone interpreting service available – If English is not your first language, call us and ask for an interpreter

### **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-hour helpline)

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) (incl. an online chat service)

### **Women's Aid**

Women's Aid is a national charity which works to end abuse against women and children.

Tel: 0808 2000 247

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

Women's Aid also has a dedicated website for young people, **[www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk)** where young people can get more information about relationship abuse and where to get help.

### **Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centres**

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. Rape & Sexual Abuse Centres are not just for women in 'crisis'.

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

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

**Galop**

Galop offers support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people experiencing domestic abuse.

Helpline: 0800 999 5428 (Monday and Thursday 10am-8pm, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am-5pm, Friday 1pm-5pm).

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

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

**The Mix**

Essential support for the under 25s'

Tel: 0808 808 4994

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

A 1-2-1 chat service is available via the website

**NSPCC**

Tel: 0808 800 5000 (24 hr helpline)

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

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



## 12. 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 your partner uses online banking and has a saved password, then if you clear the cookies on your PC, your partner will realise you've done so, because their password will no longer be saved. Also, your partner may notice if the address history on the PC has been cleared and this may raise suspicion.

### **Other Internet browsing options**

Many Internet browsers now have an option to go into 'in private' or 'incognito' mode. This enables you to browse the Internet without storing any history or cache data.

Internet Explorer allows an in private mode of searching. From the homepage, click Tools (the cog in the top right of the page, select Safety and click In Private Browsing)

Google Chrome can also be downloaded and this has an option of incognito browsing (<http://www.google.com/support/chrome>).

### **Clearing browsing history and cache in Internet Explorer**

Clearing the history:

- Click on the Tools menu (in the row at the top of the browser)
- Move the mouse pointer to Safety from the drop down menu and select Delete Browsing History.
- In Browsing History tick the items you want to delete, (remember to uncheck the Preserve Favourites box to delete cookies etc).
- Click Delete





Information on how to clear the browsing history and cache in other Internet browsers can be found at [www.wikihow.com/Clear-Your-Browser's-Cache](http://www.wikihow.com/Clear-Your-Browser's-Cache).

### **Toolbars**

Browser toolbars such as Google 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'.

### **Emails**

If an abuser sends you threatening or harassing email 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 'Drafts' 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 (Gmail, Hotmail, 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 Google for an account you can access from anywhere and use a name that is not recognisable as you. Keep this email account secret.

### **Internet Safety Advice**

There are a number of websites that provide advice on Internet safety, including:

Metropolitan Police – provides advice and guidance on a wide range of safety issues including Internet safety.

Website: [www.safe.met.police.uk](http://www.safe.met.police.uk)

CBBC Stay Safe – tips and tricks for children to stay safe online.

Website: [www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/stay-safe](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/stay-safe)



## 13. 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 dial 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 ORGANISATIONS**

#### **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.

Tel: 03301 025811 (24/7 service)

E-mail: [info@saferplaces.co.uk](mailto:info@saferplaces.co.uk) (office hours: Mon-Fri 9:00-17:00)

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

#### **Essex Police**

Essex Police Domestic Abuse Central Referral Unit

Tel: 101 ext 180340 or 01245 491491

Freephone: 0800 358 0351 (non-emergency number)

Website: [www.essex.police.uk/be\\_safe/domestic\\_abuse.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/be_safe/domestic_abuse.aspx)

Minicom: 01245 452828

#### **Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge**

Tel: 01206 500 585

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

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

#### **Changing Pathways**

A domestic abuse charity working across Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford and Thurrock. Office hours 9am – 5pm.

Tel: 01268 729707 (Helpline)

Tel: 01268 581591 (for Refuge space)

Email: [welcome@changingpathways.org](mailto:welcome@changingpathways.org)

#### **Victims Gateway**

Victims Gateway provides practical and emotional support to help you deal with the impact of a crime, even if you don't want to report it to police or it happened in the past. The support can be tailored to your particular situation, and specialist services are available for victims of the most serious crime such as rape and sexual violence.

**Search for available services at <https://www.essexvictimsgateway.org/>**

**Victim Support**

Helpline: 0300 303 0165 (Monday to Friday 9am- 6:30pm, Saturdays 10am-4pm)

Out of hours: 08 08 16 89 111

E-mail: via website

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

**Essex County Council**

You can call Essex Social Services for help, advice or information for yourself or for another adult or child.

For advice regarding a child, call: 0345 603 7634 (out of hours call: 0345 606 1212)

Website: <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Health-Social-Care/Families-and-childrens-social-care/Protecting-Vulnerable-Children/Pages/Protecting-Vulnerable-Children.aspx>

For advice regarding an adult call: 0345 603 7634 (out of hours call: 0345 606 1212)

Email: [FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk)

**Citizens Advice Bureau**

There is a single telephone number covering all of Essex

Tel: 03444 770 808

The website [www.essexcab.org.uk](http://www.essexcab.org.uk) provides information on local CABs

**Local Authorities**

Your local district/borough council can give advice on housing issues relating to domestic abuse. See 'Housing Options' leaflet for contact details.

**NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS****Action on Elder Abuse**

Charity giving help and information about the abuse of older people, including abuse by family members and partners.

Helpline: 0808 808 8141 (Freephone)

Email: [enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk)

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

**Galop**

Galop offers support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people experiencing hate crime, sexual violence or domestic abuse.

Helpline: 0800 999 5428 (Monday and Thursday 10am-8pm, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am-5pm, Friday 1pm-5pm).

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

Website: [galop.org.uk](http://galop.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-hour helpline)

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

Tel: (Out of hours) 020 7008 1500, ask for the Global Response Centre

Email: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk)

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

**National Centre for Domestic Violence**

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

Tel: 0800 970 2070 or 0207 186 8270

Text: NCDV to 60777 and they will call back

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

**National Stalking Helpline**

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

Tel: 0808 802 0300 (Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9:30am-4pm, Wed 1pm-4pm)

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

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

**NSPCC**

The NSPCC is a charity which protects children across the UK.

Tel: 0808 800 5000 (24-hour Child Protection Helpline)

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

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

**Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centres**

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 any day of the year. Also 3pm – 5:30pm on weekdays)

**Refuge**

Refuge is a charity that offers help and advice to women and young girls who are in abusive relationships.

24-hour national helpline: 0808 2000 247

**Relate**

Offers advice, relationship counselling, sex therapy, workshops, mediation, consultations and support face-to-face, by phone and through their website.

Helpline: 0300 100 1234

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

**Respect**

Respect is a charity which runs support services and programmes for those who inflict abuse in relationships including young men and women.

Respect Phoneline: 0808 802 4040 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

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

Website: [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk) (incl. online chat service)

Respect also provides an advice line for men who are victims of an abusive relationship.

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

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

Website: [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk) (incl. online chat service)

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

A website where young people can get information about relationship abuse and where to get help.

**Women's Aid**

Women's Aid is a national charity which works to end abuse against women and children.

Tel: 0808 2000 247 (Freephone 24-hour national domestic violence helpline)

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

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



## 14. 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 section.

**Please note** that in this section we have 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 and 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 violence:**

- 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 her and help her 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 her stay with her partner or family when you think she should leave or go to the police.
- It's important that she doesn't feel like you're telling her what to do.

### **What to say**

- sexual or domestic abuse is totally unacceptable
- it's common – one in four UK women will experience domestic abuse
- 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 – see "Getting Help and Advice" (section 12)

### **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. Two women are killed every week by a current or former male partner; around 12 women a year are killed in so-called 'honour' violence 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 she is in danger
- offer to keep copies of important documents etc. for her, in case she has to leave in a hurry
- find out information about local services and encourage her to seek support before she 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 on her

***You may be her only lifeline.***

### **Contact Details**

#### **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: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk)

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





## 15. Crimestoppers

**As an independent charity, we are not part of the police and we are not a TV show.** You might have seen or heard something about a crime but don't know what to do, or are scared to come forward. It's easy to think there is nothing you can do, but we offer you a safe way to do this.

We want more people to speak out if they know someone is being abused. We know it's not always an easy thing to do but Crimestoppers offers the public the chance to give information anonymously.

We don't take personal details and we don't record calls. We can't trace calls or information given online. Those who contact us don't have to give a statement to police or go to court. Crimestoppers gives you the power to call it as you see it. And it's totally anonymous. Only you will know that you called or contacted us.

Just phone **0800 555 111 (or use our secure Crimestoppers website)**. **Your call is 100% anonymous** - you may even be eligible for a reward (up to £1,000 and paid anonymously).

Whether it's family, a friend or someone you've witnessed suffering, contact us now. Domestic abuse is a crime, so report it like one. However, we are unable to take information from victims of abuse directly because we operate an anonymous service. So if you are a victim of crime please contact the police immediately.

Crimestoppers is simple and it works – around 20 arrests are made every day thanks to information passed to the charity.



[www.crimestoppers-uk.org/](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/)



## **16. 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 than 20 per cent of employed women take time off work because of domestic violence and 2 per cent lose their jobs as a direct result of the abuse.
- 75 per cent 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 can follow employees to work and affect their productivity, performance, attendance, and emotional and physical health. It can also lead to abuse in the workplace. Colleagues may be affected and fear for their own safety. Yet, for some, the workplace can be a safe haven and offer routes to support and vital resources to help and support employees experiencing domestic abuse.

### **What can employers do?**

#### **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**

- Believe an employee if they disclose experiencing domestic abuse – do not ask for proof.
- Reassure the employee that the organisation has an understanding of how domestic abuse can affect them.

#### **Provide support**

- Divert phone calls and email messages and look to change their phone extension if an employee is receiving harassing calls.
- Agree with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if their ex/partner telephones or visits the workplace.
- 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.
- Keep a record of any incidents of abuse in the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the workplace.



**Refer to the appropriate help**

Provide information for the employee on external sources of help and advice (see leaflet 'Getting Help and Advice').



## 17. Further Information and Resources

### Galop

<http://www.galop.org.uk>

Resources: Leaflet and factsheets



### NSPCC / Childline

Leaflets, booklets and other resources can be purchased from the NSPCC website <https://cpc-publications.myshopify.com/posters>



### Essex Police

[http://www.essex.police.uk/be\\_safe/domestic-abuse.aspx](http://www.essex.police.uk/be_safe/domestic-abuse.aspx)

Resources: Posters and links to websites of organisations which provide help to victims of domestic abuse in Essex and nationally.



### Forced Marriage Unit

<https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage#forced-marriage-unit>

Resources: Leaflets, posters, handbook and other guidance

### National Centre for Domestic Violence

<http://www.ncdv.org.uk/information-for-police-agencies/order-booklets-cards-and-posters/>

Range of resources including posters and contact cards which can be ordered from the website.



### National Stalking Helpline

<http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/resources>

Resources: Posters and leaflets



## **Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre**

[http://www.rasasc.org.uk/?page\\_id=279](http://www.rasasc.org.uk/?page_id=279)

Resources: Leaflets

## **Refuge**

Leaflets, posters and wallet-sized helpline cards can be obtained by contacting

[press@refuge.org.uk](mailto:press@refuge.org.uk)

## **Safer Places**

<http://www.saferplaces.co.uk/for-partners>

Resources: Posters and leaflets

## **The Hideout**

<http://www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/adults/resources/default.aspa>

Resources include posters, leaflets, and educational toolkit and games for children.



## **Womens Aid**

[http://www.womensaid.org.uk/landing\\_page.asp?section=000100010014&sectionTitle=Shop](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/landing_page.asp?section=000100010014&sectionTitle=Shop)

Wide range of posters, leaflets, reports, books, etc, a number of which are free to download.





## Victims of Domestic Abuse can get help and advice at this Jobcentre.

### What we can do.

- Our staff have been trained in Domestic Abuse awareness
- If you are claiming Jobseekers Allowance or Universal Credit and are currently dealing with a Domestic Abuse situation, we realise that you may need time to sort those issues out first, your Work Coach can relax the amount of Jobsearch you need to do for a set period of time. Just ask them.
- We have information available, leaflets and phone numbers which will tell you how to get more support



### Janine 'J9' Mundy

Her husband murdered her on 27 June 2003, in Camborne, Cornwall. Janine was the mother to two young boys who are now being cared for by her family.

Her family support this Programme to raise awareness and to help victims escape their abusers before it is too late.



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



## 19. Useful Numbers – Quick Reference

Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141
Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Violence	07768 386922
Asylum Aid	020 7247 8741
Benefits - Basildon	01268 533333
Benefits - Castle Point	01268 882200
Benefits - Chelmsford	01245 606400
Benefits - Epping Forest (Surname A-L)	01992 564157
Benefits - Epping Forest (Surname M-Z)	01992 564156
Benefits - Harlow	01279 446655
Benefits - Rochford	01702 318197 or 01702 318198
Benefits - Tendring	01255 686811
Benefits - Uttlesford	01799 510335
Changing Pathways	01268 729707
Childline	0800 11 11
Chinese Information and Advice Centre	0300 201 1868
Citizen's Advice Bureau	03444 770 808
Civil Legal Advice	0345 345 4345
Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge	01206 500 585
Essex County Council Learning and Social Care Direct - Daytime	0345 6037634
Essex County Council Learning and Social Care Direct - Night time	0345 6061212
Essex Police - Non Emergency Domestic Abuse Number	0800 358 0351
Essex Police Domestic Abuse Central Referral Unit	101 ext 180340
Essex Social Services (office hours)	0345 603 7634
Essex Social Services (out of hours)	0345 606 1212
Forced Marriage Unit (office hours)	0207 7008 0151
Forced Marriage Unit (out of hours)	020 7008 1500
Galop	0800 999 5428
Gingerbread	0808 802 0925

Immigration Advice Service	020 7357 6917
JAN Trust	0208 889 9433
Jewish Women's Aid	0808 801 0500
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327
Muslim Community Helpline	020 8904 8193 or 020 8908 6715
National Association for People Abused in Childhood	0808 801 0331
National Centre for Domestic Violence	0800 970 2070 or 0207 186 8270
National Stalking Helpline	0808 802 0300
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centres	0808 802 9999
Refuge	0808 2000 247
Refugee council	020 7346 6777
Relate	0300 100 1234
Respect	0808 802 4040
Rights of Women	020 7251 6577
Safer Places	03301 025811
Samaritans	116 123
Sanctuary - Basildon	01268 533333
Sanctuary - Castle Point	01268 882461
Sanctuary - Chelmsford (office hours)	01245 606400
Sanctuary - Chelmsford (out of hours)	01245 606644
Sanctuary - Epping Forest	01992 564165
Sanctuary - Harlow	01279 446655
Sanctuary - Rochford	01702 318103
Sanctuary - Tendring	01255 686452
Sanctuary - Uttlesford	01799 510510
Shelter	0808 800 4444
Somalian Women's Centre	020 8752 1787
The Mix	0808 808 4994
Victim Support (office hours)	0300 303 0165
Victim Support (out of hours)	08 08 16 89 111
Women's Aid	0808 2000 247