

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV)

Resource Booklet

Supports and interventions
for adults who experience
Domestic Abuse



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Introduction and Acknowledgements

This resource booklet is the result of interagency collaboration to raise awareness around domestic abuse and to ensure that effective responses are in place. It can be used as a resource to support professionals who work with women, children and families in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) area. It is a joint project of Southside Addressing Violence Effectively (SAVE) and DLR Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC).

SAVE is a dynamic Interagency Forum that was set up in 2005 to tackle the issue of domestic abuse in the absence of adequate services in the DLR county. The Forum also advocated for the development of a refuge and other well-funded community-based services that provide a safe and supportive environment for women and their children at risk of domestic abuse. SAVE organises regular conversations and training for the 20 member organisations and professionals in the county. It is hosted by Southside Partnership.

The resource booklet is also supplemented by a pocket size guide which will serve as a quick reference to emergency services.

This resource booklet is the product of multiple interagency partners working together to highlight awareness of domestic abuse. In the first instance, DLR CYPSC wishes to thank and acknowledge the Roscommon CYPSC and services whose original work on the County Roscommon Domestic Abuse Resource Pack provides the template for this document.

We wish to thank Miriam Kivlehan who was the independent consultant working on this resource booklet and the following members for submitting feedback on this resource pack:

- Daniela Naab, previous Project Leader of the Women's Programme and Interagency Group SAVE
- Miriam Callanan, Project Worker for Interagency Group SAVE
- John Doyle, Interim Co-ordinator DLR DATF
- Helena O' Brien, DLR CYPSC Co-ordinator
- Sonya Logan, Service Manager – Refuge and Community Based Services, Sonas

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Purpose and Scope of the Resource Booklet

This resource booklet has been crafted to serve as a tool for a diverse range of professionals, including GPs and health care workers (mental health services/addiction services/homeless services), social workers, public service personnel, teachers and educators, social care, youth workers and community development personnel. Its primary objective is to equip these professionals with an understanding, a rich array of information, and to signpost those who may be experiencing domestic abuse.

With this knowledge, professionals will be better prepared to engage with those who experience domestic abuse and/or who may disclose their experiences of abuse, enabling them to signpost to the relevant service. This resource booklet focuses on the supports and interventions for adults who experience Domestic Abuse. Within the pocket size guide there is a QR code to Barnardos Childhood Domestic Abuse resources which provide supports and information for Children and Young People who experience Domestic Abuse.



Importance of Addressing Domestic Abuse

Addressing domestic abuse is of paramount importance for those experiencing it due to the profound and lasting impact it can have on their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. There are several key reasons why addressing domestic abuse is crucial:

1. **Protection of Human Rights** Addressing domestic abuse is essential to safeguard the fundamental human rights of women, including the right to live free from violence and discrimination.
2. **Physical and Emotional Well-being** It is crucial for the physical and emotional well-being of women as domestic abuse can lead to severe physical injuries, long-term health consequences, and emotional trauma.
3. **Psychological Health** Domestic abuse can have a profound impact on women's mental health, and addressing it is vital to prevent conditions such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
4. **Preventing Fatalities** Acting against domestic abuse is a matter of life and death, as it can escalate to fatal outcomes if left unaddressed.
5. **Empowerment** Addressing domestic abuse empowers women by providing them with resources, support, and opportunities to regain control of their lives and make choices that promote their well-being.
6. **Children's Safety** For those with children, addressing domestic abuse is crucial to ensure the safety and well-being of their children, who are often witnesses to the abuse.
7. **Breaking the Cycle** Intervening in domestic abuse situations helps break the cycle of violence, preventing future generations from experiencing the same trauma.
8. **Social and Economic Stability** Addressing domestic abuse is essential for women's social and economic stability, as it can lead to job loss, homelessness, and financial dependency.

9. **Community Well-being** By addressing domestic abuse, communities can become safer and more supportive environments for all members, reducing the social costs associated with abuse.
10. **Promoting Gender Equality** Addressing domestic abuse is a critical step towards achieving gender equality, as it challenges harmful gender norms and promotes respectful relationships.
11. **Access to Justice** It ensures that women have access to justice and legal protections, reinforcing the importance of the rule of law.
12. **Public Health** Addressing domestic abuse is a public health imperative, as it reduces the burden on healthcare systems and prevents the long-term health consequences of abuse.
13. **Ending Isolation** For many, addressing domestic abuse ends their social isolation and connects them with support networks that can aid in their recovery.
14. **Recovery and Healing** It provides people with the opportunity for recovery and healing, allowing them to rebuild their lives after abuse.
15. **Preventing Re-victimisation** Intervention helps prevent revictimisation, ensuring that the person does not continue to endure abuse in subsequent relationships.

Supporting those who experience domestic abuse is vital for their immediate safety, long-term well-being, healthy development, and the prevention of intergenerational cycles of abuse. It also contributes to creating a society that values and protects the rights of all individuals in their homes and relationships. Addressing domestic abuse is not only a moral imperative but also a societal responsibility that contributes to the well-being and safety of all and communities as a whole.



Statistics*

1 in 4

Woman Experience Domestic Abuse



1 in 7

Men experience Domestic Abuse

28,638

Contacts with Women's Aid National and Regional Support Services



8,682

Contacts with Men's Aid

40%

The proportion of adults who experienced sexual violence in their lifetime with higher levels for women



52%

Women



28%

Men

*Statistics derived from Women's Aid Annual Report 2023, Men's Aid Annual Report 2023 and Central Statistics Office (CSO) Sexual Violence Survey 2022.

Understanding Domestic Abuse

Key Terms

The terms **domestic violence**, **domestic abuse**, and **intimate partner violence** are often used interchangeably, but they can have slightly different connotations based on context or legal definitions in different jurisdictions. However, they all refer to abusive behaviours that occur within intimate or familial relationships.

Traditionally the term **domestic violence (DV)** has been most used in Ireland which over time has become a broad term to include physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, technology-facilitated abuse and other harmful actions aimed at controlling or exerting power over a partner. In recent times however, it has also been considered limiting due to outdated perceptions which limit its associations to physical assault of adult victims by adult perpetrators.

On the other hand, **domestic abuse (DA)** is regarded as a more inclusive term as it both encompasses all of the above range of abusive and controlling behaviours that can occur within domestic relationships. It also acknowledges children and young people as victims in their own right rather than merely witnesses of abuse. The term is also useful in non-legal discussions and awareness campaigns to emphasise the need to address abuse in various types of familial relationships.

The term **intimate partner violence (IPV)** specifically refers to abusive behaviours within romantic or dating relationships, where one partner seeks to control, dominate, or harm the other. This term is often used to highlight abuse within romantic partnerships and to emphasise that the abuser is someone who is, or was, closely involved in an intimate relationship with the victim. Intimate partner violence acknowledges that abusive behaviours

can occur in various stages of a romantic relationship, including dating, cohabiting, and marriage. It is also a useful frame for recognising abuse in relationships between young people and same-sex couples which do not align with the traditional family unit or heteronormative diad.

In the glossary of terms, there is also a clear distinction between a victim of domestic abuse and a survivor. The word **victim** refers to someone who is currently experiencing or has recently experienced domestic abuse; whereas **survivor** refers to someone who has managed to escape or overcome the abusive situation and is no longer under the control of the abuser.

While these terms are often used interchangeably in many contexts, it is important to understand the nuances of usage, as each may highlight different aspects of abusive behaviours or stages within the cycle of abuse in domestic and intimate relationships. For the purposes of this resource booklet the term Domestic Abuse is used throughout and the following definitions provide a comprehensive understanding of its reach and scope.



Definitions

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse refers to a pattern of behaviours and actions perpetrated within a familial or intimate relationship, characterised by the exertion of power and control over one partner by another, often resulting in physical, emotional, sexual, and financial harm. This harmful dynamic may encompass various forms of abuse, including physical violence, intimidation, humiliation, isolation, threats, and manipulation.

Coercive control

Coercive control is a pervasive element of domestic abuse, involves sustained patterns of manipulation and domination, where the victim's autonomy is systematically undermined, restricting their freedom and agency.

The Gendered Nature of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is deeply rooted in power and control dynamics, often driven by societal and cultural norms that perpetuate sex and gender inequality.

The gendered nature of domestic abuse refers to the fact that it disproportionately affects women and girls, and it is often linked to unequal power relations between males and females. While it's important to note that men can also be victims of domestic abuse, the overwhelming majority of cases involve women as victims and men as perpetrators.

The key aspects of the gendered nature of domestic abuse include:



Prevalence

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, with the majority of victims being female. This reflects the broader sex and gender inequalities in society.

Power and Control

Domestic abuse is frequently rooted in an abuser's desire for power and control over their victim. Traditional gender norms that depict men as dominant and women as submissive can contribute to this dynamic.

Types of Abuse

The forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse, are often influenced by gendered power dynamics. For instance, societal norms might perpetuate the idea that men have a right to control their partner's actions or finances.

Reproductive Coercion

In some cases, abusers use reproductive coercion to control women's reproductive choices, which can include forcing them to have or not have children against their will.

Isolation

Abusers may isolate victims from family and friends, making them more dependent on the abuser for support. This tactic can be more effective when women are already subject to societal restrictions and limited social networks.

Victim Blaming

Gendered attitudes may lead to victim-blaming, where society holds women responsible for the abuse they endure, suggesting they somehow provoked it.

Stereotypes and Shame

Gender norms and stereotypes can perpetuate feelings of shame and guilt in victims, making it difficult for them to come forward or seek help.

Barriers to Reporting

Cultural norms that value privacy or discourage speaking out about family matters can further discourage women from reporting abuse.

Legal and Institutional Responses

Gender biases in legal and institutional responses can result in cases being dismissed or inadequately addressed.

Intersectionality

The gendered nature of domestic abuse intersects with other factors like race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation, leading to complex experiences for marginalised women.

It's crucial to recognise the gendered nature of domestic abuse to develop effective prevention strategies, and to support systems and policy interventions. Addressing domestic abuse requires dismantling the unequal power dynamics between genders, challenging harmful gender norms, and working towards a more equitable society where all individuals can live free from violence and coercion.

Types of Domestic Abuse

As defined above, domestic abuse is an all-encompassing term for a range of harmful behaviours that may occur within any intimate or family relationship, where such behaviour aims to exert control and power over a partner and any children or young people dependant on the relationship. The following list provides an overview of the different forms of domestic abuse, with examples of each:

- 1. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse involves the use of force to cause bodily harm or injury to a partner. It can include hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, choking, or any other actions that cause pain or harm. It also includes assault using a weapon (gun, knife or household item), physical restraint, imprisonment and killing.
- 2. Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

Emotional abuse targets a person's self-esteem, emotional well-being, and mental health. It involves tactics that belittle, demean, manipulate, and control the victim's emotions and thoughts such as constantly criticising and insulting a partner, making them feel worthless and powerless. It may also include the destruction of personal property; threats of suicide or self-harm; or the threatening or abuse of children in front of the victim.
- 3. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves coercing or forcing a partner into sexual activities without their consent. It includes any unwanted sexual behaviour or violation such as rape, sexual assault, stealthing, or manipulation through guilt or threats into engaging in sexual acts against their will. It may also include the forced exploitation of the victim in prostitution or other sex-trade activities; the control of contraception; or the withholding of sex or intimacy by the perpetrator as an act of abuse or control of the victim.
- 4. Financial Abuse**

Financial abuse entails controlling or restricting a partner's access to financial resources, creating dependency and limiting their ability to make independent decisions regarding money. It may include withholding money from a partner or their children; monitoring spending; controlling access to bank accounts, social welfare or credit cards; stealing from or defrauding a partner of money or assets; withholding physical resources such as food, clothes, shelter, medications or personal hygiene products; preventing the victim from working, studying, or choosing or progressing through an occupation.
- 5. Coercive Control**

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviours aimed at dominating and manipulating a partner. It involves isolating the victim, monitoring their actions, exerting control over various aspects of their life, and fostering dependency. An example might be restricting a partner's interactions with friends and family, monitoring their calls and messages, and using threats to maintain control.

- 6. Isolation**

Isolation involves cutting off a partner from their social support networks, leaving them feeling isolated, helpless, and vulnerable. This may manifest as discouraging or preventing a partner from spending time with friends, family, co-workers, neighbours or engaging in social activities outside of the home.
- 7. Intimidation**

Intimidation includes the use of threats, fear, and manipulation to gain control over a partner's actions and decisions. This may include threatening to harm a partner, their loved ones, or their pets if they don't comply with the abuser's demands.
- 8. Gaslighting**

Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation in which an abuser seeks to make their victim doubt their own perceptions, memories, and reality. It's a tactic used to gain control over the victim and undermine their self-confidence. In the context of domestic abuse, gaslighting can be a particularly insidious and damaging form of manipulation. Gaslighting can manifest in various ways, including denying things that were said or done, deflecting blame onto the victim, trivialising the victim's feelings, and creating confusion about events. It's essential for individuals to recognise these tactics and seek support if they suspect they are being subjected to gaslighting in a domestic abuse situation.
- 9. Technology-Facilitated Abuse**

Also referred to as *digital abuse* or *cyber abuse* involves the use of technology to control, intimidate, manipulate, or harm a partner within an intimate or familial relationship. This form of abuse leverages digital tools and platforms to exert power and control over the victim, extending the dynamics of domestic abuse into the virtual realm. Examples include sending harassing or threatening messages, emails, or social media posts to the victim; use of fake accounts or impersonation of the victim online; use of spyware, tracking apps, or other means to monitor the victim's online activities, location, and communication.
- 10. Stalking**

Stalking involves persistent unwanted attention, monitoring, and harassment of a partner, both physically and online. It may include continuously following a partner physically or virtually, tracking their movements, and sending threatening messages.
- 11. Triangulation**

Triangulation refers to a manipulation tactic involving a child, used by an abusive partner to create tension, confusion, and control within the family dynamic. It may involve using a child as a messenger or as a source of information to facilitate the perpetration of abuse against the victim.

These forms of domestic abuse often interconnect and can escalate over time. It's crucial to recognise that abuse is not limited to physical violence alone; it encompasses a range of behaviours that seek to control, intimidate, and harm a partner.

Risk and Protective Factors

Risk and protective factors play a crucial role in understanding the dynamics of domestic abuse. They help identify the factors that contribute to the likelihood of a person experiencing domestic abuse as well as those that can mitigate its impact. Keep in mind that these factors can vary depending on individual circumstances. Here are some common risk and protective factors for those experiencing domestic abuse:

Risk Factors:

- 1. History of Abuse** Women who have experienced abuse in previous relationships or from family members may be at a higher risk of experiencing domestic abuse.
- 2. Power and Control Imbalance** When there is a significant power and control imbalance in a relationship, the risk of abuse increases. This can include issues related to income, education, and employment disparities.
- 3. Dependency** Financial, emotional, or social dependency on the abuser can increase the risk of abuse, as it can be harder to leave the relationship.
- 4. Isolation** Women who are socially isolated or have limited support networks are often more vulnerable to abuse, as they may lack resources and contacts to seek help.
- 5. Substance Abuse** Substance abuse by the abuser can exacerbate abusive behaviours and increase the risk of violence.
- 6. Unemployment or Financial Stress** Economic stressors can increase tension in a relationship and contribute to the likelihood of abuse.
- 7. Children** Women with children may be at a higher risk, as abusers may use the children to exert control or manipulate the victim.
- 8. Cultural and Social Norms** Societal norms that tolerate or condone abusive behaviours can increase the risk for women, particularly if they are discouraged from seeking help.
- 9. Lack of Legal Protection** If legal protections or support services are lacking or inaccessible, those experiencing domestic abuse may face increased risk.

Protective Factors:

- 1. Strong Social Support** Those with a supportive network of friends, family, and community members may have resources and encouragement to leave an abusive relationship.
- 2. Economic Independence** Having financial stability and independence can empower those experiencing domestic abuse to leave abusive situations.
- 3. Education and Employment** Higher education and stable employment can provide those experiencing domestic abuse with options to support themselves and their children independently.
- 4. Access to Services** Availability of support services, shelters, and counselling can increase the likelihood that those experiencing domestic violence will seek help and leave abusive relationships.
- 5. Self-Esteem and Empowerment** Those who have a strong sense of self-worth and empowerment are more likely to recognise abusive behaviours and take action.
- 6. Legal Protections** Effective legal measures, such as restraining orders and laws against domestic violence, can provide a sense of safety and support.
- 7. Knowledge about Abuse** Awareness of the signs of abuse and resources available for help can empower those experiencing domestic violence to seek assistance.
- 8. Mental Health Support** Access to mental health services can help those experiencing domestic violence cope with trauma and build resilience.

Domestic abuse is a complex issue influenced by numerous factors. Professionals working with people experiencing domestic violence should consider these factors when providing support and assistance. Additionally, a victim's specific circumstances and resources will impact the extent to which these factors contribute to their risk and protective factors.

The Cycle of Domestic Abuse

The cycle of domestic abuse, often referred to as the “Cycle of Violence,” is a pattern that characterises many abusive relationships. It typically consists of three main phases:

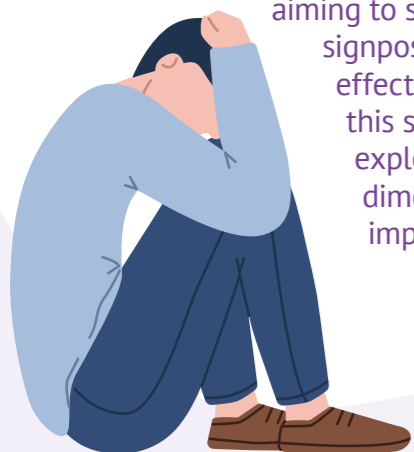
1. Tension Building Phase
2. Abusive Incident
3. Reconciliation and Honeymoon Phase

Once abuse has begun, it not only continues, but over time tends to increase in both frequency and severity. As the abuse continues, the three-phase cycle begins to deteriorate. The tension-building phase becomes shorter and more intense, the incidents of abuse becomes more frequent and severe, and the reconciliation periods become shorter and less intense. This results in a victim becoming more vulnerable over time.

Impact of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a deeply distressing and pervasive issue that exacts a heavy toll on the lives of the those who experience it. Its consequences ripple through every facet of their existence, leaving profound and lasting scars.

Understanding the multifaceted impact of domestic abuse is crucial for professionals aiming to support and signpost survivors effectively. In this section, we explore the various dimensions of this impact, including:



1. Emotional and Psychological Effects

Domestic abuse can have devastating emotional and psychological consequences. Survivors often grapple with anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and a pervasive sense of fear. The constant emotional turmoil can erode their sense of self-worth, leaving them feeling trapped and powerless.

2. Behavioural Effects

People subjected to domestic abuse may exhibit altered behaviours as a survival mechanism. This can manifest as withdrawal from social activities, substance abuse, or even self-harming behaviours.

3. Physical Effects

Physical abuse can lead to a range of physical injuries, from bruises and broken bones to more severe trauma. The physical toll often extends to chronic health issues, as the stress and anxiety associated with abuse can weaken the immune system and exacerbate pre-existing conditions.

4. Cognitive Effects

Survivors may experience cognitive impairments, such as difficulty concentrating, memory problems, and impaired decision-making abilities. These cognitive effects can hinder their capacity to plan for their safety or seek assistance.

5. Relationship Effects

Domestic abuse profoundly impacts relationships. Survivors may withdraw from friends and family or face challenges in forming new relationships due to trust issues. Children within the family may also witness the abuse, which can impact their emotional development.

6. Risk of Future Abuse

Exiting an abusive relationship does not always mark the end of the abuse. Many survivors remain at risk of future abuse, and some may find themselves in subsequent abusive relationships. Understanding the dynamics that perpetuate abuse is crucial for intervention and prevention efforts.

7. Mental Health Consequences

The mental health consequences of domestic abuse can be severe, leading to conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders, and suicidal thoughts. Recognising and addressing these mental health challenges is vital for providing holistic care.

8. Long-Term Effects

The effects of domestic abuse often endure long after the abusive relationship has ended. Survivors may struggle with trust issues, intimacy problems, and ongoing mental health concerns. Recognising the long-term impact is essential for long-term support and recovery planning.



Recognising Signs of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can manifest in various ways, and it is crucial for professionals to be adept at recognising its signs and indicators. Recognising signs of domestic abuse requires a nuanced understanding of both the visible indicators and the emotional complexities that survivors may exhibit. It is important that any response to signs of abuse are undertaken whilst ensuring that actions taken to support survivors do not inadvertently cause further harm.

Behavioural Indicators of Domestic Abuse

Physical Signs

Look for unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, or fractures, particularly if the explanations provided seem inconsistent or unlikely.



Emotional Changes

Be vigilant for signs of emotional distress, including anxiety, depression, withdrawal from social activities, and changes in mood or behaviour.



Control and Isolation

Recognise control tactics, such as isolation from friends and family, monitoring of communications, and restrictions on personal freedom.



Financial Control

Identify signs of financial abuse, such as restricted access to money, accounts, or employment opportunities.



Fearful Behaviour

Pay attention to signs of fear, including avoidance of specific topics, flinching, or appearing nervous around a particular individual.



Sexual Coercion

Be aware that survivors may isolate themselves from friends and family to protect them from the abuser's retaliation.



Common Reactions and Coping Mechanisms



Denial

Understand that survivors often deny or downplay abuse due to fear, shame, or dependency on the abuser.



Survival Strategies

Recognise that survivors may employ various survival strategies, such as compliance, dissociation, or appeasement, to mitigate harm.



Guilt and Self-Blame

Be sensitive to survivors' feelings of guilt or self-blame, which can result from manipulation by the abuser.



Depression and Anxiety

Understand that survivors may experience symptoms of depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of the abuse.



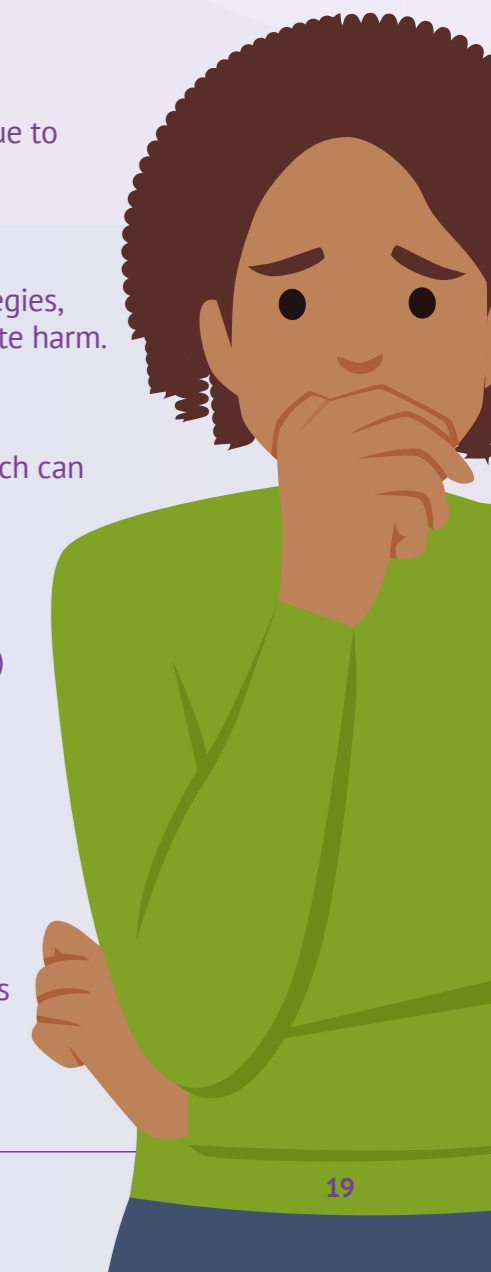
Substance Abuse

Acknowledge that some survivors may turn to substance abuse as a coping mechanism to numb emotional pain.



Social Isolation

Be aware that survivors may isolate themselves from friends and family to protect them from the abuser's retaliation.



What can I do as a Professional?



RECOGNISE



RESPOND



REFER

All services and professionals/practitioners need to be able to **RECOGNISE** the signs of Domestic Abuse; **RESPOND** accordingly, and **REFER** where necessary.

Remember that trusted professionals in a person's life may be the first person they reach out to. It is essential that we are able to respond in the best way as well as knowing local resources for referral. Professionals need to make themselves aware of their agencies policies and procedures regarding domestic abuse and avail of training.

Organisations can make their work environment a safe space for a victim of domestic abuse to talk about their experiences:

- Display posters, brochures and information on local, regional and national Domestic Abuse services
- Put information into toilets so that victims can discreetly pick it up
- Provide training to staff regarding domestic abuse service provision and training on how to respond to a disclosure of domestic abuse
- Being aware that since November 2023 workers have a legal right to 5 days paid leave if they need to take time off because of the abuse



RECOGNISE Signs and Signals

- Person might be afraid of their partner
- There may be talk about the person's temper, anger or possessiveness
- There may be bruising or injury with the excuse of an accident
- The victim may have history of alcohol use or substance misuse
- They may be accompanied by the partner
- Have erratic attendance at work, college appointments
- Seem controlled and stopped from seeing family and friends
- Keep in mind the impact on children who may also be living in the situation

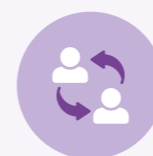


RESPOND

Victims of domestic abuse may not disclose information about their experience unless directly asked. When a person discloses that he/she has experienced domestic abuse this indicates the trust and value placed in the professional/person for help and advice.

REMEMBER

- Listen and be supportive but not judgemental (see appendix 1 for Effective Communication Checklist)
- Assure the person that no-one deserves to be abused despite what the perpetrator says
- Remind the person that being violent is against the law
- Provide accurate local information on services available and how to access them
- Respect their decisions and let them know you are there to support them
- Document the conversation as part of your professional system
- The most dangerous time for a victim of Domestic Abuse is when he/she is just about to leave
- The victim is the best placed to assess their own risk
- Get consent from client to hold/pass on details



REFER

Professionals should be well-versed in local referral protocols and the range of services available to survivors. This includes connecting survivors with outreach workers, legal aid services, counselling resources, and law enforcement agencies when necessary. While making referrals, it's essential to respect the survivor's choices and autonomy. Survivors may not be ready to engage with all services immediately, so a gradual approach may be needed.

Local Services in DLR

In a case of emergency dial 999/112 for Gardai and Medical Assistance

Garda Stations in DLR

Blackrock District Office
(Superintendent Gordon Wolfe) blackrock_ds@garda.ie

Dún Laoghaire District Office
(Superintendent Fergal Harrington) dunlaoghaire_ds@garda.ie

Cabinteely 01 666 5400

Dún Laoghaire 01 666 5000

Shankill 01 666 5900

Blackrock 01 666 5200

Dundrum 01 666 5600

Stepaside 01 666 5701

Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team (DACT) dmreast.dact@garda.ie

Divisional Protective Services Unit (DPSU) dmreast.dpsu@garda.ie

Outreach Services

Sonas Advice Line/Outreach/Court Accompaniment 087 952 5217

Women's Aid Outreach
in Dun Laoghaire and Dundrum call 1800 341 900 - 24 hr hr National Freephone

Bray Women's Refuge - Anu Wicklow Outreach 086 059 7560

Crisis Accommodation DLR

Safe Home Sonas (Mon-Fri 8am-6 pm) 087 742 2897

Additional Support/Crisis Counselling (Referral Service)

Southside Addressing Violence Effectively (SAVE) Interagency Network 087 3935955

Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC)

Citizens Information Centre Dundrum 0818 077 430

Citizens Information Centre Dun Laoghaire 0818 077 400

Law Centres

Dolphin House 01 888 6344

Legal Aid Board 066 947 1000 / 01 646 9600

Court Contact Numbers for the DLR Area

Dublin District Family Law Office, Dolphin House 01 888 6344/6347/6350

Bray District Court 01 274 4800

Support in Court

Domestic Abuse Information and Support (D.A.I.S) –
A Drop-In Service for Women at Dolphin House Family Law Court 4th Floor,
Mon-Fri: 9.30 am – 12.30 pm & 2 – 4.30 pm
or call 1800 341 900

Useful Numbers

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre 01 800 77 88 88

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU), Rotunda Hospital
Tel: 01-817 1736 (9.00am – 4.30pm, Monday – Friday)
or outside hours 01 817 1700 ask for SATU

Drugs and Alcohol / HIV Helpline 1800 459459

Refuges

The building of a new Refuge in DLR is in planning.

Bray Women's Refuge - Anu Wicklow 01 286 6163

Aoibhneas Women's Refuge, Coolock 24 hr Freephone 1800 767 767

Saoirse Women's Refuge, Tallaght 1800 911 221 **24 hr Helpline**
01 4630400 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)

Sonas Women's Refuge, Blanchardstown 01 866 2015/1800 222 223 **24 hr**

Other Useful Numbers in DLR Housing Services

Housing Department, DLR County Council 01 205 4828

Homeless Unit 1800 707 707

Community Welfare and Other Services

Community Welfare Services National Phone Line 0818 607080

Dun Laoghaire Intreo 0818 405060

Dublin 14 & 16 Intreo, Nutgrove 0818 405060

Barnardos Tivoli 01 284 2323, Loughlinstown 01 282 0328, Ballyogan 01 905 9443

DLR Community Addiction Team 01 217 6140

DROP Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Outreach Project 01 2803187

LetsTalkDLR Local Mental Health Supports in DLR www.LetsTalkDLR.ie

Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG) 01 295 7372

My Project Family Support Services 01 9027703

Women's Collective Ireland Dún Laoghaire Rathdown 086 1744863 / 01 282 593

National Services

Women's Aid
1800 341 900
24 hr National Freephone Helpline and Free Confidential Interpretation Service

COSC resource hub for domestic violence prevention and awareness in Ireland

Nasc Migrant and Refugee Rights – Domestic Violence

MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence)
Domestic Abuse perpetrators intervention programmes for men 065 684 8689

Support for Men Experiencing Domestic Abuse

Men's Aid 01 5543811

Men's Development Network National Helpline 1800 816 588

Elder Abuse

HSE Elder Abuse Service 1850 241 850

SeniorLine Freephone 1800 80 45 91

Migrant Victims of Domestic Violence & Trafficking

Immigrant Council of Ireland Information & Referral 01 674 0200

Support for Muslim Women in ICCI (Islamic Cultural Centre Ireland) Community Welfare/Women's Depart. 01 208 0000

AMAL Women Association Court & Accompaniment Service 089 612 2893

AkiDwa Information & Referral 01 834 9851

Ruhama for women affected by sexual exploitation, prostitution & human trafficking - Freetext REACH to 50100 or call 01 836 0292 **Freephone 1800 020 202**

Online Services

Bright Sky App

Vodafone Ireland Foundation, working with Women's Aid and An Garda Síochána, have developed Bright Sky Ireland, a free, easy to use app that provides practical support and information on how to respond to domestic abuse. It is for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else. Bright Sky helps you to spot the signs of abuse, know how to respond, and help someone find a safe route to support.



The app can be downloaded for free via the app stores. Please only download the app if it is safe for you to do so and if you are sure that your phone isn't being monitored.

Too Into You

Women's Aid runs the Too Into You campaign which is focused on young people, in particular young women, aged 18-25 years. The campaign aims to teach young people about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, the red flags of relationship abuse, and provide support at our dedicated website for young people –



www.toointoyou.ie

Legal Considerations

Working with those experiencing domestic abuse involves a complex set of legal and ethical considerations to ensure their safety, well-being, and rights are upheld.

Legal Framework

In Ireland, the governing legal framework for domestic abuse is anchored in both national and international obligations. As a signatory to the Istanbul Convention, the state is committed to aligning its laws and policies with the Convention's standards, which include robust measures to combat domestic violence and gender-based violence. The National Government Strategy Zero Tolerance outlines the country's comprehensive approach to addressing domestic abuse, emphasising prevention, protection, and support for survivors. The establishment of Cuan in 2024 was a key action under the Zero Tolerance strategy for combating domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV). The first Cuan Corporate Plan, covering the period 2025 to 2027, sets out how Cuan will fulfil its mandate and work towards achieving a society with zero tolerance for any form of DSGBV or the attitudes which underpin it, and ensuring victims have access to the full range of supports and services they need.

Professionals and practitioners should be aware of the array of legislation that pertains specifically to domestic abuse and child protection, along with legislation governing sexual assault, family law and employment legislation. A current list of the most pertinent governing legislation is provided in appendix 2.

Below is information on the types of orders available to victims of Domestic Violence and Coercive Control under the Domestic Violence Act 2018:

A Safety Order

A safety order is an order of the court which prohibits the abusive person (the respondent) from committing further violence or threats

of violence. They are not obliged to leave the home. If the abusive person is not living with the applicant, the safety order prohibits them from watching or being near their home and following or communicating (including electronically) with the applicant or a dependent person (any child).

A Barring Order

A barring order requires the abusive person (the respondent) to leave the home and prohibits the abusive person from entering the home. The court may also, if it thinks fit, prohibit the person from further violence or threats of violence, watching or being near the applicant's home, or following or communicating (including electronically) with the applicant or a dependent person (any child).

Interim Barring Order

Where the court, on application to it for a barring order or between the making of that application and its determination, is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing there is an immediate risk to the safety of the applicant or a dependent (and a protection order would not provide sufficient protection), the court shall grant an interim barring order. The Interim barring order requires the abusive person to leave the home and prohibits the person from entering the home for up to 8 days.

Emergency Barring Order

An emergency barring order requires the abusive person to leave the home, and prohibits the person from entering the home. This is an immediate order where there is reasonable grounds to believe there is an immediate risk of significant harm to the applicant or a dependent person if an order is not made immediately.

- It is important to note that the legislative landscape for DSGBV is dynamic and professionals should regularly update their knowledge of emergent or amended legislation.

Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity

Guidance on cultural sensitivity and diversity is essential for practitioners and professionals working with those impacted by domestic abuse to ensure that support is inclusive, respectful, and effective. A sensitivity and diversity approach must recognise cultural differences; address barriers to reporting and help-seeking; and providing inclusive and culturally competent support.

Recognising Cultural Differences

- **Education and Awareness:** Educate yourself and your team about various cultures, belief systems, and practices. Understand that definitions and perceptions of domestic abuse may vary across cultures.
- **Open-Mindedness:** Approach each case with an open mind and without making assumptions based on cultural backgrounds. Avoid stereotyping or generalising.
- **Cultural Norms:** Recognise that cultural norms may influence how abuse is perceived or tolerated. Be sensitive to differences in family structures, gender roles, and interpersonal dynamics.
- **Language and Communication:** Respect language preferences and consider using interpreters when necessary. Ensure that communication is clear and understandable across language barriers.

Addressing Barriers to Reporting and Seeking Help

- **Stigma and Shame:** Acknowledge that cultural factors may contribute to stigma around discussing family issues or seeking outside help. Create a safe space that minimises shame and blame.
- **Lack of Awareness:** Some individuals may not recognise certain behaviours as abuse due to cultural differences. Provide education about what constitutes abuse and its impact on children.
- **Fear of Reprisal:** In some cultures, speaking out against family members may be discouraged

due to fear of retaliation or family dishonour. Be aware of these fears and provide assurance of confidentiality and safety.

- **Lack of Knowledge of Services:** Ensure that families are aware of available support services that are culturally appropriate and sensitive to their needs.

Ensuring Inclusive and Culturally Competent Support

- **Cultural Competency Training:** Regularly train yourself and your team in cultural competence to enhance your ability to provide effective support to diverse populations.
- **Personal Bias Reflection:** Reflect on your own biases and assumptions, and strive to offer equitable and non-judgmental support.
- **Respect Autonomy:** Respect the choices and decisions of those experiencing domestic abuse, even if they differ from your own cultural perspective.
- **Culturally Relevant Resources:** Provide resources that are culturally sensitive, available in different languages, and relatable to diverse experiences.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with local community organisations that specialise in supporting specific cultural groups such as; Southside Partnership (Women's Programme, International Protection Applicants and Ukrainian Refugee Programme, Holly House and Project Centre in Ballybrack/Loughlinstown); Family Resource Centres (Ballyogan, Balally, Hillview and Rosemount); DLR Integration Forum. Their insights can guide your approach.

By incorporating cultural sensitivity and diversity considerations into your approach, you can ensure that people impacted by domestic abuse receive support that is respectful, inclusive, and aligned with their cultural beliefs and needs. This approach strengthens the effectiveness of your interventions and contributes to a more equitable and just response. Appendix 3 provides guidance for scoping cultural and ethnic groups in the local community and appendix 4 provides an outline for a cultural sensitivity template.

Glossary

Advocacy	Support provided by trained professionals to help survivors navigate legal, medical, and social services.
Barring Order	A court order that excludes a violent partner or spouse from the home and/or prohibits the perpetrator from further violence or threats of violence, watching or being near the home, or following or communicating (including electronically) with the victim or a dependent child or young person.
Child Protection Laws	Legal measures that prioritise the safety and well-being of children, including provisions for intervention in cases of abuse or neglect.
Child Victim	A child who observes or overhears incidents of domestic abuse but may not be the direct target of the abuse.
Coercive Control	A pattern of behaviour that seeks to control, dominate, and manipulate a partner through various means, such as isolation, intimidation, threats, and monitoring.
Confidentiality	The ethical obligation to protect sensitive information shared by survivors and individuals seeking support.
Coordinated Community Response	Collaborative efforts involving Gardaí, social services, shelters, and advocacy organisations to address domestic abuse comprehensively.
Counselling Services	Professional mental health support and therapy for individuals and families affected by domestic abuse.
Cultural Sensitivity	Being aware and respectful of cultural differences, beliefs, and values when providing support to diverse individuals.
Cycle of Abuse	The recurring pattern in abusive relationships, involving tension building, an abusive incident, and a period of remorse or "honeymoon" phase.
Dissociation	A coping mechanism in response to trauma, where an individual mentally disconnects from their surroundings or experiences to reduce emotional distress.

Domestic Abuse (DA)	A pattern of coercive, controlling, or violent behaviours within a familial or intimate relationship, involving physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, or technology-facilitated abuse. Characterised by the exertion of power and control over one partner by another, resulting in harm or death of an intimate partner and/or their children, this dynamic may encompass various forms of abuse, including physical violence, intimidation, humiliation, isolation, threats, and manipulation.
Domestic Violence (DV)	A broad term to include physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, and other harmful actions aimed at controlling or exerting power over an intimate partner.
Economic Abuse	A form of domestic abuse where the abuser controls the victim's financial resources, making them economically dependent and limiting their autonomy.
Emergency Intervention	Immediate actions taken to ensure the safety and well-being of a victim or survivor facing an imminent threat of harm.
Empowerment	The process of increasing a person's sense of control, agency, and decision-making power over their own life.
Empowerment-Based Approach	A method of support that focuses on helping survivors regain control, make decisions, and rebuild their lives on their terms.
Femicide	The intentional killing of women or girls on account of their sex which result from deeply rooted gender-based discrimination, violence, and inequality. Femicide is a legal classification of homicide in many countries but not in Ireland, and encompasses a range of scenarios, including intimate partner violence, honour killings, dowry-related violence, and other forms of gender-based violence that lead to the death of women and girls.
Flashbacks	Vivid and distressing recollections of traumatic events that can be triggered by various stimuli, leading to intense emotional reactions.
Gaslighting	A form of psychological manipulation where an abuser makes the victim doubt their own perceptions, memories, and reality.
Healthy Boundaries	Setting and maintaining clear limits in relationships to ensure one's physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Healthy Relationships	Relationships based on mutual respect, communication, trust, equality, and emotional support.
Intersectionality	The recognition of how multiple social identities (e.g., sex, race, class, sexual orientation) intersect and influence experiences and vulnerabilities.
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)	The physical, sexual, or psychological harm inflicted by a current or former partner or spouse within an intimate relationship.
Isolation	A tactic used by abusers to physically or emotionally separate the victim from friends, family, and support networks, increasing the victim's dependency.
Legal Advocacy	Support provided by legal professionals or advocates to help survivors navigate legal processes, obtain restraining orders, and secure their rights.
Mandatory Reporting	Legal requirement for professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to authorities.
Perpetrator	The individual who engages in abusive or harmful behaviours within an intimate relationship, causing harm to their partner or family members.
Recovery	The ongoing process of healing, growth, and rebuilding one's life after experiencing domestic abuse.
Refuge	A safe space where survivors of domestic abuse and their children can seek crisis refuge accommodation from an abusive environment.
Reintegration	The process of survivors reconnecting with their social networks, reclaiming their independence, and rebuilding their lives after leaving an abusive relationship.
Reproductive Coercion	The use of power and control tactics by an abusive partner to interfere with a victim's reproductive choices.
Resilience	The ability to adapt and cope positively in the face of adversity, including exposure to domestic abuse.
Restraining Order	A legal order issued by a court that prohibits an abuser from contacting or approaching the victim, ensuring the victim's safety.

Safety Order	A court order that permits a violent partner remain in the home, but is ordered not to use violence, threats or molestation against the partner or a dependant person. If the perpetrator is not co-habituating with the victim, a Safety Order may also prohibit them from watching, or being near the home; or from following or communicating (including electronically) with the victim or a dependent person.
Safety Planning	A personalised strategy to help survivors of abuse stay safe and minimise risk when facing dangerous situations.
Secondary Trauma	The emotional toll experienced by professionals or caregivers who work closely with survivors of trauma, leading to symptoms similar to vicarious trauma.
Self-Blame	The tendency of survivors to attribute the abuse to their own actions, even when it's clearly the abuser's responsibility.
Shelter Services	Safe and confidential accommodations provided to survivors and their children to escape an abusive environment.
Trauma Bonding	The development of a strong emotional connection between a victim and their abuser due to cycles of abuse and moments of kindness.
Trauma	The emotional and psychological response to a distressing event, such as domestic abuse, often resulting in lasting effects on an individual's well-being.
Trauma-Informed Care	An approach that recognises the impact of trauma on individuals and provides services in a way that promotes safety, trust, choice, and empowerment.
Trauma-Informed Language	Using language that avoids re-traumatisation and is sensitive to the experiences of survivors, acknowledging their strength and resilience.
Triangulation	The manipulation of a child, often by an abusive parent, to create conflict or competition between the child and another individual, typically the other parent or caregiver.
Vicarious Trauma	The emotional and psychological impact that professionals and caregivers may experience due to exposure to the traumatic experiences of others.

These terms further enrich the understanding of domestic abuse and the complexities associated with it. Always remember the importance of using language that is sensitive and respectful to survivors' experiences.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Effective Communication Checklist

Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment

Build Trust: Establish a foundation of trust by being consistent, reliable, and respectful in your interactions.

Non-Judgmental Attitude: Create an environment where victims feel comfortable expressing themselves without fear of judgment.

Confidentiality: Explain the limits of confidentiality and how information will be shared only when necessary to ensure their safety and well-being.

Physical Environment: Ensure the physical setting is welcoming, comfortable, and free from distractions, creating a safe space for discussions.

Respect Boundaries: Respect the personal space and boundaries of the victim to make them feel comfortable and in control.

Facilitating Open Dialogue

Encourage Sharing: Create opportunities for women to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Use open-ended questions to promote dialogue.

Use Age-Appropriate Language: Tailor your language to their age cohort making it easier for them to understand and express themselves.

Normalise Feelings: Let them know that their feelings are valid and normal reactions to a difficult situation.

Reflective Practice: Reflect on your own communication style and be mindful of any biases or assumptions that might hinder open dialogue.

Express Empathy: Show understanding and empathy by acknowledging their emotions and demonstrating that you care about their well-being.

Developing Active Listening and Empathetic Responses

Active Listening: Give your full attention to the victim, making eye contact, nodding, and using verbal cues to show that you are engaged in the conversation.

Reflective Listening: Repeat or paraphrase what they've said to confirm your understanding and encourage them to elaborate further.

Validate Emotions: Acknowledge their feelings without judgment or trying to minimise their experiences. Use phrases like "I can see why you would feel that way" or "That sounds really tough."

Empathetic Responses: Express empathy by conveying that you understand how they might be feeling. For example, say, "I can imagine that must be really difficult for you."

Avoid Interruptions: Allow them to express themselves fully without interrupting, giving them the space to share their thoughts and feelings.

Respond with Sensitivity: Tailor your responses to their emotional state. If they're upset, respond gently; if they're sharing a positive experience, share in their excitement.

No Pressure: Let them know that they don't have to share more than they're comfortable with. Respect their pace and boundaries.

By creating a safe and supportive environment, fostering open dialogue, and using active listening and empathetic responses, professionals can provide essential emotional support for women impacted by domestic abuse. These strategies help build trust, empower individuals to express themselves, and promote healing and resilience.

Appendix 2: Legal Framework Chart

Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment

Legal Instrument	Key Provisions
Domestic Violence Act 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides legal protection and remedies for victims of domestic abuse. Defines various forms of domestic abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and coercive control. Establishes safety orders and barring orders to protect victims.
Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 & Family Law Act 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for a range of family law protections concerning marriage, separation, divorce, guardianship, custody and access.
Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for the implementation of various online safeguards under the auspices of a new Online Safety Commission.
Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person (Amendment) (Stalking) Bill 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for a specific offence of stalking characterised by repeated, unwanted behaviour that occurs as a result of fixation or obsession and causes alarm, distress or harm to the victim.
Domestic Sex and Gender-Based Violence Agency Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation providing for a new statutory agency to be tasked with ensuring the delivery of services to victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
Children Act 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on the welfare of children and the role of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla). Outlines procedures for child protection and care orders. Addresses the responsibilities of parents and guardians.
Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses various aspects of sexual offenses, including consent and exploitation.
Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers offenses related to assault and harm, which can be relevant in cases of domestic violence.
Gender Equality Acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender and promotes gender equality.

Legal Instrument

Key Provisions

Child Care Act 1991 (Amendment) Act 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances the protection of children and the responsibilities of the Child and Family Agency.
Data Protection Acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the privacy and protection of personal data, including sensitive information related to domestic abuse cases.
Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act, 1962 and Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information on accessing legal aid and representation for victims of domestic abuse.
Family Law Act 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains provisions related to guardianship, custody, access, and maintenance of children.
Children First Act 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires professionals to report child protection concerns and establishes guidelines for child safeguarding.
Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides rights and supports for victims of crime, including domestic abuse.
Work-Life Balance Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for paid Domestic Violence leave (5 days in order to access support) for those in the process of questioning their relationship, recovering from an episode of abuse or planning to leave an abuser.

Creating a legal framework chart requires consultation with legal professionals to ensure up-to-date and accurate information.

Appendix 3: Scoping Cultural and Ethnic Groups in the Community

The following list provides an overview of communities living in Ireland as recorded in various CSO data. When working with these communities, it's crucial to approach each with cultural humility, respect, and a willingness to learn about their unique experiences and needs.

African Diaspora	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals from African countries residing in Ireland, contributing to a diverse cultural landscape.
Asylum Seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals who arrive in Ireland and apply for asylum (protection-also called International Protection Applicant-IPA) because they fear persecution in their home country.
Brazilian Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals from Brazil who have established a presence in Ireland.
Chinese Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">People of Chinese origin, including recent immigrants and those who have been in Ireland for generations.
Eastern European Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Including countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and more.
Filipino Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals from the Philippines who have made Ireland their home.
Indian Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals from India who are part of the multicultural fabric of Ireland.
Irish Travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A distinct indigenous ethnic group in Ireland with their own culture, traditions, and nomadic lifestyle.
Jewish Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A small but historic community in Ireland.
LGBTQ+ Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals from diverse backgrounds within the LGBTQ+ community.
Migrant Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Various migrant communities from countries such as Poland, Nigeria, China, India, Pakistan, and more.
Mixed Heritage Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds resulting from mixed heritage.
Muslim Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Representing various nationalities and cultural backgrounds, contributing to the religious diversity of Ireland.
Nigerian Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">People of Nigerian origin, contributing to Ireland's diversity.

Pakistani Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">People of Pakistani origin who have settled in Ireland.
Polish Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">One of the largest immigrant communities in Ireland, contributing significantly to the economy and culture.
Refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Immigrants who have been granted the right to live, work, and access certain public services in Ireland.
Roma	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A minority ethnic group with a diverse range of cultural backgrounds and languages.
Sikh Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">People of Sikh faith and origin residing in Ireland.
Trilingual Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communities where multiple languages are spoken at home, often including English and two other languages.
Ukrainian Refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Individuals who have fled their home country due to various factors such as conflict, violence, persecution, human rights violations, or other forms of instability.

Note: This list is not exhaustive and the cultural landscape of localities in Ireland is continually evolving. Locality specific information can be gleaned from Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) available from the CSO after the publication of each census.

Appendix 4: Cultural Sensitivity Checklist Template

Identify Key Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research and identify the major community and ethnic groups in Ireland that may be impacted by domestic abuse.
Engage with Community Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish connections with community leaders, cultural experts, and organisations to better understand the specific cultural nuances.
Understand Cultural Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Familiarise yourself with the cultural values, norms, and traditions of each community, especially those related to family dynamics, gender roles, and conflict resolution.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learn about preferred communication styles and nonverbal cues within each community.
Religion and Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the role of religion and spirituality in the lives of individuals from different communities, as they can impact their coping mechanisms and support preferences.
Taboos and Stigmas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Be aware of cultural taboos and stigmas related to discussing domestic abuse, seeking help, or disclosing family issues.
Reporting Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learn how different communities approach reporting domestic abuse, whether through formal channels or community support networks.
Approaches to Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand how support is traditionally sought and provided within each community, including roles of extended family members or community leaders.
Privacy and Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Respect varying expectations of privacy and confidentiality within different communities.
Gender and Power Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognise that gender and power dynamics can differ across communities and impact experiences of domestic abuse.
Collaborative Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partner with community organisations and liaisons to facilitate effective communication and culturally sensitive support.
Language Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If language barriers exist, ensure access to interpretation services to facilitate communication.
Trauma and Healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand how trauma is perceived and healing is sought within each community.
Balancing Tradition and Modernity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Acknowledge how traditional values may interact with contemporary perspectives on domestic abuse and support-seeking.
Continuous Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regularly update your knowledge through training, workshops, and interactions with community members.

Remember that cultural sensitivity is an ongoing process that requires humility, openness, and a commitment to learning. Collaborate with cultural experts and engage in open conversations with individuals from different communities to ensure that your support is respectful, inclusive, and culturally appropriate.

Further Reading

The field of domestic abuse and child protection is evolving therefore it is important to stay up-to-date with research and practices. This selection of publications covers a range of topics related to domestic abuse, trauma-informed care, child protection, and supporting young victims and survivors.

This list includes general texts, as well as resources focusing on understanding Domestic and Sexual Gender-Based Violence (DSGBV), Violence Against Women (VAW), and cultural or honour-based violence. Volume 2 of the Domestic Violence Resource Booklet provides an additional reading list of differentiated resources focusing on domestic abuse in the context of children and young people. It is also advisable to seek out additional resources specific to Ireland's context from reputable organisations and government agencies. Availability may vary so it is advisable to check with libraries, online bookstores, or professional organisations for access.

- 1. Practice Guide on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence**
Health Service Executive; A practice guide for staff working with children and families.
- 2. Children and Domestic Violence: When Should the State Intervene?** Cathy Humphreys and Nicky Stanley. This book provides insights into the challenges of addressing domestic violence in the context of child protection, highlighting the balance between intervention and family support.
- 3. Domestic Violence and Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Approach** edited by John Cox and Stan McKenzie. This comprehensive book addresses the intersection of domestic violence and mental health, providing insights into assessment, intervention, and support for survivors.
- 4. Domestic Violence: A Handbook for Health Professionals** by Lyn Shipway
- 5. Violence Against Women and Mental Health** by Sheila Intwala
- 6. Encyclopaedia of Domestic Violence and Abuse** edited by Laura L. Finley
- 7. Violence Against Women: Myths, Facts, Controversies** by Walter S. DeKeseredy and Martin D. Schwartz
- 8. Gender-Based Violence and Public Health: International Perspectives on Budgets and Policies** edited by Keerty Nakray
- 9. Intimate Partner Violence: Effective Procedure, Response and Policy** edited by Kirkham and Hamel
- 10. Global Perspectives on Gender and Violence: Myths and Realities** edited by Nanette M. Davis and R. Emerson Dobash
- 11. The Verbally Abusive Relationship: How to Recognize It and How to Respond** by Patricia Evans
- 12. Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men** by Lundy Bancroft

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13. **The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals That Protect Us from Violence** by Gavin de Becker
 14. **Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror** by Judith Herman
 15. **I Believe You: Support, Advocacy, and Education for Survivors of Domestic Violence** by Cathy Plourde
 16. **No Place for Abuse: Biblical and Practical Resources to Counteract Domestic Violence** by Catherine Clark Kroeger and Nancy Nason-Clark
 17. **Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God** by Francis Chan
 18. **Domestic Violence in the Muslim Community: Understanding the Epidemic and Developing Constructive Solutions** by Imam Mohamed Magid and Salma Elkadi Abugideiri
 19. **Honour and Violence: Gender, Power, and Law in Southern Pakistan** by Nafisa Shah
 20. **Victims and Viragos: Metropolitan Women, Crime, and the Eighteenth-Century Justice System** by Gregory J. Dunston (historical context)
 21. **The Honour Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen** by Kwame Anthony Appiah (exploring cultural norms and change)
 22. **Violence in Brazil: A Critical Review** edited by Alba Zaluar and Marcos Alvito
 23. **Domestic Violence in China: Prevalence, Risk Factors and Policy Implications** by Ko Ling Chan
 24. **Gender and Violence in Eastern Europe** edited by Aili Mari Tripp, Kristen Ghodsee, and Tatiana Kostadinova
 25. **Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones: From the Ancient World to the Era of Human Rights** by Elizabeth D. Heineman
 26. **The Silenced: A Novel** by James DeVita
 27. **When Intimate Partner Violence Meets Same Sex Couples: A Review of Same Sex Intimate Partner Violence** by L Rollè, G Giardina, AM Caldarera, E Gerino and P Brustia

