

Living in an abusive relationship can make you feel trapped. Talking to someone who understands, sharing what is happening can help you:

- get things into perspective,
- realise what is happening,
- identify who is to blame and
- think about ways to make things better.

In addition to your midwife / health visitor, support worker or early years officer you might like to get help from:

**Fife Cedar Plus**  
**01592 583676**

Provides therapeutic group work and support for children age 0 – 16 and their mothers who have experienced domestic abuse. Please phone for more information and to make referrals.

**Fife Women's Aid**  
**0808 802 5555**

Services for women and children with experience of domestic abuse, including refuge, support and help to think about your choices and next steps.

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline**  
**0800 027 1234**

Telephone service offering compassionate and non-judgemental support, open 24 hours a day, all year round.

**Police Scotland 101**

Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers can advise on your safety and offer practical assistance.

**In an emergency call 999**



# Parenting through domestic abuse

for mothers with babies and young children



Working together to give children the best start



# What is domestic abuse?

“Domestic abuse (as gender-based abuse) can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends).”



# Parenting through domestic abuse

Babies and young children are affected by what happens in their family. They can pick up on the feelings and emotions of those around them. Perpetrators of domestic abuse are known to intentionally undermine mother's parenting skills. It's important for babies and children to feel secure.

It can be difficult for fearful mothers to build loving, caring relationships with their children.

## Children Need:

- A safe and peaceful environment
- Love and affection
- Play and interaction
- Routines and boundaries
- Time with their mother / primary caregiver
- To be fed and cared for



It is important to ask for help sooner rather than later. Domestic abuse is difficult to talk about, but telling someone is the first important step towards support, protection and recovery. Speak to:

- Your family or a friend
- Your midwife / health visitor, support worker, early years officer, or
- One of the specialist agencies listed in this leaflet

There are services in your area that can help keep you safe and care for your child. These include groups where mothers can get support to help their child; practical support like home security advice; as well as more specialist advice agencies.