



**SPECIALIST IN FAMILY LAW
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a difficult word to use as it conjures up an image of physical abuse. But there are many forms of domestic violence which are not just physical but can seriously affect one or both parties and also in the children. Domestic violence is not just confined to women as there are many men who suffer abuse at the hands of their partners, be they male or female.



Many people who read this can relate to it. Aggressive and controlling behaviour can take many forms, whether it simply is in a controlling form; telling the other person what they can and cannot do; what they can and cannot wear; which friends they can see and where they can and cannot go.

The abuse does not have to be physical. Causing someone to fear for their safety; harassing them, stalking them; threatening or intimidating them; subjecting them to verbal abuse are all forms of domestic abuse and no-one should have to suffer this sort of behaviour.

All of this behaviour can undermine your confidence and demoralize you and leave you with feelings of insecurity, lack of self confidence and self belief and sometimes a feeling that you are to blame for the other party's unacceptable behaviour or that you deserve to be ill-treated.

Domestic violence not only impacts upon the person who is the subject of it; it can often impact upon the children and the home in which they are living. For children to witness verbal or physical aggression and domestic violence is extremely harmful and can impact upon them, not only in their current situation, but in years to come and also affect their development, both educationally and at home and in future relationships.

Children who witness domestic violence from an early age often believe that is normal behaviour within the family unit and it is not until later in their own life that they appreciate that this behaviour is not acceptable. Every parent has a duty to protect their children and to keep them free from harm but it is not always easy.

Frequently asked questions are:-

- **I have nowhere to go if I leave and take the children with me;**
- **I simply cannot stay in a refuge with my children;**
- **He or she will find me wherever I may go;**
- **I am too frightened to leave and everyone will blame me;**
- **I am unable to support myself or my children financially if I leave;**

No-one should suffer from domestic violence of any form. Many are frightened to admit that they have been the victim of domestic violence or feel ashamed to do so but there is help and assistance at hand both in the form of The Protection from Harassment Act; through the Police, and through the help and guidance of your Solicitor and the obtaining of Non-Molestation Orders and protection through the Courts.

There are also a number of local organisations who can assist alongside the advice and assistance that is provided to you by this firm – we are here to help you along that difficult journey.

Don't suffer in silence any longer.



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