

Ask Marc

Independent Domestic Violence Advice Services for Men

Don't deal with it alone

ask:
marc



The Cedar Centre

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse means an *incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse* by someone who is **personally connected** to you.

Personally connected means that they may be your current or ex-husband, wife or civil partner, someone you are or have been in an intimate relationship with, or someone co-parenting a child with you. They could also be another relative such as a parent, or your adult child.

Domestic abuse doesn't just mean physical violence, and it can include:

- **Coercive control:** a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence
- **Psychological** and/or **emotional** abuse
- **Physical** abuse
- **Sexual** abuse
- **Economic** abuse
- Harassment and stalking
- Online or digital abuse
- **Forced marriage**, and so called "**honour crimes**" that are perpetrated primarily by family members

Who does domestic violence happen to?

Anyone can be abused, regardless of their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity. Domestic abuse can happen between partners, within families or in shared homes.



Is it happening to you?

Domestic abuse happens to men too.

Does your partner or someone at home:

- Criticize you, put you down or call you names?
- Make you feel scared to disagree or anger them?
- Constantly check up on you or follow you?
- Make it difficult for you to see your family and friends, or control who you see and what you do?
- Make it difficult for you to see your family and friends, or control who you see and what you do?
- Play mind games with you, then call you "crazy"?
- Hit you, use weapons against you, or threaten to?
- Keep money, food, affection or medical care from you?
- Try to shame you by saying you're not a "real man"?
- Tell you no-one will believe you because you're a man?
- Threaten you by saying they will tell others that you are abusing them?
- Threaten to take your children away?
- Tell you that the abuse didn't happen, wasn't serious, or that you deserved it?
- Make you do things that you are uncomfortable with, such as coercing you into unprotected sex or to perform sexual acts you don't want?
- Threaten to "out" you to other people if you are gay, bisexual or trans?
- Threaten you by telling you that you could be deported because of your immigration status?

If you feel scared of your partner or someone at home because of things they say and do, or are forced to change your behaviour because you are frightened of their reaction, you might be experiencing domestic abuse.

Talk to someone

What is an IDVA?

IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisers) are trained specialists who support people who are at risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members.

Although IDVAs work closely with other organisations to ensure you get the best support, they are **independent** of all statutory agencies including the police, local authority and social services.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse you may be referred to an IDVA by a professional, or you can self-refer by calling us on **0121 289 6402**. Our IDVA service can support people over the age of 16 in Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall.

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We know it can be difficult to talk about, but telling someone can really help.

0121 289 6402*
info@askmarc.org.uk

*The telephone number will not show up on your phone bill.

Contact Ask Marc

We will listen to you, advise and support you. We can offer you telephone guidance or one to one support depending on what you want. We won't judge you because of what you say, and we can help you with choices on how to move forward.

? FAQs

How can an IDVA support you?

An IDVA will work with you over the short - medium term and enable you to make choices and plans that contribute towards your long-term safety.

The things an IDVA can help with include:

- Being someone to talk to in confidence about what has happened
- Advice and support planning tailored to your needs
- Sharing information with you so that you feel empowered to make decisions that are right for you
- Assessing your risk level and developing safety plans with you including practical steps to help keep you safe
- Helping you to understand how the criminal justice process works, explaining what will happen if you report to the police, and what happens in court. We can also support you at court and afterwards.
- Information about civil orders that can help protect you from your abuser, including Non-Molestation Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders
- Helping you access other services who can help e.g. refuge, housing, immigration, counselling and legal services
- Maximising your safety by working closely with other agencies to reduce the risk of harm that you face, and representing you at MARAC
- Interpreting services if you need them

Can men get refuge?

We can offer access to safe, specialist accommodation for male victims of domestic abuse, "honour"-based violence and forced marriage. If you have children, you can bring them if you need.

If you do not feel safe in your home, please call our 24-hour number on **0121 552 6448**. We will talk to you about your needs, in order to try to find the best space for you...

? Further FAQs

Do you support gay, bisexual, and trans men?

Yes, we support all men who are experiencing this kind of abuse and violence. We will listen to you, understand, and offer you advice and help based on your situation. We can also help you to access specialist LGBT+ support services if you need them.

What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage is one in which one or both of the people getting married do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage and coercion is involved. Coercion may include emotional force, physical force, threats of violence, or financial pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in the UK.

"Honour"-based violence is a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families or other groups. Abuse and violence can happen when perpetrators think that a relative has "shamed" the family or group by breaking their "honour" code. Often there is no single perpetrator and victims can be at risk from close or extended family or community members.

Both these kinds of abuse affect men too. Does someone in your family not consult you in decisions about your life, make threats so you are scared to disagree with them, or force you to do things against your will? If this is happening to you, you may be experiencing honour-based abuse, or you may be at risk of a forced marriage. Please call us for advice and support.



**Don't deal with it alone:
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We offer support for men experiencing domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence, or stalking.

0121 289 6402

Other useful contact numbers

-  **Men's Advice Line:** 0808 801 0327
-  **Citizens Advice Bureau:** 0121 500 2703
Advice on a range of issues including benefits, work, debt, housing and the law.
-  **NCDV (National Centre for Domestic Violence):** 0800 970 2070
Free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic violence.
-  **West Midlands Police:** 0345 113 5000
In an emergency: dial 999.

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Ask Marc is a support service for men who have been affected by domestic abuse, stalking, rape or sexual abuse.

We offer independent, confidential advice and support to help men be safer, make choices, and move forward with their lives.

 info@askmarc.org.uk

 askmarc.org.uk

 **0121 289 6402**

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Anyone can experience abuse.

The Cedar Centre

Ask Marc's services are based in our Cedar Centres in Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall which bring together a range of support services for survivors.

Ask Marc is a project of Black Country Women's Aid, which has supported survivors of abuse and violence in the West Midlands for over 30 years.

 blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk

“ Every session got easier as I shared my experience. They never judged me as a man or the colour of my skin. They gave me the strength to fight another day. I couldn't have done it on my own.

“ I have never been in a place where I have felt more accepted and understood.

