Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership

Opening Closed Doors

Domestic Abuse

How to help a friend or someone in your family



My family encouraged me to seek help



With support from a friend I grew stronger

Domestic abuse is when a partner, or someone else in the family, hurts a person or makes them scared



This booklet was written by Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership in collaboration with the Speak Out Leaders and Consultancy & Training team at VoiceAbility Cambridgeshire

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You can contact us at dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Easy Read version of leaflet by VoiceAbility

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Information for friends and family who are worried about someone who may be suffering domestic abuse:



It is not easy to know how to support a friend or someone you love who is suffering domestic abuse.



But you can make a difference.



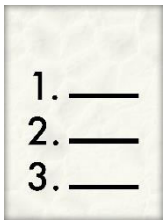
It can be very upsetting to think that someone is hurting a person you care about. The first thing you may want to do is to protect that person. But this could be dangerous. This leaflet tells you about ways you can do it safely.



We know that more women than men suffer domestic abuse. But it does happen to men too.



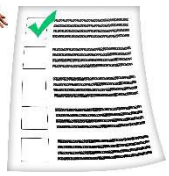
If you see someone being hurt call the police on 999.



What is in this leaflet:



Page 5: What is domestic abuse?



Page 6-7: Some of the signs of domestic abuse



Page 8: What a person who is suffering domestic abuse may be feeling and going through



Page 9-11: What you can do to give support



Page 12-14: Protecting children & young people



Page 15-16: Protecting disabled people



Page 17-18: When to get involved



Page 19-20: Making a Safety Plan



Page 21-22: Organisations who can help



What is domestic abuse?

Here are some examples:



Physical:

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Driving a car in a dangerous way



Sexual:

- Rape
- Calling someone sexy names in a bad way
- Taking sexy photos that someone does not want



Financial:

- Not giving a person their money
- Stopping a person from getting a job
- Stealing



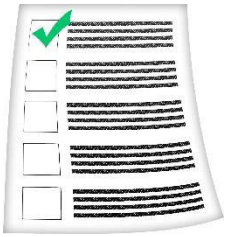
Emotional (how a person feels)**:**

- Telling a person they are always wrong
- Calling a person names
- Keeping a person away from family and friends



Psychological (how a person thinks)**:**

- Making a person feel scared
- Making threats to do something



Some of the signs of domestic abuse



- The person behaves differently when their partner is there.



- They seem nervous when with their partner.
- They are not their usual self. They are not as confident as usual or they seem scared.



- Their partner texts or calls them all the time when they are out with you.



- They have started to cancel plans at the last minute, or they make excuses not to spend time with you.



- They are always saying sorry for what their partner does.



- You have noticed bruises or other injuries. You think they are not telling the truth about how they got them.



- Your friend has changed how they look. Perhaps they dress differently or have stopped putting on make-up



- They may be using Facebook less than before.
- They may have been taking more time off sick from work than usual.





Signs that someone may be controlling



- The person has said their partner is jealous.
- They have cut them off from family and friends.



- They always pick them up and drop them off wherever they go.



- They get angry if the person is a bit late.



- They always tell the person they are wrong and put them down.



- They make it hard for you to spend time with the person on your own. Or they put everyone in a bad mood when you are there.



- They are always posting on the person's Facebook page. The person has told you the partner can get at their account. Or you think this is happening.



- You have seen them get angry over something that did not seem that important.



- They control the money in the relationship.

A person is being abused if:



- **They are scared to be themselves or:**
- **They do not do things because they are scared of what their partner might do.**



What a person who is suffering domestic abuse may be feeling and going through



- They may always feel scared that there will be more violence or that their children are not safe.
- They may think it is their fault and that if they change the domestic abuse will stop.



- They may be confused because they love their partner but hate the abuse. They may be hoping that the partner's good side will come back.



- They may depend on their partner for money and to feel good about themselves.



- Many people feel shame, guilt, embarrassment.
- They may feel hopeless and so find it hard to make decisions about the future.



- People often think no one will believe them.



- They may worry that if they ask for help they will never see their children again.



- Men may feel they are not real men. They may not believe they are a victim. Gay men suffer worse violence than men who are not gay.



- In a same-sex relationship the partner may say they will tell the person's family, friends and colleagues that they are gay.



What you can do to give support



- ✓ Give the person time to open up. You may have to try a few times before they will talk to you.



- ✓ Be direct. You could say: “I am worried about you because…” or “I am worried about your safety”.



- ✓ Do not judge. Believe what they say.
- ✓ Tell them the abuse is not their fault and that you are there for them.



- ✓ Concentrate on giving support and building their confidence.



- ✓ Help your friend to keep contact with people outside the home.



- ✓ Be patient. It can take time for someone to understand that they are being abused. It can take even longer for them to decide what to do.



- ✓ Tell them they are not weak. Domestic abuse is all about one person using power over another.



- ✓ Encourage them to keep a diary of anything that happens and to tell other people about it.



- ✓ Encourage them to report anything that happens to a GP or the police.



Try not to do these things:



- Do not tell them what to do. Encourage the person to make decisions at the right time for them. It is important that they get control back over their own life. This may take a long time.



Remember that the partner is controlling them. They do not need other people to do the same.



- Do not put pressure on the person to leave their partner. You may be worried about them but they have to make that decision at the right time for them.



- It is natural for you to want the person you care about to be safe. But do not get frustrated if they do not make decisions fast.



- This is because the most dangerous time for a victim is when they leave their partner. Most murders happen when they have just gone or when they are trying to leave.



- Try not to say bad things about the partner. This is because it may make the person embarrassed and less happy to talk to you.



Practical things you can do to help



✓ Offer to keep a set of keys and important documents, such as passports, benefit books and some money. This is in case the person needs to leave fast.



✓ If your friend has been hurt, offer to go to the hospital with them, to their GP or another professional they can talk to, like a counsellor.



✓ Offer to help tell the police what has happened if the person wants to do this.



✓ Help to make a Safety Plan (see page 18).



See pages 21-22 for phone numbers and websites of organisations who can help.



Protecting children and young people



Where there is domestic abuse between adults, there is often child abuse too.



All children and young adults who see violence suffer some kind of abuse. An adult may hit them by accident or on purpose.



Adults often think that children and young people are not affected much by domestic abuse if they do not see violence. This is not true.



Children may:

- Hear something violent happening in the next room.



- See injuries later.



- Be affected by a parent's behaviour changing a lot.



- Be looked after badly because of the abuse. This is called neglect.



How a child or young adult is affected by living with domestic abuse depends on many things. They include:









- Their age
- The type of abuse
- What they know is happening
- Having an adult who protects them
- Their personality



The long-term effects on children who have gone through domestic abuse are very bad. They can include:



- Depression
- Guilt



- Hurting themselves





- Suicide
- Using alcohol and drugs



- Not being able to trust people



What you can do



- ✓ If you know a child or young person who has lived with domestic abuse, make sure they talk to someone about what happens at home.



- ✓ It is normal that they may not want to talk, that they feel upset, angry and confused. But what you can do is support them to express their feelings in a better way.



If you are worried about a child's safety, the most important thing is to report it to any of these people:











- ➢ School staff
- ➢ A GP
- ➢ A health visitor
- ➢ The police
- ➢ Children's social care: **0345 045 5203** (cambridgeshire)
- ➢ Children's social care: **01733 864170** (Peterborough)



If you think a child is in danger right now and needs help urgently, call the police on 999.



Protecting disabled people



A disabled woman is twice as likely to suffer domestic abuse as a woman with no disability.



Disability can include:

- Physical disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health problems
- Not being able to see or hear well
- Old age
- Illness











As well as the domestic abuse in the list on page 4 of this leaflet, these things may also happen to a disabled person:



- The abuser (the person doing the abuse) does not give personal care. For example: they do not help the person to use the toilet.



- The abuser spends the person's money on the wrong things or without their permission.



- The abuser tells them that no one else will love them. Or tells them that if they leave they will have to go into a care home.



- The abuser may use the children to control the person. They may tell them that their children will be taken away if they report abuse because they will not be able to look after them on their own.



- The abuser may hurt the person in a sexual way or rape them. This is because the person is not able to stop them or perhaps does not understand what is happening.



For more information:

Go to the website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk or www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk

and search for 'adult abuse'.



To get help for someone you know:

Phone Adult Support: 0345 045 5202 (Cambridgeshire)



Phone Adult Support: 01733 747474 (Peterborough)



Carers can also suffer domestic abuse. This could have been happening for a long time. Or it could be something that started when their partner became ill or disabled. There is professional help for carers in this situation. This website has more information:



http://www.carerstrustcambridgeshire.org/



When to get involved



You may worry about whether to offer support to the person you care about. Lots of people think domestic abuse is a private matter that should be dealt with behind closed doors.



BUT many people go through domestic abuse and we all have a duty to speak out against it. This could mean talking about it to the person you know. Or telling an organisation about it who can do something to help.



At the same time remember that getting between the person you know and their partner can be dangerous – for you and for them.

It may help to remember this about domestic abuse:





- It happens a lot. People may wait years before telling anyone about it or asking for help.
- It is very dangerous. Every month about 7 women and 2 men are killed by their partner or ex-partner.



- Everyone has the right to live free from violence and fear.



- It is not the fault of the victim. The abuser is the only person responsible for their actions.



Clare's Law



This law means you can contact the police if you, or the person you care about, are worried about what a partner has done in the past. The police will then say if the partner has a record for abuse or violence.



You can do this by:



✓ Speaking to a police officer in the street



✓ Phoning 101

✓ Going to a police station

Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders (DVPNs and DVPOs)



The police have new powers with DVPNs and DVPOs. This means they can ban an abuser from a home.



They can also stop them having contact with the victim for at least 2 days and up to 28 days.



Making a safety plan



A safety plan helps people going through domestic abuse to think about:



- How to stay safe while they are still in the relationship.
- How to stay safe if they decide to leave.

The plan may include:



- What to do in certain situations, including a crisis.



- Keeping important and emergency phone numbers where they are easy to find. They could be the numbers for:







  - ✓ Local domestic abuse services
  - ✓ GP
  - ✓ Social worker
  - ✓ Solicitor
  - ✓ School



- Asking neighbours you can trust to phone the police if they hear an attack.



- Working out an escape plan. Agreeing a secret word that can be used, so the person can let you know their plans without the abuser finding out.



- Packing an emergency bag and putting it somewhere safe like a neighbour's house.



- Finding a safe place in the house for the person where they can get away from their partner.



Preparing to leave

Sometimes an abuser will increase the violence if they think their partner is planning to leave. They will also continue the abuse after they have left.



It is a good idea for the person to:

- Plan to leave when the partner is not around.



- Take everything they need with them, including important documents.



- Take their children with them. If they do not do this it may be hard to have the children living with them in the future.



- Tell the children's teachers what is happening and who will pick up the children in the future.



- Open a separate bank account, or put aside some money each week.

See pages 21-22 for organisations who can help



Organisations who can help



Always call 999 in an emergency

You can speak to a specialist professional for advice:

If you live in Cambridge City, East or South Cambridgeshire call: **Cambridge Women's Aid: 01223 361214**
www.womensaid.org

If you live in Fenland, Peterborough or Huntingdonshire call:
Refuge: 07787 255821

Other useful organisations:

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre: 01223 245888
www.cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk

Peterborough Rape Crisis Care: 01733 852578
www.peterboroughrapecrisis.co.uk

Rape Crisis England and Wales: 0808 802 9999
www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Sexual Assault Referral Centre: 0800 193 5434
http://www.theelmssarc.org/

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247
www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327
www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Galop: 0300 999 5428
www.broken-rainbow.org.uk
Support for Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transexual people.

Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247
www.karmanirvana.org.uk
Support for victims of 'honour' crimes and forced marriages.

NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children): 0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk

More information

Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership: www.cambsdasv.org.uk

The Hideout: A website for children and young people
www.thehideout.org.uk

Home Office Domestic Abuse pages:
www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse

Cambs Police including Clare's Law and protection orders:
www.cambs.police.uk/GetCloser/DomesticAbuse