

Remember

Don't try to 'fix' the problem (or the abuser!) yourself. Not only might this be dangerous for the victim of abuse but it could be dangerous for you.

If you are concerned for someone's safety, or the safety of their children, then we all share a responsibility to report this. You can get help through your Local Authority Adult or Children Safeguarding Services, or in an emergency the police.

National helplines:

Victim Support 24 hour Supportline:
08 08 16 89 111

National 24 hour Domestic Abuse
Helpline: **0808 2000 247**

Men's Advice Line: **0808 801 0327** or
email: **info@mensadvice.org.uk**

LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline:
0300 999 5428 or email:
help@galop.org.uk

ChildLine: **0800 1111**



Contact your local Victim Support:

Supportline: 08 08 16 89 111
FREE CONFIDENTIAL INDEPENDENT



Registered office: Victim Support, 1 Bridge Street, Derby, DE1 3HZ
T: 020 7268 0200 Next Generation Text: 18001 020 7268 0200 Registered charity no. 298028
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How to help those living with abuse or control during Coronavirus



www.victimsupport.org.uk

VictimSupport @VictimSupport victimsupport_uk

How to help those living with abuse or control during Coronavirus

While we may not be seeing as much of our friends and family at the moment, we're all trying hard to keep in touch. If you are concerned that a friend, family member or neighbour may be living with domestic abuse or coercive control then there are some really simple things you can do to help. Here are some of our top tips:

Ask

If everything is ok

Try to find a safe time to ask if everything is okay. You are not prying, but you are letting them know that you have noticed that something is going on, or that they seem stressed or upset. You are letting them know that they are not alone and somebody cares about them.

How best to contact them

Think about how you contact them, and if the abuser could see or hear this contact. Could you start by sending a friendly or amusing message just to let them know you are thinking of them?

How you can help

Sometimes what's happening on the television, in news, in books, or on social media can be a starting point for a conversation. Be aware that this can trigger someone disclosing what is happening to them, so be prepared to help.



Listen

Be patient

Don't expect them to tell you what's happening the first time you ask. Acknowledging, or sometimes even recognising, that a relationship is unhealthy or abusive is really difficult.

Be there for them

It can take a really long time to trust an outsider, or be open about what is happening. By asking you have let them know that when they are ready you are there for them.

Let them know you believe them

If someone has been brave enough to tell you about the abuse, then let them know you believe them, and that you don't blame or judge them. Remember the only person responsible for the abuse is the abuser.

Try not to offer lots of advice

It is very kind and sometimes all too easy to offer advice; it is a natural reaction when we want to help. However, offering solutions or telling them what they should do can make people feel judged and ashamed. Listen, believe but try not to offer lots of advice.

Help

Listening is sometimes enough

Sometimes just talking to someone who listens and believes is enough. You may never know how much you helped someone just by doing that one simple thing.

Encourage them to talk

If you can, encourage them to talk to a professional and get up to date advice.

Help with safety planning

You may be able to help with safety planning. If it is safe to, you could offer to be a safe place, maybe to hold copies of important documents, or a place to store an 'emergency bag'.

