

# HOW TO GET HELP

Signposting for trauma and harm in maternity

**IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OF HARM OR VIOLENCE OR IF A CHILD IN YOUR CARE IS AT RISK OF HARM- CONTACT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BY DIALING 999**

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# SAFER BEGINNINGS

Safer Beginnings aims to improve maternity outcomes and the postpartum safety of women with a specific focus on women from ethnic minority communities in England, Wales and Scotland, by developing specialist information, services and interventions that enable self-advocacy in maternal safety from obstetric and domestic abuse/violence and FGM/FGC.

The lead partners of the Safer Beginnings programme, White Ribbon Alliance and Best Beginnings are not service delivery organisations or violence support services but we want to make sure that you have people to contact to help you to stay safe.

If you, or a child in your care are in immediate danger or at risk of harm you should call 999.

If you have been impacted by the content of the resources created within the Safer Beginnings programme and require additional support for your current circumstance you may wish to contact one of the organisations listed to get the right help.

# DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT

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## Domestic Abuse in England

### Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline (run by Refuge) supports women experiencing domestic abuse with emergency temporary accommodation, outreach support, expert guidance from Independent Domestic Violence Advocates and drop in services.

Refuge all-female staff are highly trained and can provide a range of emotional and practical support to help you and your children reach safety.

You can call the helpline on **0808 2000 247** to discuss your rights and options (available 24 hours a day).

You can also send them a message on their website here:

[www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Contact-us](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Contact-us) or chat to them live on their website: [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Chat-to-us-online](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/Chat-to-us-online)

For more information about Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline, visit: [www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en)

### For Baby's Sake

For Baby's Sake takes a whole-family approach, starting in pregnancy and dealing with the entire cycle and history of domestic abuse, identifying and directly addressing the trauma or traumas that lie at the heart of the problem. It usually continues until the baby is two.

For Baby's Sake work with both parents, whether or not they are a couple. Each has their own practitioner. Their way of working empowers parents to break cycles of abuse, to transform the life-chances of whole families.

To find out more about For Baby's Sake and what is available in your area (or online) see here: [www.forbabyssake.org.uk/for-parents/#our-locations](http://www.forbabyssake.org.uk/for-parents/#our-locations)

Email: [welcome@forbabyssake.org.uk](mailto:welcome@forbabyssake.org.uk)

Call: 01438 873420

## England Cont:

### Respect Helpline

The Respect Phoneline offers help for domestic abuse perpetrators who want to change, they give confidential advice & support to help you stop being abusive. Respect Phoneline is a team of friendly advisors who will listen to you without judgement. The team are available to offer you confidential and honest advice to help you stop being violent.

To find out more: [www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)

Free and confidential helpline: 0808 802 4040 Monday – Friday between 9am and 8pm.

### Galop

Galop is the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity. Galop work with and for LGBT+ victims and survivors of interpersonal abuse and violence. Galop specialise in supporting victims and survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, hate crime, and other forms of abuse including honour-based abuse, forced marriage, and so-called conversion therapies. Galop are a service run by LGBT+ people, for LGBT+ people, and the needs of the LGBT+ community are at the centre of what Galop do.

To find out more: [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)

Helpline for LGBTQ+ experiencing domestic abuse: 0800 999 5428



## England Cont:

### Forced Marriage Unit

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) leads on the government's forced marriage policy, outreach and casework. It operates both inside the UK (where support is provided to any individual) and overseas (where consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals).

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to: victims and potential victims of forced marriage and professionals dealing with cases. The FMU public helpline can help with: safety advice, providing assistance when an unwanted spouse is due to move to the UK ('reluctant sponsor' cases), where possible, assistance in repatriation of victims held against their will overseas.

To find out more: [www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage)

Call: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151

Email: [fmue@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fmue@fcdo.gov.uk)

### Paladin – National Stalking Advocacy Service

Paladin NSAS is a trauma-informed national charity, established in 2013, to support victims of stalking in England and Wales. Their team of accredited Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers (ISACs) ensure that high risk victims of stalking are supported and that a coordinated community response is developed locally to keep victims and their children safe.

To find out more: [www.paladinservice.co.uk](http://www.paladinservice.co.uk)

Call: 0203 866 4107



## Domestic Abuse in Scotland

### Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone with experience of domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends and colleagues.

The helpline team have a specialist understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse and forced marriage, and the options available for support in Scotland. If you are experiencing domestic abuse, think that you might be, or are concerned about someone else, the Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline can help you.

You can call the helpline on 0800 027 1234, email the helpline on [helpline@sdafmh.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sdafmh.org.uk) or use their live chat service on their website: [www.sdafmh.org.uk](http://www.sdafmh.org.uk)

### Scottish Women's Rights Centre

If you are a woman aged over 16 and have been affected by violence and abuse in Scotland, the Scottish Women's Rights Centre can offer you free and confidential legal advice and advocacy support.

You can call their helpline on 08088 010 789 to talk to someone about the issues affecting you and to get initial information and advice. The helpline opening hours are on their website: [www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk](http://www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk)

They also offer surgeries, legal representation, sexual harassment legal advice and resources and guides.



## Scotland Cont:

### **Hemat Gryffe**

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid provide culturally sensitive support to women, children and young people primarily from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities who have experienced domestic abuse in any form which can be physical, emotional, financial or sexual abuse; including forced marriage, honour based abuse and cultural oppression.

They provide temporary refuge accommodation, crisis support, and advocacy. You can call them on **0141 353 0859** or find more information on their website: [www.hematgryffe.org.uk](http://www.hematgryffe.org.uk)

### **Shakti Women's Aid**

Shakti Women's Aid support black minority ethnic (BME) women, children and young people who are experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse and FGM in Edinburgh and East, Mid, and West Lothian, Fife, Dundee, and Forth Valley (Stirling, Falkirk, and Clackmannanshire).

They provide support with accommodation, referring to specialist solicitors who can deal with legal issues and safety planning.

You can call them on **0131 475 2399** (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday), email them on [info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk) or find more information on their website: [www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)

### **Amina (The Muslim Women's Resource Centre)**

Amina's Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate caseworkers provide support for racially minoritised women and Muslim women with complex needs in distress or crisis, including those experiencing domestic abuse and FGM. They can help women in English, Arabic, Punjabi and Urdu. Any other languages can be accessed using a translating service as required.

You can call their free helpline on 0808 801 0301 or access their live chat and find more information on their website: [www.mwrc.org.uk](http://www.mwrc.org.uk)

All calls are strictly confidential and non-judgemental; they always deal with clients in a culturally and/or faith-sensitive manner.

## Domestic Abuse in Wales

### Live Fear Free Helpline

The Live Fear Free Helpline provides help and advice about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence including FGM.

For free advice and support, or to discuss your options, you can:

- Call the helpline on **0808 80 10 800**
- Contact their text service by texting **07860 077 333**
- Contact their email service by emailing [info@livefearfreehelpline.wales](mailto:info@livefearfreehelpline.wales)
- Use their live chat service by visiting [www.gov.wales/live-fear-free/domestic-abuse-wales](http://www.gov.wales/live-fear-free/domestic-abuse-wales)

All conversations with Live Fear Free are confidential and are taken by staff that are highly experienced and fully trained.

You can find more information by visiting: [www.gov.wales/live-fear-free](http://www.gov.wales/live-fear-free)

### BAWSO

BAWSO support people from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds who are affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking and Prostitution.

They run purpose-built refuges, safe-houses, one-stop-shop facilities, floating support for survivors in the community, and specialist projects for each area of violence and exploitation of women and girls, men and boys.

You can call their helpline on **0800 731 8147**. Email them on [info@bawso.org.uk](mailto:info@bawso.org.uk) or find more information by visiting: [www.bawso.org.uk](http://www.bawso.org.uk)



# FGM/FGC SUPPORT

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## What is FGM?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when your genitals have been cut or stitched or changed without a medical reason. Some people call it 'being cut' or 'female circumcision'. There are different types of FGM and all of them can cause health problems and pain such as infections in your urinary tract and painful periods.

You can find out more about the different types of FGM from RCOG [www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/female-genital-mutilation-fgm](http://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/female-genital-mutilation-fgm)

You can find out more from the NHS website [www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm)

## FGM/FGC in England

### FGM Support Clinics

National FGM Support Clinics are a place for women who have experienced FGM to discuss their health needs in a sensitive and non-judgmental environment.

The services are provided by an all-female team and include:

- physical assessment and treatment (including deinfibulation if required)
- emotional support and counselling
- general information
- access to FGM Health Advocates
- referral to a specialist consultant, if needed

The clinics run either weekly or every 2 weeks.

Referrals from GPs and other health professionals are strongly encouraged, but you can also access a clinic through:

- walk-in appointments
- using a self-referral service

To find your closest clinic, visit: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/national-fgm-support-clinics](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/national-fgm-support-clinics)

## FGM/FGC in Scotland

### **Saheliya**

Saheliya is a specialist mental health and well-being support organisation for black, minority ethnic, asylum seeker, refugee and migrant women and girls (12+) in the Edinburgh and Glasgow area. Their staff are from a variety of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds and we all have an understanding of how race, gender and culture affects the mental well-being of black and minority ethnic women and girls.

Although FGM is not referenced on their website, they do support anyone that has experienced this.

You can find information about their services by visiting [www.saheliya.co.uk](http://www.saheliya.co.uk) you can email them on [info@saheliya.co.uk](mailto:info@saheliya.co.uk) and you can call them on the numbers below to find out more information about their FGM support:

Edinburgh: 0131 556 9302

Glasgow: 0141 552 6540

### **Shakti Women's Aid**

Shakti Women's Aid support black minority ethnic (BME) women, children and young people who are experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse and FGM in Edinburgh and East, Mid, and West Lothian, Fife, Dundee, and Forth Valley (Stirling, Falkirk, and Clackmannanshire).

They provide support with accommodation, referring to specialist solicitors who can deal with legal issues and safety planning.

You can call them on 0131 475 2399 (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday), email them on [info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk) or find more information on their website: [www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk) (Although support for FGM is not referenced on their website, they do provide this service.)

## Scotland Cont:

### Amina (The Muslim Women's Resource Centre)

Amina's Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate caseworkers provide support for racially minoritised women and Muslim women with complex needs in distress or crisis, including those experiencing domestic abuse and FGM.

They are an advocacy service trained and qualified to carry out risk assessments, safety plan and provide multi-agency support where needed. They can help women in English, Arabic, Punjabi and Urdu. Any other languages can be accessed using a translating service as required.

You can call their free helpline on **0808 801 0301** or access their live chat and find more information on their website: [www.mwrc.org.uk](http://www.mwrc.org.uk) All calls are strictly confidential and non-judgemental; they always deal with clients in a culturally and/or faith-sensitive manner.

## FGM/FGC in Wales

### BAWSO

BAWSO support people from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds who are affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking and Prostitution.

They run purpose-built refuges, safe-houses, one-stop-shop facilities, floating support for survivors in the community, and specialist projects for each area of violence and exploitation of women and girls, men and boys.

You can call their helpline on **0800 731 8147** (available 24 hours a day 7 days a week), email them on [info@bawso.org.uk](mailto:info@bawso.org.uk) or find more information by visiting: [www.bawso.org.uk](http://www.bawso.org.uk)



# SEXUAL ABUSE SUPPORT

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## Sexual Abuse UK Wide

### The Survivors Trust (UK)

The Survivors Trust runs a free, national helpline 7 days a week for people aged 16+. They welcome and encourage all survivors of rape or sexual abuse and violence to call their helpline. They are a fully inclusive service, providing safe, non-judgemental support to survivors, their supporters and professionals.

You can call their free, confidential helpline on **0808 801 0818**.

You can find more information about the helpline and opening hours here: [www.thesurvivorstrust.org/our-helpline](http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/our-helpline) You can also contact them via their live chat service.

## Sexual Abuse England and Wales

### Rape Crisis UK

If you are aged 16+ and have experienced rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse or any other type of sexual violence – or you're not sure what happened – you can call the Rape Crisis helpline on **0808 802 9999**. The phone service is open 24/7, every day of the year.

You can also chat to them online here: [www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/want-to-talk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/want-to-talk)

During a call or chat, they will listen to you and support you. You don't need to tell them anything that you are not comfortable with sharing. They will tell you what options are available and help you to think about what you'd like to do next (if anything).

### New Pathways Rape crisis and sexual abuse support services.

New Pathways Rape crisis and sexual abuse support services provide specialist support for adults, children and young people who have been affected by rape, sexual assault or abuse. They offer face to face, online and telephone services. They have centres for face to face services across south, west and mid Wales.

To find out more: [www.newpathways.org.uk](http://www.newpathways.org.uk)

Call: 01685 379310 or email: [enquiries@newpathways.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@newpathways.org.uk)

## England and Wales Cont:

### **Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre North Wales**

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre North Wales provides information, specialist support and therapy to anyone aged 3 and over who has experienced any kind of sexual abuse or violence either recently or in the past.

RASA also provide specialist support and therapy to partners and family members of those who have been affected by sexual abuse and violence. There is a choice of male or female workers as well as the service in Welsh or English.

Call the office on 01248 670 628

To find out more: [www.rasawales.org.uk](http://www.rasawales.org.uk)

## Sexual Abuse in Scotland

### **Hemat Gryffe**

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid provide culturally sensitive support to women, children and young people primarily from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities who have experienced domestic abuse in any form which can be physical, emotional, financial or sexual abuse; including forced marriage, honour based abuse and cultural oppression.

The provide temporary refuge accommodation, crisis support, and advocacy.

You can call them on 0141 353 0859 or find more information on their website: [www.hematgryffe.org.uk](http://www.hematgryffe.org.uk)



# BIRTH TRAUMA SUPPORT

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## UK Wide Birth Trauma Support

### **Make Birth Better**

Make Birth Better offer support to guide all people affected by traumatic experiences, including new parents and their families, in the right direction on their path to recovery.

They help you understand what birth trauma actually is and how it might be affecting you now. Or how it has in the past.

They have a range of resources and you can read about their support services here: [www.makebirthbetter.org/birth-trauma-support-for-parents](http://www.makebirthbetter.org/birth-trauma-support-for-parents) or contact them by emailing: [hello@makebirthbetter.org](mailto:hello@makebirthbetter.org)

### **The Birth Trauma Association**

The Birth Trauma Association (BTA)'s main role is to support parents who have been psychologically distressed by traumatic birth. In addition to the formal support they offer, the BTA have a peer support program and are active in campaigning for better birthing conditions and better mental health support after a traumatic birth experience.

To contact the Birth Trauma Association, please email them at [enquiries@birthtraumaassociation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@birthtraumaassociation.org.uk) or ring their helpline 01264 860380. You can also find a variety of resources on their website: <https://www.birthtraumaassociation.org/>

**For information on your rights in pregnancy and birth, and for advice and support on navigating the maternity services, we recommend the following organisations:**

**Birthrights** - Protecting human rights in childbirth  
<https://www.birthrights.org.uk/>

**AIMS** - For a better birth  
<https://www.aims.org.uk/>

## UK Wide Support Cont:

### Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/postnatal-depression-and-perinatal-mental-health/ptsd-and-birth-trauma/>

### PANDAS Foundation UK

<https://pandasfoundation.org.uk/>

### Tommy's

<https://www.tommys.org/baby-loss-support>

### Motivational Mums Club

<https://www.motivationalmumsclub.co.uk/motivational-mums-free-mental-health-sessions>

## Notes on getting the help you need

However you have come to using this resource, we hope that you find the help that you need to stay free from harm. Violence and harm of any form are unacceptable and are particularly complicated if they happen or are triggered by your maternity experience.

If you require further signposting or need support to ensure that you are being listened to, please contact us at White Ribbon Alliance UK to speak to one of our team about what help we can direct you towards.

[www.whiteribbonalliance.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org.uk/contact-us)

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or are having suicidal thoughts, please seek immediate support from the emergency services by dialing 999, or contact Samaritans on 116 123. Online support from Samaritans can be found by visiting their website:

# SUPPORT FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

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## Why do health care professionals need support?

Health care professionals witness a wide range of challenges and situations that can leave them with vicarious ('secondary') trauma from their work. Health care professionals also deserve to live free from harm, and protecting their own emotional wellbeing as they work to serve others is vitally important.

White Ribbon Alliance UK have produced a resource called Free From Harm which aids midwives and health care professionals working in maternity to understand their rights and the impact of trauma on both their professional practice and lives. You can access this resource at: [www.whiteribbonalliance.org.uk/safer-beginnings](http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org.uk/safer-beginnings)

## Support Organisations for Health Care Professionals

### Make Birth Better

Make Birth Better support all people affected by traumatic experiences – new parents, their families and professionals.  
[www.makebirthbetter.org](http://www.makebirthbetter.org)

### NHS England Staff Support Services

Support and resources for NHS staff in England, including a helpline and mental health and wellbeing hubs.  
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/>

### Mind

Mind is a national mental health charity, helping people to face mental health challenges.  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

### Mental Health at Work

Mental Health at Work provides guidance, support, and resources to assist NHS leaders and line managers in creating mentally and emotionally healthy workplaces.  
<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/resource/supporting-the-mental-health-of-nhs-staff/>

# ABOUT WHITE RIBBON ALLIANCE UK

White Ribbon Alliance UK prioritises the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all people, but with a focus on those who face the most significant disadvantage in sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

White Ribbon Alliance UK operates by positioning the voices of people to speak truth to power, which means ensuring that politicians and duty bearers are listening to the voices and demands of general and civil society. We focus on achieving this through the application of Human Rights to advance peoples sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing and progress towards gender equality.

## VISION AND MISSION

We envision a gender equal world in which all people realise their right to quality health and wellbeing.

Our mission is to enable a people-led movement that asks, listens and acts to advance sexual and reproductive rights.

## HOW WRA UK WORKS

White Ribbon Alliance UK is an independent charity working in alliance with other partners across the globe. We focus on using a Human Rights framework to advance policy, programme and practice in the areas of Abortion, Maternity, Menopause, Sex Education, LGBTQ+ Rights, Female Genital Mutilation, Gender Equality, Gender Based Violence, Economic Justice, Period Poverty and Asylum Seekers and Refugees.

Our approach is both simple and effective. We **Ask**. We **Listen**. And we **Act**.

You can read more details on the way we work on our [website](#)

## WRA UK & WRA GLOBAL

White Ribbon Alliance is a locally led, globally connected grassroots movement advocating for gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

WRA UK is a National Alliance of the global White Ribbon Alliance.

You can read more about the history of the movement and other National Alliances [here](#).