

Help from Social Work Services

East Lothian Council offers social work services through three main social work teams: Children's Services, Community Care and Criminal Justice. This leaflet gives brief information about these teams and how social work services can support you if you and your children are living with domestic abuse. Social workers will treat you sensitively and with respect. They will treat what you say in confidence, unless a child is at risk of serious harm.



Children's Services

This team provides services to children and young people, parents and carers. They have a statutory duty to protect children who may be at risk of harm. You might be in touch with this team if, for example, you are worried about the effect of domestic abuse on your child such as their behaviour or their education. It can be very helpful for a child or young person to confide in a social worker.

Help from Social Work Services

The Children's Services team is based at Randall House in Macmerry. Staff can meet you at any council office or convenient place near where you live. Phone 01875 824 090 and ask to speak to the Duty Children's Services Social Worker to make a first appointment. Opening hours are Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Friday from 9am to 4pm.

In an emergency out of office hours phone the Emergency Social Work Service on 0800 731 6969.

Community Care

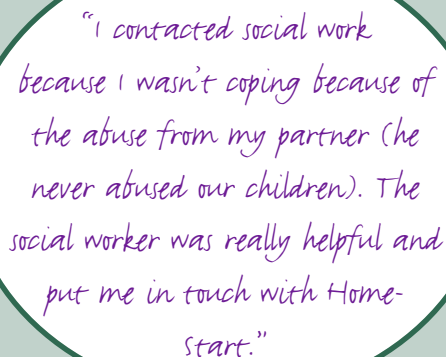
This team provides services to people over 16 who are in need of help usually because of old age, disability or vulnerability. The team also works with carers and families. You might be in touch with this team if, for example, you are elderly or disabled and being abused by a partner/ex-partner or are caring for someone in this situation. It can be very difficult if your abusive partner is your main carer you or if you are being abused by the person you care for.

Contact the team on 0845 603 1576. Whenever possible, they will come to you or meet you somewhere mutually convenient.

In an emergency out of office hours phone the Emergency Social Work Service on 0800 731 6969.

Criminal Justice

This team supervises offenders in the community; works with offenders leaving prison; and supports families of prisoners and victims of crime. You may be in touch with this team as a victim of domestic abuse and/or if the person who abused you is under social work supervision.



"I contacted social work because I wasn't coping because of the abuse from my partner (he never abused our children). The social worker was really helpful and put me in touch with Home-start."

Help from Social Work Services

The team is based at 6-8 Lodge Street, Haddington (01620 826 600). The office is open from 9am to 5pm on Mondays to Thursdays, and from 9am to 4pm on Fridays. You can drop in to pick up information but if you would like to see someone to talk about something in detail, it's better to phone ahead.

If you have an emergency when the offices are closed, phone the Emergency Social Work Service on 0800 731 6969.

You, your children and social work services

Many women who are abused by their partner fear that their children will be accommodated in care as a result of the abuse and/or if they leave their partner. Abusive men often threaten their partners that this will happen. This is not true. Very few children are accommodated in care without the consent of parents.

Although social workers know that there is a connection between domestic abuse and child abuse, they also know that the best way to protect children is to protect the mother. They are aware that women are good at protecting their children and go to great lengths to do so.

If the police are called to your house because of domestic abuse, and there are children in the household, a referral is made to the Children's Reporter. In some cases this may lead to the child and parents appearing before a Children's Hearing or the child being placed on the 'at risk register'. When this happens, a social worker from Children's Services will become involved to make sure that the children are not being hurt by the abuse (see leaflet 4). They will talk to you about what may need to change for the children to be taken off the register, and help you find support so you are able to protect your children from your partner's abuse.

**Phone the Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline in confidence
on 0800 027 1234 any time, day or night.**

Domestic abuse: there's no excuse

2nd edition December 2009