

## **Domestic Violence & Abuse**

Is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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 abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional. It can happen to anyone regardless of marital status, age, religion, ethnicity, disability or sexuality. The abuser may be a current or former partner, a parent, child, sibling, extended-family member or same-sex partner.

Men also experience domestic abuse from both female and male partners. WWMWA work directly with high risk male victims in our IDVA service, young males in our CIDVA/CRUSH and CYP projects and we also signpost to males organisations that can offer help and support.

## **Sexual Violence & Abuse**

Women in controlling and abusive relationships may experience sexual violence including rape, sexual assault, coercion or exploitation. We also support women who are involved with or exiting prostitution or who have been trafficked into the sex industry. Such women may experience abuse, rape and physical violence on a daily basis, compounded by social isolation.

## **Women at risk of forced marriage or so-called “honour crime”**

We support women to make their own choices and stay safe when those choices conflict with the views of others. We can provide specialist workers to support women from black, minority ethnic and refugee groups (BMER).

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

We support women and girl children at risk of FGM, a practice that is illegal in Britain. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for cultural or religious reasons and can lead to appalling injury, infection and death.

## **West Mercia Women's Aid 24hr Domestic Abuse Helpline**

**Herefordshire, Shropshire,  
Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire**

**Our Domestic Violence Helpline  
operates across West Mercia and  
offers confidential support,  
information, advice and access to  
refuge or emergency accommodation,  
providing emergency transport when  
necessary. It is a free-phone number  
and is staffed 24 hours a day by  
trained workers.**

### **Worcestershire**

**0800 980 3331**

*24 hour support*

**Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford &  
Wrekin**

**0800 783 1359**

*24 hour support*

## **Refuge Services**

Our refuges are located at confidential addresses across West Mercia, providing safe, temporary accommodation with on-site support. Women can live in our refuges with or without children, regardless of age, culture, disability or sexuality, as long as we are able to meet their needs. Some women stay for a night or two while they think about their options; others live in the refuge until they are re-housed. The typical length of stay is 6 months. Families can access our refuges 24hrs via our helpline.

## **Community Support**

One to one support is available to women living in their own homes or in temporary accommodation across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. We support women at all stages of an abusive relationship whether they are in a relationship or have left. Appointments are confidential and can be accessed through our helpline during office hours.

## **Group Work**

We offer a comprehensive programme of group work such as the Freedom Programme, Parenting through domestic abuse, Power to Change and Recovery Toolkit. We believe this work is integral to our services and helps change lives.

## **Support through the court process**

Support through the legal, civil and court process is essential for women experiencing domestic violence and abuse. We aim to work with other agencies to ensure women receive appropriate legal advice and support.

## About West Mercia Women's Aid

We are a specialist domestic abuse service provider, staffed and managed by women, and working with women and children affected by domestic violence, utilising the knowledge and experience gained from over 30 years of service delivery and campaigning.

We challenge gender bullying, the erosion of women's rights and social tolerance of oppression of women and girls, regardless of their religion or culture.

Our range of services operates across Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, offering a 24hr helpline. In all of these areas we have an IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) Service working with high risk victims at risk of significant harm and/or homicide. In Herefordshire and Worcestershire we have refuge or other safe accommodation, Community support and group programmes. We provide emotional and practical support to empower women and children to take control of their own lives and come to terms with their experiences, from initial assessment of need and risk, through to long-term recovery.

We support women from all backgrounds and with a variety of issues, such as mental health problems, learning difficulty, substance use, self-harm, disability and no recourse to public funds – as long as we can safely meet their needs.

West Mercia Women's Aid is committed to a co-ordinated multi-agency response to the problem of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. We seek to work together with other professionals within local, regional and national partnerships to improve service provision and promote the protection of women and children. We also offer specialist training for other professionals and organisations.

## Other Useful Numbers

**National Domestic Violence Helpline:**  
0808 2000 247

**Live Fear Free Helpline (Wales)**  
0808 8010 800

**Victim Support**  
08 08 16 89 111

**Respect**  
0808 802 4040 (free from landlines and most mobiles)

Open: Monday – Friday 9am-5pm  
Email [info@respectphoneline.org.uk](mailto:info@respectphoneline.org.uk)  
Website: [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)

- **Herefordshire Service & Head Office:**  
P O Box 74, Hereford  
HR4 9WB  
☎ 0800 783 1359  
Email:  
[info@westmerciawomensaid.org](mailto:info@westmerciawomensaid.org)

- **Worcester Service:**  
P O Box 660, Worcester  
WR4 9UU  
☎ 0800 980 3331

[www.westmerciawomensaid.org](http://www.westmerciawomensaid.org)

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**Supporting and  
empowering  
women  
and children  
affected by  
domestic abuse  
or other forms of  
violence**

**In Herefordshire, Worcestershire,  
Shropshire & Telford & Wrekin**

**Registered Charity No 1078496**