

# Feel safe at home



## Do any of these things happen in your family?

- There are bad arguments or fights
- Your mum gets sworn at or called names.
- Your mum gets pushed, hit or kicked.
- Furniture and other things in the house get broken or smashed.
- Your pets get hurt.
- You and your brothers and sisters feel scared.
- You or your brothers and sisters get hurt.

If some or all of these kinds of things are happening in your family, then you might be living with domestic violence.

# What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence usually happens between adults who live together or are in a relationship with each other. It can also happen after they have split up.

One adult (usually the man) bullies the other one (usually the woman); he might hurt her feelings, make her scared, or hit her.



It is not always men who hurt women though. Sometimes women hurt men, or there can be violence between two men or two women. Sometimes other family members take part in the bullying and violence too.

Domestic violence in a family can happen in any place, and at any time. Often it happens at home and sometimes other people don't know about it.

Domestic violence can hurt children too. Often children hear or see it going on between adults in their family, and sometimes they get caught in the middle of a fight.

## How does it make you feel?



Living with domestic violence in your family can make you feel:

- sad and quiet
- worried about your mum
- scared
- confused
- tired
- angry
- lonely or not cared about
- left out
- afraid because you are getting hurt too.

You might also:

- find it hard to sleep
- have trouble doing your schoolwork
- think someone else at home is the favourite and gets treated better than you
- get into trouble a lot at home or at school.

**It is normal to feel these things if there is domestic violence in your family.**

Here's what some children say about domestic violence:

“It makes children feel sad and upset but they pretend that everything is ok.” *(Girl, 10)*

“You feel low and lonely.” *(Boy, 10)*

“You feel heartbroken and worried about mum getting hurt.” *(Girl, 8)*

“You don't feel cared about.” *(Boy, 9)*

## What about your mum?

People in your family might try to keep the domestic violence a secret, and your mum might think that you don't know it is happening. Maybe, like you, your mum is feeling upset and afraid. She is probably worried about lots of things, and she might not be able to spend a lot of time with you or look after you as much as she would like.

**Remember, domestic violence is not your mum's fault. If she is being hurt and scared by someone stronger than her, then she will probably find it very hard to stop them.**

## It's never your fault

Remember that domestic violence is not your fault.

Sometimes children feel they have to stick up for the adults they care about. It is normal to feel like this, but you can't change the way that adults behave. Children are NEVER to blame for domestic violence. The only person who is in the wrong is the adult who is being a bully.

You, your mum and the rest of your family have the right to feel safe and happy at home.



**Don't keep it to yourself**

Maybe you are feeling like no one cares about you. Maybe your mum thinks you don't know about the violence. Maybe you are being hurt and your mum doesn't know about it. It's a bad idea to keep these kinds of things a secret because they might just keep happening. Tell someone who can help.

## **What can you do?**



- Try to talk to your mum and tell her how you feel. This might help your mum understand how things are for you, and together you could talk about how to make things better.
- Tell another person in your family about what is happening at home. It could be a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or even an older brother, sister or cousin. If you want, you could ask them to talk to your mum for you, if you don't feel like doing it.
- Talk to an adult that you like, outside your family, about what is happening at home. This could be a teacher, a nurse or doctor, a family friend, a neighbour, or even your own friend's mum or dad.

**If the first or second person you tell can't help, keep telling people until you find someone who can help you and your family feel safe and happy.**

## Here's what other children who have lived with domestic violence have to say:

**“Stay calm - you should never get involved.”**  
*(Boy, 12)*

**“Tell somebody you trust.”** *(Girl, 8)*

**“Talk to your mum about your feelings – it's not her fault.”** *(Boy, 10)*

**“Tell your mum to tell someone else – there are people who want to help.”** *(Boy, 11)*

## Who else can help?

There are lots of people who can help you and your mum. The helplines on this leaflet get lots of calls from children about domestic violence; they will listen to you and they understand what is happening at home.

You can talk to them about how you feel, and ask them for help or advice. Your mum can call these numbers for help too. Remember, the best thing for both of you is to talk to someone.



If a friend tells you that there is domestic violence in their family, you could:

- give them this leaflet
- tell them to talk to an adult that they trust
- tell them to ring one of these phone numbers.



## ChildLine

**Phone: 0800 1111** (calls to this number will not show up on landline phone bills, but may be on some mobile phone bills)

**Website:** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Textphone: 0800 400 222** (this number is for anyone who is deaf or hard of hearing. It is not open at night)

It is free to call ChildLine, and it is open all week, day and night. The people who work on ChildLine listen and give advice to children about any problem, including domestic violence.



# National Domestic Violence Helpline

**Phone: 0808 2000 247**

(calls to this number may show up on phone bills.  
Check with the telephone company)

**Email:** [helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk)

It is free to call the National Domestic Violence Helpline, and it is open all week, day and night. The people who work there give help and advice about domestic violence to adults and children.

# NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

**Phone: 0808 800 5000**

(calls to this number will not show up on landline phone bills, but may be on some mobile phone bills)

It is free to call the NSPCC Helpline, and it is open all week, day and night. The people who work on the Helpline give help and advice to adults and children about lots of family problems, including domestic violence.

## NSPCC Asian Helplines

**Phone: 0800 096 7719** (Mon-Fri, 11am-7pm)

## NSPCC Cymru/Wales Helpline

**Phone: 0808 100 2524** (Mon-Fri, 10-6pm)

**Email:** [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Textphone: 0800 056 0566**

(this number is for anyone who is deaf or hard of hearing)

## The Hideout

If you are able to use the internet you could also look at this website. It has lots of information and advice about domestic violence, especially for children.

**Website: [www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk)**  
(you can hide your visit to this website by following the steps on the screen)

## What to do in an emergency

If the fighting gets really bad, it is very important that you and your family don't get hurt.

Here are some good ideas for keeping safe:

- Don't get stuck in the middle of a fight – stay away from it.
- You could hide in a safe place at home or nearby, and tell your brothers and sisters to hide too.
- Or you could go to a neighbour or another adult you trust, and tell them what is happening.
- Or you could get a phone and call the police on **999** for help (it is free to call this number).

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[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)



A big **THANK YOU** to the children using  
NSPCC services who helped to write this leaflet

Stores code NS/399  
Registered charity number 216401

**NSPCC** <sup>TM</sup>  
Cruelty to children must stop. **FULL STOP.**

If you can't take this leaflet away with you please tear off  
the strip below and keep these numbers somewhere safe  
and hidden for when you might need them

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**Feel safe**

**0800 1111**

**0808 2000 247**

**0808 800 5000**