

Domestic Abuse COVID-19 Resource Pack for Practitioners

Covid-19 social distancing and lockdown measures mean we are likely to see an increase in domestic abuse incidents. This resource pack has been put together to raise awareness amongst frontline workers and practitioners to the services available in Newham. It also includes practical advice and guidance for both practitioners and survivors.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Let vulnerable people know that if they are unable to speak they can still call 999 and make a noise (e.g. a cough or tap) and press '55' when prompted to alert the Police silently.

What support is available for victims of domestic and sexual violence in Newham?

The London Borough of Newham commissions [Hestia](#) to provide the Community Based Domestic and Sexual Violence Support Service. The service provides the following:

- Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs)
- FGM Support
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Peer Support
- Exiting Sex Work Support
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Floating Support
- Specialist Domestic Abuse Court Coordinator
- Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordinator

Hestia's domestic and sexual violence support service is still operating during the COVID-19 outbreak. The service is able to offer support to service users over the phone and is accepting new referrals through the normal referral pathway. This is the quickest and safest way to get support, as the service is specific to Newham.

Making a Referral and seeking advice:

To make a referral complete a referral form by clicking [here](#) and send to: Referralsnewhamdsv@hestia.org.

Call Hestia's Newham service number on **0808 196 1482** for advice and guidance. This number is open 24 hours days but should only be used after 6pm if urgent advice is needed.

Where there is an immediate and life-threatening risk you should call 999.

Emergency Refuge Accommodation

If access to an emergency refuge accommodation is required, please contact Hestia's Newham service how can offer advice and support, as well as placing Newham women and their children into emergency refuge placements if required.

Newham MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

The Police and Hestia coordinate a high-risk panel to discuss high-risk domestic abuse cases and the panel is still operating at this time, albeit virtually. To make a referral to MARAC a referral form (attached) should be sent to Newham.MARAC@hestia.org. Further information can also be found using this link <https://www.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Domestic-violence.aspx>

NewDAy - CLOSED

NewDay has officially closed, however, **CYPS practitioners** are still able to discuss their risk assessment and safety planning for families.

Following a discussion with your manager, you can request a phone discussion by sending an email to **NewDay@newham.gov.uk**. The email must include:

- your practice lead, Azeus ID for the children; and
- Your best contact number.

A member of the previous NewDay team will contact you within 1 working day to discuss with you further. Details of any discussion will be uploaded to Azeus.

Practical advice for practitioners and keep survivors of domestic abuse safe

BrightSky App

During this period of uncertainty and isolation, many survivors of domestic violence may find themselves at increased risk. Professionals who work with survivors of DV should support and encourage the downloading of Hestia's **BrightSky App**. The app provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know and is disguised to look like an everyday app on the person's phone.

Calling 999 and unable to speak – Silent Solutions / Make Yourself Heard Campaign

When calling 999, if a person is unable to speak there is a function that allows the caller to press '55' putting the call through to the Police for assistance. The caller should make a noise (e.g. a cough or tap of the handset) when prompted by the operator and then press '55'. Watch this [YouTube](#) video for more information on how the function works.

More information about the Make Yourself Heard Campaign can be found [here](#).

Training & resources for practitioners

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) have put together some advice and information on recognising and responding to domestic violence and abuse for practitioners. For more information [click here](#)

Solace Women's Aid have are hosting a **FREE** webinar series - supporting survivors during COVID-19.

- Understanding domestic abuse in the context of COVID-19, on Thursday 2nd April, 11am – 12pm
- Assessing risk during COVID-19 – Tuesday 7th April, 11am – 12pm
- Safety planning during COVID-19, Thursday 9th April, 11am – 12pm
- Supporting survivors to flee during COVID-19, Wednesday 15th April, 11am – 12pm

For more information and to register for the webinars, click [here](#).

Other Specialist Advice for Professionals

The government's Gov.uk website has compiled a list of useful resources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

Workers can familiarise themselves with the specific advice for women from **Women's Aid**, which can be found here:

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/>

Safelives Staying safe during COVID-19 - A guide for victims and survivors of domestic abuse.

<https://safelives.org.uk/staying-safe-during-covid-19-guidance>

RESPECT provide advice for male victims of domestic abuse as well as advice for practitioners working with male perpetrators.

RESPECT has developed specific advice for guidance for practitioners working with male perpetrators, which can be found here:

<http://respect.uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Respect-Covid19-Guidance-for-Practitioners-March-2020.pdf>

Other Useful Information and Resources

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk or call the 24 hour Freephone helpline: **0808 2000 247**

<http://www.galop.org.uk> – provides support to the LGBTQI+ community for domestic abuse and sexual violence.

National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 999 5428 (Mon to Friday 10am-5pm and 8pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays)

<http://staysafe-east.org.uk> or Tel: **0208 519 7241** - Stay Safe East is a unique user-led organisation run by disabled people, providing specialist and holistic advocacy and support services to disabled people from diverse communities in London who are victims/survivors of domestic or sexual violence, hate crime, harassment and other forms of abuse.