

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse takes many forms. It is never acceptable and includes psychological, emotional, physical, financial, sexual and verbal abuse. If you're suffering domestic abuse, you're likely to feel isolated, hurt, upset and scared.

Domestic abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Coercive control is now recognised as the behaviour that underpins domestic abuse. It is a pattern of behaviour which seeks to take away the victim's sense of self, minimising their freedom and violating their human rights. Here are some examples of how coercion works:

- **Creating isolation.** Limiting your contact with friends and family;
- **Depriving you.** Constantly and deliberately taking away food, medicines or restricting your basic needs somehow;
- **Managing your time.** Controlling your movements – what you do, when you do it and for how long – and checking up on you excessively;
- **Restricting your everyday activities.** This might include anything from hobbies, where you go, who you see, to what you wear and when you can sleep;
- **Degrading you.** Repeatedly putting you down, using name-calling or bullying behaviour to make you feel worthless and humiliated;
- **Restricting your ways of communication.** Taking away your mobile phone, laptop or other devices, monitoring or restricting your social media and other online activities, including the type of information and services you're allowed to access, using spyware, changing passwords or hiding things;

- **Controlling where you go.** Restricting your movements so you're unable to leave the house or use a car or public transport to get to work, attend an appointment or visit family and friends;
- **Destroying your things.** This could be something of sentimental or material value to you – big or small – or even deleting emails and text messages that were important to you;
- **Holding the purse strings.** This can include constantly monitoring, commenting on and restricting your spending or giving you only a limited amount of money to spend (possibly from your own account);
- **Making unreasonable demands.** Which may include making changes to your appearance, daily routine or sex life. Often followed up with threats or intimidation – involving you or sometimes your children – pressure or physical restraint if you don't comply, for which you're often left blaming yourself.

Abuse can also encompass stalking and harassment both of which are criminal offences. If your partner's behaviour isolates you from friends, family or colleagues, then it's important to seek help.

Domestic Abuse is a crime – if you are in any danger please call 999.

Group Work

We offer early intervention programmes designed to help you develop confidence, self-esteem and an understanding of safety within intimate and close relationships. The programme incorporates a wide range of techniques, tools and activities designed to cover key aspects such as the impact of trauma, understanding of safety, self-awareness, education and skills for change. The programme aims to empower women to improve outcomes for all family members.

iMatter

This is our 12-part support and recovery programme, normally spread over consecutive weeks, for women who have experienced domestic abuse.

Who is it for?

iMatter is aimed at women who: have experienced conflict, violence and abuse; are assessed to be 'standard' or 'medium' risk using the Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk indicator checklist; and are willing to seek help.

It is a preventative programme in design but will also assist with recovery from the effects of abusive behaviour, empowering women to better understand healthy relationships.

Course design

iMatter is designed for groups but can also be delivered on an individual basis, where necessary and/or appropriate. The sessions will be facilitated by two specially trained New Era staff who will encourage and guide you, through topics focusing on preventing negative thoughts, feelings and patterns.

The course creates a safe, informal and supportive environment in which you can learn and develop at your own pace.

What can iMatter offer?

Women referred to iMatter can expect:

- An initial meeting with a caseworker who will conduct a needs and risk assessment to determine suitability;
- An action plan and care pathway tailored to you. This may or may not involve an offer of a place on the iMatter programme;
- If the programme is not deemed suitable, support is still available by means of individual support including:
 - Advocacy with schools, social services and other agencies;
 - Referrals to specialist organisations, such as drug/alcohol support services.

You can ask for ongoing support from New Era throughout participation with the iMatter programme.

Taking part in iMatter

Individuals will be assessed for suitability to attend iMatter by New Era. You will need to meet the following criteria:

- Be at risk or have experienced conflict, violence and/or abuse and you are not at high risk, and you are:
 - Female;
 - Living in Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent;
 - Aged 18 or over;
 - Aware that your self-esteem and confidence may need developing to recover from your experience;
 - Motivated to develop self-awareness within your existing and future relationships to prevent further abuse from occurring;
 - Willing to participate and share own experiences when comfortable.

The group work programme is a key part of your case management plan which continues throughout your involvement with the service.

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New Era services

Visit our website www.new-era.uk

Support for victims

Helpline [0300 303 3778](tel:03003033778)

Web and Live Chat www.new-era.uk

Email new-era@victimsupport.org.uk

New Era support for victims provided by Victim Support.

Services for perpetrators

Helpline [01785 601690](tel:01785601690)

Email new-era@rrpgov.uk

New Era services for perpetrators provided by the Reducing Reoffending Partnership.

All services are free and confidential

We will only share information without your permission if we are worried about your safety, someone else's safety, or have a safeguarding concern.



Group work-based programme for victims of domestic abuse – iMatter



Website www.new-era.uk

New Era is delivered in partnership by Victim Support and Reducing Reoffending Partnership

