

Covid-19 has brought unprecedented challenges to all our lives; we know that some are fighting for their lives whilst others are grieving for the loss of a loved one.

There are also those experiencing domestic abuse who often suffer in silence.

Domestic abuse is something we hope no one ever has to go through, but for women in minority communities who find themselves in an abusive situation, this can be often be compounded by a lack of understanding on the subject matter.

At One Community we want you to know that if you are experiencing domestic violence, you are not alone.

If you or someone you know needs help, there is support available right now.

## Challenges in our BAME Communities:

**Domestic abuse extends beyond physical acts of violence and can be verbal, sexual, psychological, or financial.**

Since lockdown began the number of domestic abuse victims rescued and supported by One Community Scotland has risen.

Minority communities often suffer language barriers and a controlled environment due to a lack of social networks and perceived options. Most victims are women that hail from cultures that are male dominated and tolerant to domestic abuse, and most of these victims are also economically dependent on their partners.

Often undocumented Migrant or Asylum Seekers, these victims will suffer hidden domestic abuse and so are amongst the most vulnerable in society as they are either not documented or new here and so have limited knowledge of how the system works or where to go for help.

# One Community Scotland

## Domestic Abuse and How to get Help



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## Here are some suggestions from UK Charity SafeLives on what you could look to do to stay safe:

We know that if you are currently experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, you know what being isolated and frightened will feel like. You might also be worried about self-isolating with someone who is harming you.

It is important to try and think about the things that may change or make you more unsafe, especially thinking through how you might get help if you need it.

We also know that, like everyone, you could be worried about contracting the virus.

### Support from family, friends, and neighbors:

Family, friends and neighbours can be a way to get support that you need:

- Could you set up with someone you trust a check in call so you know that someone will contact you at certain times of the week?

- Can you FaceTime or call someone you trust? Can you talk to them about what you are experiencing and what your concerns are? Do you have a code word/phrase to let someone know that it is not safe to talk or to ask someone to phone the police?

### Self-care:

How you can look after yourself:

- As much as possible stick to usual routines. Maintaining basic self-care like eating, showering, sleeping, and exercising can all help your mental health.
- Take whatever breaks you can, walk around any outside space you might have and get the kids involved in an online exercise class if you can.

### Safety planning suggestions:

If you had to leave in an emergency do you know where you would go? Remember many shops and restaurants will be closed.

- If someone you trust is doing your shopping for you could you write a message on the shopping list asking for help.
- Have a bag packed ready and if you can, leave this at a trusted friend / family / neighbours home. This should contain important medical essentials and documents including passports, driving license, marriage certificate, birth certificates, your residence permit, bank cards / bank statements, diplomas, proof of residence.

- Use the fact that there are very few online shopping slots available to go to the shops and speak to someone.

### Children:

The person harming you may use child contact to further control and abuse you. The Lord President has issued guidance on compliance with court orders during the coronavirus outbreak. This is available [here](#).

If your English is limited seek help from an organization that speaks your language or where the services of an interpreter are available. Always carry the telephone number of an interpreting center in your area and take someone with you that you trust who can interpret for you. Courts provide a free translator and remind your lawyer to request one for you.

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## Please remember that if you or your child are in immediate danger and need help to call 999.

When calling 999, if it is not safe to speak then listen and respond to instructions to make yourself heard such as tapping or making a noise.

## Help and Support:

**You are not alone. There is support available right now. Do not feel inhibited in any way by the current coronavirus outbreak to report a crime against you or feel that you need to wait to get help.**

**Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline** have trained helpline workers 24 hours a day on 0800 027 1234. They will help you regardless of age, disability, nationality, or background.

**SHAKTI Women's Aid** offer help for BME women who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. You can call 0131 475 2399.

**Rape Crisis Scotland** provides free and confidential information for girls and women who have experienced sexual abuse. You can call 08088 01 03 02.

**SAY Women** is a voluntary organization which offers safe and secure accommodation for young women who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse, rape or sexual assault and who are homeless or being threatened with homelessness.

**Scottish Women's Aid** provides information, advice and support to women undergoing emotional and or physical abuse. Women's Aid refuges, located across Scotland, offer a safe, supportive environment for women and for their children, who wish to leave abusive partners. You can contact them on 0800 027 1234.

**One Parent Families Scotland** are a voluntary organization who offer support for lone parents and their families. You can contact the National Lone Parent Helpline on 0800 018 5026.

**Police Scotland** have details of your local police station on the Police Scotland website. To report immediate danger or harm call 999.

**Safer Scot** website includes where to access help if you or a friend or neighbor is suffering from domestic abuse.

## About One Community Scotland:

Launched in June 2018, One Community Scotland helps families and young people who are new to the city to settle in. We have recruited 'champions' from the city's Horn of Africa community to help us do this. These ladies have all created happy and successful lives in the city and are now offering a helping hand to others. Whether it is getting to know the city, improving language skills or applying for jobs, the ladies are there to help.

Our champions have been given a range of training to ensure people get the right support services overcome any challenges in the city.

One Community Scotland is led by prominent campaigner Khadija Coll who has spent more than 25 years working in Scotland and Africa.

## Contact Us:

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