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## MYTHS AND THE FACTS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**MYTH:** family Violence occurs more often among people from poor neighbourhoods.

**FACTS:** family violence occurs in all social and cultural groups.

**MYTH:** abuse happens when the abuser is out of control.

**FACT:** Abuse is a form of control.

**MYTH:** you can tell abusers by how they act.

**FACT:** many abusers show no signs of violent behaviour when out of the home.

**MYTH:** there's no love in an abusive relationship.

**FACT:** the abusers and victim often share times of happiness.

**MYTH:** abusers are drunks.

**FACT:** many abusers do not drink alcohol or use drugs. People who drink abuse both when they are drunk and when they are not drunk.



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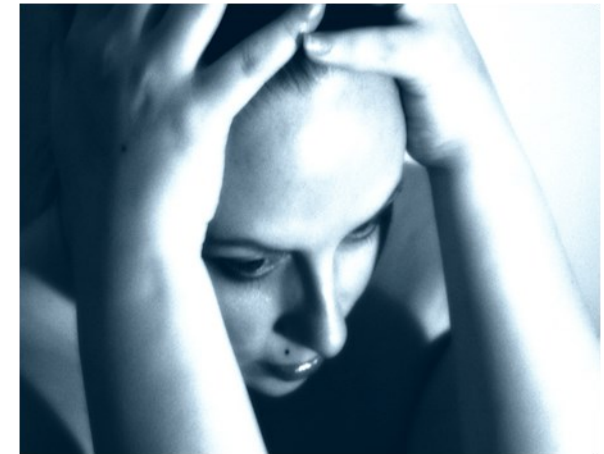
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## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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# WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic Violence is a pattern of controlling and aggressive behaviours from one adult towards another within the context of an intimate relationship.

**It can take many forms:**

**Physical abuse**  
(beating, kicking, slapping, punching, burning, strangulation, stabbing, denying sleep, throwing things, physical restraint- pinning against the wall, floor, bed)

**Verbal abuse**  
(name calling, criticizing, insulting, ridiculing, belittling)

**Emotional/psychological abuse**  
(jealousy, humiliation, degradation, put down, isolation from family and friends or stopping you having contact with your friends or family, controlling what the victim can and cannot do)

**Threats**

(threats of suicide, report you to the Social Services as an unfit parent, threats to harm)



## **Sexual abuse**

(rape, enforced sex or prostitution, any sexual behaviour or activity which you find unacceptable)

## **Financial control**

(withholding money, making you account for every penny you spend, rigidly controlling your finance)

The violence and abuse can be actual or threatened and can happen once every so often or on a regular basis.

People suffer domestic violence regardless of their social group, age, disability, sexuality or lifestyle. It can happen in all kinds of relationships.

## **FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

**You are not to blame:** you are not responsible for the violence. Your abuser has choices about other ways to react such as walking away until he is calmer.



## **You can't change your abuser's behaviour:**

you'll probably have already notice that it doesn't make much difference what you do to pacify him, he's violent anyway. The only way for your abuser to change is for him to realize he has a problem and to seek help for his

behaviour.

## **Ignoring violence is dangerous:**

violence rarely happens only once. In fact it's much more usual for the violence to get more serious the longer it goes on. Despite their dominating ways, many perpetrators appear to go to pieces after an assault or if their partners threaten to leave them. They can be very remorseful and promise to stop the violence, give up drinking etc. women sometimes feel sorry for them and agree to stay, but the violence rarely stops.

## **There is life after an abusive relationship:**

although this may seem very difficult, there are many benefits. Many women start new and rewarding lives and discover they enjoy living without a partner.

**Break the silence-** don't remain isolated: you have nothing to be ashamed of. Don't keep violence a secret. Get help from someone you trust or you can contact us as detailed at the back of this leaflet.

