

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 talk about your abuse, especially when you are pregnant. Our workers will put you at ease.

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



Workers in Women's Aid have many years of caring experience supporting pregnant women, new mothers, and newborns.

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](http://www.womensaidni.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

## Help for Pregnant Women



24 HOUR

## Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

FREEPHONE

**0808 802 1414**

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

📱 text support to **07797 805 839** ✉ **24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org**

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



If you are pregnant 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.

*30% of domestic violence starts in pregnancy.*

## Who is abused?

Any woman regardless of disability, age, sexual orientation, nationality or background can be abused during pregnancy. 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
- › Blames you for getting pregnant
- › Is jealous and possessive and continually accuses you of being unfaithful or claims that the baby isn't his
- › Causes you to have a miscarriage due to physical abuse
- › Increases their demands on you and won't allow you to rest
- › Makes you doubt your ability to be a mother
- › Constantly wants you to justify what you spend money on
- › Threatens to take custody of your children or prevent you from seeing them
- › Tries to isolate you from your friends and family and makes you justify any absence
- › Physically hurts you in any way
- › Intimidates and threatens to harm you, your baby, or those close to you, or threatens you with weapons

## 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
- › Forced or unwanted pregnancy or forced termination of pregnancy
- › Unwanted touching or kissing
- › Coerced or forced sexual activities, including violent activities that can cause a miscarriage
- › Demanding that you have sex when you are tired or ill
- › Forcing you to watch or participate in pornography
- › Posting sexual images of you on the internet without your consent
- › 'Grooming' a child or vulnerable person to engage in sexual activities of any kind

## Who sexually abuses?

Most women 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.