

Other factsheets in this series

Leaflet 1a You, your child and domestic abuse

Leaflet 2 Parenting Babies under 18 months

Leaflet 3 Parenting Toddlers (18 to 24 years)

Leaflet 4 Parenting Preschool Children

Leaflet 5 Parenting 5 - 12 year olds

Leaflet 6 Parenting Teenagers

Leaflet 7 Issues around moving home, separation and contact

Leaflet 8 How to talk to your children about domestic abuse/violence

Leaflet 9 Communicating with your child about domestic abuse. What children need to hear from the victim

Leaflet 10 Respectful parenting and establishing leadership with children who have witnessed domestic abuse.

Cambridge Women's Aid **01223 361214**
(City/South Cambs)

Refuge **07787 255821**
(Fenland, East Cambs, Hunts)

Children's Social Care (Cambridgeshire)
0345 0455203

Specialist abuse services for children
& young people (Peterborough) **01733 669404**

You can access these factsheets and find out more information about domestic abuse at the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership website
www.cambsdasv.org.uk



**Cambridgeshire
& Peterborough**
Domestic Abuse & Sexual
Violence Partnership

Pregnancy and Domestic Abuse



Leaflet 1

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse is the use of assault/violence, name calling, financial manipulation, control, sexual assault or any other act that is unwelcome, repeated and carried out by someone who you are or were in an intimate relationship with.

Domestic abuse is not a loss of control; it is a form of control. In the following passages and leaflets, where we say your child has witnessed abuse, this can mean knowing about, seeing or hearing abuse/violence.

HOW COULD MY UNBORN CHILD BE AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Over a third of domestic violence starts or gets worse when a woman is pregnant

One midwife in five knows that at least one of her expectant mothers is a victim of domestic violence

A further one in five midwives sees at least one woman a week who she suspects is a victim of domestic violence

Domestic violence during pregnancy puts a pregnant woman and her unborn child in danger. It increases the risk of miscarriage, infection, premature birth, low birth weight, foetal injury and foetal death.

WHAT ELSE COULD HAPPEN?

Many women who are abused during pregnancy will continue unhealthy habits due to stress such as smoking, drug abuse and poor diet. These can affect the unborn baby.

The abuser may prevent you from receiving proper antenatal or postnatal care which can be detrimental to both you and your baby.

WHO CAN HELP ME?

Your midwife or health visitor will be able to offer you support and signpost you to specialist support agencies. She will be able to speak to you alone.

Support is available for women experiencing Domestic abuse – you can call the National Domestic Violence Helpline on **0808 2000 247** or visit their website at <http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/>

Cambridge City/South Cambs:
Cambridge Women's Aid on **01223 361214**

Huntingdon, East Cambs and Fenland:
Refuge on **07787 255821**

SAFETY PLANNING

There are several things you can do to make sure you and your children are safe:

- Whenever there is immediate danger call 999
- Make a safety plan in case you have to flee
- Make an age appropriate safety plan specifically for your child
- Establish safe people who can look after your children if there is an incident at home
- Keep emergency telephone numbers close at hand
- Have an emergency pack in case you need to flee with items to comfort your children
- If you are separated from the abusive parent be aware of risks outside the home
- If there are legal orders in place ensure that schools and nurseries are aware so that the abusive parent cannot take your child home
- Make sure that any contact between your child and their abusive parent is safe and appropriate
- Ensure that your child can contact you at any time when they are visiting the abusive parent