

## What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse (as gender based abuse), can be Perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape), and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends).

National Strategy to  
Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland

Children are witness to & subject to much of this abuse. There is a correlation between domestic abuse & the mental, physical & sexual abuse of children. Domestic abuse is associated with broader inequalities in society, is part of a range of behaviours constituting male abuse of power & is linked to other forms of male violence, such as rape & child sexual abuse.

Domestic abuse occurs in **ALL** social groups - is **NOT** caused by stress, poverty, unemployment, alcohol, mental illness, **OR** by the women who experience the abuse. The range of common effects of domestic abuse includes physical injury, poor health and a range of emotional difficulties. The effects on children & young people who may witness the abuse or who may be used in the abuse are also recognised as including a range of forms of stress or fear as well as additional correlation between domestic abuse & child sexual abuse.

The Declaration on The Elimination of Violence Against Women  
Passed by The United Nations in 1993 states:

**"Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men & women and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position to men."**

**"Violence against women & girls is the most pervasive violation of human rights in the world.**

**Its forms are both subtle and blatant and its impact on development profound..... it is deeply embedded in cultures around the world..... yet this brutality is not inevitable... once recognised for what it is - a construct of power - it can be dismantled."**

UNICEF 1997