

Keeping you and your children safe:

It is important you have a safety plan to keep you and your children safe. It helps to plan ahead for future violence as well as increasing your safety within the relationship or if you decide to leave.

You can not stop the perpetrators violence, only they can do that.

Safety first: Plan ahead

1. Tell someone about your situation - get help.
2. Contact an IDVA for specialist support, advice, and help with safety plans and practical support. This service is free and confidential.
3. Keep your mobile phone charged and on you at all times. Call 999 for the Police in an emergency.
4. If you feel you are in danger at home, consider a code word that is recognised by a friend or neighbour who can call the police for you.
5. If you are planning to leave, don't leave any clues (such as addresses, leaflets or a packed bag) and consider what you tell your children as they may unknowingly disclose your plan.
6. Keep some money, clothes and any medication in a bag at a trusted friend's house. Keep your identity, children's birth certificates, benefits and banking documents and address book safe.
7. Explain to children that it is not their fault and they are never to blame for the violence. Tell them they should never try and stop the violence as they could get hurt. Teach them to dial 999 in an emergency.
8. Keep with you any important emergency numbers such as the Domestic Violence 24 hour helpline or an IDVA.

Useful Contact Numbers:

In an emergency or danger always call 999

Domestic Violence 24 hour Helpline	0808 2000 247
Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) at Victims Support	020 7244 4552
Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) at Women's Aid	0776 458 2194
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) at The WISH Centre	0208 416 7277 07527 187 177
Harrow Children & Families' Services	0208 901 2690
Harrow Adult Safeguarding Service	0208 420 9453
Harrow Housing Team	0208 424 1093
Harrow Women's Centre	0208 422 1100
Harrow Police Community Safety Unit	0208 733 3462
Harrow Drug & Alcohol Service COMPASS	0208 861 2787
The WISH Centre	0208 416 7277
Forced Marriage Unit	0207 008 0151
West London Rape Crisis	0208 567 7347
Havens Sexual Assault Service	0203 312 1101
LGBT Helpline Broken Rainbow	0300 999 5428
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Child line	0800 1111
Stalking Helpline	0808 802 0300
Caryl Thomas Clinic (Sexual Health/Contraceptives)	0208 863 7004
Female Genital Mutilation Helpline	0800 028 3550

(For more leaflets contact 0208 736 6285)

Domestic & Sexual Violence

Help & support for Victims & their children



All services in this leaflet are free & confidential offering emotional as well as practical support



- ✓ **You are not alone**
- ✓ **You will be listened to**
- ✓ **You will be believed**

What is Domestic & Sexual Violence?

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (physical, psychological, emotional, sexual or financial) between people who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes sexual violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, honour based violence, stalking and harassment.

Domestic & Sexual Violence can include:

- Slapping, punching, pulling hair, biting, burning, hitting, choking, kicking
- Rape, sexual assault, being forced to watch or act out pornography, indecent phone calls, being spoken to in sexually degrading ways, unwanted touching
- Controlling who you see or talk to, being put down in front of others, being blamed for everything, being humiliated
- Preventing you getting or keeping a job, being kept without money, having your wages or benefits taken from you
- Being watched, followed, sent unwanted letters, phone calls or messages sent through other people. Reading your text messages, email or social network profile
- Trying to make you feel like you are crazy, constant criticism, making you feel bad about yourself, threatening to commit suicide or hurt themselves
- Abusing or threats to hurt children or pets
- Female Genital Mutilation or cutting
- Being forced to marry someone

No one deserves to be abused.
No one has the right to abuse you.

Domestic & Sexual Violence is a crime.



- ✓ Do not put up with it
- ✓ Report it
- ✓ Get the help you need

Mental & Emotional Health:

Domestic & sexual violence does not just cause physical injuries, it can also cause mental, emotional and psychological distress.

This can make you feel:

- like you have no confidence or self worth
- anxious, worried or frightened
- tearful, sad or depressed
- suicidal or wanting to harm yourself
- like you can't cope

Do not suffer in silence, talk to an IDVA, counsellor, your GP or a trusted friend to get the support you need. All services listed on the back of this leaflet are free and confidential.

Drugs and Alcohol:

- Drugs and/or alcohol may be an issue for you, your partner or a family member
- You may be using drugs and/or alcohol to cope with violence
- The perpetrator might be forcing you to use drugs and/or alcohol
- The perpetrator might be threatening to tell someone about your drug and/or alcohol use to stop you getting help

If you are using drugs or alcohol this will NOT stop you getting the help you need with domestic or sexual violence.

Contact COMPASS who can support you or your partner with drug and alcohol issues on **0208 861 2787**. This service is free and confidential.

Perpetrators of violence can use drugs and alcohol or mental health as an *excuse* for their violence. They are NOT an excuse. No one has the right to abuse someone else.

What is an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA)?

An IDVA is someone who can support you and your children by providing information about what choices you have and supporting you with the choice you make. IDVAs are independent from police or children's services and their service is free and confidential.

They can help with:

- Safety planning for you and your children
- What options you have if you want to leave your partner
- Advice about housing, benefits and other practical issues
- Support with court or civil action
- Advice on supporting your children and reducing the impact violence may be having on them
- Represent you at MARAC

What is MARAC?

MARAC stands for Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. It is a meeting that happens once a month and is attended by services in Harrow that help victims and their children by focussing on their safety.

Due to the fact that there are high numbers of domestic violence victims, this meeting only works with victims that are assessed as high-risk by services that are supporting them.

An IDVA will attend this meeting on your behalf and will talk to you after the meeting about what safety plans can be put in place to help you.

If you have any questions or need support contact an IDVA on **020 7244 4552** or **0776 458 2194**.