## Helpful Numbers

**Emergency - Police 999**

**Police Domestic Violence Officers**
- other than in an emergency ring **0845 33 00 222**
*and ask for the officer for your area. They will also be able to put you in touch with local specialist support groups for example from the Black and Minority ethnic community.*

**Hertfordshire's Domestic Violence/Abuse Line 08088 088 088**
*An information line giving advice, support and information.*

**24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247**

**Women's Aid 0808 2000 247**
*A national charity that can offer support, advice and information on all aspects of domestic violence.*

**Women's Refuge 0808 808 9999**
*Accommodation and support for women who are experiencing domestic violence.*

**Victim Support 08453 030 900**
*Offers information and support to victims of crime, whether or not they have reported the crime to the police*

**NSPCC 08088 005 000**
*National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.*
*A charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children.*

**Mankind 08707 944 124**
*ManKind helps and advises male victims of domestic violence.*

**Broken Rainbow 0208 539 9507**
*24 - hour helpline service for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who are experiencing domestic violence.*

**Elder Abuse 0808 8088141**

An organisation that aims to prevent abuse in old age by raising awareness, providing education and promoting research.

**Tulip Project 0151 637 6363**
*A project that support parents who have experienced violence at the hands of their children.*

**Jewish Women's Aid 0800 591 203**
*Aims to break the silence surrounding domestic violence through education and awareness-raising programmes.*

HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY

# Domestic Violence Safety Plan

## Living without the offender after separation

- Seek expert legal advice on child contact and residence applications, and about options for injunctions
- Notify neighbours, employers and schools about any injunction, and ask them to call the Police immediately if they see the offender nearby
- Make sure the school and those who care for any children know who has authorisation to collect them
- Consider changing schools, work patterns, hours and route taken
- Avoid places frequented by the Offender
- Make up a codeword to give to people to indicate you need help
- Call the Police immediately if you fear for your safety
- Discuss keeping safe with a Hertfordshire Police Domestic Violence Officer

## What to take with you when you leave for you and your children

- Birth certificates
- School and medical records
- Welfare and immigration documents
- Money
- Bank details, cheque book, credit/debit cards
- Tenancy agreement, lease or mortgage papers, house deeds
- Car registration and insurance papers, driving licence, MOT
- Passport
- Marriage certificate/divorce papers
- Custody papers
- Any injunctions/legal papers
- Benefit books - income support, child benefit, housing benefit
- House, car and work keys
- Mobile phone or phone card
- Essential medication and prescriptions
- Address/telephone book
- Photographs/jewellery/sentimental items
- Child's favourite toys and books
- Toiletries, nappies, essential baby equipment
- Clothes

## What is Domestic Violence?

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or who have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality'

## When are victims most at risk?

- Separation or Child Contact Issues
  - trying to terminate a relationship or participating in child contact issues
- Pregnancy or New Birth - 30% of Domestic Violence starts or can escalate at this time
- Escalation - increases in frequency and severity indicate greater risk. The severity of violence tends to escalate after each incident
- Cultural Issues - these can lead to reduced access to services and social isolation
- Stalking - behaviour such as watching, following and constant calling indicates a heightened risk
- Sexual Assault - those who are sexually assaulted are subject to more serious injury and perpetrators are more dangerous

## What can you do?

If you are being abused by your partner or someone close to you, there are 3 important steps you can take

- recognise that it is happening to you
- accept that you are not to blame
- get help

The most important thing you can do is tell someone you trust. Never be afraid to ask for help and in an emergency ring **999 (minicom 0800 112 999).**

Hertfordshire Police have specialist officers experienced in dealing with Domestic Violence who will be able to help you.

To contact them ring **0845 33 00 222** and ask to speak to the Domestic Violence Officer for your area.
In addition you can refer to the numbers listed on the back page for further advice, support and information

## Leaving Safely

- Have a small bag already packed with spare clothes, keys, phone numbers and money in case you need to leave quickly.
  You may prefer to keep this bag at a trusted friends or at work. Make sure it is somewhere that the offender does not have access to.
- Talk to the children beforehand about the possibility of leaving in an emergency if it is appropriate to do so. Agree a codeword or a plan with them.
- Take the children with you when you leave whatever the long-term arrangements will be
- Leave when it is safe to do so
- If you later discover that you have left something essential behind, you can arrange to go back for it with a Police Officer present to prevent a Breach of the Peace. Do not return unaccompanied.
- Consider whom to trust to tell that you are leaving
- Take identification that might help others protect you from the abuser, such as a recent photograph or details of their car

## Keeping safe when staying with the offender

- Seek support from professional organisations such as those listed on the rear of this booklet.
- Hertfordshire Police Domestic Violence Officers can put you in touch with local and national agencies and groups who can help you
- Let those people know how they can contact you safely so they can keep in touch e.g. through a work number or at a friends address
- Make sure that you remove all traces of contact with those organisations from your computer/phone bills/mobile bills
- You can use the Internet in Libraries and Internet Cafes if you need to look something up away from your home address
- Receive medical help for any injuries ensuring they are recorded and if possible photographed. These may be used at a later date to support court cases or re-housing applications. Keep a record of any incident

## Improving Security

You may need to consult your landlord or your solicitor if the property is jointly owned or is a joint tenancy, consider:

- Changing the locks, installing a security system, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and/or outside security lighting
- Changing your routes and routines
- Changing your telephone number, go ex directory, screen your calls
- The Home Security Service for Hertfordshire may be able to assist with the cost and installation of security measures
- For Watford and Dacorum ring **01923 801138**
- For Hertsmere, North Herts, St Albans, Stevenage, Welwyn and Hatfield ring **01707 255711 / 255710**
- For Broxbourne and East Herts ring **01279 755109**

## Keeping safe during a violent incident

- If you are able to, in an emergency ring 999 (minicom 0800 112 999) If you can, try to leave the phone off the hook so the operator can still hear you.
- If you are unable to ring 999, telephone or text a friend, relative or neighbour with a pre-arranged code word indicating you need help so they can call the Police for you
- If you are unable to avoid an incident, try to stay away from rooms with no exit or with potential weapons in them such as the kitchen
- Plan escape routes before you need to use them
- If your partner injures you and you have not been able to call the Police, see your Doctor or attend Hospital as soon as possible. Contact the police as soon as you can safely do so

## Identify safe people and places

- Think about telling trusted neighbours, friends and work colleagues about your situation
- Identify safe places nearest to your home which are staffed 24 hours such as supermarkets, garages, hospitals and firestations. Don't be embarrassed or ashamed to ask for help in an emergency
- Locate the nearest working phone box
- Buy a mobile phone if you can afford one - if you can't afford one Hertfordshire Police Domestic Violence Officers may be able to provide a phone supported by T Mobile
- If you have a car keep it topped up with petrol
- Keep a spare car key somewhere safe