

Effects of domestic abuse on...

Women

- we remain dependent
- we hate ourselves
- we feel confused and helpless
- we have no support networks
- we drop police charges
- we are injured or killed
- we blame ourselves for our abusers behaviour
- we feel we cannot manage without our abuser

Children

- disruption
- isolation
- failure at school
- lack of sleep
- nightmares
- physical neglect or death
- blame themselves
- eating disorders
- may be taken into care
- unable to make friends

These are just some of the effects of domestic abuse.

The full list is endless...



CYMORTH I FENYWOD
CYFANNOL
WOMEN'S AID

Gyda'n gilydd rydym yn gryfach
Together we are stronger

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The Freedom Programme

Breaking the chain of abuse



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What is the Freedom Programme?

Cyfannol Women's Aid runs the Freedom Programme at Monmouthshire and Torfaen.

The programme consists of twelve sessions but you can take it at your own pace.

You can participate in each session as much or as little as you like.

The course identifies tactics abusers use, the beliefs held by abusers and the effects of domestic abuse on women and children. Each session is entirely confidential.

Who is the Freedom Programme for?

The programme is for any woman who has experience of domestic abuse, be it in their personal or professional lives.

Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, mental or financial.

What does the Freedom Programme aim to achieve?

The programme helps us to rebuild our confidence, set our own boundaries and to make our own informed choices.

Tactics abusers use to make us stay:

Isolation

An abuser cuts us off from our friends and family so we have no support networks and nobody to talk to.

Verbal abuse

This includes name calling and putting us down, leading to low self esteem, preventing us from leaving.

Bullying

Shouting, smashing things, sulking and constant questioning make us withdraw.

Financial control

An abuser will keep us short of money and take away our independence. If we have little or no money it is very difficult to leave.

Using the children

An abuser tells us we are bad mothers. They will make us feel guilty for taking the children away if we leave.

Using sex

An abuser rapes or forces us to have children, makes us feel dirty.

Blame

An abuser will tell us we deserve the abuse and makes us feel responsible.

During the programme we identify the beliefs of abusers so that we can challenge the myths surrounding domestic abuse.

Beliefs of abusers

- we need to be kept in order
- we are stupid
- we must be treated like children
- we have no rights
- abusive behaviour is normal
- violence does not affect the children
- childcare is not their responsibility
- only the abuser has rights
- what goes on in the home is no one else's business

Where do these beliefs come from?

- the workplace
- peers
- television and film
- magazines
- music
- pornography
- childhood - toys, education
- religion
- social traditions
- the court process and the judiciary

