



Domestic Abuse

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is essentially about the power and control of one person over another person. Such abuse may show itself in many ways, including physical violence, emotional or mental abuse, sexual violence and abuse, financial control or keeping a person in the home or not allowing them to go out alone, telling them who they can and cannot meet and talk to.

Perpetrators may blame being drunk or say they have “anger management problems.” These can be factors but they are not the only causes of the abuse.

Abuse against women and girls is a gender based crime; **however**, we must recognise that men and boys can be victims of Domestic Abuse and that it can affect whole families, including children.

Men have a key role in stopping the violence and helping to change the attitudes and actions of their peers.

Children of all ages can be affected by domestic abuse, even if they do not see the abuse directly.

Did you know?

One in four women experience domestic abuse over their lifetimes and between 6-10% of women suffer domestic abuse in any given year. **45% women and 26% men** have experienced at least one incident of inter-personal abuse in their lifetimes.

Does domestic abuse only happen in certain cultures or classes?

Any person can experience domestic abuse **regardless of race, ethnic or religious group**, class, gender, disability or lifestyle.

Domestic abuse can also take place in **lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and**

transgender relationships, and can involve other family members, including children.

What are the signs of domestic abuse?

- ❖ **Destructive criticism and verbal abuse:** shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening
- ❖ **Pressure tactics:** sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, commit suicide, take the children away, report you to welfare agencies unless you comply with demands regarding bringing up the children, lying to your friends and family about you, telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.
- ❖ **Disrespect:** persistently putting you down in front of other people, not listening or responding when you talk, interrupting your telephone calls, taking money from you without asking, refusing to help with childcare or housework.
- ❖ **Breaking trust:** lying to you, withholding information from you, being jealous, having other relationships, breaking promises and shared agreements.
- ❖ **Isolation:** monitoring or blocking your telephone calls, telling you where you can and cannot go, preventing you from seeing friends and relatives.
- ❖ **Harassment:** following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you, embarrassing you in public.
- ❖ **Threats:** making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting you down, destroying your possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm you and the children.
- ❖ **Sexual abuse:** using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts, having sex with you when you don't want to have sex, any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation.
- ❖ **Physical abuse:** punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling.
- ❖ **Denial:** saying the abuse doesn't happen, saying you caused the abusive behavior, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

Why do people stay in abusive relationships?

There are many reasons for staying - fear, love, the risk of homelessness, returning to home country, loss of income or not wanting to split the family. These factors can make it very difficult for partners, especially with children, to leave and some may not want to.

What is the impact on children?

Children, who witness, intervene or hear incidents are affected in many ways. We know that children are aware of abuse in the family even if they are not in the room. Children learn by copying how adults act, they get frightened and worried and it affects them in many ways, for example:

- ❖ **Emotional Problems:** crying, anxiety and sadness, confusion, anger (which can be directed toward either parent or other children, etc), depression, suicidal behaviour, nightmares, fears and phobias. In younger children and babies eating and sleeping disorders are common. Children can also suffer from PTSD (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 achievements.
- ❖ **Physical Problems:** bed-wetting, nervous ticks, headaches or stomach aches, nausea or vomiting, eating disorders, insomnia.

Infants and pre-school children	Schoolchildren	Adolescents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Delayed development❖ Sleep disturbance❖ Temper tantrums❖ Distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Behaviour problems❖ Difficulties with peers❖ Concentration problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Depression❖ Delinquency❖ Aggression towards peers and others

What can children do?

Discuss the issues with the school, talk to a member of the health service (Doctors or Nurses) or ring the Central Referral Team and discuss with the duty social worker.

What can you do?

Call the Central Referral Team on +49(0)800 724 3176.

Domestic abuse is often a crime. Never hesitate to call the Military Police who can help you. They can also put you in touch with other agencies that can help

you with safety planning, housing issues, and drug or alcohol problems, or give details of legal advisors who can assist you with the legal side of things.

For non emergencies you can contact your local Military Police Station

In the case of an emergency please dial one of the following:

Sennelager – Civ +49 (0)5254 982 2222 or Mil 79 2222

Gutersloh Civ +49 (0)5241 84 2222 or Mil 73 2222

What can I do if I am responsible for the abuse?

Contact BFSWS Central referrals on +49(0)800 724 3176, they can help you too.

Also there is help available from **Respect**: <http://www.respect.uk.net/>

Respect's key focus is on increasing the safety of those experiencing domestic violence through promoting effective interventions with those who commit the abuse.

Phone line open:

Monday - Friday 10 am-1 pm and 2 pm -5 pm

Call respect on 00 44 808 802 4040 or email us at info@respectphoneline.org.uk

Helpful contacts

BFG Crimeline: +49(0)800 184 2222

BFG Central Referrals : +49(0)800 724 3176

Women's Aid: +44(0)808 2000 247 or <http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

Children: <http://www.thehideout.org.uk/default.aspa>

Male Victims: +44(0)808 801 0327 or <http://www.respect.uk.net>

Male/Female perpetrators: +44(0)808 802 4040 or phoneline@respect.uk.net