

## What is Domestic Violence?

If you are being abused, threatened or physically or sexually assaulted by a partner, former partner or a family member, that is domestic violence.

Domestic violence can involve a range of abusive and controlling behaviours including:

- Physical attacks
- Sexual abuse
- Harassment
- Financial control
- Emotional and psychological abuse,
- Isolation from family and friends
- Threats to take the children away if you involve the police or to tell the authorities that you're a bad parent.

So-called honour crimes, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are also forms of domestic violence.

Anyone can experience domestic violence. It happens to women and men of all classes, ages, races, sexualities and religions.

Barnet Police receive over 3,000 domestic violence complaints every year – **you are not alone.**

## What can I do?

If you are in an abusive relationship there are three steps you can take.

- Recognise this is happening to you
- Accept that you are not to blame
- Seek help and support

**You cannot change your abuser's behaviour. Ignoring violence is dangerous as it rarely happens only once and it usually gets worse over time.**

Whatever choices you're making about your relationship, have a crisis plan just in case you have to leave home in a hurry.

Living with domestic violence affects children in many harmful ways. Your and your children's safety is always the most important priority.

## Keeping safe if you are still living with the abuser

- Tell someone you trust about the abuse
- Be ready to call 999 if you or your children are in danger.
- Always keep a phone charged and close to you.
- Find out about your legal and housing rights by talking to a helpline, or seeing a solicitor
- Keep copies of your and your children's important papers in a safe place. These include passports, visas and work permits, marriage and birth certificates, prescriptions, national insurance number, court orders, driving licence, bank and building society accounts, housing tenure, mortgage details, lease and rental agreements and insurance documents.
- Make and always carry with you, a list of numbers for an emergency. Include friends, relatives, local police, domestic violence help lines and agencies

- Make calls from a phone box or from a friend's or neighbour's house
- Report any injuries to your GP, health visitor or another professional, so there is a record of the abuse
- Talk to family and friends about staying with them in an emergency
- Think about escape routes
- Try to save and hide some money for bus, train or cab fares.
- Have an extra set of keys for house, flat and car.
- Keep the keys, money and a set of clothes for you and the children packed, ready in a bag and leave it with a friend you can trust.
- Take any medicine you or your children might need, national health cards, and cards for payment of Child Benefit and welfare benefits and your address book.

**If you do leave, you can always arrange for the protection of a police escort to return home to collect personal belongings.**

**24 Hour National  
Domestic Violence Helpline  
0808 2000 247**

**Advice, support and emergency  
refuge accommodation  
Language Line available for  
non-English speaking callers**

## Domestic violence is a crime. In an emergency, always dial 999.

The police should help and support you by:

- Removing the risk of further violence - ideally by removing the perpetrator and arresting him if there are grounds to do so
- Arranging first aid
- Always giving you the opportunity of being listened to and spoken to separately, away from your abuser
- Helping you to access other agencies (for example, Victim Support).

The police will provide you with an interpreter if you need one. They should never ask your children or other family members to interpret in cases of domestic violence.

You can also get protection under the civil law. This can include an 'injunction' or court order for your abuser to stay away from you and your children. Orders can also enforce your housing rights. You are likely to need a solicitor for these procedures. Depending on your income, you may be entitled to legal aid to help pay for this.

In an emergency, temporary accommodation is available through Barnet Homeseekers or you can go to a refuge (a secret safe house for women and children escaping domestic violence).

If you want to stay in your home, the Sanctuary Project can help with making your house more secure.

### Useful websites

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

## Don't suffer alone. Break the silence

National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Police Community Safety Unit	020 8733 5159
Barnet Homeseekers	020 8359 4797
Barnet Out of Hours Emergency Services	020 8359 2000
Barnet Sanctuary Project	020 8359 6072
Barnet Asian Women's Association	020 8446 9897
Domestic Violence Support Service	020 8733 5156
EACH- BME counselling	07930 401019
Elevate Refuge	0845 6000 331
Jewish Womens Aid - support and refuge	
Confidential Helpline Office	0800 59 12 03 020 8445 8060
Sangam	020 8952 7062
Somali Family Support Group	020 8371 4125
Victim Support Barnet	020 8343 4435
Broken Rainbow - LGBT people experiencing domestic violence	08452 60 44 60
Minicom	020 7231 3884
Chinese DV helpline	020 7462 1281
Community Legal Service	0845 608 1122
M.A.L.E. – men suffering DV	0845 064 6800
Muslim Women's Helpline	020 8908 6715
NSPCC Child Protection line	0808 800 5000
Rights of Women	020 7251 6577
Resolution (Solicitors Family Law Association)	08457 585671
Southhall Black Sisters	020 8571 9595
Respect (Advice line for perpetrators)	0845 122 8609

# Domestic Violence is a crime

We all have the right  
to live without fear of  
violence and abuse

