

## DOMESTIC ABUSE FACTSHEET

It's important to know that there is no 'them and us' when we're thinking about victims and survivors of domestic abuse - they are our friends, our family, our neighbours and our colleagues.

Domestic abuse isn't just physical – it can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or controlling behaviour. Whatever it's form, there's #noexcuseforabuse in Lancashire.

For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available to you in your own time frame.

If you recognise any of these feelings or behaviours then you, or someone you know, may be in an abusive relationship:

Do you ever feel:

- Belittled or put down?
- Blamed for the abuse or arguments?
- Isolated from your family and friends?
- Stopped from going to college or work?
- Accused of things you haven't done?
- Restricted in what you can wear, who you can see, where you can go or what you can think?

Have you:

- Been threatened?
- Had things that belong to you destroyed?
- Had your personal space invaded?
- Had your e-mails, texts or letters checked?

Have you ever been physically hurt by being:

- Slapped, hit or punched?
- Pushed or shoved?
- Bitten or kicked?
- Burnt?

Sexual abuse can happen to anyone, whether they're male or female. Have you ever:

- Been touched in a way you don't want to be touched?
- Received unwanted sexual demands?
- Been hurt during sex?
- Pressured to have unsafe sex – for example, not using a condom?
- Pressured to have sex - If your partner, or former partner, has sex with you when you don't want to, this is rape



## **Report it**

If you want to report a crime, but you are not in immediate danger, you can call the police on 101 or report online here: [lancashire.police.uk/reportcrime](https://lancashire.police.uk/reportcrime)

If you need the police in an emergency, please do not be afraid to dial 999 - they will help you and protect you from danger.

## **If you can't speak in an emergency**

### **Call 999 from a mobile**

When you call 999, the operator (the person on the phone) will ask which emergency service is required. Listen to the questions from the 999 operator. If you cannot say 'police' or 'ambulance', respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. If prompted, press 55 on your phone. This lets the 999 call operator know it's an emergency and that you aren't safe to speak. Click [here](#) to find out more.

### **Call 999 from a landline**

If only background noise can be heard and operators cannot decide whether an emergency service is needed, then you will be connected to a police call handler.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick up again.

When 999 calls are made from landlines, information about your location should be automatically available to the call handlers to help provide a response.

## **If you are deaf or can't verbally communicate**

You can register with the emergencySMS service. Text REGISTER to 999. You will get a text which tells you what to do next. Do this when it is safe so you can text when you are in danger.

## **I don't know where I am and need the police as it's an emergency**

If you need the police in an emergency and you're unsure of where you are, you can use the what3words app or website to generate a random three-word code to let our call handlers know exactly where you are. This code gives police call handlers a simple way to describe precisely where you are and allow them to direct help straight to the scene. Find out more about what3words and how it could help you in an emergency by visiting [www.what3words.com](https://www.what3words.com)

## **Supporting 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.

Neighbours and community members can be a life-line for those living with domestic abuse. Look out for your neighbours, if someone reaches out to you there is advice on this page about how to respond. 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 experienced 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

### **Help and support**

If you are worried that a friend, neighbour or loved one is a victim of domestic abuse then you can visit [www.noexcuseforabuse.co.uk](http://www.noexcuseforabuse.co.uk) for details of the support services in Lancashire.