

don't suffer in silence

Domestic Violence Survivors' Guide



Are you being abused?

Does your partner or family member:

- Constantly criticise you?
- Humiliate or embarrass you in front of other people?
- Behave in an over-protective manner or become extremely jealous?
- Threaten to hurt you, your children, pets, family members or friends?
- Prevent you from seeing family or friends?
- Get suddenly angry or "lose their temper"?
- Destroy personal property or throw things around?
- Deny you access to family bank accounts, credit cards, the car, or force you to account for what you spend?
- Use intimidation or manipulation to control you or your children?
- Make you have sex with him when you don't want to?
- Hit, punch, slap, kick, shove, pinch, pull hair out, strangle, choke or bite you?
- Force you against your will to marry

Do you need to make a safety plan?

Many victims of domestic violence find it helpful to have a safety plan before leaving or ending a relationship with an abusive partner or family member. There are certain things to think about when planning for your future safety.

Emergency Safety Items – have these to hand

- Phone numbers (police/helplines/friends/nearest refuge)
- Purse, car keys and some change to make a phone call
- Important papers i.e. passport, national insurance number, bank account details etc

Escape Plan – know where you are going

- Work out a safe exit route out of your home in an emergency
- Will your neighbours alert the police if they hear anything suspicious?
- Safe haven – short-term family/friends or refuge services
- Keep an 'escape bag' (money, change of clothes, important papers) either hidden or with friends

Lifelines

- Teach children to use the telephone to contact the police
- Choose a code word to use with friends, family to call for help

Are you leaving an abusive partner?

If you decide to leave, even for a short period of time, it is advisable to take your children with you, if possible, to ensure their safety and to help you get their custody.

Following is a checklist of things to take with you:

- Your identification
- Birth certificates for you and your children
- Marriage or divorce papers
- Passports, visas, work permits and any other immigration documents
- School and medical records including telephone number of schools and GP or surgery
- Money, bank books, cheque books and credit cards
- Keys – house, car, office and safety deposit box
- Mortgage details or lease and rental agreements
- Current unpaid bills
- Insurance documents
- Address book
- Family photographs, your diary, jewellery, small items of sentimental value
- Your children's favourite items of clothing and small toys
- Toiletries and clothes for you
- Pictures, if any, of injuries from your partner's abuse

Our contact number

If you need to contact us for any domestic violence help, advice, support or local information then please ring BWA on:

020 8313 9303

In an **emergency**, always contact the police: **999**

How can BWA help you?

Bromley Women's Aid provides safe, secure, high quality temporary accommodation and support services to women and children escaping domestic violence regardless of your ethnicity, social class, sexuality, or religion.

What can we offer you?

- Access to Health visitors, schools and other external agencies
- Advice on housing and legal proceedings
- Advice on Welfare Benefits
- Access to professional counselling
- Access to translation services
- Child support services
- Move on support
- Outreach and resettlement
- Referrals to appropriate agencies
- Support women when attending legal proceedings
- Telephone helpline

Other Useful Numbers

- Bromley Council Homeless Persons Unit
Office Hours: **020 8313 4098**
Out of Hours: **020 8464 4848**
- Bromley Domestic Violence free Text-line
07963 479602
- Bromley Community Safety Unit
020 8284 8760
- National Domestic Violence freephone helpline (24 hour): **0808 2000 247**
- Refuge's 24 hour National Crisis Line
0990 995 443