

# A Response to Domestic Abuse

## 1. What is Domestic Abuse?

**Domestic abuse** is a global issue which has sadly seen a rise in communities due to the impact of COVID-19. It is 'a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of **control** and misuse of **power** by one person over another within an intimate relationship (current or former) or a family. It is usually frequent and persistent. It can include violence by a son, daughter or any other person who has a close or blood relationship with the victim.<sup>1</sup> Domestic abuse is **intentional** and **persistent** and can have a devastating effect on a victim. It can include:

*threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence, abuse (emotional, financial, sexual, verbal, physical, psychological, spiritual, or virtual).*

Domestic abuse does not discriminate, it can happen to anyone. It knows no boundaries and can cross all sections of our community regardless of:

*gender, age, ability, dependants, marital status, political opinion, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation, location, or social status.*

The PSNI recorded 31,848 domestic abuse incidents in Northern Ireland in 2020, which was one of the highest 12-month periods recorded since 2004/05.<sup>2</sup> Of these incidents, 70% were from female victims and 30% from male victims. Safe Ireland recorded that on average, 2,018 women and 550 children in Ireland received support from a domestic abuse service every month from September to December 2020.<sup>3</sup> Women's Aid Ireland currently states that 1 in 4 women in Ireland have experienced domestic abuse, and Men's Aid Ireland records that 1 in 7 men have also experienced domestic violence.<sup>4</sup>

Historically, the issue of Domestic Abuse has been perceived as a 'behind closed doors' issue. There has been a reluctance to speak out against it because it was viewed as a private matter between a husband and wife, and not anyone else's concern. Such perception has meant many have stayed silent when their voice should have been raised. This silence has led to the greater suffering of many victims. The Church too has been historically complacent by staying silent, and often theology has been distorted resulting in a harmful treatment of many women. However, the Church has an important role to play in the prevention, protection and support of both men and women who find themselves victims of domestic abuse.

**The Methodist Church in Ireland (MCI) continues to have zero tolerance to Domestic Abuse.**

Conference (MCI) received reports from the Council of Social Responsibility in 2015 & 2016 recommending that every Church in our Connexion seek *Safe Place* status and ensure that they are equipping their church for the safeguarding of any victim of domestic abuse. This document further outlines our responsibility to respond to this rising global issue, acknowledging its presence in both our churches and communities. It is essential that we see the safeguarding of victims as part of the mission of the church. It is crucial that we do not remain silent against abusive and manipulative powers that do not reflect the Kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> Tackling violence at home: A Strategy for addressing Domestic violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland; Department of Health, Social Services, and Public Safety (October 2005) retrieved from [www.womensaidni.org/assets/uploads/Tackling-Violence-at-Home.pdf](http://www.womensaidni.org/assets/uploads/Tackling-Violence-at-Home.pdf) on 24 April 2021.

<sup>2</sup> PSNI: Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes reported by the Police Service in Northern Ireland; <https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/domestic-abuse-statistics/2020-21/q3/domestic-abuse-bulletin-dec-20.pdf> retrieved on 18 March 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Safe Ireland: Tracking the Shadow Pandemic - Lockdown 2, <https://www.safeireland.ie/further-increases-in-women-and-children-contacting-a-domestic-violence-service-during-the-second-lockdown-of-2020/> retrieved on 18 March 2021.

<sup>4</sup> [www.womensaid.ie](http://www.womensaid.ie) & [www.mensaid.ie](http://www.mensaid.ie)

## 2. What do we believe?

As Christians, we believe that God wants all people to flourish and grow in positive loving relationships with both Himself and one another. John 10:10 declares, 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full' (NIV), this verse points to a God who desires wholeness and restoration, not destruction and abuse. God's concern for the vulnerable and oppressed, taken alongside the direct commandment to 'love one another,' would imply that God does not intend, or condone, people to perpetrate or suffer from domestic abuse. The calling of the Church is to testify to God's heart of love in both word and action. Therefore, good teaching and practice concerning healthy relationships is key, especially in response to domestic abuse. By stating that MCI has a zero tolerance towards domestic abuse, it is implied that any form of domestic abuse is in opposition to the ways of God, and that the Church cannot support, condone, or protect any individual who believes that domestic abuse is acceptable behaviour.

We acknowledge that within Scripture there are some challenging texts and language that can be suggestive of a violent God, or a God that condoned violence towards women. Sadly, many of these texts have been used to support the oppression of women both currently and historically. However, in biblical interpretation it is important to wrestle with challenges of Scripture, taking care to consider the whole biblical narrative and what it reveals to us about the nature of God, and the nature of his love towards his creation. There are several texts that could be considered in this document, however for clarity and conciseness we present the following few in hope that they convey the heart of God for his people. The following examples are presented in such a way that highlights how these texts have been manipulated to condone domestic abuse, alongside how we hope MCI would teach on these passages.

SCRIPTURE (NIV)	HARMFUL TEACHING	HELPFUL TEACHING
<p><b>Genesis 2:18</b></p> <p><i>The Lord God said, 'it is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'</i></p>	<p><b>Women are inferior.</b> God created women to serve men. Men were created first and therefore have a right to control women.</p>	<p><b>All are equal.</b> The word 'helper' (<i>Ezer</i>) that is used here to refer to women, most often refers to God in other OT places (1 Sam 7:12, Ps 121:1-2). Therefore, it is not a suggestion of inferiority. Woman was created to be an equal helper to the man, a companion rather than a servant.</p>
<p><b>Genesis 3:6</b></p> <p><i>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.</i></p>	<p><b>It was her fault!</b> Eve took the fruit and gave some to her husband. She was weaker and more sinful than the husband. She caused her husband to sin by tricking him.</p>	<p><b>Both are complicit in sin.</b> Both man and woman were present and participatory in the act of the Fall. Adam was as much at fault. Romans 5:12-21, <i>'Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people, because all sinned.'</i></p>
<p><b>Genesis 3:16</b></p> <p><i>To the woman he said, '... your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you.'</i></p>	<p><b>Rulership as a right for men.</b> God determined that men should rule their wives, therefore that is how it should be. It is the woman's punishment/curse for sinning.</p>	<p><b>Rulership as a result.</b> A consequence of sin is that a man would rule over his wife, it was not God's created plan or order of creation. Before the fall, men and women were created equal. As the work of Christ draws on the restoration of creation, then too we should see a restoration to the relationships between man and woman.</p>

# A Response to Domestic Abuse

SCRIPTURE (NIV)	HARMFUL TEACHING	HELPFUL TEACHING
<p><b>Matthew 5:32</b></p> <p><i>But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery...</i></p>	<p><b>Marriage as Contract.</b> Marriage is in the control of the husband. The only reason for divorce is adultery. If a spouse leaves for any other reason they go against God.</p>	<p><b>Marriage as Covenant.</b> Marriage is a covenant between a husband and wife. Abuse in any form is a break to that covenant of love and trust. God would not desire for anyone to be the victim of domestic abuse.</p>
<p><b>Matthew 6:12</b></p> <p><i>And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.</i></p>	<p><b>Forgive and forget.</b> You should forgive the abuse, no matter how often it happens. You are supposed to forgive, not walk away.</p>	<p><b>Consequences.</b> Sin has consequences and forgiving does not remove these consequences. Forgiveness is a process and must not nullify the consequences of abuse or mean the situation must continue. Women or men should not have to stay in an abusive relationship to forgive their partner.</p>
<p><b>Ephesians 5:22</b></p> <p><i>Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.</i></p>	<p><b>Obedience = servat.</b> The woman must obey her partner no matter what.  If your partner is abusing you, you must not be obeying him enough. Be more submissive.</p>	<p><b>Obedience = mutuality.</b> Ephesians 5:21 says 'submit to one another' and so verse 22 must be read in light of mutual submission, one to the other. Obedience and submissions are a voluntary choice we make to one another that is based on an equality of love and respect. Within abuse, there is no love nor respect. It is unjustifiable.</p>
<p><b>Ephesians 5:23</b></p> <p><i>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body of which he is the Saviour.</i></p>	<p><b>The holding of power.</b> The man is the head of the house; therefore, he has all power and the right to assert it.  Headship symbolises superiority and having the right to take more than to give.</p>	<p><b>The laying down of power.</b> The example given here of headship is that of Christ over the Church. When Christ came to earth, he gave up his heavenly power for the sake of his church. In the example of Christ, headship is about laying down power for the sake of loving another, it is not about superiority or control. It is also worth noting that in verse 25, husbands are told to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. This is a high expectation of love and sacrifice on a husband too. Abuse is not in line with this imagery.</p>
<p><b>1 Peter 1:6</b></p> <p><i>In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.</i></p>	<p><b>Accept suffering.</b> Victims should accept abuse and use the suffering as an opportunity to grow in their faith. Suffering is to be accepted.</p>	<p><b>Refute suffering.</b> Remaining in an abusive relationship is not an offering of faith to God. It is not suffering that will bring God glory. Scripture continually speaks value over us. It tells us we are precious and loved by God. God's work in Scripture is about bringing freedom to those enslaved or oppressed. Domestic abuse is not freedom and does not glorify God.</p>

*'Only yesterday I was told of a Christian woman who escaped a viciously cruel marriage and went to consult her pastor. The man of God, wishing to restore domestic peace and harmony, sent the fearful congregant back to her home along with his well-meant prayers and good advice. Two days later the woman was dead, slain by the hand of her husband.'*

*Catherine Clark Kroeger,  
'The Pastor and Domestic Violence'*

The above examples are a small number of texts in comparison to many that could be deeply studied. We encourage you to further study in this area using some of the resources mentioned at the end. It may seem surprising to you that the texts above have been used in harmful ways, even if unwittingly, however the overwhelming truth from the voices of victims is that the church has not always been a place of refuge. Many testimonies from victims shine a light on harmful theology that has been used to further manipulate and perpetrate abuse. In response to such testimony, we should lament and repent, and most assuredly aim to do better.

## **An extra note on FORGIVENESS**

The area of forgiveness is one that we wrestle with in an attempt to fully understand. We understand forgiveness as a way of the

Kingdom and know that we receive forgiveness in the grace of God. Forgiveness is part of the relationship of love that God has with the world, which involves continually creating and recreating. When we talk of forgiveness, we often use language that is suggestive that forgiveness means the past has been dismissed. However, forgiveness does not negate the consequences of the past. We see this in the body of the risen Christ, still bearing the scars of the cross. What forgiveness does is let people live in a new relationship to the consequences of the past. Christians should not pretend that forgiveness is easy. It takes time, it cannot be coerced. Forgiveness in the case of abuse, is not about a vindication of a perpetrator, but it is about the healing and freedom that it can be to all those involved. Encouraging someone to remain in an abusive relationship is not a witness to the freedom that can be found in the process of forgiveness.

## **An extra note on DIVORCE**

It should be noted that when divorce is discussed in Scripture, both in Old and New Testament, it is based on the protection of the most vulnerable in the relationship, most frequently the woman. If a man carelessly divorced his wife, she was left unable to provide for herself in that cultural setting. The laws around divorce prevented a husband from casting aside a wife and leaving her destitute when she had been at no fault. God's dislike of divorce is founded on his dislike of the mistreatment of a spouse within a relationship. (For example: Malachi 2:10-16)

The Methodist Church in Ireland upholds the Christian ideal of lifelong marriage, it is recognised however that this situation is not always achieved. (*Methodist Belief, 2003*)

## **An extra note on GENDER**

The texts that we have included here focus predominantly on women. However, we acknowledge that domestic abuse is not discriminatory and that both men and women can be victims of domestic abuse. Equally we acknowledge that domestic abuse is not exclusive to married couples, and that it can take place within any relationship regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social status, marital status, or family relationship. The passages offered hopefully build on the principles of value and care that would support the position of zero tolerance to domestic abuse, and encourage an understanding of God that loves, cares for, and protects the vulnerable and oppressed. Domestic abuse, in whatever form, devalues the person, causing harm and oppression. It is an injustice against the victim and an injustice against God. As we wrestle with many of the passages in Scripture, we hold to the truth of a God who is just and whose mandate is to set the captives free.

*'To ignore this violence and humiliation is to ignore the voice of God. To pat the victims on the head and minimize their pain is to slap God in the face. To go to our homes and sleep at night, without being compelled to act, while others live in terror is ignoring our duty to God and neighbour.'*

*Ron Clark, 'Freeing the oppressed: A call to Christians concerning domestic violence'.*

## 3. Good Practice... Prevention, Protection and Support

### A. THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN PREVENTION

- i. **Worship & Teaching:** There is always an opportunity for worship leaders to speak out against domestic abuse in their preaching, teaching, and prayers. However, sensitivity should be exercised in acknowledging that theological emphasis can be both affirming and damaging to those in abusive situations. Therefore, careful thought must be given to wording used when constructing teaching or prayers. Language used should reflect the inclusive emphasis of our beliefs about equality and should be focused on increasing the value of those who may feel weak, not reducing it. Gender inequality must be continually challenged in all aspects of our Church life, as it is unacceptable to the gospel message to allow it to be present within our worship and practice. Speaking into domestic abuse may feel uncomfortable and difficult at times, but when the current shocking statistics of the numbers of victims are considered, it should become imperative that the Church finds its voice to condemn such abuse and encourage a more positive understanding of relationships and marriage.

Circuits are strongly encouraged to acknowledge and support the International Day of Action Against Violence Against Women on 25 November as part of their rhythm of worship. This could be in the sharing of information on Social Media and the inclusion of White Ribbon Statement and prayers on the relevant Sunday. ([www.whiteribbon.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbon.org.uk))

- ii. **Children & Young People:** Domestic abuse does not only affect adults in a relationship. It can have a detrimental effect on children and young people too. This can take place within intimate relationships or peer-relationships. Children who witness domestic abuse are themselves considered to have been emotionally abused.<sup>5</sup> The Church has a responsibility to be a safe and nurturing environment to all children and young people. It is vital that leaders know the importance of modelling positive relationships in their relationships with young people under their care. Leaders should also be aware of how to respond if a young person discloses information pertaining to domestic abuse. This is included in the Safeguarding Training provided by MCI which **ALL** those working with children and young people **must** avail of before taking up any leadership role.

Advice on issues of safeguarding can be sought from the Methodist Church in Ireland's Connexional Safeguarding Officer at [safeguarding@irishmethodist.org](mailto:safeguarding@irishmethodist.org)

- iii. **Sharing Information:** Local churches are encouraged to display information of local services and organisations that can offer support in the area of domestic abuse or sexual violence. These are readily accessible from organisations. Displaying such material provides helpful support to those who need it, and also promotes an ethos that the Church has a zero tolerance towards domestic abuse.

It is also helpful for those working and volunteering in the church to make themselves aware of local organisations, so they know how best to refer or signpost someone who is looking for help.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/> accessed 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

- iv. **Training:** There exists a need for awareness within the Church of the reality of domestic abuse. This is the responsibility of the whole Church, not simply the minister or lay worker. Therefore, the accessibility of training for all in congregational life is greatly important. This can take many formats for example: formal training, bible study, and worship, to collaborative working with other agencies. Basic awareness of the extent and effects of domestic abuse on individuals, families and society should be an essential part of core training and pastoral ministry. For ministers in training, an understanding of the impact of theological teaching in the context and reality of domestic abuse, the use of language in teaching and worship, and the importance of modelling equal, respectful relationships should be a part of ministerial formation. This is also essential to the theological training of Local Preachers.

All clergy, lay employees, volunteers, and congregations should endeavour to keep trained and informed about domestic abuse so that the best possible support can be offered to anyone who is suffering. Those in leadership should lead by example in their engagement with training and good practice, this will encourage open and positive engagement and discussion within other congregational members.

**It should be noted however, that although training is beneficial, we should be aware of our limitations and that the greatest help we can offer is to signpost people to professional agencies who specialise in support and care for victims of domestic abuse.** We need to avoid practice that deals with issues 'in house,' or that believes that receiving basic training makes us experts. Professional agencies should always be contacted as we acknowledge the limitation of the help we can offer as Church.

- v. **Partnership Training ONUS Ltd & MCI:** The Council for Social Responsibility report to Conference in 2015 and 2016, stated that every Methodist Church should become a **Safe Place**. 'Safe Place' is an initiative which provides support in a range of settings for people requiring information on domestic abuse and how to signpost those affected. This **online training is available to all Methodist Churches across the Connexion** and will enable everyone to play their part to create a society that has zero tolerance towards domestic abuse, in which prevention and early intervention work is crucial. For information on *Safe Place* Training, congregations should contact the Learning & Development Officer for MCI.

As a 'Safe Place' there is a commitment to:

- Support the *Safe Place Campaign Pledge*: never to commit, condone or stay silent about domestic abuse.
- Provide a safe place for victims of domestic abuse to confidentially access information.
- Acknowledge that domestic abuse is a problem that impacts on all of us as society. Therefore, be prepared to play our part in supporting victims, and state clearly to perpetrators that we will not tolerate abuse in our community.

## B. THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN PROTECTION & SUPPORT

Tackling domestic abuse will require professional expertise and specialist work, however this does not mean that it be side-lined from the ministry and mission of the church. The role of the church may be to walk alongside the victim on their long journey to wholeness. The Church has an opportunity to offer positive friendships in a time of great difficulty, and to speak encouragement and hope to someone who may be experiencing great despair. Here are some key points to consider when there has been a disclosure of domestic abuse:

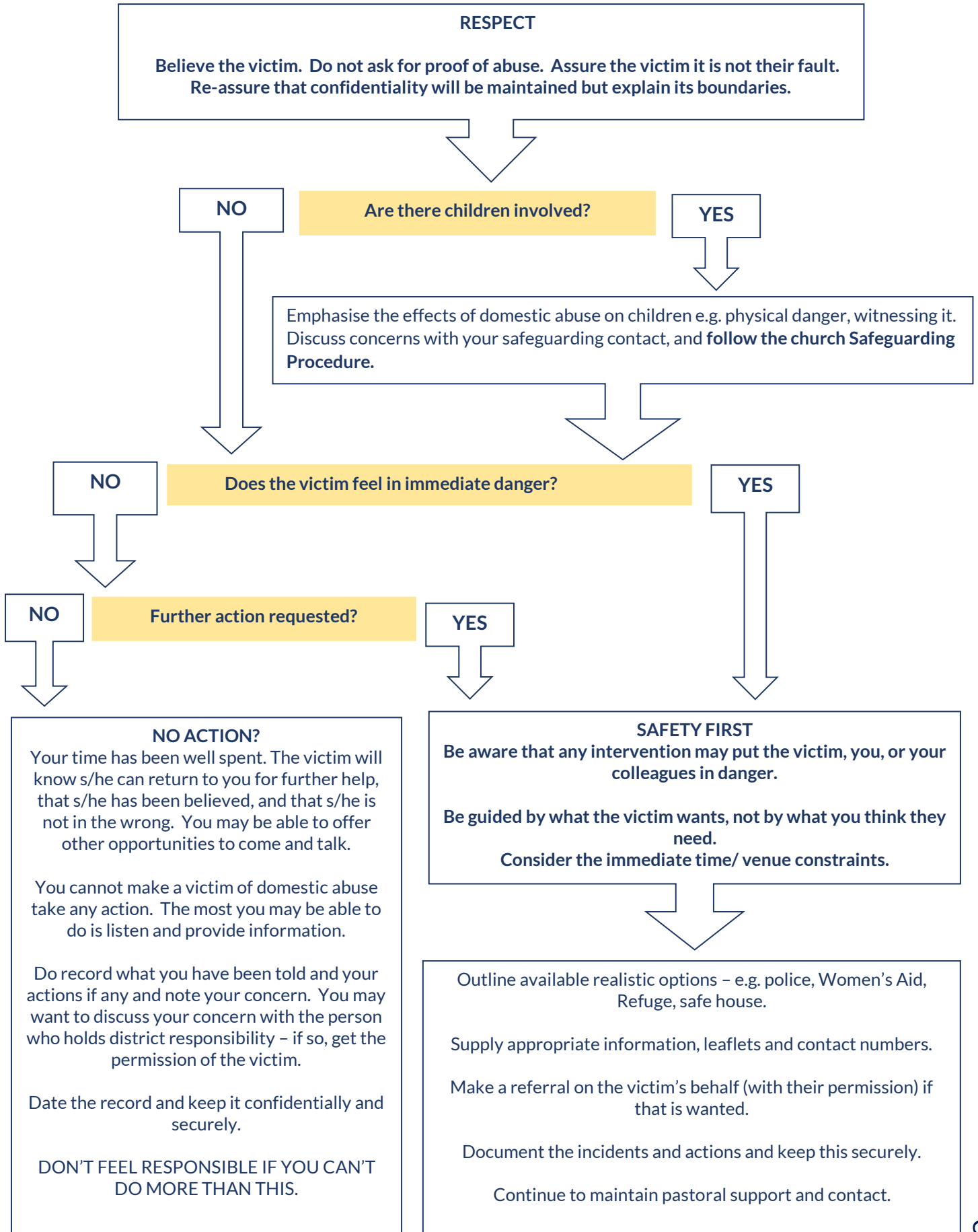
- **Always believe what is being disclosed.** It has taken a great deal of courage for a victim to speak out. Meet that courage with reassurance and trust so they know this is a safe space for them to speak. Ask questions that gather good information about what support is needed, not questions that accuse or cast judgements.
- **Determine what kind of support the person is looking for or needing.** This will depend on many things including the person's emotional state and whether there is an immediate danger from the perpetrator. An appropriate response will depend on these factors.
- **How is the information coming to you?** Is the disclosure coming from a victim or a second party? If this is from a second party, is the victim aware the disclosure is being made?
- **Is this disclosure going to require a formal complaint?** Or is this primarily a need for help and support amid trauma?
- **Have the police been informed?** Please note that no victim should ever feel forced to involve the police. However, if in immediate danger this should be actively encouraged.
- **Support offered to the victim should be at their own pace.** Those offering support need to avoid the temptation of trying to rush things along or intervening in ways that will inadvertently put the victim at more risk. The journey of support can be a long and slow one, but that is ok, it is important to realise that from the moment of disclosure the victim can usually only cope with taking one step at a time.
- **If both parties are involved in the congregation,** there will be a tension to hold between those who may wish to choose sides. It is essential that a victim is listened to well, and trusted, therefore empowering them to feel safe and to have the strength to continue in the brave journey to freedom from abuse. It must be recognised that the need for work with perpetrators should be undertaken by someone with specialist skills, and where pastoral support from the church can be offered alongside. However, abused and abuser cannot both be supported in the same church community **unless** that is the express, independent wish of each, nor can they be supported pastorally by the same person. It should also be noted that it should never be the victim who has to leave the church unless this is the only safe option. It is not the role of the church or minister to intervene between partners or act as a mediator/go-between.
- **Good practice in pastoral listening** means that there will always be more than one person on the premises during planned meetings. Quiet and confidential places should be available for listening, but ideally someone else should also be aware of where and when confidential listening is taking place. This protection is for both listener and the one seeking help.
- **It is essential that those who listen know when it is important to refer issues on.** Although we want to provide safe, listening spaces for all, we need also to be aware that there are legally some issues that cannot be kept confidential (e.g. issues of child protection, criminal action, and danger to life). It is also highly important that those who pastorally support others are aware of the appropriate boundaries to pastoral relationships and take care always to work within those boundaries. This point highlights the need for appropriate training as mentioned above.

- ***In the case of allegations against ministers***, or staff members, the Methodist Church's Complaints Procedure should be followed, and the District Superintendent contacted.
- **Leaders and workers must be aware** that the greatest risk for the victims of domestic abuse is at separation or immediately after separation. Confidentiality needs to be emphasised particularly concerning addresses and information about children and how contact is being made with the victim. As the church protects and supports it must take great care that the best possible protection is afforded to those most vulnerable.
- ***Always be ready to refer on.*** The Church should be aware of the need of specialist professional services who can offer support to victims and have relevant local contact numbers to hand. Permission from the victim should be sought before referring on. Likewise, there should be a clarity of expectation between the church and the victim about the type of support that the church can realistically offer.
- ***Where appropriate, talk through an emergency plan.*** If a victim is reluctant to contact a professional agency, despite your best efforts to encourage them to do so, here are some points that might be helpful for them to think through. (Please note that the most dangerous time for any victim is the time of escape, this is why it is **essential** that you encourage them to engage with professional agencies who can support them to safety. The following are not points for you to organise, but for the victim to consider.)
  1. Plan an emergency escape and get your neighbours' support **if possible and safe to do so**.
  2. Keep money safe for taxis, bus fares and telephone calls.
  3. Make sure you have your own key to the house.
  4. Have clothes ready for you and your children in case of need.
  5. Find out and keep safe the telephone numbers of your nearest Women's Aid group, the Police, Samaritans, and Social Services.
  6. Try to have your Post Office Child Benefit Account Card, your rent book, bank book, marriage and birth certificates, passport and driving licence with you when you leave.



# A Response to Domestic Abuse

## Disclosure Flow Chart



## 4. Further Resources

### USEFUL CONTACTS: NORTHERN IRELAND

Anyone who feels in immediate danger should dial 999.

#### Police Service of Northern Ireland

*(Ask to speak to your local Domestic Violence Officer)*

☎ 101

### SUPPORT SERVICES:

#### Nexus

*(Domestic and Sexual Abuse 24-hour Helpline (freephone) for all victims)*

☎ 0808 802 1414

🌐 <http://dsahelpline.org>

✉ [help@dsahelpline.org](mailto:help@dsahelpline.org)

#### Women's Aid Federation NI

*(Information on Local Women's Aid branches can be found online)*

☎ 028 9024 9041

🌐 [www.womensaidni.org](http://www.womensaidni.org)

✉ [info@womensaidni.org](mailto:info@womensaidni.org)

#### Men's Advisory Project

☎ 028 9024 1929 (Belfast)

☎ 028 7116 0001 (Foyle)

🌐 [www.mapni.co.uk](http://www.mapni.co.uk)

✉ [info@mapni.co.uk](mailto:info@mapni.co.uk)

#### The Rainbow Project (LGBTQ+ Centre)

☎ 028 9031 9030 (Belfast)

☎ 028 7128 3030 (Foyle)

🌐 [www.rainbow-project.org](http://www.rainbow-project.org)

✉ [info@rainbow-project.org](mailto:info@rainbow-project.org)

#### The Rowan (Regional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) for NI)

☎ 0800 389 4424

🌐 <http://therowan.net>

#### Victim Support NI

☎ 028 9024 3133 (Belfast)

✉ [belfast@victimsupportni.org.uk](mailto:belfast@victimsupportni.org.uk)

☎ 028 7137 0086 (Foyle)

✉ [foyle@victimsupportni.org.uk](mailto:foyle@victimsupportni.org.uk)

🌐 [www.victimsupportni.com](http://www.victimsupportni.com)

#### Samaritans

☎ 116 123

🌐 [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

✉ [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

#### Lifeline

☎ 0808 808 8000

🌐 [www.lifelinehelpline.info](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info)

#### Men's Alliance NI

🌐 [www.mensallianceni.co.uk](http://www.mensallianceni.co.uk)

# A Response to Domestic Abuse

## USEFUL CONTACTS: REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Anyone who feels in immediate danger should dial 999.

**An Garda Síochána**

 112

## SUPPORT SERVICES:

**Women's Aid** (24hr National Freephone Helpline)  
Local Women's Aid branches can be found online.

 1800 341 900  
 [www.womensaid.ie](http://www.womensaid.ie)  
 [helpline@womensaid.ie](mailto:helpline@womensaid.ie)

**Men's Development Network** (Male Victims National Helpline)

 1800 816 588  
 [www.mensnetwork.ie](http://www.mensnetwork.ie)  
 [men@mensnetwork.ie](mailto:men@mensnetwork.ie)

**Men's Aid Ireland**

 (01) 554 3811  
 [www.mensaid.ie](http://www.mensaid.ie)  
 [hello@mensaid.ie](mailto:hello@mensaid.ie)




**LGBT Ireland**

 1890 929 539  
 [www.lgbt.ie](http://www.lgbt.ie)  
 [info@lgbt.ie](mailto:info@lgbt.ie)

**Rape Crisis Help**

 1800 778 888  
 [www.rapecrisishelp.ie](http://www.rapecrisishelp.ie)

**Samaritans**

 116 123  
 [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
 [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Mental Health Ireland**

 (01) 284 1166  
 [www.mentalhealthireland.ie](http://www.mentalhealthireland.ie)  
 [info@mentalhealthireland.ie](mailto:info@mentalhealthireland.ie)

## A. FURTHER READING:

### BOOKS:

Clark, Ron, *Freeing the Oppressed: A call to Christians concerning Domestic Violence*, (Oregon: Cascade Books, 2009).

Conway, Helen L, *Domestic Violence and the Church*, (Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1998).

Court, Victoria, *Shattered Glass: From Victim to Survivor*, (Cambridgeshire: Melrose Books, 2006).

Cummings, Dr Chloe, *What would Jesus Do About Domestic violence and abuse towards Christian women?* (Booklocker.com, Inc, 2011).

Gnanadason, Aruna, *No longer a secret: The Church and Violence Against Women (Revised Edition)*, (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997).

Hennessy, Don, *How He Gets into her Head: The Mind of the Male Intimate Abuser*, (Atrium, 2012).

Hennessy, Don, *Steps to Freedom: Escaping Intimate Control*, (Liberties Press, 2018).

Herman, Judith Lewis, *Trauma and Recovery*, (London: Pandora, 1998).

Kroeger, Catherine Clark & Nason-Clark, Nancy, *No place for abuse: Biblical and Practical Resources to Counteract Domestic Violence*, (Illinois: Inter Varsity, 2001).

Miles, Reverend Al, *Domestic Violence: What every Pastor needs to know*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).

Paynter, Helen, *The Bible Doesn't Tell Me So: Why you don't have to submit to domestic abuse and coercive control*, (The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2020).

The Archbishops' Council, *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Guidelines for those with Pastoral Responsibility*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2006).

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