

- **Does your (ex) partner make you feel frightened?**
- **Does your (ex) partner keep you from seeing your friends and your family?**
- **Do you feel that your (ex) partner controls aspects of your life?**
- **Does your (ex) partner ever hurt, threaten or humiliate you?**

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, please pick up a copy of this leaflet as the information inside could help you.

You might be experiencing domestic abuse.

People argue and fight in almost all relationships. What is different about domestic abuse is that it can stop you being yourself.

Domestic abuse can make you feel frightened, ashamed and powerless. Over time, things usually get worse rather than better.

Domestic abuse is not a one off event – it is a pattern of controlling behaviour that may or may not involve physical and/or sexual abuse as well as emotional abuse. An abusive relationship means that one partner has more power and control in the relationship than the other and misuses that power and control.

Remember, it is never your fault.
The perpetrator is always to
blame for domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse most often
affects women, but the
information in this booklet will help
anyone experiencing domestic
abuse. So it can help you if you
are in a same sex or heterosexual
relationship and whether you are
a woman or a man.

Power & Control Wheel



Using intimidation

Making you afraid by using looks, actions, gestures. Smashing things. Destroying your property. Abusing pets. Displaying weapons.

Using emotional abuse

Putting you down. Making you feel bad about yourself. Calling you names. Making you think you're crazy. Playing mind games. Humiliating you. Making you feel guilty.

Using isolation

Controlling what you do, who you see and talk to, what you read, where you go. Limiting your outside involvement. Using jealousy to justify actions.

Minimizing, denying and blaming

Making light of the abuse and not taking your concerns about it seriously. Saying the abuse didn't happen. Shifting

responsibility for abusive behaviour.
Saying you caused it.

Using children

Making you feel guilty about the children.
Using the children to relay messages.
Using visitation to harass you. Threatening
to take the children away.

Using male privilege

Treating you like a servant. Making all the
big decisions. Acting like the “king of the
castle”. Being the one to define men’s
and women’s roles.

Using economic abuse

Preventing you from getting or keeping
a job. Making you ask for money. Giving
you an allowance. Taking your money.
Not letting you know about or have
access to family income.

Using coercion and threats

Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt you. Threatening to leave you, commit suicide and report you to social work. Putting pressure on you around court proceedings. Making you do illegal things.

Source: Domestic Abuse Intervention Project,
202 East Superior Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802 218-722-2781
www.duluth-model.org

Whilst the perpetrator is always to blame for domestic abuse, there may be some things you can do to help keep you safer. Remember in an emergency you can always call the Police on 999 or on 101.

Things you could do now

- Think about the kinds of feelings you get when the situation is serious – how do you cope with these and manage the risks?
- Think about how you can leave from different areas of the house.
- Is there somewhere you can keep your purse and keys and get to them quickly if you need to leave?

- Make sure that your phone is charged and you have access to it.
- If you need to leave quickly – where will you go?
- Can you leave some of your things with someone?
- What could you tell children to help keep them safe?
- Do your children know how do call 999?

If you are preparing to leave (permanently or for a short time)

- Can you leave money and spare keys somewhere?
- Where can you keep important documents, such as birth certificates, passports, etc so you can get them?
- Do you have the phone numbers you need like Housing, Women's Aid, the Police?
- Are there friends or family who can support you and who you could leave spare clothes with?
- What else would you need to take with you and how will you get these out of your house?

- Can you get access to transport – if public transport, do you know the timetables?
- Can you rehearse your 'escape' plan?
- Is it safe to leave your children with your partner?
- What would you need to tell your children?
- Can you change your mobile phone or switch off the tracking, GPS and location services?

If your partner no longer stays with you

- Can you have the locks on your windows and doors changed as soon as possible?
- Can you replace any wooden doors?
- Is there good lighting outside your home?
- What will you tell your children about what they can do to help keep safe?
- Can you get some legal advice about interdicts, etc?

- What can you tell your neighbours to do if they see someone hanging about near your house?
- Do your smoke detectors work?
- Do you need to ensure that your address doesn't appear on court papers or in social work documents?
- Keep a diary of any concerning events, including how they made you feel and what happened.

Keeping safe in other places

- Can you tell people about your situation – friends, neighbours, work colleagues?
- Can you vary your routine, i.e. route to work, where and when you do shopping?
- What measures can your work put in place, i.e. varying start and finishing times, working from home, someone helping you to and from the car park?

If you have other needs

- Make sure you have access to medication, adaptive equipment or have spares available.
- If you need help to leave, how will you get this?
- Will you or other family members need alternative care – can this be arranged in advance?

There are agencies across the Highlands that can help you. Sometimes, these agencies may share information about your situation to help keep you and your children safe.

Police

The Police are specially trained to respond to domestic abuse. Officers will speak to you about your situation and help you with ways to keep safe. Your address can be 'flagged' on police system which may result in a faster response to any further incidents reported.

Police will fully investigate any incident of domestic abuse and where there is enough evidence apprehend the perpetrator and report the matter to the Procurator Fiscal. Where appropriate they may put you in touch with other agencies who can support you.

Women's Aid

Women's Aid will listen to you and believe you. They will support you in any way they can helping you to make decisions which are best for you, they will never tell you what to do.

They offer emotional support for you and any children you have, they can help find you somewhere safe to stay (in some areas this may be in their own accommodation). They will provide you with practical help in relation to housing, the legal process, benefits and much more. They work with women, children and young people helping them to deal with the impact living with abuse has had on them.

Victim Support Scotland

VSS can provide support to anyone affected by domestic abuse and in Highland is our recommended service for men affected by domestic abuse. They will also provide you with emotional support whether face to face, by telephone or email and can help with a range of issues.

NHS Highland

You can talk to any Health professional that you or your children are in contact with about your situation. Staff will listen to you and support you

to ensure that your health care needs are met. Some staff have responsibilities to ask you directly about whether you have ever experienced domestic abuse.

Housing

The Council housing services have a duty to help people who are unintentionally homeless, this includes those who are leaving an abusive relationship. Housing services will help you consider your housing options and look at what might be available for you in both the short and the long term.

Health & Social Care

Staff can support both you and your children if you are experiencing domestic abuse. You can talk to a Health Visitor or a Social Worker about what is happening and they will look at what they can do to help you and your family.

The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)

COPFS prosecutes crimes in Scotland and supports victims and witnesses through Victim Information and Advice (VIA). The COPFS decides if a case will proceed to court and the

exact nature of the charge(s). The COPFS will decide if it is in the public interest to prosecute a case and in Scotland a victim cannot “withdraw their statement”. VIA keeps clients updated on the progress of the case and can help people get in touch with other organisations. VIA will also discuss what support may be available to help when giving evidence (including special measures) if the case goes to trial including arranging a court visit.

Helpful phone numbers

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 027 1234 (24 hour)

Victim Support Scotland Helpline

0345 603 9213 (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)

Men's Advice Line

0808 801 0327 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Caithness & Sutherland

Women's Aid

0845 408 0151

Inverness Women's Aid

01463 220 719

Lochaber Women's Aid

01397 705 734

Ross-shire Women's Aid

01349 863568

Your useful phone numbers



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

NHS
Highland



**The Highland
Council**
**Comhairle na
Gàidhealtachd**

In association with Women's
Aid and Victim Support.