

ONE in FIVE CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE.



Domestic Abuse advice for Parents

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Domestic abuse in a relationship: recognise it

There are different kinds of abuse, but it's always about having power and control over you. If you answer yes to any of the following questions, you might be in an abusive relationship.

Emotional abuse

Does your partner ever.....?

- belittle you, or put you down?
- blame you for the abuse or arguments?
- deny that abuse is happening, or play it down?
- isolate you from your family and friends?
- stop you going to college or work?
- make unreasonable demands for your attention?
- accuse you of flirting or having affairs?
- tell you what to wear, who to see, where to go, and what to think?
- control your money, or not give you enough to buy food or other essential things?

Threats and intimidation

Does your partner ever.....?

- threaten to hurt or kill you?
- destroy things that belong to you?
- stand over you, invade your personal space?
- threaten to kill themselves or the children?
- read your emails, texts or letters?
- harass or follow you?

Physical abuse

The person abusing you may hurt you in a number of ways.

Does your partner ever.....?

- slap, hit or punch you?
- push or shove you?
- bite or kick you?
- burn you?
- choke you or hold you down?
- throw things?

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can happen to anyone, whether they're male or female.

Does your partner ever....?

- touch you in a way you don't want to be touched?
- make unwanted sexual demands?
- hurt you during sex?
- pressure you to have unsafe sex – for example, not using a condom?
- pressure you to have sex?

Have you ever felt afraid of your partner?

Have you ever changed your behaviour because you're afraid of what your partner might do?

If you think you may be in an abusive relationship, there is help available.

Help a friend if they're being abused

If you're worried a friend is being abused, let them know you've noticed something is wrong.

They might not be ready to talk, but try to find quiet times when they can talk if they choose to.

If someone confides in you that they're suffering domestic abuse:

- listen, and take care not to blame them
- acknowledge it takes strength to talk to someone about experiencing abuse
- give them time to talk, but don't push them to talk if they don't want to
- acknowledge they're in a frightening and difficult situation
- tell them nobody deserves to be threatened or beaten, despite what the abuser has said
- support them as a friend – encourage them to express their feelings, and allow them to make their own decisions
- don't tell them to leave the relationship if they're not ready – that's their decision
- ask if they have suffered physical harm – if so, offer to go with them to a hospital or GP
- help them report the assault to the police if they choose to
- be ready to provide information on organisations that offer help for people experiencing domestic abuse