

## Other factsheets in this series

**Leaflet 1** Pregnancy 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](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk)



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

# You, Your Child and Domestic Abuse



## Leaflet 1a

## 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 CHILDREN BE AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Most children will be aware of the abuse or violence even if they were not in the room, and in extreme cases of violence, even when they were not in the home. They can overhear things and pick up on the atmosphere at home or between care givers as well as seeing physical injuries.

Children are very aware of the feelings and responses/actions of their caregivers and respond to them in certain ways. Domestic abuse can impact on your child's development and beliefs about relationships.

Remember to talk to your children about abuse and safety. The sooner you begin to communicate with them the sooner you can begin to support them through the abuse and to understand it.

## WILL MY CHILD GROW UP TO BE AN ABUSER?

Witnessing or experiencing abuse as a child does not mean they will grow up to be an abuser but there are things you can do to help your children cope with the violence and understand that it is not normal or acceptable and that it is not the victims fault. These factsheets have some simple tips on how to minimize the negative effects of domestic abuse on your children.

## HOW CAN THESE FACTSHEETS HELP?

There are ten leaflets in total with each one specific to the age of the child so that you can choose those relevant to your family dynamics. They are all focused on the child's exposure to domestic abuse and how to parent them.

These leaflets are intended as a guide and should not take the place of your knowledge and judgments about your children. Always seek professional advice if you are concerned about your child or their behaviour deteriorates or they become a danger to themselves or others.

## WHO ELSE CAN HELP ME?

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**

You could also speak with your Health Visitor, Midwife, GP or Social Worker (if you have one) who will signpost you to further local services to help you with your child.

## 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