

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse takes many forms and can happen to any member of the Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) community of any gender, sexuality, socio-economic status or age, often without them even realising it. It is never acceptable and can include psychological, emotional, physical, financial, sexual and verbal abuse.

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.

The following practices that may take place within the BAMER community are classed as domestic abuse, and, as well as being unacceptable, are also illegal.

- **Forced Marriage** – when one or more parties do not consent to the marriage or consent is obtained by force;
- **Honour-based Violence** – when a person is subjected to threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment in the name of so-called ‘honour’;
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – any procedure that involves the partial or total removal of a female’s external genitalia or any injury to them for non-medical reasons.

Modern Day Slavery and people trafficking – both of which are also illegal – can also involve domestic abuse.

If you’re suffering domestic abuse you’re likely to feel shame, isolated, hurt, upset, scared, confused, embarrassed and often unable to speak out due to cultural sensitivities and inter-racial differences within BAMER communities.

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.** Telling you where you can and cannot go, 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 that’s precious to you – big or small – or even deleting emails and text messages that were important to you;
- **Controlling your money.** 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 treating you like a servant, 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.

Support for BAMER victims:

New Era services are available to victims of domestic abuse wherever they live in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with safety and immediate risk prioritised.

Identifying and coming to terms with the effects of domestic abuse can often be a complex process, but it’s important you seek help as soon as you suspect you have a problem, for your own safety and wellbeing. Support is provided for as long as it is needed.

Specially trained staff are able to help you, whether you’ve made a report to the police or not.



Services available to BAMER victims

One-to-one support

New Era provides tailored individual support to BAMER victims which focuses on identifying the immediate needs of those seeking help and prioritising their safety. Support is provided by a dedicated Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor (IDVA) from the BAMER community. However, we recognise that sometimes – for cultural and other reasons – a victim might prefer to work with a different member of our team, not connected as closely to the BAMER community. You will be involved in all decision making throughout and support will be at your pace, whether it’s provided by an IDVA or one of our Domestic Abuse Practitioners (DAPs).

Our specially trained professionals will:

- Listen to you in a non-judgemental way and in your language of choice;
- Respond effectively in a crisis situation, prioritising your safety and confidentiality;
- Understand any complex needs you may have, taking account of cultural sensitivities;
- Provide emotional support, encourage you to feel comfortable talking about your experiences and help you to come to terms with what’s happened;
- Provide information to help you and your family stay safe and practical advice on immigration, housing, benefits, legal and other matters;
- Help you to support any children who may have been involved;
- Signpost you to other appropriate services and agencies that you may need to support the next stage of your recovery.



Children and Young People (CYP)

New Era supports children and young people aged between four and 18 who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse. Our dedicated team of CYP domestic abuse practitioners offer both individual and group support programmes.

Consent and confidentiality

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

If information is shared, we will always try and discuss with you why we are passing this on and what happens next.

Sometimes the best way to help might be to involve other agencies. In these cases, we will always ask your permission to share your information.

New Era services:

Visit our website www.new-era.uk

Support for victims

Helpline **0300 303 3778**

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 904770**

Email new-era@justice.gov.uk

New Era services for perpetrators provided by the Probation Service.

All services are free and confidential

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



Support for Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) victims of domestic abuse

Group work

We offer group work for adult women, parents, carers and children who have been the victim of domestic abuse. Although not tailored specifically to the BAMER community, all our courses are designed to help participants develop confidence, self-esteem and an understanding of safety within intimate and close relationships. All our programmes incorporate 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 programmes aim to benefit all family members.



Website www.new-era.uk

New Era is delivered in partnership by Victim Support and the Probation Service



Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent