



A safety plan

- ✓ Know where the nearest telephone is located.
- ✓ Know where refuge can be sought.
- ✓ Make a list of important and emergency numbers.
- ✓ Save money for bus or taxi fare.
- ✓ Have an extra set of keys to home and car.
- ✓ Pack an emergency bag - take enough clothes, including school uniforms and children's favourite possessions.
- ✓ Consider when it is best to leave.
- ✓ Discuss it with the children. It is important to try to leave with all the children.
- ✓ Keep important documents together e.g. benefit books, medical cards, certificates, bank books, legal orders etc.
- ✓ Keep a note of the family's essential medicines.
- ✓ Leave when partner is not around.

Full contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

This leaflet is available in Cantonese, Urdu, Hindi and Arabic

Tel: 028 90331818 24 hour domestic violence helpline



Local Women's Aid Groups

Belfast: 028 90666049
 Ballymena/Antrim : 028 25639301
 Coleraine: 028 70356573
 Cookstown & Dungannon: 028 86769300
 Craigavon & Banbridge: 028 38343256
 Fermanagh: 028 66328898
 Foyle: 028 71344499
 Lisburn: 028 92668142
 Newry: 028 30250765
 North Down & Ards: 028 91273196
 Omagh: 028 82245998

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation.

**129 University Street
 Belfast
 BT7 1HP**

Tel: 028 90249041

Fax: 028 90239296

**24 hour domestic violence helpline:
 028 90331818**

Email: niwaf@dnet.co.uk

Website: www.niwaf.org

English

Domestic Violence Help From Women's Aid



NORTHERN IRELAND
**Women's
 AID**
 FEDERATION



What is domestic violence?



Domestic violence is the physical, emotional, sexual, financial or mental abuse of one person by another, with whom they have or have had an intimate relationship.

It can happen to any woman, regardless of her age, social class, race, disability or lifestyle.

An abusive relationship is often based on fear.

Acknowledging that you are in an abusive relationship is an important step in preventing and stopping the violence.

What can I do if I'm in an abusive relationship?

The **first step** is to talk to someone. Hopefully, this will help you to acknowledge that it is happening to you and to stop playing down the abuse you are experiencing. Women's Aid is here to help you come to terms with the violence.

The **second step** is to recognise that you are not to blame. No-one deserves to be assaulted, humiliated or abused, least of all by their partner in what should be a caring relationship. Women often blame themselves because they have consistently been told it is their fault.

The **third step** is to begin seeking the help and support that is available. This step includes gaining emotional support and practical help. You can start this process by talking to a friend that you trust, calling the Women's Aid Helpline, or contacting your local Women's Aid group. You may want to start thinking about moving to somewhere safe, away from your abuser, or taking legal action that will protect you and help prevent the violence against you.

The prospect of leaving an abusive relationship can be as frightening as the prospect of staying. It takes courage for a woman to reach out and seek help and this process can be painful and distressing.

Where can I get help if I am in an abusive relationship?

If you, or someone you know is experiencing, or has experienced domestic violence the Women's Aid 24 hour Helpline (028 90331818) can give you support, help and information. You do not have to be in an emergency situation to contact the Women's Aid Helpline. If you do not speak fluent English you could get a friend to telephone on your behalf. Your own community group e.g the Chinese Welfare Association, Indian Community Centre or the Belfast Islamic Centre may also be able to provide a translator.

There are also local Women's Aid refuges throughout Northern Ireland that can offer you emergency accommodation. If you decide to go to a refuge, you will be helped to devise a safety plan for leaving (see model plan on next page).

Many local Women's Aid groups also run advice centres, drop in centres or outreach services to more isolated areas. You can call in to see someone or telephone for advice and support, without having to stay in a refuge. Details of your nearest group are on the back of this leaflet.

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation (NIWAF) is a voluntary organisation that exists to challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence. We seek through our work to promote healthy and non-abusive relationships. Violence must be seen by everyone, both male and female, as unacceptable and unnecessary. By raising awareness of domestic violence and the effects it can have on individuals, it is possible to enable people to gain a greater understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship and the benefits gained from being involved in such a relationship.