

Experiences of women, children & young people

Women's experiences might include:

- being punched, hit, slapped, bitten, burnt, cut, stabbed and killed
- having to leave home and leave behind their possessions, their friends and neighbours
- living in a state of constant fear
- being raped and sexually assaulted - sometimes with objects
- enforced prostitution
- sleep deprivation
- forced to watch, mimic pornography
- being tied up
- being urinated on
- being threatened with deportation
- being ostracised by her community
- being constantly criticised and put down
- being isolated from family and friends
- having no control over money
- having to ask for money for every thing
- being asked to account for her every movement
- having her personal possessions destroyed
- being humiliated and degraded
- being constantly told they are going mad
- being threatened with children being taken into care
- not being allowed to use contraception

Children's experience of domestic abuse might include:

- being aware of the abuse - either seeing it directly or overhearing it
- being forced to watch the abuse/confirm the abuse is justified
- being forced to participate in the abuse and degradation of their mother
- intervening to protect mother either:
 - directly and risking their own safety
 - indirectly calling police, neighbours, etc
- being blamed as the cause of the abuse
- having their toys and possessions destroyed
- having their pets hurt or killed
- being told not to tell
- trying to keep younger siblings safe during violent episodes
- having to leave home, their friends and relatives, their school or nursery
- being abducted and used as hostages in an attempt to get the woman to return
- being threatened with death
- children may also be being abused separately from the abuse of their mother

Adapted from: A variety of SWA comments and publications, *Children Equality and Respect Children and Young People's Experience of Domestic Violence SWA 1994*

Children Living With Domestic Violence: Putting Men's Abuse of Women on the Child Care Agenda Mullender, A and Morley, R