

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Domestic and Family Violence describes a number of forms of abuse that can occur in an intimate or family relationship. It can occur between men and women or in same-sex couples, and at any age.**

**In most situations of Domestic and Family Violence, there are a number of types of violence or abuse occurring at the same time, and there is also often an element of Coercive Control.**

**Coercive Control is a form of ongoing oppression, manipulation and monitoring of a victim by the perpetrator. It is done to instill fear and prevent the victim from making their own decisions or asserting their right to live without violence.**

### Physical Abuse

This is when someone is physically hurting you or even threatening to hurt you or, a loved one, a pet or destroying your property or belongings, in an attempt to exert control over you.

Violence doesn't need to leave lasting scars or marks to be classified as abuse. If someone punches the wall next to your head they are still committing an act of physical violence against you.

*Physical violence and assault are criminal acts and can be referred to the Police.*

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse and violence can easily go unnoticed or be downplayed by the victim, the perpetrator or even by well-meaning bystanders, but it is just as damaging in the long run as other forms of Domestic and Family Violence. It is also a key precursor to systematic coercive control, which often leads on to more direct physical abuse or violence.

Emotional violence includes insults, shouting, threats and intimidation.

### Social Abuse

Social violence is another aspect of coercive control, and can often make things more difficult for the victim to reach out to friends or family for support.

It can take the form of isolating you from your family or any friends that you have on your own, or by insulting and belittling you in front of other people.

### Financial Abuse

This is what happens when someone's partner controls all decisions and access to money in a way that is unfair, unjust and done to control their behaviour or limit their movements.

It's not the same as when someone asks for help with finances or feels they can't trust themselves with their own money. Financial violence is done by a perpetrator seeking to control a victim.

### Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse or violence occurs when someone is prevented by their partner or family member from having their own religious, cultural or spiritual beliefs and participating in the customs or rituals of their religion.

**IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 000**

