

Wakefield District Domestic Abuse Service

# Domestic abuse isn't sweet...

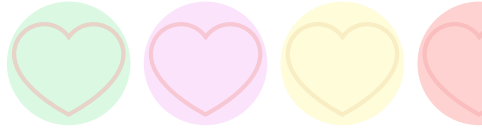


## Here To Help

If you or someone you know are experiencing domestic abuse or using abusive behaviors there is help and support available.

#KeptSweet





## What is domestic abuse?

Domestic 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.



## Domestic abuse is not just about violence, it can involve many different types of behaviour and ill treatment such as:

- **Coercive control** – this could include tracking your movements and telling you where you can go and who you can see. Keeping you isolated from friends and family and taking control of many aspects of your life.
- **Physical abuse** – for example, hitting, punching, kicking, pulling hair, biting, burning, choking, starving, punishments or anything that hurts you or makes you feel afraid.
- **Emotional abuse** – this might be constant criticism, threatening to hurt you, your children or your family, putting you down in front of others and humiliating you, threats to ‘out’ you or use your sexuality against you.
- **Sexual abuse** – this might be rape, doing or saying things of a sexual nature that make you feel uncomfortable, or that physically hurt you or someone else. Refusing to practice safe sex or controlling contraception is also abusive.
- **Economic abuse** – this might include stealing money from you, running up debts in your name, not allowing you access to your money, spending all the money that should be for food and bills, or preventing you from working.
- **Forced Marriage** – being forced to marry someone you do not choose or agree to, is domestic abuse. Many of the different abusive behaviours might be used against you, perhaps by more than one person.
- **‘Honour’ Based Abuse** – if someone in your family is abusing you and defending their actions due to maintaining ‘honour’ this is domestic abuse
- **Female Genital Mutilation** – this is the damage of, removal or partial removal of female genitalia for none medical reasons. It is included as a form of domestic abuse because it is about coercive control, physical abuse and emotional trauma.

# You are not alone

You may feel very alone in your situation and not even realise that you are experiencing domestic abuse.

Anyone can experience domestic abuse - any age, social background, education level, working or unemployed, any ethnic background, married, single, same sex partnerships, any level of physical ability, with or without children and anyone can be a perpetrator of abuse.

## **Domestic abuse can happen in any sort of close relationship such as:**

- Married men and women in heterosexual, lesbian or gay relationships
- Unmarried partners, living together or apart
- Boyfriend and girlfriend, boyfriend and boyfriend, girlfriend and girlfriend
- Transgender relationships with women or men
- Young people who are using abusive behaviours against parents (teen to parent abuse)
- Older people whose adult children are using tactics of abuse

## **Domestic abuse and children**

Some of the biggest victims of domestic abuse are the smallest.

If you have children, or have children living in your home, they will be affected by the domestic abuse that is happening. Even though you may be doing your very best to protect them, children who live with abuse can feel very frightened and confused.

Children may get caught up in the middle of an assault and get hurt, or may see you being hurt and not know what to do. You may think that if children don't see or hear the abuse they won't be affected, but they will be and they will be upset to see the effects of abuse on you too.

Children react to domestic abuse in many different ways depending on their age and the situation.

### **Some common signs that a child is affected by the abuse are:**

- Becoming withdrawn, quiet or upset
- Not sleeping or eating well, starting to wet the bed again
- Wanting to stay home from school because they are too worried about what might happen if they leave you
- Feeling like the abuse is all their fault and trying very hard to 'fix' things
- Trying to be the perfect child, never causing a problem
- Becoming aggressive, and lashing out
- Showing signs of depression and anxiety.

If there are children in your home it is important that you get help to protect them and you. Children want you to be safe.

## Can I get help?

Yes, help is available. Making the decision to get help may be difficult, you may decide to visit a website or call a helpline before getting in touch with a local service. Do what feels right for you. If you are worried about a friend or relative you can also seek help and advice.

In an emergency always call the Police on **999**

For non-emergency's call the Police on **101**

- **Wakefield and District Domestic Abuse Service (WDDAS)**

A comprehensive local support service **0800 915 1561**. Email: [domesticabuse@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:domesticabuse@wakefield.gov.uk)

Visit: [www.wakefield.gov.uk/KeepItSweet](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/KeepItSweet). Website information is provided in a number of community languages.

- **Rosalie Ryrie Foundation**

A voluntary sector service which works with victims, children and perpetrators of domestic abuse. Call: **01924 315 140** or visit: [www.rosalieryriefoundation.org.uk](http://www.rosalieryriefoundation.org.uk)

- **24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline for female victims** - Call: **0808 2000 247** or visit: [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

- **Men's Advice Line** -

Call: **0808 801 0327** or visit: [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

- **National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline** - Call: **0800 999 5228** or visit: [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)

- **Honour Network Helpline**

For those worried about or experiencing forced marriage and/or honour based abuse call: **0800 5999247** or visit: [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

- **Social Care Direct** - if you are worried about the safety of a child, vulnerable adult or older person **0345 8 503 503**

- **Victim Support**

call **0808 1689 111** or visit: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

- **Female Genital Mutilation helpline** -

If a girl or woman is in immediate danger of FGM call the police on 999. Otherwise call: **0800 028 3550** or email [fgmhelpline@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelpline@nspcc.org.uk)

- **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** [www.westyorkshire.police.uk/staysafe](http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/staysafe) -

The Police website gives comprehensive information about sexual assault and where to get help

## Here are some useful actions you can take:

- Tell someone you trust about the abuse – this could be a friend, family member, teacher, or an organisation
- Think about contacting a specialist service, they understand your situation and can offer a lot of help
- Tell your GP about the abuse if you can, they can support you and make a record of what you have said
- Talk to family and friends about staying with them in an emergency situation
- Think about escape routes to make sure both you and your children can get away safely in an emergency
- Pack an emergency bag - include clothing, medication, money, keys, important documents, personal valuables. A mobile phone with charger will be useful
- If you live in social housing, speak to your housing provider, they can help you
- You may want to contact a solicitor about a separation, child contact or for other legal advice

- You may need to talk to your bank if you have left your home or have joint accounts with the person who has abused you.

### **The services listed in this leaflet can help you make a safety plan.**

There may be a lot of practical things for you to sort out if you decide to leave an abusive relationship, you do not have to do it alone - the organisations listed can help you.

When you are away from the abuse and are safe, feeling better about yourself and your life can take time.

You could think about the benefits of having counselling or getting emotional support from a local group. This can help you move on and reclaim your life. The local domestic abuse service WDDAS will be able to help you with this.

## **There is life after domestic abuse.**

## **You do not need to live in fear.**



# I am using abusive behaviours – Can I get help?

Yes, there is help available, and we want you to get in touch. It can be really hard to admit to yourself that your behaviour is abusive and will be hurting the very people you love the most.

It takes a great deal of courage to make the decision to ask for help. No one can make the changes for you, but there is help available to support you.

**Living a life free from abuse is possible; the services below can help you take the first steps.**

- **Wakefield and District Domestic Abuse Service**  
Call: **0800 915 1561** or visit: **[www.wakefield.gov.uk/keepitsweet](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/keepitsweet)**  
This service works with partner agencies to support people wanting to stop using abusive behaviours
- **Rosalie Ryrie Foundation**  
A voluntary sector service which works with victims, children and perpetrators of domestic abuse  
Call: **01924 315 140** or visit: **[www.rosalieryriefoundation.org.uk](http://www.rosalieryriefoundation.org.uk)**
- **Respect**  
Help for men and women who abuse their partners and want to take steps to change their behaviours call **0808 802 4040**  
**[www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)**

**Further help and service information is available, please visit:  
[www.wakefield.gov.uk/keepitsweet](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/keepitsweet)**

