

Our team of specially trained workers understand the devastating impact domestic or sexual violence can have on your life. We realise it can be hard to pick up the phone for the first time.

Our Helpline workers are experienced in supporting you to talk when you are ready. We understand you may not know what to say or how to start. You may feel vulnerable, fearful, or not want to disclose your sexual orientation to strangers. Our workers will put you at ease.



The Helpline can refer lesbian and bisexual women and their children directly to the safe network of refuges and outreach support services provided by local Women's Aid groups.

We can arrange safe temporary accommodation for gay and bisexual men and their children, and for transgender people. We can also refer LGBT people to a range of other agencies for support.

If you have been sexually assaulted the Helpline can arrange immediate practical help, including direct referral to The Rowan, the sexual assault referral centre.

For further information on domestic and sexual violence visit www.womensaidni.org
For further support and information on LGBT issues visit www.rainbow-project.org or www.hereni.org

24 HOUR

Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

Open to *all women and men* affected by domestic & sexual violence

☎ **0808 802 1414**

📱 text support to **07797 805 839**

✉ **24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org**

Freephone from all landlines and mobiles

Translation service available

Confidential, caring service
24/7, 365 days a year

The Helpline also welcome calls from concerned family members, friends and colleagues, youth workers, teachers, professionals, community groups and clergy.

MANAGED BY WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION NORTHERN IRELAND

Help for LGBT People



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If you are in a same sex relationship or identify as a transgender person and have any concerns about domestic or sexual violence, now or in the past, contact the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline.

The Helpline provides information, emotional support, and the opportunity to talk over all your concerns, including housing and legal options. You are guaranteed a confidential and caring response.

Most LGBT people are abused by someone they know. If you are being abused, it is never your fault.

Who is abused?

Any LGBT person can be abused regardless of gender, age, disability, nationality or background. The Helpline welcomes calls from everyone.

Recognising what is happening to you, or has happened in the past, is the first step in escaping the pain and misery of domestic and sexual violence.



Domestic violence

Domestic violence can be physical, emotional, financial, or psychological. Sexual abuse is often a part of domestic violence.

You are being abused if your partner/ex-partner/boyfriend/girlfriend/family member does any of the following:

- › Constantly criticises your appearance, undermines your decisions and opinions
- › Undermines and belittles your sexual orientation, or questions your identity
- › Threatens to 'out' you to your family, friends, partners, colleagues, and neighbours
- › Is jealous and possessive and continually accuses you of being unfaithful
- › Controls how you express yourself as an LGBT person, or forces you to 'act straight'
- › Threatens to take custody of your children or prevent you from seeing them
- › Constantly wants you to justify what you spend money on
- › Tries to isolate you from your friends and family and makes you justify any absence
- › Threatens to harm you or physically hurts you in any way
- › Injures or hurts your pet

Sexual violence

Sexual violence/abuse refers to any sexual acts that a person does not consent to take part in. It may not always be physically violent.

Sexual violence/abuse can include:

- › Rape
- › Unwanted touching or kissing
- › Coerced or forced sexual activities, including activities that may involve violence and pain
- › Forcing you to watch or participate in pornography
- › Posting sexual images of you on the internet without your consent
- › Having unprotected sex with you while knowingly infected with an STI
- › Using drugs or alcohol (or spiking drinks) to make you vulnerable in order to have sex with them
- › 'Grooming' a child or vulnerable person to engage in sexual activities of any kind

Who sexually abuses?

Most people are abused by someone they know and trust, a partner or ex-partner, relatives, babysitters, 'friends of the family', people in positions of authority, neighbours, and sometimes strangers. Abusers are often good at convincing those they have abused that it was their fault and they agreed to it.