

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic Abuse can affect everyone



Directory of Services for West Kent

November 2011

Contents

Page 3.....	Introduction
Page 4.....	What is domestic abuse?
Page 6.....	Domestic abuse facts and figures
Page 7.....	Why leave, why stay?
Page 8.....	Effects on children and young people
Page 9.....	Crisis planning
Page 10.....	Housing Sevenoaks District
Page 11.....	Housing Tonbridge & Malling Borough
Page 12.....	Housing Tunbridge Wells Borough
Page 13.....	Kent Supporting People
Page 14.....	Refuges
Page 15.....	Welfare benefits
Page 17.....	West Kent Police
Page 18.....	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
Page 19.....	Community Legal Service
Page 20.....	Solicitors in West Kent
Page 21.....	Citizen Advice Bureaux
Page 22.....	Victim Support
Page 23.....	Witness Services

Contents

Page 24.....	Kent Probation Service
Page 25	Community Domestic Abuse Programme (CDAP)
Page 26	Freedom Programme
Page 27.....	Family Matters
Page 28	Spring House Family Service
Page 29	Sure Start Children’s Centres
Page 30	Home Start South West Kent
Page 31.....	Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop
Page 32	Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS)
Page 33	North Kent Women’s Aid
Page 34	West Kent Relate
Page 35	KCC Children’s Services
Page 37.....	West Kent National Health Service
Page 38	Substance Misuse
Page 40	Lesbian, Gay Bisexual & Transgender
Page 41.....	Men’s Advice Line
Page 42	Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare
Page 43	Local Telephone Numbers
Page 44	National Telephone Numbers

Introduction

This booklet is about domestic abuse, what you can do about it and where you can get help, advice and support. If you, or someone you know, is experiencing domestic abuse, this booklet aims to give you the information you need.

It is for anyone who is in an abusive relationship, including men and people in gay or lesbian relationships.

‘What is domestic abuse?’

The term ‘domestic abuse’ is understood to mean any abuse between current or former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever it occurs. The abuse may include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of controlling and aggressive behaviours by one individual, towards another, within the context of an intimate relationship.

Domestic abuse covers a range of situations and victims of domestic abuse do not always have visible bruises. Many abusers engage in verbal threats or emotional abuse, which can be equally harmful. Violence and abuse can be actual or threatened and may include:

- Physical, sexual or psychological abuse e.g. slapping, pushing, kicking, punching, stabbing, rape, verbal abuse, humiliation, stalking, intimidation
- Financial or emotional deprivation e.g. withholding money, not allowing friends to visit or phone calls, keeping a partner from contacting their family or friends, stopping a partner from getting or keeping a job, social isolation
- The use or threat of using legal sanctions against a partner e.g. threats about the custody of the children, threats of deportation
- Denial of rights e.g. denial of medical care, physical freedom

‘What is domestic abuse?’

All forms of abuse - psychological, economic, emotional and physical - come from the abuser's desire for power and control of another.

The Structure of Abuse

- Isolation
- Disability and exhaustion
- Degradation
- Threats
- Enforced trivial demands
- Displays of total power
- Occasional indulgences
- Distorted perspectives

Advice

Remember, you are not to blame. Admitting to yourself and others that you are experiencing domestic abuse may seem difficult but it is an important step towards getting protection for yourself and your family.

Domestic Abuse Facts and Figures

Anyone can be a victim. People suffer domestic abuse regardless of their social group, class, age, race, disability, sexuality or lifestyle, in all kinds of relationships. The abuse can begin at any time - in new relationships or after many years spent together and can happen infrequently or on a regular basis.

The following information highlights why it is so important to seek help:

Children and young people who have lived with Domestic Abuse are, as adults:

- There are no social barriers - It can happen to anyone
- It is not caused by drink or drugs- they may increase the violence and abuse but are not the underlying cause
- On average 2 women a week are killed by a violent partner or an ex partner in England and Wales
- 1 woman in every 4 experiences domestic violence over their lifetime
- 1 man in every 6 will be a victim
- Domestic abuse against men is likely to be under reported
- 30% of all women who experience domestic abuse are hit for the first time when pregnant
- Abused women are 5 times more likely to attempt suicide
- 6 times more likely to commit suicide
- 60 times more likely to become involved in crime
- 1,000 times more likely to abuse others

Advice

The agencies primary services are keen to assure anyone, male or female, young or old, that they will receive support, advice and help to resolve their particular situation. Please refer to the information contained in this booklet for the individual agencies and organisations.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse it is important to remember that you are not to blame . You cannot change your abusers behaviour; the abuser needs to change their own behaviour. Ignoring violence can be dangerous

Admitting to yourself and others that you are experiencing domestic abuse may seem difficult but it is an important step towards getting protection for yourself and your family.

Why Leave? Why Stay?

People stay in abusive relationships for many reasons. Not everyone recognises or labels what is happening to them as domestic abuse. Contributing factors that may cause an abused person to remain with or return to his/ her abusive partner include:

- Fear of retaliation
- Economic & emotional dependency
- Isolation
- Low self esteem
- Embarrassment
- Social stigma
- Beliefs about marriage
- Love
- Children
- Pets and personal items
- Homelessness
- Transport
- Uncertainty of future situation

Effects on Children and Young People

Children and young people will react in different ways to growing up in a home where domestic abuse occurs.

They may be affected by the tension, or by witnessing arguments and assaults. They may think they are to blame or feel insecure, alone, frightened or confused. They may be isolated or embarrassed in front of their friends. They may feel resentment towards you or feel helpless.

Regardless of whether or not they are ever directly abused, children who witness the abuse of a parent may develop behaviour problems, depression, sleeping disorders, and/or anxiety disorders. Because children learn about the world around them by observation, they are also at increased risk of becoming an abuser, or a victim of abuse, in adulthood.

Effects of abuse are likely to be seen in pre-schools and schools and can contribute to pupils' lower achievement levels. Your school teacher or SENCo (special education needs co-ordinator), FLO (Family Liaison Officer), school nurse and or health visitor, and or Headteacher can help too.

Crisis Planning

Sometimes victims of domestic abuse have to leave home in a hurry to escape from assault or further abuse. It can help if you make some plans.

Making a crisis plan is a way of feeling more in control, more positive and confident. This is just a suggested plan of action which you can add to or change to suit you:

Find somewhere you can quickly and easily use a phone (neighbour, relative, other contacts) Make, and always carry with you, a list of numbers for an emergency to include friends, relatives and local police (even well known numbers can be forgotten in a panic).

- Try and save some money for bus, train, taxi fares
- Have an extra set of keys for your house, flat, car
- If you feel it would not place you in more danger, consider taking the following measures:
 - Keep a set of keys, money and a set of clothes packed and ready in a bag that you can quickly take
 - Consider explaining to your children (if they are old enough to understand) that you might have to leave in a hurry
 - Explain that you will take them with you or arrange for them to join you as soon as possible. Discuss the crisis plan with them but not if under the influence of the abuser.

If you have more time to plan leaving, do as many as possible of the following:

- Leave when the abuser is not around
- Take all the children with you
- Take your legal and financial papers, marriage and birth certificates, court orders, national health cards, passports, driving licence, child benefit books, address book, bank books, chequebooks, credit cards and so on
- Take any medicine you or your children might need
- Take any of your personal possessions, which have sentimental value - photographs or jewellery for example
- Take favourite toys for the children
- Take clothing for at least several days
- If you have pets and are worried they may not be looked after if left behind try to arrange for someone to care for them. An animal charity might be able to help
- If you do leave and realise that you have forgotten something, you can always arrange for the protection of a police escort so you can return home to collect it

Housing

Sevenoaks District (SDC)

The Council's Social Housing Team can advise you on your housing options and may be able to provide emergency accommodation if you are at risk from or suffering from domestic abuse.

The Council will explore housing options such as refuge spaces, emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, and in certain cases it will contact other local authorities to arrange housing outside of the area. The Council can help you to apply for social rented housing through its Housing Register, and can offer a Deposit Bond and Rent-in-Advance scheme to help you rent privately.

The Council also operates a Safe Haven Scheme for people who suffer from domestic abuse. This can assist victims of domestic abuse who wish to remain safe in their homes, subject to agreement from the Police. In appropriate cases, the Council can fund and arrange for works to be carried out to provide security works such as intruder alarms, additional window and door locks, and external security lighting systems.

If you would like to discuss your situation with an officer of the same sex, we can arrange this. The Council also offers a translation service to those whose first language is not English. SDC is committed to providing advice and support for all people experiencing domestic abuse, including same sex relationships, bisexual and transgender people and can refer people to other projects for further support and advice.

Contact us:

8.45am - 5.15pm: Tel: 01732 227000

5.00pm - 8.30am incl weekends: tel: 01732 227000

Housing

Tonbridge & Malling Borough (TMBC)

TMBC housing options team can provide advice and may be able to help you access emergency accommodation if you are experiencing domestic abuse.

We can book an urgent housing options appointment so we can discuss your situation in more detail. We can organise appointments at either our offices at Kings Hill or Tonbridge Castle. We can arrange an appointment with an officer of the same sex if you would prefer this.

The kind of urgent assistance that we can provide may include us finding a refuge space in an area that is safe for you or obtaining Bed & Breakfast accommodation for you if appropriate. We can help you seek legal advice to help you remain in your current accommodation, if you consider it is safe and appropriate for you to do so.

If it is not possible for you to stay in your home, we will be able to provide information on alternative housing options. This may include applying for social rented housing via the Council's housing register or obtaining a privately rented property. TMBC has a rent deposit guarantee scheme which can provide help with the costs of securing a privately rented home.

Contact us:

8.30am - 5.00pm: tel: 01732 876067

5.00pm - 8.30am incl weekends: tel: 01732 844522

Housing

Tunbridge Wells Borough (TWBC)

TWBC provides a 24 hour emergency homelessness service and will provide advice and emergency accommodation for households who are experiencing domestic abuse either within the borough or from outside of the Tunbridge Wells Borough. We may be able to assist you to find emergency accommodation in either a refuge or a bed and breakfast depending on what is available and if it is appropriate for you and any children.

The Housing Needs Team are available to offer advice and assistance to families who are experiencing domestic abuse. It may be that with the support of other agencies and if it is safe for you to do so you can remain in your own home. If this is not the case we are able to advise you on the options that are available to you. This maybe advice on securing housing through the housing register or through the private rental market.

We are able to offer assistance with securing private rented accommodation through the Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan and Deposit Guarantee Scheme.

We will be able to put you in touch with other agencies who are able to offer further support and advice during and after your application to us.

Contact us:

8.30am - 5.00pm: tel. 01892 554156

5.00pm - 8.30am incl weekends: tel: 01892 515392

Kent Supporting People

Supporting People helps vulnerable people to have a better quality of life by providing housing-related support services. The programme helps pay for the services that allow people to live independently in the community.

It aims to prevent the problems that can cause people to become homeless including, build up debts or rent arrears, need hospital treatment, move into care, or households feeling domestic abuse. Above all it helps people move back into independent living. The money comes from Supporting People grant provided by government.

Support may be provided by a variety of methods.

These include:

- A service that is provided as part of accommodation - this is known as an “accommodation-based service”
- A service provided to an individual in his or her own home regardless of where they live - this is known as “floating support”

Supporting People Team

Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ

Tel: 08458 247100

Website: www.kent.gov.uk/supportingpeople

www.spkweb.org.uk

Refuges

A refuge is a safe house for women and children leaving domestic abuse to stay while they sort out their problems and decide what to do next.

If you are a woman who needs to leave home due to physical, emotional or sexual abuse, refuges can give you and your children a safe place to stay along with confidential information and advice.

However, local women may not be re-housed in local refuges for their own safety and for the safety of other women and children.

There are several Refuges in the Kent area, please contact the National Domestic Helpline for information.

When you arrive you will be welcomed by a worker who will explain what life is like in a refuge. You and your children will have a bedroom for your use. In some refuges the bedrooms include washing facilities and in others they are exclusive bed-sitters or fat units.

There are communal dining rooms, sitting rooms, bathrooms/ showers and laundry facilities.

Some refuges have equipped children's playrooms staffed by child workers. During your stay you will receive advice and assistance on benefits, legal rights and housing etc.

National Domestic Violence Helpline:

Offers practical advice and emotional support as well as up to date information on refuge vacancies.

0808 2000 247 (24hrs)

DOVE Project (Domestic Violence Ended)

DOVE, Inc. is committed to serving communities, families and individuals impacted by domestic violence. They seek to empower clients and the community by providing safety, shelter, education and support services.

01702 302333

Welfare Benefits

Child Benefit - This is payable if you have the responsibility of a child living with you. It is not means tested and is payable at a fixed rate for each child up to the age of 16 or, if still in full time education, age 19. It is deducted as an income from Income Support but not from Working Families Credit.

Child Benefit Customer Enquiry Line: 0845 302 1444

Income Support - This is a means-tested benefit and “tops up” other income (including maintenance payments) to a level pre-set by the Government. It is paid to people who are sick or disabled, lone parents, carers or people over 60 years old. If you work less than 16 hours a week you may still be entitled. If you are responsible for rent, Council Tax or hostel charges you will be eligible for help of up to 100% of the cost. Help towards mortgage interest payments will become available after a fixed period of time depending on circumstances.

Jobseekers Allowance - If you are not in one of the categories to claim Income Support, or you are but want to find work, you can register at a Jobcentre in your area. You do not have to go to the nearest one if this could pose a threat. There are numerous schemes both practical and financial to help you back into work.

Job Seekers Enquiry Line: 0800 055 6688

Working Tax Credit - This is also a means-tested benefit and tops up earnings of people working at least 16 hours per week. Maintenance payments are ignored when calculating your income.

Child Tax Credit - This is a payment to support families with children. You can claim Child Tax Credit if you are responsible for one child (or young person) or more. You do not have to be working to claim.

Helpline: 0845 300 3900

Welfare Benefits

Housing Benefit, and Council Tax - If you do not receive Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance you may still be able to get help towards your rent and Council Tax. The amount will depend on your income.

If you are the sole adult in your household you will qualify for a 25% reduction in your Council Tax. You should contact your Local Authority direct. If you flee your home because of violence or harassment, you may be entitled to Housing Benefit on two homes for up to 52 weeks, provided you intend to return.

Mortgage Assistance: if you claim Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, and your mortgage was taken out before Oct 1995, no assistance is available for the first 8 weeks. From week 9 until week 26, 50% of assistance is granted followed by 100% assistance from week 27. This rule applies if you are the parent of dependent children and your partner abandons you, regardless of when your mortgage began.

If your mortgage began after Oct 1995, no assistance is available for the first 40 weeks of your claim. If you are over 60, there is no waiting period for help with housing costs. There is a limit to the amount of loan, which is eligible for help.

Child Support Agency - If you receive either Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance (income based) the benefit department will contact you about seeking maintenance payments. If your partner is violent or there is a risk of harm to yourself or your children you may decide not to provide the details of the absent parent. If there is a serious threat to your family's health and safety the decision-maker can waive the right to pursue maintenance payments. This will be explained to you in full at the interview.

**Child Support Agency National Line:
0845 7133133**

Housing Benefit/ Council Tax benefit contact numbers:

Sevenoaks District Council: **01732 227000**

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council: **01732 844522**

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council: **01892 526121**

West Kent Police

If you or someone you know is the victim of Domestic Abuse.

- Police will deal promptly and positively with any domestic abuse incident that they are called to attend
- Police have Domestic Abuse Officers and other experts who can give advice
- Children can be victims too - the Public Protection Unit is there to protect the welfare of children who are victims of emotional, physical or sexual abuse
- Where it is necessary the person responsible for the abuse will be arrested
- Officers will try to take action that will protect you from further abuse
- Police work closely with other local agencies such as Women's Refuge, Victim Support, Local Authorities (Councils) and Housing agencies in order to get the support you need.

In an emergency always dial 999

Otherwise, contact

West Kent Police: 01622 690690

General line: 01732 771055

You can ask Police to :

- Respond to you quickly
- Talk to you separately from the abuser
- Arrest the abuser when there is sufficient evidence
- Get you immediate medical attention if you need it
- Assist you with transport to a safe place or refuge
- Keep records of all incidents of domestic abuse
- Accompany you and protect you if you want to return home to collect belongings

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

The CPS is the agency responsible for taking forward prosecution through the courts:

To prosecute CPS may look at:

- The ability and willingness of the complainant to testify
- The history or the relationship and details of previous incidents
- Details of any civil proceedings and orders
- The composition of the family and the effect of proceedings on any children

There is no specific offence of 'Domestic Abuse'. The expression describes the circumstances or environment in which other crimes, usually forms of assault, take place.

The CPS can advise Police on evidential matters in order to provide a realistic prospect of a conviction against each defendant.

Each case is looked at in an objective way and with many factors taken into consideration. There are occasions when the victim will withdraw the complaint.

The CPS will think very carefully about the interests of the victim, however the victim cannot have the final word on the subject of the prosecution.

The CPS recognises that domestic abuse may occur in relationships which extend beyond that of partners and include family members and takes this matter very seriously.

The Crown Prosecution Service is bound by the Codes Of Practice for Crown Prosecutors.

CPS Number: 01622 356300

The Community Legal Service

(Formerly Legal Aid)

What is it?

The Community Legal Service provides information, advice and legal services to help people understand their rights and responsibilities, and to resolve their problems.

Free Legal Help is available to people on low incomes from solicitors and some advice agencies.

To be eligible for free legal help there are income limits which vary from time to time.

There are also capital limits. If you are in dispute with your partner then his/her income can be discounted from the calculation. Higher limits apply if you have children, or need further legal work, including court representation.

Any solicitor or agency displaying the Community Legal Service logo will be able to tell you if you are eligible for free Legal Help, or refer you to someone who can.

Helpline: 0845 345 4345 (Mon – Fr 9.00-5.00)

www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk

Solicitors in West Kent

There are four solicitors in West Kent providing free Legal Help for eligible people. They are:

Berry & Berry,

11 Church Road, Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 526344

Berry & Berry,

185 High Street, Tonbridge
Tel: 01732 355911

Clarke Kiernan,

2-4 Bradford Street, Tonbridge
Tel: 01732 360999

Evans Main,

83 High Street, Sevenoaks
Tel: 01732 464848

Max Barford & Co,

16 Mount Pleasant Road, T Wells
Tel: 01892 539379

The local CABs are also funded by the Community Legal Service to provide debt and welfare benefits help to people suffering or at risk from domestic abuse. Details on the CAB can be found in this booklet.

What can you expect of the CLS?

- You can receive help with:
- Civil court action to obtain occupation and nonmolestation orders
- Child care and residence orders
- Divorce and separation
- Property and money matters
- Debt problems
- Welfare benefit entitlement and claims

West Kent Citizens Advice Bureau

We are a generalist advice service covering enquiries about employment, debt, benefits, consumer issues, family law and many other areas. The service is free to all and is independent and confidential.

We also have a Legal Services contract to offer specialist benefits and debt advice prioritising victims and survivors of domestic abuse. We offer a holistic service where we can also advise on housing options and make referrals where appropriate. We will accept referrals from solicitors or other professionals who may be assisting you.

Our specialist caseworker will see people by appointment, but you can also drop in to the bureau during normal times and be referred to them.

Tonbridge and Malling :

3-4 River Walk, Tonbridge Tel: **01732 350099**

Tunbridge Wells :

78 St. Johns Rd, T Wells Tel: **0844 499 4140**

Sevenoaks:

Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks Tel: **01732 454443**

Edenbridge & Westerham:

68 High Street, Edenbridge Tel: **01732 865131**

Swanley:

16 High Street, Swanley Tel: **01322 664949**

Victim Support

Victim Support is an independent national charity, with trained volunteers who live in the local area. Volunteers contact victims of crime (including Domestic Abuse victims) and offer free, confidential support and information.

Volunteers from Victim Support are specially trained to help victims in these circumstances and can arrange to meet the victim away from the home, at a safe time and place, so that they can discuss their options. People are referred to Victim Support by the police and other organisations or can make direct contact themselves.

Victim Support can help with:

- Seeking legal advice
- Crisis planning
- Putting people in touch with agencies who can help find a safe place for them and their children to go
- Contacting housing authorities and many other agencies

Volunteers offer the opportunity:

- To talk and acknowledge what is happening.
- To talk about feelings in confidence and safely.
- To be given the opportunity to recognise that they are not to blame.
- That no one deserves to be assaulted, humiliated or abused by a partner or anyone in a caring/family relationship.
- Help seeking the support that is available, together with emotional support.

Kent Helpline: 0845 389 9528 Mon-Fri 8am-8pm

The service we offer is both free and confidential

Witness Service

Appearing at court is often an unfamiliar experience and victims/ witnesses may be unsure about what to expect. The Witness Service at the court has trained volunteers who would be glad to offer friendly guidance and support. The service is free and confidential.

We can offer victims/witnesses and their family and friends:

- The opportunity to talk to someone in confidence (but not about the evidence)
- A pre-trial familiarisation visit to the court and where possible, an informative visit to the courtroom
- Information on court layout and procedures
- A quiet place to wait during their time in the court building
- Someone to accompany them in the courtroom if staff resources allow, and the court permits
- Practical help, e.g. assistance with expense forms
- Access to those in a position to answer specific questions about their case
- An opportunity to talk about the experience of giving evidence following the case

Support is offered to prosecution and defence witnesses. Support is available before and on the day of the trial.

Support is not available for defendants. Nor are we yet able to support anyone at the County Court or Family Court. The Witness Service cannot act as an Appropriate Adult.

Kent Probation

The aim of Kent Probation Area, in relation to domestic abuse, is to achieve a greater level of public protection by working with perpetrators of domestic abuse in a non-collusive way and prioritising the protection of the victims and any children.

Kent Probation Area offer a Domestic Abuse Offenders Programme, the aims of which are to challenge the attitudes and abusive behaviour of male perpetrators of domestic abuse and enable them to work towards making positive changes and reduce the possibility of further abusive behaviour.

Fundamental to this is the partnership between Probation Services, Social Services, Police and Women's Support Services to ensure that the safety of women and children is at the core of the programme.

Head Office:
25 Knightrider Street
Chaucer House
Maidstone
Kent ME15 6ND

Telephone 01622 350820

Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme (CDAP)

The CDAP is designed to help men who feel their behaviour towards their partners has been, or still is abusive. To challenge their behaviour and to see how it is affecting their partner or ex-partner and any children who are involved.

The programme also ensures the safety of women and children is addressed as part of the programme.

It is a rolling programme that lasts 27 weeks and is made up of nine modules, with each module having three sessions.

The modules are:

- Non-violence
- Non-threatening behaviour
- Respect
- Support & Trust
- Accountability & Honesty
- Sexual Respect
- Partnership
- Responsibility Parenting
- Negotiation & Fairness

Sessions are held once a week in Tonbridge and last for two and a half hours 6.30pm - 9pm.

The group who attend the programme, which is completely free, is a mixture of men who are on probations orders and those who have been referred by their GPs or Social Services, or who have self-referred.

For more details contact David Philpot

Tel: 07933 359210

Freedom Programmes

The Freedom Programme is a 12 week programme offering women the opportunity to learn more about the reality of domestic violence and abuse.

The programme aims to help women gain self esteem and the confidence to improve the quality of their lives and to introduce women to community resources. Additionally the programme helps women understand the beliefs held by abusive men and in doing so, recognise which of these they have shared; illustrate the effects on any children; assist women to recognise potential future abusers;

Tunbridge Wells District:

Crèche available. Plus Freedom Programme Reunited

Contact: Sue Frawley: **01892 538137**

Tonbridge and Malling District:

Contact: Women's Support Services:

Public: **01622 761146**

Edenbridge and Sevenoaks (alternate):

Contact: **07854 780690**

Swanley:

Contact: West Housing Association **01732 749400** ext **335** or **512**

For more information: www.freedomprogramme.co.uk

Family Matters

What is it?

Established in 1990, Family Matters is one of the U.K's leading specialised charitable services which provides counselling and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) support to victims of rape and sexual abuse.

The counselling service is provided by specially trained and highly qualified professionals and volunteers, allowing our expertise to be wide-ranging and help address how sexual violence is linked with physical abuse, depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress, anger management, bereavement, work, sexuality, relationships, self-esteem issues, alcohol and drug misuse, amongst others.

ISVAs offer an individually-tailored service unique to each client which aim to offer the highest quality emotional and practical support for victims of rape and sexual abuse.

Practical support includes:

- Police communication
- Understanding the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Criminal Justice System (CJS)
- Victim Support
- Access to appropriate health services
- Assistance finding secure housing (where appropriate)
- Support through court

Emotional support includes:

- Education and awareness of common cognitive and emotional reactions after the incident
- Secure, warm, and confidential environment
- Knowledge of other relevant sources of help
- Coping strategies
- Referral to Family Matters Counselling service

Family Matters runs an inclusionary service - we welcome all cultural backgrounds, ages, races, and genders. It doesn't matter if you have reported the incident to the police or not, we can still help. It is also an outreach service. However, you can always come to the headquarters in Gravesend.

We work across 14 boroughs in Kent, ISVAs 6, including Sevenoaks, helping over 4000 people each year.

At Family Matters we understand it may be difficult to talk to family or friends at this time.

Helpline: 01474 537 392 (24 hour answering service)

Address: 13 Wrotham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0PA

Office No: 01474 536 661 (9am-5pm)

Website: www.familymattersuk.org

Spring House Family Service

Spring House Family Centre is an independent family support service based within the grounds of Sevenoaks Hospital. We have a purpose built Centre where lots of different activities take place for families who have a child under five.

Parents are offered a friendly welcome and support in:

- Parenting
- Children's behaviour
- Family relationships
- Health
- Emotional problems etc.
- Housing
- Feeling lonely wanting to meet new people

Families can either attend the activities we run at the Centre or home visits can be arranged.

How Can Spring House Help You?

Our Family Support Workers will visit you, usually in your own home, to explain the services we provide.

- A chance to meet people and make new friends.
- A chance to help your children develop and learn through play in our Stay Play and Learn sessions and our parent child activity groups.
- Access to groups including self development and adult education, parenting and healthy lifestyles groups.
- Support to help you work through particular issues either at the Centre or in the home.
- A group especially for Young Parents

Maree Stephens, Spring House Family Service, Hospital Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3PT.

Tel: 01732 465539

Sure Start Children's Centres

Children's centres are places that provide information and offer access to services for families with children aged 0-5 years in every local community.

Children's centres are ideally placed to guide confidentially families who are experiencing bullying or violence to specialist help, either directly or through their close links with Health Visitors and Midwives.

Each children's centre also offers a variety of services to cater for the needs of the community including the following:

- Links to childcare provision
- Encouragement and support for parents thinking about training or finding a new job
- Ante-natal classes and baby clinics
- Information and advice about breastfeeding, parenting and speech & language
- Family support and outreach to parents
- Drop in play sessions for parents and children
- Services for children with special needs and disabilities
- Links with voluntary agencies
- Links with schools

Families are welcome to attend the activities we run at the centres or other activities provided by the children's centres in other community venues.

Centres are generally open Monday-Friday 8am-6pm; no appointment is needed - just drop in and ask to speak with someone.

Tel: 0800 0 323230

Email: childrenscentres@kent.gov.uk

Home-Start South West Kent

Home-Start South West Kent is a voluntary organisation committed to promoting the welfare of families with under fives. Volunteers offer regular support, friendship and practical help to families under stress, helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown.

Families experience a variety of problems from isolation, family stress, post natal depression, anxiety, and concerns about behaviour within the family. We work closely with other statutory/ voluntary agencies within the locality helping to support families where in some cases child protection is or could become an issue as well as Domestic Abuse.

Volunteers are recruited and interviewed prior to attending a Preparation Course, which covers a variety of subjects. At the end of the course all potential volunteers are re-interviewed and assessed as to whether they are suitable to be matched with families.

Home Visiting

Families receive one to one support by means of a volunteer visiting their home on a weekly basis. This support can be emotional and/or practical, is flexible to meet the families' needs and is confidential.

How to refer - Referral forms are available from our office. Please feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss a family prior to referral. The main criteria are that the family has at least one child under five.

Home-Start South West Kent,

116b London Road,
Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent TN4 0PN

Tel: 01892 524916

Domestic Abuse One Stop Shops

What we do

Domestic Abuse One Stop Shops are a drop in service for anyone affected by domestic abuse who feels that they could benefit from any help or advice. It is a free and confidential service and no appointment is necessary.

You can get advice from various agencies under one roof, such as:

- Sevenoaks District Council Housing
- North Kent Women's Aid
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Solicitor

SWANLEY ONE STOP SHOP

To find out the time and place of the One Stop Shop please contact North Kent Women's Aid on 0800 917 9948 www.nkwa.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS)

DAVSS is a local charity supporting men and women in Tunbridge Wells Borough and Sevenoaks District who are suffering from domestic abuse. The service also supports male victims in Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

Highly trained volunteers and professional supervisors have the knowledge, experience and time to be able to offer advice, information and support to enable clients to make informed decisions that will provide safety for them and their families.

The service offers free, confidential support by:

- Listening without bias or judgement
- Offering advice tailored to individual situations
- Exploring options and helping clients make choices
- Accompanying clients to meetings or attending court
- Signposting to organisations which can provide housing , benefits and other advice
- Helping to identify risks and working with clients to produce safety plans

Local Helpline: 01892 570538 (10.00am to 1pm weekdays)

Email: office@davss.org.uk

Web: www.davss.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service (DAVSS) is a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 7660698

Registered Charity No. 1143001

North Kent Women's Aid

What we do

Refuge Provision -

North Kent Women's Aid (NKWA) provides refuge accommodation in the Dartford and Gravesham areas for women and children who are fleeing domestic violence. During their stay we provide support and advice to the women in order that they can make informed decisions regarding their future. We also support the children and provide counselling to help them through this difficult time.

IDVA and Outreach services

Our experienced and knowledgeable staff provide support and advice to men and women in the community affected by domestic abuse through one to one meetings and through the One Stop Shops that we run in association with the local authority Housing teams in Gravesham, Swanley and Dartford, the Citizen Advice Bureaux and local solicitors. We will carry out Risk Assessment and Safety Planning with those affected by domestic abuse and signpost to other services where appropriate, eg drug and alcohol support services.

School/Youth Work

NKWA works with schools, colleges and youth clubs to educate young people on the effects of domestic abuse and to promote healthy relationships.

NKWA operate a Helpline for people to ring for support and advice – 0800 917 9948 – and information can be sourced through our website at www.nkwa.org.uk

In addition, NKWA also run a hostel for homeless young people, male and female, aged between 16 and 25 years old.

If you wish further information please contact us at:

PO Box 753, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1FY

Tel: 01322 384792

Helpline: 0800 917 9948

E-mail: admin@nkwa.org.uk

Web: www.nkwa.org.uk

Opening times - Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

West Kent Relate

Working with Domestic Abuse

Where Domestic Abuse is a past or current issue in a relationship, Relate works with both partners.

In cases of domestic abuse we would look to counsel both parties individually.

The initial focus of such work is to enable the couple to take responsibility for their own behaviour and begin to value and respect the relationship.

Both partners agree to a non-violence contract with the counsellor and this is reviewed weekly. If the couple are unable to work within the safety plan and Domestic Abuse continues, then the counselling contract ends.

To make an appointment for Counselling:

12 Mount Ephraim
Tunbridge Wells
Kent

National Number: 0845 130 4010

Kent County Council Children's Services

The Children and Families Initial Assessment Team will carry out an assessment where there is a child in the household.

If your children are living in a violent situation they are considered as "Children in Need" under the Children Act. Social Services have a duty to support families with children in need and to ensure that children are safe from harm.

A Social Worker may assess your child's needs in order to offer support, counselling or therapy. If they are unable to provide you with the help needed, the Social Worker may be able to offer you advice and support in approaching other agencies. Social Services can also provide you with information about: Childminders, playgroups and nurseries, self-help groups and counselling services.

We understand that your problems may be of a very personal nature. Someone else can contact us on your behalf. You can also have a friend or relative with you.

Legislation - the Department has responsibilities under the Children Act 1989 for Child in Need and Children at risk of harm. It should be the general duty of every local authority:

- *To safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and*
- *So far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. Sect 17 (10)*
- *Where his/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of a service*

Kent County Council Children's Services

The Voluntary Sector may have an important role to play in contributing to an assessment and providing services to a family.

Children who are experiencing domestic abuse may benefit from a range of support and services. Some may need safeguarding from harm. Often supporting a non-violent partner is likely to be the most effective way of promoting the child's welfare.

The Social Services Department can facilitate access to a place of safety for a parent and child/children through the provision of a travel warrant.

If a child is a victim of domestic abuse then the Kent Child Protection Procedures would guide the Children's Services Department and all the statutory agencies as to the appropriate action to take.

Contact:

County Duty Team Tel: **0845 824 7100** (24hrs)

In office hours: **01622 696717**

24 hour duty team out of office hours: **0845 762 6777**

Website: www.kent.gov.uk

Contact: County Duty Team

Tel: 08458 247 100 (24hrs)

Website: www.kent.gov.uk

West Kent NHS

Abuse in a relationship will affect you both physically and emotionally. You may feel tired and run down or depressed and unable to cope. You may feel ashamed of what is happening to you and some people turn to alcohol or drugs to try to get through it.

Although it is difficult, remember that your health is important, talk about your feelings, remember it is not your fault.

Talk to your GP, Practice Nurse, Health Visitor, or School Nurse at a Health centre, clinic or surgery.

Seek medical attention for your injuries from your GP, Treatment Centres or Hospital A&E Department.

Children are often harmed both physically and emotionally in abusive relationships. Children feel afraid and insecure in a violent home and they need to express their feelings. They may be aggressive or withdrawn and show signs of anxiety.

Discuss your child's needs with your Health Visitor.

The Health Visitor has a responsibility for Child Protection Issues.

West Kent NHS Contact: **01732 375200**

NHS Direct: **0845 4647**

Accident & Emergency Department:

- Pembury Hospital: **0845 155 1000**
- Darenth Valley Hospital: **01322 428100**
- Maidstone Hospital: **01622 729000**

Domestic Abuse often escalates during pregnancy. Talk to your midwife - If you are pregnant, as part of general protocol and commitment to good practice, midwives will ask whether you are experiencing any problems.

KCA UK

KCA is a countywide organisation, which offers support and a range of services to people who have difficulties with drugs and alcohol.

One of the services we offer is for partners, carers and parents of drug and alcohol abusers. We offer one to one counselling and support .

This service is free and confidential. If you would like more information please ring the following office

KCA Tonbridge

Tel: 01732 370413

KCA Young Persons

Tel: 01227 456744

Website: www.kca.org.uk

Kenward Trust

Kenward Trust is a registered Charity founded in 1968 and highly experienced in offering the very best in professionally operated recovery programmes for people suffering from drug and alcohol misuse and homelessness problems.

The Kenward Trust offers hope for those who are serious about wanting to recover from drug and alcohol abuse and work towards a new life - free from their addiction.

There are residential rehabilitation and day community recovery centres, caring, professional staff work closely with residents to restore self-confidence, dignity and other life skills.

The Kenward Trust also has specialist programmes for young people who may suffer from Substance Misuse

Kenward Trust Tel: 01622 814187

Website: www.kenwardtrust.org.uk

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Abuse

Women living within same-sex partnerships experience less violence within the relationship than do women living with male intimate partners. However, men living in same-sex relationships experience violence at nearly twice the rate of men living with female intimate partners.

Even though there are similarities - in that battered lesbians and gays suffer from the same emotional, physical, sexual and economic abuse, isolation tactics and selective destruction of pets and property as their non-gay counterparts - there are additional complications confronting them. Abused lesbians and gays must, in addition to dealing with the abuse from their partner, face the probability of added victimisation by a community, legal system and service providers, who maybe homophobic.

For guidance, support and information contact

Broken Rainbow: 0300 999 5428

Mankind: 01823 334244

Kent Lesbian Line: 01622 763573 (open Thurs 7.30pm – 10pm)

Men's Advice Line

The Men's Advice Line is a confidential helpline for all men experiencing domestic violence by a current or ex-partner. This includes all men - in heterosexual or same sex relationships.

We want to give all men who experience domestic violence the chance to talk about it. We provide emotional support, we can give you practical advice and we can inform you of specialist services that can give you advice on legal, housing, child contact, mental health and other issues.

Call us on freephone number 0808 801 0327

Free from landlines and most mobile phones

Monday - Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm

If the lines are busy or if you are calling outside of those hours, please leave a message with your name and a safe number and we will call you back as soon as we can. You can also email us: info@mensadviceline.org.uk

The Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare

The Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare was founded in 1952 by the late Miss Raymonde-Hawkins M.B.E. to provide sanctuary and welfare for unwanted or badly treated animals. Our guiding principles are selective rehabilitation wherever possible for dogs, cats and small companion animals, and lifetime sanctuary care for our exotic birds, horses, goats and donkeys.

As well as being a home to so many animals the Centre is also open to the public and welcomes group visits as well as individuals and families.

In April 2008 the Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare became a member of the Links Group, a multi-agency interest group that promotes the welfare and safety for children, adults and animals, so that they are free from violence and abuse.

For many women/families leaving violent relationships there are very few options open to them regarding their pets. So the Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare offers a pet fostering service for such situations.

The service is accessible to any women/family living in either Kent or Sussex that are fleeing domestic violence.

We take referrals from both agencies and/or directly from the owner, providing they can provide confirmation that they are fleeing domestic violence i.e. an email or letter from a case worker, the police or social services. A number of forms then must be completed these include a pet information form and a legal contract.

Once this information has been received we will endeavour to place the pet temporarily in a loving family home with a volunteer foster carer. The pet will be reunited with its owner once they are settled and are able to have it back.

Placements vary in length; an average stay is between 6 and 9 months. During this period the owner will not be allowed see their pet.

During the placement we will provide food and veterinary treatment free of charge (subject to terms and conditions) but donations towards the upkeep of the pets are very much appreciated.

All placements are strictly confidential. Raystede is a registered charity and relies entirely on voluntary support

To contact the Pet Fostering Co-ordinator:

Office hours are 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday (an answer machine is available out of hours and it is checked daily)

Telephone: 01825 880478 (direct line) Fax: 01825 840995

Email: petfostering@raystede.org

Local Telephone Numbers

Building Bridges

Support services for families in the Edenbridge area. Tel: 01732 860 560

Community Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme

Tel: 07950 229291

Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service

Tel: 01892 570538 (10am to 1pm weekdays)

Edenbridge Children's Centre Manager Ailsa Winstanley

Tel: 01732 864045

Freedom Programme

Tunbridge Wells Tel: 01892 538137

Tonbridge & Malling Tel: 01622 761146

Sevenoaks Tel: 07854 780690 / 01732 749400

Kent Homophobic and Hate Reporting Line

Tel: 0800 328 9162

Kent Lesbian Line

Tel: 01622 763 573 (open Thursday 7.30pm - 10pm)

Kent Racial Incidents Reporting Line

Tel: 0800 138 1624

North Kent Women's Aid

Tel: 0800 1979 948

Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare

Tel: 01825 880478

Samaritans (24hrs)

Tel: 01892 532 323 / 08457 90 90 90

Sevenoaks Child Contact Centre (supported, not supervised)

Tel: 07951 862313

Springhouse Family Service

Tel: 01732 465 539

Swanley Children's Centre

Tel: 01322 668132

Turning Point: Drug and alcohol advice centre

Tel: 01622 690944

National Telephone Numbers

Broken Rainbow

Information and support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender victims of domestic abuse.

Tel: 0300 999 5428

BT Advice Line Malicious Calls

Tel: 0800 666 700

Childline

Tel: 0800 11 11

Child Protection Helpline (NSPCC)

Tel: 0808 800 5000

Crisis

Tel: 0844 251 0111

Elder Abuse Response Helpline

Tel: 0808 808 8141

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Advice on forced marriages and honour based violence issues.

Tel: 020 7008 0151

Male Advice Line

Advice and support for men experiencing domestic abuse.

Tel: 0808 801 0327

Mankind

Helpline for male victims of domestic abuse.

Tel: 01823 334244

National Domestic Violence Helpline (24hrs)

Tel: 0808 200 247

Respect

Information and advice on domestic abuse perpetrator issues.

Tel: 0808 802 4040

**This publication is available in large print
for a copy call 01732 227414**

If you need help communication with us or understanding this document,
we can arrange for an interpreter to help you.

Please contact us on 01732 227000 stating your language & telephone number

This booklet has been supported by Sevenoaks District Council,
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

