

Domestic Abuse

(Information taken from NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>)

Every child deserves a safe and secure home. But witnessing domestic abuse can have long-term effects on children and young people. That's why we've got advice and support for parents and carers to help keep children safe from domestic abuse.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Types of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet.

Signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or [bullying](#)
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- [anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts](#)

- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- [drug or alcohol use](#)
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal.

Effects of domestic abuse

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's [mental](#) and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

What's important is to make sure the abuse stops and that children have a safe and stable environment to grow up in.

Our [services](#) can support children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse to help them move on and receive the care they need.

If a child reveals abuse

If a child talks to you about domestic abuse it's important to:

- listen carefully to what they're saying
- let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- tell them it's not their fault
- say you'll take them seriously
- don't confront the alleged abuser
- explain what you'll do next
- report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

Support

For parents

If you're an adult experiencing domestic abuse, there are organisations that can help.

- [Relate](#)
[0300 003 0396](tel:03000030396)
You can talk to Relate about your relationship, including issues around domestic abuse.
- [National Domestic Violence Helpline](#)
[0808 2000 247](tel:08082000247)
A 24 hour free helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

- [Men's Advice Line](#)
[0808 801 0327](tel:08088010327)
Advice and support for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse.
- [National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)
[0800 999 5428](tel:08009995428)
Emotional and practical support for LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse.

We're here to support you, no matter your worry. Call us on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000), email help@nspcc.org.uk or fill in our [online form](#).

For children and young people

Our Domestic Abuse, Revovering Together (DART™) is a therapeutic service for mothers and children who have experienced domestic abuse.

Find out more about all [our services for children](#), including how to get in touch with ones in your area.

[The Hide Out](#), created by Women's Aid, is a space to help children and young people understand abuse. It also helps them learn how to take positive action.

How Childline can help

We understand how difficult it is for children to talk about domestic abuse. Whether it's happening now or happened in the past, Childline can be contacted 24/7. Calls to [0800 1111](tel:08001111) are free and confidential. Children can also contact [Childline online](#).

Childline has information and advice for children and young people about [domestic abuse](#), including why it happens and what they can do.