

Together
we can break
the cycle of
**DOMESTIC
ABUSE**

Essential Safety Guide

Campaign materials produced by Philip Gowan and Emma Haselton – November 2025

Domestic Abuse – Safety Guide for Staff

A simple safety guide for staff at risk or to share with colleagues and customers you are concerned for

This six-part online publication is a partnership project Chorus CX, an online training provider focused on small and independent business, with Willows 301 a charity dedicated to supporting women and their families.

Why?

- **1 in 4** women will in their lifetimes be a victim of domestic abuse.
- Every week **TWO** women are killed by an abusive partner.

It is a powerful thought that in your workplace could be your or a colleagues only place of safety!

We hope this guide will help you or colleagues make that most important first step.

To take back control, create pathways of protection, safety from your partner's abuse, or if still in an abusive relationship, seeking greater protection once you have separated – develop a safety plan and process to help protect you and your family from further harm.



Together We Can..

Domestic Abuse is everywhere. And it is everybody's business, within companies – large and small, customers, families, friends. Anyone can be affected.

Together we can all do our part - be aware of what we think is not a 'healthy relationship' if we suspect a person is not being treated well, with respect, with care or consideration, we can say so.

Challenge it. Ask the questions.

Ask your friend/colleague if they are ok within their relationship, do you feel safe? Does your partner hurt or harm you?

If you do not feel confident doing this, speak to a manager or HR. Display our poster in the staffroom, toilets etc. see the resources guide for agencies who can give support.



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1. Being Prepared

Getting yourself prepared – some simple but effective steps can help you to feel in control and have a plan of action.

Documents

- Get all your essential information and documentation together, court orders, injunctions, ID, important paperwork etc.
- List all relevant phone numbers: friends, family and those people involved in your case, police, case workers, solicitors, school staff etc.
- Create a diary or journal to log any incidents with the date and time. Create a timeline of previous incidents. Keep this somewhere safe.
- Beware voice messages may have a short life span - so make copies before they expire taking screen shots.

Emergency Bag

Pack an emergency bag and store in a safe place or with a friend, family or neighbour. Include all IDs: passport, birth certificates, driving licence, keys etc.

Do not forget medication for you and any children, plus clothing and money, if possible, seems extreme - but do plan an escape route from the home in an emergency.



A Willows 301 Case Study

M was supported with interventions such as 1:1 meetings, phone calls, and emails, to help to build a legal case against ex-partner.

Helped to develop a safety plan, security of home, car, and devices.

Referrals made to relevant services and support to complete paperwork and interviews as required.

Encouraged to attend survivor group sessions, educational workshops around domestic abuse, and further support for mental health recovery.

Currently M is safe, court order obtained, and housing, educational, work settings all secure and risk aware. M states that support from Willows 301 has been the single most crucial step in feeling positive about identifying the risks, feeling safe, and hopeful in recovery from abuse.



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2. Smart Phones

Your smart phone is your most important communications device in seeking help from others and storing valuable information: texts, emails etc.

This data and information could also be used in criminal proceedings.

An abusive or controlling partner will know this and they will also want to use it to their advantage, which is why you should make all your mobile devices and data storage as safe as possible.

If you only use your phone for email create a new address and send yourself emails with evidence, or information you may need.

- Always keep your mobile phone with you, charged and with enough credit in case you have to hide or lock yourself in a room.
- Emergency calls can still be made without credit and support agencies can accept reverse charges.
- Setup any speed dials that you can use in an emergency.
- Have Willows 301 or other agencies contacts setup on your phone.
- Use caller ID on your phones (if not, try using an answer phone to screen any unwanted calls).



70% of Cases..

The domestic violence charity Refuge says more than 70% of those it provides support to have reported tech-related abuse within a relationship.

Your smart phone is at the centre of your digital world.

Smart speakers, tracking apps and key-logging software are among products that have made it easier for perpetrators to maintain control of victims and continue abuse.

Ensure you are smarter than your phone



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3. Home Security

SAFEGUARDING YOUR HOME..

If your abusive partner has left your home, you will need to act to both reduce risk of incidents and to help you feel less stressed and safer.

This list is daunting and may not be needed in all cases, the team at Willows 301 will help advise you as will the approved and vetted providers we use.

It could be a costly exercise and you may need to seek independent financial advice, unfortunately grants are limited and subject to a detailed assessment.

- Change of locks for all points of access, doors, windows, garage etc.
- For doors a brace, a spy hole and door chains
- Security lights for front and rear of property
- Alarm system
- Cameras – but be careful of those using your Wi-Fi as these can be hacked
- Fire – know escape routes and have suitable fire extinguishers, blankets etc.



Signals and Alerts...

Your family, friends and neighbours can be excellent support in keeping you safe.

If appropriate, set up signals or codes with neighbours and friends, for example

- Lights on or off in certain rooms or use of curtains etc.
- Normal conversational sentences which flag to them a problem e.g. 'Sorry can't go out tonight need to be here for a friend coming over.'

If restriction orders in place – let neighbours know so that they can call the police if they see the person at your home.

Emma Haselton
CEO & Founder



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4. Support in the Workplace

At Willows 301 we encourage organisations to appoint a trained 'Confidant', someone who employees can talk to in complete confidence.

If not such a role or HR person and you are not comfortable in talking to your boss, there is probably someone you work with that you do feel comfortable with and is able to talk to them for you.

It is best that you do talk to someone to get the support you need, for example;

- Sharing your partners image with colleagues so they know if they try to get access to you at work
- Keep copy of legal documents at work: court orders, injunctions etc.
- Have colleagues that can go to lunch with you, walk with you to your car or the bus/train stop/station
- Use your journal/diary to log incidents at work – visits, calls on phone, work emails/texts

If your partner works for the same employer then the situation is much more complex, if no HR support, then do seek advice from a charity or agency that have professionals to advise on such matters.

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Duty of Care

Given the numbers of people impacted by domestic abuse it is not surprising laws were introduced.

In 2021 the Domestic Abuse Act came into force which does expect employers to show a duty of care for their employees.

The place of work maybe the only place someone could feel safe.

For a small business, a policy template is the obvious solution – but ineffective.

What is important is that staff feel that they can talk and be listened to.

Literally their lives could be at risk, owners and staff being aware of the signs and being supportive is what matters most.

Philip Gowan
Director & HR Expert



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5. Stalking

Stalking

This is one of the most common forms of harassment. Your partner maybe aware of the typical routes you would take on a day-to-day basis. So, always have a personal alarm with you – stick to routes that are residential and well-lit at night, avoiding alleyways and quiet walkways.

Let people know where you are going and when you should be back and if visiting give a time of arrival.

If you know the area will be dark then take a powerful torch, check before you leave so you know the batteries are fresh.

Car and Driving

- Keep the doors and windows locked whilst driving and avoid having your windows down
- Park near to street lighting or put outside lights at home before leaving to get into your car
- When approaching your car try to see all around it visually, including looking in the back seat before getting in
- Park so you can exit quickly without reversing
- Have car breakdown service or have someone who will come to you in event of a breakdown



Stalking is a crime...!!

It is interrelated to harassment and intimidation. Especially when the abuser is intensely jealous or following the ending of an abusive relationship.

Its purpose - a means of exerting power and control over you.

Now recognised as a form of domestic abuse within the criminal justice system, with charges being brought - more than doubling over a 5-year period in a recent CPS statistic's.

We are now seeing better recognition among police and prosecutors of stalking as part of a wider pattern of domestic abuse.

Emma Haselton
CEO & Founder



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6. Cyber Security & Technology

It is best to assume your partner has already installed software and apps onto all your devices, both personal and home e.g. game consoles, computers etc. basically any device connected to the internet!!

Cyber Checklist

- Do **backups** of photos, music, contacts etc. that you do not want to delete, then clean phone by resetting to factory settings
- Change password for phone and ensure the location finder is **OFF**. Set the device security PIN display timer for less than a minute to restrict easy access
- For your **accounts** registered and accessible via your phone – change passwords and login security questions. Examples; bank, hosting services/cloud – Apple/Google, Shopping apps
- **Social media**, check the location finder is off, do not post events or activities you will be attending in the future, remove connections that are unknown to you and could have been created without your knowledge
- **Equipment** and hardware that are linked to the internet: doorbells, cameras linked to Wi-Fi, laptops/computers, gaming consoles etc.
- Check your **Car** for tracking devices – there are many places where they can be hidden

Martin McGrath

“For many years now, I have supported domestic abuse charities, victims and survivors.

It has been clear that abusers will use whatever tools are available to be in control.

Technology, social networks, devices. Apps/software, digital accounts via the internet offer them a gateway into your life and the ability to digital stalk you and possibly also your children.

Use this cyber checklist to get started – but recommend advice from well-trained security experts as well.

The team at Willows 301 can help you decide what is the best option for you.

Cyber Security Consultancy



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Useful Resources and Contacts



0800 970 2070

Email: office@ncdv.org.uk

Website: <https://www.ncdv.org.uk/>



0808 2000 247

Website: <https://refuge.org.uk/>



01383 739084

Email: contact@safe-space.co.uk

Website: <https://safe-space.co.uk/>



A Charity for the Northwest of England & Campaign Partner

07392852922

Email: contact@willows301.co.uk



Designed and developed by Chorus CX - training solutions for customer experience & duty of care



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Specialist Services

Group	Charity Name	Website
Men	The Mankind Initiative	https://mankind.org.uk/
	Respect	https://www.respect.org.uk
Older People	Hourglass	https://www.wearehourglass.org/
Children	NAPAC	https://napac.org.uk/
LGBT+	Galop	https://www.galop.org.uk/helpline
Trans	Trans without Abuse	https://www.transwithoutabuse.org.uk/
Black Women	Hersana	https://hersana.org/
Jewish	Jewish Women's Aid	https://www.jwa.org.uk/
Latin American	LAWRS	https://lawrs.org.uk/
Muslim	Nour	https://www.nour-dv.org.uk/
Chinese	Advice Centre	https://ciac.co.uk/
Honour based abuse	Karma Nirvana	https://karmanirvana.org.uk/
Stalking	The Suzy Lampugh Trust	https://www.suzylamplugh.org/
Sexual Abuse	Rape Crisis (England & Wales)	https://rapecrisis.org.uk/
	Rape Crisis (Scotland)	https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/
	The Revenge Porn Helpline	https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/
Perpetrators	Driver Partnership	https://drivepartnership.org.uk/

Safe Space Scheme - the Safe Spaces scheme offers a private, safe area to people experiencing domestic abuse and is offered in the consulting areas of Boots UK, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, HSBC, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK. <https://safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/>



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The Campaign

Our campaign is to reach out to business and encourage awareness and education by displaying our poster to allow staff to download this guide.

Please do register your support and become a sponsor - either as an individual or a business. Here is our 'sponsors logo' and those participating will be added to our online list of supporters..



SCAN TO REGISTER YOUR SUPPORT



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