

Domestic abuse in relationships

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What is domestic abuse?

If your partner hurts you, shouts at you, puts you down, humiliates, criticises and scares you then this is 'Domestic abuse' and you do not have to put up with it. There are several sources of help for you.

The abuser could be a partner, ex-partner or someone in your family. Domestic abuse is usually reported as being men hurting women, but men can be victims too. According to the Office for National Statistics, in the year ending March 2018 an estimated 2.0 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2018, (around 6 in 100 adults). 7.9% of Women and 4.2% men have experienced domestic abuse, equivalent to an estimated 1.3 million female victims and 695,000 male victims. Many more incidents will have gone unreported. It can affect anyone regardless of age, class, race, sexuality, disability or social background. It is rarely a one-off event and often gets more severe and more frequent over time.

One in four women and one in six men suffer Domestic abuse at some time in their lives. Domestic abuse accounts for 25% of reported violent crime and the vast majority of incidents are witnessed by children. This is damaging to them too.

The abuser may use psychological manipulation to blame the victim e.g. "If you were not so useless/selfish/frigid/poisonous etc. then I wouldn't need to do this. You made me like this ...".

Do not feel guilty or blame yourself.

It is not your fault. It is the abuser's responsibility to control their behaviour.

The abuser may seem remorseful afterwards and promise it will never happen again. They are unlikely to succeed unless they make specific changes in their lives through attending an anger management course/counselling or psychotherapy/alcohol withdrawal programme etc. They will need to address the power and control issues that are so difficult for them. Some resources are listed in 'help for the abuser'.

Most people keep it a secret for too long - do not be ashamed as you are not at fault. If you are being threatened or abused, then help is available locally and nationally.

Developing a crisis plan

1. You may decide to leave home. Try to make an action plan.
2. Always carry a list of numbers you can call in an emergency.
3. Try and save money for a taxi, train or bus fare.
4. Have an extra set of keys cut for the house or car.
5. Keep keys, money and a set of clothes and any medication for yourself or children to hand, in case you have to leave in a hurry.
6. Take legal and financial papers: Benefit and Rent books, National Insurance Number, medical, marriage and birth certificates, passports, bank book and your address book. You may also want to take personal photos.
7. Have a safe address to go to.
8. If necessary, a Police Officer can return to the house with you later.
9. If possible, leave when the abuser is not around.

Helping agencies

If you are unsure about what to do there are a very wide range of support agencies available for you. You may be clear that you want to leave immediately and want to sort out finance, accommodation etc. You may be unsure and want to explore family issues, possible resources for your partner etc. The services listed in this section are all available to help you in many different ways.

- **[Living Without Abuse](#)**

0808 80 200 28 (Mon to Sat. 8am to 8pm)

Loughborough based charity providing support to anyone experiencing or fearing violence or abuse from a partner, ex-partner or family member.

- **Leicester Domestic Abuse Helpline**

0300 303 1844

Trained volunteers offer a wide range of advice on housing, benefits, legal rights and many other issues. All calls are treated in a confidential and non-judgemental manner.

- **[Victim Support Scheme](#)**

0808 16 89 111

VSS offers a confidential service and emotional support to victims of crime. You can telephone and ask to speak to a volunteer trained to help you with Domestic abuse issues, or [request support online](#), whether you are a female or male victim.

- **The Police** 0116 222 2222 (Loughborough)

The Police take all reports of Domestic abuse seriously. They will do all they can to help you. Police policy states that the alleged offender will be arrested if an offence is committed which carries the power of arrest, provided that you, as the victim, indicate that you wish to complain.

For information, contact Loughborough Police who have a Victim Liaison Officer who you can talk to on an informal and confidential basis.

In an emergency dial 999 and ask for the police.

- **Women's Aid:**

Provides:

Refuge: Safe, emergency temporary accommodation for women and children who need protection from violence. They also support male victims of domestic abuse.

Confidential Information: Emotional and practical support for women and families whether or not they are ready/able to leave their abusive partner. Information on benefits, housing, legal procedures etc.

Other Services:

- Personal panic alarm systems for women and families living in their own homes
- Photographs of injuries caused by Domestic abuse. These will be taken by trained female workers

Women's Aid also offers information on other support services such as welfare benefits.

- **Health**

Should you suffer injury it is important to be seen by your GP as soon as possible. Your Health Visitor can also offer support and advice.

- **Rape Crisis Centre**

Leicester 0116 255 8852 (Tues-Fri 10am - 4.00pm, Wed 6.30pm - 9.00pm)

Based at Juniper Lodge General Hospital.

Rape Crisis can counsel you if you have been affected in any way by sexual abuse whether in the past or present. All contact is confidential. The telephone number is constantly staffed, if you receive no reply be prepared to keep ringing.

- **Housing - Charnwood Borough Council**

(01509) 634567 (also available out of hours in an emergency only)

housing@charnwood.gov.uk

Should you flee or be thrown out of your home and are homeless as the result of Domestic abuse, the council may be able to assist with temporary accommodation and can offer advice regarding your housing options.

- **Welfare Benefits** (Jobcentre Plus)

One of the many reasons you may stay in abusive relationships is because of a fear of lack of money. If you leave you may be entitled to Income Support or other benefits.

For information telephone (01509) 831000

- **[Social Services Department](#)** (01509) 266641

The Social Services can offer advice about steps you can take to protect yourself if you are in a violent home situation. They can advise about childcare issues but will not get involved in custody disputes. They can also advise about welfare benefits. They can advise you if you are an adult or a young person, a person with physical or learning disabilities, mental ill health or an elderly person.

Telephone from 8.30am - 5pm (4pm Fridays) or visit the office at Pennine House, Lemyngton Street, Loughborough.

Outside office hours telephone the emergency duty team on (0116) 255 1606. An operator will pass on your message to the duty social worker who will contact you

Support for male victims of abuse:

- **[Mankind](#)**: 01823 334244

- **[Men's Advice Line](#)**: 0808 801 0327 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm
info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Other Useful Contacts:

- **[Free-VA](#)** 0808 80 200 28

[Victim services](#)

[Perpetrator services](#)

A registered charity based in Leicester, working towards reducing domestic violence, rape and sexual assault.

- **[Leicester Counselling Centre](#)** (0116) 255 8801

- **[Leicester Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)** (0116) 255 0003

- **[Relate](#)** (0116) 254 3011

- **[Samaritans](#)** 116 123

- **[Quetzal Project](#)** - for survivors of sexual abuse (0116) 253 3383

- **[Turning Point](#)** - drug & alcohol use/misuse (01509) 611111 information and support

Loughborough University resources

If you are a victim of Domestic abuse whilst a student at LU, you can use any of the local and national services already listed. In addition, there are university student support services which will also be valuable:

Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity team: 01509 228338

studentwellbeing@lboro.ac.uk

To book an appointment with any of our services within Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity (including the Counselling Team, Mental Health Support Team and the Wellbeing Advisers), please complete [the referral form](#). We can also support you if you have witnessed Domestic abuse at home and are worried about other members of your family. If you feel that the stress of witnessing violence has affected your emotional relationships, it may be helpful to explore this in counselling too.

Student Advice (Student Voice, LSU): 01509 635072

For practical advice including complaints and accommodation and finance

Hall Warden/Accommodation Office

For help in moving accommodation

Security: 01509 222141

For support and advice on safety

Useful websites

- [Gov.uk, Domestic abuse: how to get help](#)
- [UAVA \(United Against Violence and Abuse\)](#)