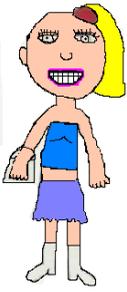


HULL WOMEN'S AID



CHILDREN'S SERVICES



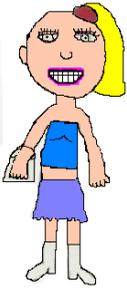
What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse includes any abusive behaviour repeatedly used by one person to control and/or dominate another person with whom they have or have had an intimate relationship.



It also includes the exertion of control and/or domination of one family member over another.

Domestic abuse can be physical, emotional, mental, sexual, or financial. It might be a combination of one, some, or all of these elements.



There is no excuse for it. It is not caused by anger, depression, unemployment, alcohol or drug use. It is caused by one person's desire, usually male, to have power and control over another, usually female.

What are the signs of domestic violence?

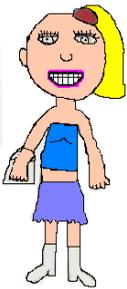


Destructive criticism and verbal abuse:

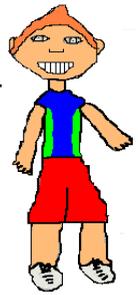
shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening.

Pressure tactics:

sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, commit suicide, take the children away, report the woman to welfare agencies unless she complies with his demands regarding bringing up the children, lying to her friends and family about her, telling her that she has no choice in any decisions.



Disrespect: persistently putting the woman down in front of other people, not listening or responding when she talks, interrupting her telephone calls, taking money from her purse without asking, refusing to help with childcare or housework.

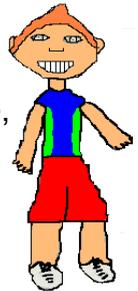


Breaking trust: lying to the woman, withholding information from her, being jealous, having other relationships, breaking promises and shared agreements.



Isolation: monitoring or blocking her telephone calls, telling her where she can and cannot go, preventing her from seeing friends and relatives.

Harassment: following the woman, checking up on her, opening her mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned her, embarrassing her in public.



Threats: making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting her down, destroying the woman's possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm her and the children.

Sexual violence: using force, threats or intimidation to make the woman perform sexual acts, having sex with her when she doesn't want to have sex, any degrading treatment based on her sexual orientation.



Physical violence: punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling.

Fact: In 90% of cases of domestic abuse children are in the same room or the next room. (Hughes 1998)





How does it affect children?

Domestic abuse affects children too, and the secret of domestic abuse is a very heavy burden for any child to bear.



Even when it appears that children aren't being directly abused themselves, research shows that they are likely to be aware of what is happening.

Children living with violence will actively interpret the situation, try to predict what will happen and assess their roles in causing violence. They won't worry about consequences, engage in problem solving, and take measures to protect themselves, siblings and their mother, both physically and emotionally.



A third of children try and intervene during attacks on their mother, and children sometimes feel guilty if they don't come to their parents aid. Guilt is often accompanied by self blame and feelings that they may have caused a parent to be abusive.



It is estimated that between one third and two thirds of children in homes where the mother is being abused are also at risk of being abused themselves.

A significant proportion of children grow up in homes where abuse occurs are detrimentally affected. The emotional impact of abuse on children is pervasive and long lasting. Many children however show remarkable resilience and once removed from the abuse move on to build new relationships and live full and happy lives.



Children can experience both short term cognitive, behavioural and emotional effects as a result of witnessing domestic abuse.

Each child will respond differently to trauma and some may be resilient and not exhibit any negative effects.



Effects domestic violence has upon children:

- They may become anxious or depressed
- They may have difficulty sleeping
- They may have nightmares or flashbacks
- They can be easily startled
- They may complain of physical symptoms such as tummy aches
- They may start to wet their bed
- They may have temper tantrums
- They may behave as though they are much younger than they are
- They may have problems with school
- They may become aggressive or they may internalise their distress and withdraw from other people
- They may have a lowered sense of self-worth
- Older children may begin to play truant or start to use alcohol or drugs
- They may begin to self-harm by taking overdoses or cutting themselves
- They may have an eating disorder



Fact: The NCH study found 75% of mothers said their children had witnessed domestic abuse, 33% had seen their mothers beaten up, 10% had witnessed sexual violence (NCH, 1994).



About Hull Women's Aid

Hull Women's Aid has been established for 35 years. HWA is a member of the Women's Aid Federation of England, (a national organisation that co-ordinates the work of individual groups and regions to provide temporary refuge and support to victims and survivors of domestic violence).

HWA is the sole provider of safe and secure refuge accommodation on the north bank of the Humber for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

HWA supports women and children who are experiencing/fleeing domestic violence/abuse, by providing temporary accommodation, telephone and direct advice and individual support to any woman who requests it. We work with partner organisations to improve the quality of life for women and children who are living with/fleeing domestic violence. We also provide a Floating Support Service which offers a tenancy support service to vulnerable women and children, who have experienced domestic violence to improve their ability to live independently and free from abuse in their own tenancies.

We are committed to ensuring that current and potential service users, will not be discriminated against on the grounds of social circumstances or background, gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, disability, sexually, age or religion.

About HWA Children's Services

Hull Women's Aid Children Services offers outreach support for young people aged 0-19 years. They will talk to the young person on a one to one/group work basis about domestic violence, how it has affected them and their family, about any worries that they may have and give advice and support on how to reduce risks.

They will also work directly with a child's mother/carer to help rebuild the relationship between mother/carer and child if this has been damaged by the perpetrators abuse.

Our children's workers aim to:

- Develop and provide a range of appropriate activities to meet the physical, emotional and development needs of children and young people residing in the refuge or in the community who have experienced/living with domestic abuse.
- Listen and respond to the views of children and young people through consultation and participation.
- Enable children/ young people in refuges or in the community to experience living and playing in a supportive environment free from violence or any form of discrimination.
- Help children and young people come to terms with and recover from their experiences of domestic violence.
- Enable children to overcome practical or emotional difficulties by providing advocacy
- Ensure that child protection issues are dealt with appropriately within a multi-agency partnership.

The easier it becomes for children to talk about problems the more supported and accepted they will feel socially.

Fact: 40% - 60% of cases of domestic violence/ abuse child abuse is also occurring (Stark & Flitcraft)





Hull
City Council

Contact us...

**If you are wanting support
for a young person affected
by domestic violence:**

- Please talk to the young person/parent about the Service before contacting us, and check that they want a service from Women's Aid.
- Make sure they think that domestic violence is an issue for them.

Hull Women's Aid Children's Services : 01482 475112
Fax line: 01482 475113

Hull Women's Aid: 01482 474133
Fax line: 01482 446920

Useful websites:

www.thehideout.org.uk
www.womensaid.org.uk



Hull Women's Aid

www.hullwomensaid.org