

Domestic Violence

A resource
for trans people

Contents

Acknowledgements	<i>i</i>
‘They love me, they love me not...’	1
Why it can be hard to talk about domestic abuse	4
Am I being abused?	6
Abuse from a former partner or family members	10
Using someone’s gender identity to abuse	13
Myths about domestic abuse that can make it difficult to get help	16
About abusive relationships	18
Domestic abuse affecting trans people from diverse communities	26
Trans young people	28
Trans parents and children	31
Chronic illnesses, disability and domestic abuse	34
Ending the abuse	36
What you can do to get help	40
Computer safety warning	42
About abusers	44
For people using violence and abuse	46
Useful contacts	49



Acknowledgements

This resource has been written principally to assist trans¹ people who experience domestic abuse.

While it may also be of use to family and friends, as well as service providers, we have assumed a certain level of knowledge about the trans community. We hope it will be the first of a range of resources about domestic abuse as it affects trans people in London.

While this is a new resource, we are indebted to the work of Barking and Dagenham PCT who originally developed domestic abuse resources for lesbian, gay and bisexual men and women upon which we have drawn. This resource has been written and produced by two organisations:

The Greater London Domestic Violence Project (www.gldvp.org.uk) is an independent charity that works to end violence by inspiring and influencing direct service providers, and through promoting partnerships and innovation.

As part of our work, we provide technical support to the LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum with whom we have collaborated with to produce this leaflet.

The Forum is a network of practitioners, activists and researchers working around the issue of LGBT domestic abuse.

Thanks are particularly due to James Rowlands without whom this leaflet would not have been possible as well as Maria Sookias, Jay Stewart, Denise Anderson, Joe, Jamey Fisher and Janice Ristock for their contributions.

NHS Barking and Dagenham (www.bdpct.nhs.uk) serves the population of Barking and Dagenham, an outer London borough with a population of around 170,000 people.

Barking and Dagenham was a demonstration site for domestic violence for the NHS in London in 2008, and launched the regional resource site www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk to help improve the support provided by healthcare professionals to individuals experiencing and affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Most importantly of all, we want to acknowledge and express our gratitude to those who have contributed from their personal experience to help make this a useful resource.

¹ 'Trans' is used in this resource as an umbrella term. It includes cross-dressers, transgender and transsexual people as well as anyone else who is in any way gender variant, including a desire to live outside male/female binaries. This definition, as well as a more extensive description of the meaning of 'sex' and 'gender', is taken from *A Guide for Young Trans People in the UK* published by the Department of Health in 2007 available at: www.pfc.org.uk/files/281091_YP_trans.pdf



They love me, they love me not...

People experience domestic abuse regardless of age, carer responsibility, class, disability, gender identity, sex, sexuality, immigration status, race and religion.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour characterised by the exercise of control by one person over another within the context of an intimate or family relationship.

Trans people can experience domestic abuse from a same or opposite sex partner, and can do so regardless of the gender identity of either person.

In some cases, abusers will use the process of 'coming out' or transition as an additional form of control. This can be particularly difficult where children are involved.

Trans people can also experience abuse from family members. If someone experiences abuse from their family, this may occur after they have come out, during transition or when they enter into a relationship where either or both partners are trans.

Most people find domestic abuse difficult to identify and this is especially true if you are the one it is happening to. It can be very tempting to want to believe it was a 'one-off', or that it's just a bad patch, or is related to external events and factors.

People sometimes misunderstand domestic abuse and think it is only physical violence when actually it usually consists of emotional, financial and/or sexual abuse as well.

Additionally, trans people often face heightened levels of abuse and violence outside their homes because of transphobia². Whilst it is devastating for anyone who faces abuse from a loved one, for trans people it can be especially traumatic because of a lack of safety elsewhere in their lives and the discrimination they may face if they seek help.

Whatever your circumstances, if you are experiencing abuse, it is important to remember that:

- You are not alone
- You do not have to live in fear
- Help is available
- You do not 'deserve' to be abused
- Suicide or self harm is not the answer
- There is life after abuse

² *Transphobia is a term used to describe an irrational feeling of fear or contempt towards transgender women and men, and could also describe discriminatory behaviours towards transgender people.*

Why it can be hard to talk about domestic abuse

It can be hard to name behaviours as abuse when they are happening in a trans person's relationship. Talking about domestic abuse in either intimate or family relationships is never easy. Often this is because people don't talk about violence and abuse.

With abuse involving trans people there is so little information available that the idea of a current or former partner, or a family member being the 'abuser' can be difficult to accept.

Regardless of the relationship, an abuser will often manipulate their victim so that they feel they are to blame for the abuse. They may use someone's gender identity against them. For example, an abusive partner may say, "This is how it is when you're a trans person". Other times, they may say that abuse can't happen in a relationship involving trans people.

If an abuser is a former partner or family member, they may say that someone deserves the abuse, for example, because they are transitioning.

Abusers often promise to change their behaviour (see 'About Abusers'). The hope for that positive change can keep a victim from identifying the pattern of abuse in the relationship. Abusers may also try to make their victim think they are responsible for any abusive behaviour (see 'About Abusive Relationships' later in this booklet).

For example, someone could be showing you this information to try and prove to you that you are an abuser. There is no checklist that can determine whether someone is an abuser; one needs to consider the entire relationship and individual incidents in context.

It is also important to recognise that in some relationships a trans person may be the abuser. There is more information later in this booklet for people who use violence and abuse (see 'For People using Violence and Abuse').

If you are unsure, talk it over with someone you trust like a family member or friend. You could also contact various helplines or organisations (there is a 'contacts' section listing domestic violence and trans organisations at the end of this booklet).

If you are in immediate danger, call **999**.



Am I being abused?

How can you determine whether you're being abused? Every relationship is different and many relationships have rough patches with arguments and other turmoil.

A relationship becomes abusive when there is a pattern of behaviour that means one person is exerting power and control over another.

Abuse in an intimate relationship can take many forms. This is true regardless of the gender identity or sexual orientation of either the abuser or victim, whether someone is a current or former partner or whether they are a family member. Abuse can include physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse.

While everyone's experience is unique, examples of abusive behaviour can include being in a former or current relationship with or related to someone who:

- Keeps you from spending time with friends or family members.
- Makes you account for your time when apart from them.
- Is excessively jealous and possessive.
- Makes unreasonable demands for your attention.
- Blames you for all the arguments or problems in the relationship.
- Wants to make all the decisions.
- Invades your privacy – opening and reading mail, e-mail or going through personal belongings.
- Gets angry for no apparent reason.
- Seems like two different people – one is charming and loving, the other is mean and hurtful.
- Lies in order to confuse you.
- Criticises, ridicules, humiliates or belittles you.
- Controls your finances or feels entitled to your financial support.
- Damages your property.
- Harasses you at work or school.
- Threatens to out you at work, to your family or to others.
- Criticises your body and appearance.
- Prevents you from practicing safer sex.
- Forces or coerces you to have sex or hurts you during sex.

- Becomes angry if you don't go along with their sexual demands.
- Blames their behaviour on alcohol, drugs or their own history of abuse.
- Pressures you to use alcohol or other drugs.
- Threatens you with physical harm or makes you feel afraid.
- Pushes, shoves, grabs, punches, hits or strikes you with hands or fists.
- Threatens or assaults you with weapons, such as household objects or knives.
- Manipulates you with the constant threat of mood changes and impending rage.
- Has you “walking on egg shells” or living with constant stress, anxiety and fear.
- Although not relevant for all trans people, domestic abuse can often start or become worse during pregnancy.

An abuser can also use someone's gender identity to abuse and some examples of this are listed on pages 13–15.

Abuse from a former partner or family members

If you are experiencing abuse from a former partner or family member, the types of abusive behaviour may include those listed on the previous page but the context will change.

For example, you are less likely to be spending as much time with a former partner but the intention remains the same - to exert power and control.

Abusive behaviour in this situation may be particularly focused around stalking and harassment; attempts to make you behave in a certain way; to stop you accessing trans spaces, or efforts to stop you seeing a current partner.

Threats or actual violence, including sexual violence, may also be something that a former partner uses, with these potentially directed towards you or your current partner.



Using someone's gender identity to abuse

While much of the abuse described in this booklet is similar for anybody who experiences domestic abuse, trans people can also experience unique forms of abuse when their gender identity is used to abuse.

An abuser can use the fact that their victim is a trans person. This can include:

- Threats to 'out' i.e. to disclose your gender identity without consent. For example to an employer, family or community.
- If you are also identified as LGB, an abuser could also threaten to disclose your sexual orientation without your consent.
- Criticising you for not being a 'real woman / man', for example if you have only recently come out or have not undergone GRS.



- Trying to convince you that you deserved abuse, or that you are the real abuser because of how hormones are influencing your behaviour.
- Suggesting that agencies such as the police or housing services will not help you or may subject you to further abuse because they are transphobic (this may be especially effective if you have had a bad experience with agencies in the past).
- Physically assaulting surgically or medically altered body parts.
- Withholding money for transition (or other) health care, clothing, or withholding medication or hormones.
- Coercing the victim to get medical or surgical treatment to change their body back to what the abuser wants it to be.
- Exploiting internalised transphobia to heighten any sense of fear or shame related to your gender identity in order to control you.
- Targeting sexual or emotional abuse toward parts of the body that you may be ashamed of or detached from.
- Ridiculing your gender identity by criticising your appearance, dress, voice quality, grooming etc.
- Criticising your sexual performance affected by hormones.
- Forcing you to expose scars.
- Refusing to use your preferred pronoun or name.
- Refusing to legitimise the relationship by introducing you to family and friends.
- Exploiting any difficulties you may be having in finding employment.
- Forcing the victim into marriage.
- Threats to withdraw child contact or remove children.
- Destroying medication.
- Destroying clothes.

A useful way of visualising the links between different types of abuse, including abuse specific to someone's gender identity, is to use a 'Power and Control Wheel'. Often, one or more violent incidents are accompanied by an array of other types of abuse.

One version of a Power and Control Wheel at www.tcfv.org/pdf/Updated_wheels/LGBT.pdf has been developed specifically for LGBT communities.

Myths about domestic abuse that can make it difficult to get help

There are a number of myths about domestic abuse that can prevent people getting help. You might be worried that services who might otherwise be able to help will believe these myths; this can be a barrier to you accessing support.

Sometimes an abuser will intentionally use these myths to try and stop you reporting your experiences (e.g. to the Police).

- A belief that abuse towards a trans person is understandable / acceptable so that you are at least partly responsible for the abuse.
- If abuse occurs, you and the abuser will ‘play-out’ gender normative roles for example, the abuser will be ‘butch’ while the non-abusive partner will be more feminine or one partner will be male or female.
- That no one will help you if you are trans and experiencing domestic abuse.

- That you are more able to leave an abusive relationship if you are a trans person (for example, by suggesting that a relationship involving a trans person is not ‘real’ or ‘as significant’ as for a non-trans person or because people do not think trans people have children or caring responsibilities).
- That domestic abuse could not happen to you because you are a trans person.

All these myths are based on misconceptions. If you are experiencing domestic abuse it is because one person (your former or current partner, or a family member) is attempting to exert power and control over you.

It is important to remember that nobody should have to live with violence or the fear of abuse.

About abusive relationships

An abuser has two aims: one, to keep you in a relationship with them and two, to control your behaviour so it meets their needs. Abusers can be very devious in creating tactics to meet these aims, but there are some common ones:

It's more than physical

Most people think of abuse as physical but there are other types of abuse including emotional, financial and sexual abuse. It is important to remember that people still experience domestic abuse even if they never experience physical violence (see pages 8 and 9 for a description of different types of abuse). For example, verbal or emotional abuse is almost always used in abusive relationships, even if physical abuse is not. Abusers can be extremely creative in the types of abuse that they use.

It's normal

Abusers will try to convince their victim that abusive behaviour is 'normal' or 'normal in a relationship involving a trans person'. This tactic is especially effective with people who have not been in a relationship with a trans person before, people who have newly identified as trans or with people who do not have easy access to community resources. Abuse is not normal in any relationship and has no part in a healthy relationship.





You're the abuser, I'm the victim

You may have defended yourself against abuse, perhaps even using physical force. An abuser may assert that this self-defence is abuse and you are the abuser. Or the abuser may claim that you are 'mutually abusive'. A common characteristic of abusers is the lack of responsibility they take for their own behaviour.

They may accuse you of being the 'abuser', while genuinely believing that they are the 'victim'. They may use this claim to manipulate friends and service providers. An abuser, for example, may seek an injunction against you claiming you are the abuser. For someone who is transitioning, an abuser may use this to claim they are the victim.

You're to blame

Another form of abuse is to blame you for 'causing' the abuse to happen. The abuser will claim that they would not have been abusive if you did X or didn't do Y. Again, the abuser is trying to shift the responsibility. They may also try and make you feel responsible for the relationship as a whole. The reality is that someone who is abusive must choose to stop using these tactics.

If the abuser is a former partner or family member, they may well use these tactics or involve others to try and control you. They may say that you are not 'really' trans, or that being trans, or being in a relationship with a trans person is wrong or immoral. As with other so-called excuses, these are only ways to try to justify abusive behaviour.

It's the stress, drugs...

Abusers sometimes claim that some circumstances force them to abuse and if only the circumstance were to change, they would stop. They blame their abusive behaviour on circumstances such as stress, lack of a job or the use of drugs and alcohol.

Most abusers will deny, minimise ('it was only a...' / 'it was just a...') or blame you for the abuse. They may also blame their abusive behaviour on your substance use. These are only excuses to help the abuser maintain control. Nothing justifies abuse.

Promises, promises

Abusers commonly promise to change – to stop abusing, to stop using drugs or alcohol, etc. These promises often follow an abusive incident. The goal of these promises is to win you back and to hold you in the relationship.

Abusers may believe their own promises, but the goals of the promises are not to reform their behaviour but to keep you. Once you indicate that you are staying in the relationship, the promise is forgotten. Remember words are cheap, it is important to focus on what someone does rather than what they say.

No legal protection

Abusers may attempt to convince you that no one will help you because you are not entitled to legal protection from abuse. This is not true; the UK Government defines domestic abuse as:

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.'

A range of legal options are available, including both civil and criminal courts. For more information on legal issues, contact a solicitor or your local Citizen's Advice Bureau.

For information on legal issues for trans people (for example, around gender recognition) contact Press for Change, The Gender Trust or one of the trans organisations listed in the Contacts section.

No help for trans people

There is help available. Not only does the definition of domestic abuse recognise the needs of trans people, there are specific services such as Broken Rainbow which support trans and LGB people who are in abusive relationships.

Most domestic abuse services are available regardless of sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. It is generally only refuges that are women only. These may be restricted to trans women who are under a clinician or who have a gender recognition certificate, but there are other housing options available.

Go to www.gldvp.org.uk and follow the 'LGBT Domestic Abuse' link using the navigation page on the left hand-side³ for more detailed information about housing options, including a publication by Stonewall Housing 'Housing Options for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People Experiencing Domestic Abuse'.

There are also services for people who experience domestic abuse in every borough in London. Go to www.gldvp.org.uk and follow the 'services by borough' link using the navigation page on the left hand-side⁴.

³ The complete link for housing options is: tiny.cc/DfKHT

⁴ The complete link for domestic violence services in London is: tinyurl.com/2or36y



Domestic abuse affecting trans people from diverse communities

BLACK, ASIAN, MINORITY ETHNIC AND REFUGEE (BAMER) TRANS PEOPLE

Trans people often find themselves at the “bottom of the barrel” compared to those who encounter other forms of oppression. A trans person who is also BAMER and / or LGB will often find that racism and homo/biphobia are taken much more seriously as forms of oppression than the transphobia they encounter.

Within BAMER communities, as elsewhere, trans people may be subject to homo/biphobic and transphobic responses or abuse.

BAMER trans people may put a high value on having partners of their own ethnicity and find it hard to let go of them if they are abusive. The contacts section at the end of this booklet includes links to BAMER organisations.

Trans people can also experience a particular kind of domestic abuse; forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has produced a ‘Guide to Forced Marriage for LGBT people’ and is written for LGBT people who are being forced into marriage either in the UK or abroad.

The FMU is able to help and advise people who are being forced into marriage.

Go to:

www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/forced-marriage-lgbt or the contacts section at the end of this booklet.

If you are a trans person with insecure immigration status experiencing domestic violence, there are provisions within UK law to afford you some protection and assistance. This is a very complicated area of law and you should seek specialist advice (see contacts section).

Regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, young people can often be expected, or feel forced to, conform to stereotypical gender roles. This can have a direct impact on a young person's self esteem.

Exploring a trans identity as a young person can mean someone might be experiencing a lot of pressure and negative reactions, which can decrease the likelihood of finding appropriate, and useful help and advice. This may increase trans young people's isolation and their vulnerability to violence and abuse.

A trans young person who is experiencing domestic abuse may not want to lose an abusive partner, especially if it is their first relationship with someone who has accepted their gender identity and/or supported them through transition.

Alternatively, you could experience domestic abuse from family members. In either situation, you may feel less safe at home or school.

If you are a young trans person (under 18) who is living with your parents/carers and experiencing domestic abuse from your family, most agencies will classify your experience as child abuse rather than domestic abuse. Help is available from social services/Childline and under the Children Act (1989), any decisions made must be in your 'best interests'.

The contacts section at the end of this booklet includes links to organisations that support trans young people. There is also a booklet ('A Guide for Young Trans People in the UK') produced by the Department of Health and several other trans organisations that has information and advice for young trans people⁵.

⁵ Department of Health (2007) *A Guide for Young Trans People in the UK*
www.pfc.org.uk/files/281091_YP_trans.pdf

Trans parents and children



Some trans people have children. Some may have children from a previous relationship, some may have children with a partner, or some may have adopted children.

Sometimes former or current partners and family members, including adult children, can be abusive towards a trans person and their children.

Trans parents /carers can experience judgmental attitudes about their parental choices and abilities. This can be used against trans parents/carers as part of the abusive pattern of behaviour from former or current partners and/or extended families.

Parents / carers who experience domestic abuse can face:

- Threats of isolating children from extended family or community.
- Their children being encouraged to continue verbally/physically abusing their parent/carers in their absence.
- False accusations of child neglect/ abuse.

- Fear of contact being stopped with children using the court process.
- Fear of having children taken away by local authorities.
- Accusations of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual harm to their children.
- Threats of child abduction.
- Threats of physical harm to new partners who share parental responsibility.
- Emotional abuse when an abusive partner suggests that because someone is a carer or step/adoptive partner they are not the ‘real’ parent.

All these activities may be used as methods of controlling trans people to remain in contact with abusers. The police, and civil and criminal courts have wide ranging powers to protect children from abuse.

Children living in households where domestic violence is happening are now identified as “at risk” under the Adoption and Children Act 2002. From 31 January 2005, Section 120 of this Act extended the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others.

This would include witnessing domestic abuse.

For information on legal issues relating to trans people contact Press for Change, The Gender Trust or one of the trans organisations listed in the Contacts section.

More general information on parenting and domestic abuse is available from Rights of Women (www.rightsofwomen.org.uk) or Women’s Aid (www.womensaid.org.uk) who both publish information about parenting and domestic abuse.

There are many ways of protecting your children from witnessing and experiencing abuse. In all instances where children are involved speak to a solicitor who specialises in family law and who is trans friendly.

Chronic illnesses, disability and domestic abuse

Chronic illnesses (e.g. Alzheimer's, Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Multiple Sclerosis, etc) can cause tension, stress and a range of other problems within a relationship but they do not cause domestic abuse.

Current or former intimate partners (or family members) choose the weapons of abuse and control they use, and their, or their partners' health can be used as one of these weapons.

Domestic abuse can begin at or around the time that an illness or disability is diagnosed. In some cases the abuser is the one with the illness or disability, while in others it is the person without the illness that is abusive.

Within an abusive relationship, if either or both of the partners (or a family member) have a chronic illness, many types of abusive or controlling behaviour may exist (for examples of abusive behaviour see pages 8 and 9). However there are a number of forms of domestic abuse that are specific to relationships where either or both partners have a chronic illness.

If the abusive partner does not have a chronic illness they may:

- Threaten to, or actually, disclose your health status to friends, family or colleagues.
- Withhold medication, treatments or access to other medical services.
- Threaten to cut off support or to leave.
- Verbally abuse you by saying you are 'diseased, sick, unclean'; or other inappropriate comments about your illness, or otherwise undermine your confidence.

If the abusive partner does have a chronic illness (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis) they may:

- Use guilt or other psychological abuse to manipulate you.
- Refuse to take medication or seek medical services.
- Use their illness to manipulate services, e.g. saying 'I'm weak and sick, how could I control him / her?'
- Where an abuser partner has an illness that is transmittable (e.g. a sexually transmitted infection) they may threaten to, or actually, infect you to prevent you leaving.

As well as the specialist domestic abuse services listed in this resource, there is information on a number of health related organisations in the contacts section at the end of this booklet.

Ending the abuse

Experience has shown that once abuse begins it is very likely to continue and become more frequent and severe over time. This applies to both current and former partners as well as family members. Research suggests that abusers are also very unlikely to end the relationship.

Where violence and abuse is coming from a former partner or from family members, this is also likely to become worse over time. Abusers rarely end the relationship because in most cases they psychologically need the partner more than the partner needs them.

They can be quite successful at hiding their dependency on you and their fear of losing you, and they often work to convince you that you would be lost without them.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, making a decision about the relationship (particularly whether to stay or leave) can be really difficult, involving both emotional and practical considerations. If a former partner or family members is the abuser, you may also fear losing family or friends if you leave.





Often, leaving an abusive partner only signifies the end of the relationship - not the end of the violence or abuse.

Whether you stay or leave, it is wise to have a safety or crisis plan⁶ to maximise your safety. If you are experiencing any form of domestic abuse you might consider making a crisis plan. A crisis plan can set out what you could do under certain circumstances to help reduce the risk of emotional or physical injury to yourself (and your children).

Your crisis plan can include strategies for reducing risk to yourself from your abuser, or it may outline how you could get away. You can make a crisis plan on your own or speak with a trusted friend or a domestic abuse worker [contact details are available at the end of this leaflet].

If you prefer, suggestions of things you could include can be found on several of the websites of specialist domestic violence agencies.

⁶ An example of a Safety Plan can be found in the *Survivors Handbook* produced by Women's Aid. For more information go to www.womensaid.org.uk/

What you can do to get help

Reach out for help! Support is available.

If your abuser has assaulted you, or you are afraid for your own or for others' safety you can call the police. The police have the power to provide you with immediate protection at any time of the day or night.

Call **999**. The Police have guidelines that instruct them to respond to domestic abuse in a particular way.

The Police should: respond promptly; ensure your safety; stop the violence; thoroughly investigate what has happened; speak to you and your partner separately; get a statement from you and any witnesses; collect evidence; take photos of any injuries and the scene; and arrest the violent person if they have committed a criminal offence.

Trans people often do not reach out for help because they believe there is no help out there for them. Services specifically for trans people are limited but they do exist. Alternatively, trans people may well know that there are domestic abuse services available but be fearful that these will either be transphobic, or will not understand any specific needs they may have.

Domestic abuse services should offer support to trans people regardless of the gender of your abuser or your gender identity. There are also trans-friendly services of all types such as mental and physical health care providers, counsellors, social service agencies and support groups. The contact details for a range of organisations are included in the contacts section at the end of this booklet.

Computer safety warning

For your own safety – when you search for information or communicate about partner abuse - do not use any computer to which your abuser has access.

Your Internet, e-mail and document use activities leave traces on your computer that can be found by your abuser. Ideally, use a computer to which the abuser does not have access, for example at work, in a library, or a friend's or family member's computer.

If you do use your own computer, there are some basic steps that can provide some measure of protection and remove most traces of your computer activities. Guidance on how to clear your computer of information can regularly change.

For advice on how to clear a computer of cookies, temporary website files, browser and search engine history go to the Women's Aid website at www.womensaid.org.uk and click on the 'cover your tracks online' tab in the top right-hand corner⁷.

⁷ The complete link for the advice on keeping yourself safe on the Women's Aid website is www.womensaid.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001000800010001



About abusers

The most frequently reported reason why people stay in abusive relationships is 'hope for change', believing the abuser's promises to get help or to change.

If you are experiencing abuse from a former partner, you may feel an obligation not to report your experiences because of children, for fear of people finding out about your new relationship or because you still have feelings for a former partner. You may also fear that you will not be believed or will be blamed for the abuse.

This may be particularly important if an abuser, particularly a former partner, blames their abusive behaviour on your new gender identity.

Whatever an abuser says, experience shows that once a person begins to abuse, the problem is likely to get worse. Review the examples of abusive tactics to get a perspective on your own experience in the section 'am I being abused?'.
[View this section in the full leaflet](#)

Abusers may feel guilty and apologetic after an abusive incident and promise themselves and you that they will change. Unfortunately, even with the best intentions, most abusers do not stop abusing without support.

Respect is a national organisation working with men who are using violence in their relationships. The Respect phone line, however, offers information and advice to both male and female domestic violence perpetrators, their partners, friends and family, and to frontline workers who come into contact with perpetrators in their work.

For details, see the contacts section at the end of this leaflet.

For people using violence and abuse

This resource has been written for trans people experiencing domestic abuse and does not include comprehensive information for abusers.

If you are an abuser then you need to know that your behaviour is unacceptable and possibly also criminal.

If you want to seek help, call the Respect phoneline for abusers on 0845 122 8609 or visit www.respectphoneline.org.uk/pages/help-and-advice.html





Useful contacts

TRANS ORGANISATIONS IN THE UK

a:gender

020 7035 4253 or www.agender.org.uk

A:gender is the support network for staff in government departments/agencies who have changed or need to change permanently their perceived gender, or who identify as intersex.

Beaumont Society

www.beaumontsociety.org.uk/

The Beaumont Society is a support group for transsexuals, those who crossdress, transvestites, and their families, and friends and colleagues.

The FTM Network

www.ftm.org.uk

The FTM Network is an informal and Ad Hoc self-help group open to all female to male transgender and transsexual people, or those exploring this aspect of their gender. The FTM network has a helpline on (0)161 432 1915, which operates on Wednesday evening between 8pm and 10.30pm, UK time.

Gender Identity Research & Education Society**(GIRES)** 01372 801554 or www.gires.org.uk

Provides information and training based on research into atypical gender identity development.

Gendered Intelligencewww.genderedintelligence.co.uk/

Gendered Intelligence has a background in teaching in schools, colleges and Universities, as well as working with young people in non-statutory settings. They are also active members of their community engaging in trans activism, academia and the arts.

The Gendys Networkwww.gender.org.uk/gendys

GENDYS is a UK-based network for all transgendered people, their families, and care professionals. To this end, the network produces a quarterly journal, and holds biennial conferences in Manchester.

The Gender Trust

0845 231 0505 (national helpline) or

www.gendertrust.org.uk

The Gender Trust is a registered charity. Their web site carries details of the regional support organisation and affiliated groups around the UK and across the world.

The Gender Trust also runs a confidential service offering help and support to anyone with queries about all aspects of gender identity issues. The national helpline operates 7 days a week from Monday to Friday 10am to 10pm and Saturday & Sunday 1pm to 10pm

Mermaidswww.mermaids.freeuk.com

Mermaids is a support group formed by and for the parents who have trans children and who, whatever the eventual outcome may be, want to know how to support those young people.

A helpline is available on **07020 935066** between 3pm and 7pm Monday – Saturday.

Press for Changewww.pfc.org.uk

Press for Change is a political lobbying and educational organisation, which campaigns to achieve equal civil rights and liberties for all trans people in the United Kingdom, through legislation and social change.

TRANS ORGANISATIONS IN LONDON

FTM London

www.ftmlondon.org.uk or 07948 250778

FTM London started in 1997 as a peer support group for female to male transgender or transsexual people. Today they are a diverse and exciting group that continues to offer much needed support as well as information, resources and friendly networking for the FTM community.

Translondon

www.translondon.org.uk

TransLondon is a discussion/support group for all members of the 'trans' community, whatever their gender identity (or identities) and whatever stage in their 'transition' they have reached (if at all).

However, all members must themselves be trans-identified or 'questioning'.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES

Broken Rainbow

08452 60 44 60 or www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/
Support for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence.

The National 24 – hour Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247 or www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/
24 – hour freephone national domestic violence helpline operated in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

Respect

0845 122 8609 or www.respect.uk.net/
For people who are abusive to their partners and want to stop.

DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES IN LONDON

Bede House

020 7232 1107 / 020 7237 9162 or
www.bedehouse.org

Provides practical and emotional support and advocacy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans people who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. Working with people who live, work, study or socialise in Southwark.

Galop

0207 704 2030 (Shoutline) or www.galop.org.uk

Provides information, advice and practical support to LGBT Londoners who have experienced homophobic or transphobic abuse, sexual abuse, problems with the police, or domestic violence.

Galop can help people report homophobic or transphobic crime to the police through their anonymous 3rd party reporting scheme.

The Havens

www.thehavens.co.uk/

Anyone in London who has been raped or sexually assaulted can come to a Haven. Women, men and children can all attend.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The Antidote Project

020 7437 3523 or
www.thehungerford.org/antidote.asp

Pan London project delivered by Turning Point. Antidote offers information and support exclusively to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) people around drugs and alcohol. Whether you want to cut down or stop using or drinking, or want information about keeping safe Antidote can help.

HOUSING

Metropolitan Support Trust (Gay Men's Services)

020 7501 2306 or
www.mst-online.org.uk/gaymensservices.html

A supported housing project which supports gay men who are/have been victims of same sex domestic violence or homophobic abuse in Wandsworth. The service primarily provides medium-term temporary housing.

Rainer Housing

020 8693 3311 or www.raineronline.org

Provides support and housing to LGBT young people, aged 16-21 years old in South London.

Shelter

0808 800 4444 or www.shelter.org.uk/

A free, national telephone advice line staffed by trained housing advisers. They have helped thousands of people, from finding them a place to sleep to suggesting how to handle mortgage arrears.

Stonewall Housing

020 7359 5767 or www.stonewallhousing.org/

Provides free and confidential advice and advocacy for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in London. Specialist domestic abuse and housing advice available. Also runs supported hostels for young (16-24) LGBT people with support needs.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PACE

0808 1807 223 (helpline) or www.pacehealth.org.uk/

London's leading charity promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. The PACE Helpline is available for family and relationship support.

The Helpline is open on Monday 9.30-12.30 & Thursday 3.30-6.30 on 0808 1807 223. They also offer structured Telephone Counselling, of up to 6 weekly 30 minute sessions. Or you can email the Helpline pacehelpline@pace.dircon.co.uk

BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Forced Marriage Unit

0207 008 0151 or www.fco.gov.uk/en/fco-in-action/nationals/forced-marriage-unit/

The FMU offers confidential advice and assistance to those who have been forced into marriage overseas; are at risk of being forced into marriage or people worried about friends or relatives. The FMU recently produced a booklet for LGBT people. For hard copies email fmufco.gov.uk

Imaan

www.imaan.org.uk/

A social/support group for LGBT Muslims.

Imkaan

www.imkaan.org.uk

Imkaan is a second tier national charity, specialising in domestic violence - especially Asian Women's Refuges, who support Asian women and children experiencing domestic violence.

Naz Project London

020 8741 1879 or www.naz.org.uk/

Provides sexual health and HIV prevention and support services targeted to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in London.

UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group

020 7922 7811 or www.uklgig.org.uk/

Information and advice for LGBT people who have immigration issues.

DISABILITY

GLAMS

020 8438 0959 or www.mssociety.org.uk/support_and_services/support_groups/gay_and_lesbian.html
 GLAMS is a national self-help support group for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people affected by MS.

Regard – LGBT (Disability Group)

020 7688 4111 / 020 7688 0709 (Minicom)

For the contact details of other generic and LGBT organisations consult 'Stonewall' (page 60) or www.stonewall.org.uk/information%5Fbank/disability/

OLDER PEOPLE

Age Concern

0800 00 99 66 (helpline) or www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/lesbian_gay_links.asp#Older

The UK's largest charity working with and for older people.

Polari

www.casweb.org/polari/

An independent lesbian and gay organisation that works for better services for older lesbians, gay men bisexuals and transgender people.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Childline

0800 1111 or www.childline.org.uk/

Childline is the free confidential helpline for children and young people in the UK. You can talk to Childline about anything - no problem is too big or too small. If you are feeling scared or out of control or just want to talk to someone you can call them on 0800 1111.

Albert Kennedy Trust

020 7831 6562 (London) or www.akt.org.uk

Provide housing support and advice to young LGBT people up to the age of 25 years old.

OTHER LGBT ORGANISATIONS

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard

020 7837 7324 or www.llgs.org.uk/

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard (LLGS) provides an information, support and referral service for lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and anyone who needs to consider issues around their sexuality.

Stonewall

08000 50 20 20 (Info Line) or

www.stonewall.org.uk/information_bank/

Stonewall works to achieve equality and justice for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people. Stonewall's Information Service provides details about a number of different topics and local support groups, activities and services for lesbian gay and bisexual people.

FOR PRACTITIONERS

Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA)

www.caada.org.uk

A charity established to encourage the use of independent advocacy as a way to increase the safety of survivors. CAADA has an extensive library of resources, including information relating to LGBT people, available at

www.caada.org.uk/library_resources.html#11.

For guidance relating to LGBT and MARACs (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) go to

www.caada.org.uk/toolkits.html

Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP)

www.gldvp.org.uk

GLDVP is a second tier service for the London domestic violence sector, which was set up in 1997. It works to strengthen the sector by identifying common goals, promoting joint planning and minimum standards between agencies, ensuring that good practice in domestic violence work is transferred across London.

LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum

www.gldvp.org.uk/

The LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum is a network of practitioners, activists and researchers working around the issue of LGBT domestic abuse. It exists to provide a forum in which to meet, network and exchange good practice.

For more information contact the Co-Chairs on

lgbtforum@gldvp.org.uk

The Survivor Project

www.survivorproject.org/

The Survivor Project is an American non-profit organisation dedicated to addressing the needs of intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence.



Produced – August 2009