24 HOUR

# Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

Open to ***all women and men*** affected by domestic & sexual violence

**0808 802 1414**

text **support** to **07797 805 839**

24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

Freephone from all landlines and mobiles

Translation service available

Our team of specially trained workers understand the devastating impact domestic or sexual violence can have on your life. We realise it can be hard to pick up the phone for the first time.

Our Helpline workers are experienced in supporting you to talk when you are ready. We understand you may not know what to say or how to start. Our workers will put you at ease.

The Helpline can refer women and their children directly to the safe network of refuges and outreach support services provided by local Women's Aid groups.



We can also arrange safe temporary accommodation for men and their children and refer women and men to a range of other agencies for support.

If you have been sexually assaulted the Helpline can arrange immediate practical help, including direct referral to The Rowan, the sexual assault referral centre.

For further information on domestic and sexual violence visit www.womensaidni.org

Confidential, caring service
24/7, 365 days a year

The Helpline also welcome calls from concerned family members, friends and colleagues, youth workers, teachers, professionals, community groups and clergy.

**MANAGED BY WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION NORTHERN IRELAND**



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## Contact the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline to discuss any concerns you have about domestic or sexual violence, now or in the past.

The Helpline provides information, emotional support, and the opportunity to talk over all your concerns, including housing and legal options. You are guaranteed a confidential and caring response.

*Most people are abused by someone they know. If you are being abused, it is never your fault.*

## Who is abused?

Any woman, man, child or young person can be abused regardless of age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality or background. The Helpline welcomes calls from everyone.



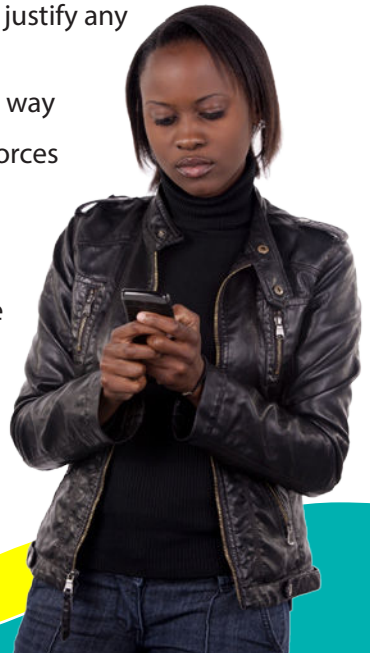
Recognising what is happening to you, or has happened in the past, is the first step in escaping the pain and misery of domestic and sexual violence.

## Domestic violence

Domestic violence can be physical, emotional, financial, or psychological. Sexual abuse is often a part of domestic violence.

You are being abused if your partner/ex-partner/ boyfriend/girlfriend/family member does any of the following:

- Constantly criticises your appearance, undermines your decisions and opinions
- Blames you for everything that goes wrong
- Is jealous and possessive and continually accuses you of being unfaithful
- Constantly wants you to justify what you spend money on
- Threatens to take custody of your children or prevent you from seeing them
- Tries to isolate you from your friends and family and makes you justify any absence
- Physically hurts you in any way
- Demands sex, coerces or forces you into unwanted sexual activities
- Intimidates and threatens to harm you or those close to you or threatens you with weapons
- Injures or hurts your pet



## Sexual violence

Sexual violence/abuse refers to any sexual acts that a person does not consent to take part in. It may not always be physically violent.

Sexual violence/abuse can include:

- Rape
- Unwanted touching or kissing
- Coerced or forced sexual activities, including activities that may involve violence and pain
- Forcing someone to watch or participate in pornography
- Posting sexual images of someone on the internet without their consent
- Stalking
- Using substances such as drugs or alcohol (or spiking drinks) to make someone vulnerable in order to have sex with them
- 'Grooming' a child or vulnerable person to engage in sexual activities of any kind

## Who sexually abuses?

Most people are abused by someone they know and trust, a partner or ex-partner, relatives, babysitters, 'friends of the family', people in positions of authority, neighbours and sometimes strangers. Abusers are often good at convincing those they have abused that it was their fault and they agreed to it.