



Women's  
Domestic Abuse  
Helpline

0161 636 7525

## Media Toolkit

### Who we are

Independent Choices was founded in 1978 as an organisation run by women, for women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse in Greater Manchester. Independent Choices Greater Manchester is a registered charity, number 1158313. Registered in Manchester. Registered office PO Box 390, Manchester M16 7WE

Through our helpline services we can offer advice, information, telephone counselling and support to any woman (age 16 and over) who is being abused, has been abused or is in fear of being forced into marriage by someone they are having a relationship with, or have formerly had a relationship with. This includes partners, husband, ex-partners and family members, and women in same sex relationships.

The helpline is delivered 33 hours a week, staffed by paid workers and volunteers. As part of the service we also provide a non-urgent email advice service and our own website, as well as the End the Fear website.

### What is domestic abuse?

Around 2m women every year are a victim of domestic abuse, and around two women a week are killed at the hands of a partner or ex-partner. Greater Manchester Police deal with around 50,000 reports of domestic abuse every year. .

Until recently, there has been no official recording of domestic abuse incidents because it is very difficult to measure. Domestic violence is a very private crime. Victims of domestic violence are less likely than victims of other forms of violence to report their experiences to the authorities because of beliefs that their abuse is not a matter for police involvement, their experiences too trivial, or from fear of reprisal.



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Often, too, perpetrators are convicted of assault rather than of domestic abuse, so its impact is even harder to measure

There is thus significant under-reporting of domestic abuse by victims, and it is acknowledged that data on reported incidents and cases prosecuted, which has recently started being collected by the criminal justice system, represents the tip of the iceberg.

Domestic abuse is not only about being physically or sexually abused and it is rarely a one off incident. Emotional abuse is for some women and children just as serious and damaging and can be longer lasting. Many women and children still carry the emotional scars long after the physical injuries have healed. Financial abuse is another form of domestic abuse and a way that women are controlled by partners/ ex-partners. This includes stopping women from working, taking their money or making women take out loans in their name.

Any woman can experience domestic abuse regardless of race, ethnic or religious group, class, disability or lifestyle. It can also take place in lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender relationships and can involve other family members including children.

### *End the Fear*

The End the Fear fortnightly email bulletin is now emailed to over 900 agencies and individuals with an average of 700 visits a week to the site, keeping professionals in Greater Manchester up-to-date with good practice, local initiatives, research and training. We also inform service users about where they can go for help across Greater Manchester, as well as information on domestic abuse, the impact it can have and safety planning.



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Who are our callers?



## WDAH incoming contacts

Area from	Contacts
Bolton	64
Bury	119
Oldham	224
Rochdale	201
Salford	316
Stockport	298
Tameside	187
Trafford	349
Wigan	93
Manchester	1,736
Not known/not district specific	248
Outside Greater Manchester	807

Ethnic origin	Contacts
African	160
African-Caribbean	23
Black UK	99
East European	86
European	47
Middle Eastern	54
Mixed Race	90
Not known/ N/A	1376
Other	129
South Asian	794
White UK	1784
Total	4642

Dependent children - 3066   Single woman - 1722   Pregnant - 151



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Where ethnic origin is known, 45% of contacts were from or about a woman from a BME background.

Where age is known, 52% of women were aged 16-29. The map relates to 2013/14.

### *How are we funded?*

We are funded by Manchester City Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester as well as donations and Awards for All. We also get some funding from End the Fear.

However, much of our funding is given to us annually. Not knowing how much we will have every year makes it much harder to plan our services.

### *Why do we need help?*

Independent Choices provides vital advice for around 4,600 women from Greater Manchester each year through its helpline.

For many women in violent or abusive relationships the helpline is the first port of call and the information and support they receive on that first call is crucial in helping to keep them and their children safe. However, the charity has seen its public funding to be reduced by one third due to last year's spending cuts and struggled to keep up its vital service. We provide excellent value for money and are staffed in part by highly trained volunteers. It costs us around £40 per hour to offer this service.

We also administer the End the Fear website which is an invaluable resource for people experiencing domestic abuse across Greater Manchester.

Getting it wrong can cost a lot.



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- A presentation to GP - £48
- Callout to police - £90
- A&E – Minor assault - £65
- Depression - £332
- A&E – Major assault - £2,700
- Hospitalisation due to severe domestic force - £9,190
- Court costs – common assault - £215
- Court costs – serious wounding - £9,127
- Court costs – section 18 prosecution - £8,430
- Domestic homicide - £1,097,338

By supporting Independent Choices, you are showing your support for the local community and saving women and children from a life of fear.