

MAKE THE CALL DON'T BE A BYSTANDER LET'S PREVENT DOMESTIC ABUSE TOGETHER



When we don't intervene or speak out against domestic abuse, we give the abuser the permission to carry on.

Don't be a bystander to domestic abuse.



WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Any behaviour which is abusive, violent, controlling, coercive or threatening to those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

It can include anything from verbal insults, put-downs, mind games, controlling money, checking a phone or email, rape, physical damage to your home, hitting you, throwing things at you, pushing you, restricting freedom, telling you what to wear – it can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and/or emotional.

At it's worst it can be life threatening.
Domestic abuse is against the law.
If you witness an assault,

**PLEASE CALL THE POLICE
IMMEDIATELY ON 999.**

I'M WORRIED WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- Offer to listen and support them no matter what they decide.
- You can't 'rescue' them - they have to be the one to decide it's time to get help.
- Don't judge them - they know their partner/family member and the risks involved.
- They need to know they are believed and are not to blame.
- Let them know you're there for them and they have nothing to be ashamed about.

Let your friend/family member know you will always be there no matter what.

HOW WILL I KNOW SOMEONE IS EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE?

- **Do they** seem afraid of their partner or anxious to please them?
- Have they stopped seeing friends or family?
- Do they cut phone conversations short when partner is in the room?
- Have they become anxious or depressed or lost confidence?
- Have they any physical injuries? Bruises, broken bones, sprains, cuts etc.?
- **Does their partner**
 - o Criticise or humiliate them in front of other people?
 - o Behave in a jealous or possessive way?
 - o Make all the decisions and/or control all the money?
 - o Tell them who they can see and what they can do?
 - o Make them feel 'mad' or 'bad' or play mind games?
 - o Prevent them using the phone.
 - o Tell them what to wear, time them when they're out?
- **Are children** afraid of partner?
Are they reluctant to leave children with the partner?
- **If they have left** the relationship, is the partner constantly calling, harassing, following them, coming to house or waiting outside?

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WHAT CAN I DO?

- Listen, try to understand and take care not to blame them. Tell them that they're not alone and that there are many people in the same situation.
- Acknowledge that it takes strength to trust someone enough to talk about experiencing abuse. Give them time to talk, let them tell you the detail they are comfortable with, don't push them to tell you things.
- Acknowledge that they're in a frightening and very difficult situation.
- Tell them no one deserves to be abused, threatened or beaten, despite what the abuser has said. Nothing they do or say can justify the abuser's behaviour.
- Support them as a friend/family member. Encourage them to express their feelings, whatever they are. Allow them to make their own decisions.
- Don't tell them to leave the relationship if they're not ready to do this. It's their decision.
- Ask if they are suffering physical harm. If so, offer to go with them to a hospital/GP, or take photos of any injuries.

- Help them to report the assault to the police if they want to do so.
- Be ready to provide information on organisations that offer help. Explore the available options. The West Lancashire 24-hour local Helpline is: **0808 100 3062**
- Go with them to visit a solicitor if they're ready to take this step
- Help them make a safety plan – a place to go, what to pack, whom to tell.
- Let them create the boundaries they think are safe and not safe; don't push for any actions they express doubt about.
- Offer your friend/family member the use of your address and/or telephone number to leave information and messages, and tell them you will look after an emergency bag.
- Look after yourself while you are supporting someone through such a difficult and emotional time. Ensure that you do not put yourself into a dangerous situation; for example, do not offer to talk to the abuser or let yourself be seen by the abuser as a threat to their relationship.

NATIONAL HELPLINES

For **WOMEN** 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline
FREEPHONE: **0808 2000 247**

For **MEN** 24 hour National
FREEPHONE: **0808 801 0327**

For **LGBT** Domestic Abuse Helpline
0800 999 5428
OR EMAIL: help@galop.org.uk

LOCAL HELPLINE

West Lancashire 24-hour
local Helpline
FREEPHONE: **0808 100 3062**