

refugee council

help and advice



October 2006

Domestic violence – do you need help?

Domestic violence is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, between family members, or between other people who live or have lived in the same household/accommodation regardless of their gender or sexuality.

The violence can take many forms:

- **physical abuse**; beating, kicking, assault with or without weapons, strangling and stabbing
- **sexual abuse**; rape, forced sex, forced to watch or participate in pornography, being denied access to contraception
- **emotional abuse**; threats (including to kill), damage to property, being shouted at, intimidation, being controlled
- **financial abuse**; being denied food or money

If you are being abused, remember that:

- you can report the abuse to one or more of the following: the National Domestic Violence Helpline, the police, your doctor or the Refugee Council
- the information you give will be kept confidential and no action will be taken without your agreement
- you can be moved to a safe place (with your children) immediately
- you may be able to apply for asylum independently
- reports of abuse are taken very seriously
- the law can offer you protection against your abuser, for example through legal action
- you may continue receiving support from National Asylum Support Service (NASS) depending on your circumstances
- it is not your fault you have been abused

Contact the following for help:

Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247

If you don't speak English, please state what language you speak. You may have to wait while the interpreter is found, or you can say what language you speak, give your telephone number and an adviser and an interpreter will call you back.

Police (emergency) 999

Refugee Council's advice lines. Contact the appropriate office during office hours:

London	020 7346 6777
East of England	01473 297 900
West Midlands	0121 620 1515
Yorkshire & Humberside	0113 386 2210