

COVID-19/Coronavirus

Domestic and sexual abuse
keeping safe and getting help

Easy Read



Safety Advice for Survivors



Many survivors will be feeling unsafe isolating in a house with an abusive person, and away from their support networks.



We want you to know that we are here for you.

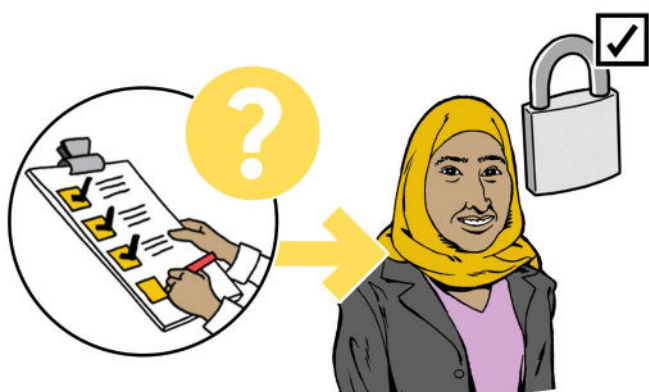


We have put together some advice and information about support you can get.

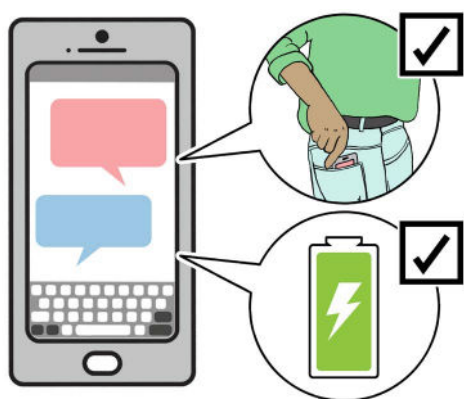


Always remember that the abuse you are experiencing or have experienced is not your fault.

Keep Safe



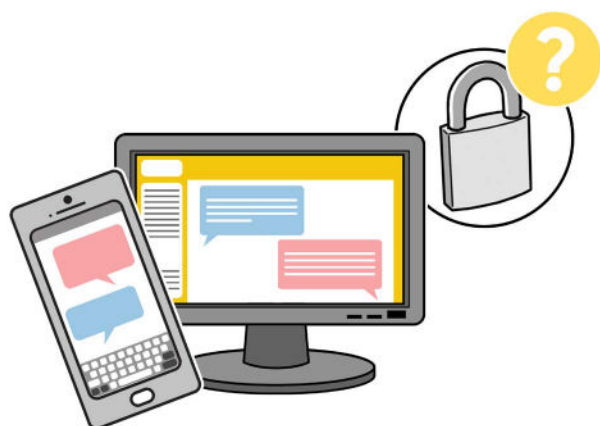
It is important to think through what you can do to keep safe.



Try to **keep your mobile phone on you at all time**. Try to make sure your mobile phone is charged.



Family, friends and neighbours can support you.



Can you safely keep in touch with people you trust over the phone or online?



This could be a friend, family member, neighbour, carer, or support worker.



You can use the times when you can leave the house to make these calls. This could be when you go to the supermarket.



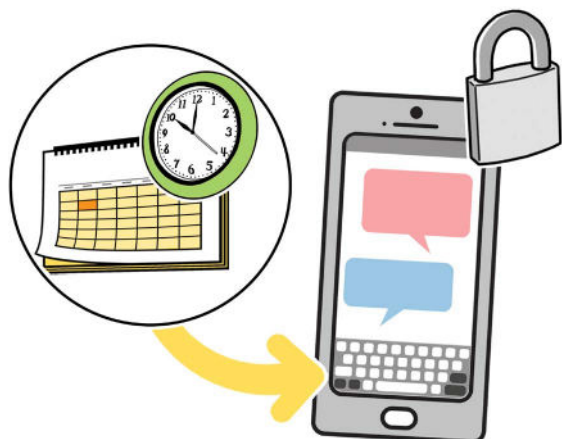
Can you talk to them about what you are experiencing?



Can you have a special word with a trusted person that lets them know it is not safe to talk or to ask them to phone the police?



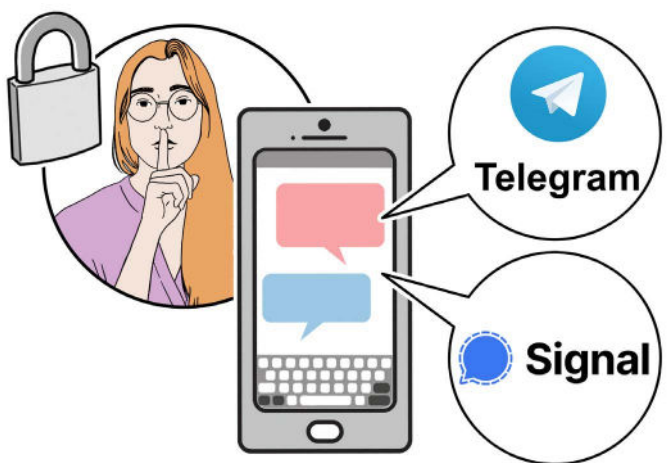
Could you agree a regular time and day for them to check-in?



Let them know if there are safe times to call you.



If the abuser is checking your phone delete your messages or call records afterwards.



You can also try apps that help you keep what you say private. For example, Telegram and Signal.



The **Police** are an important service when you are in danger. Do not be afraid to **call 999** in an emergency.



Silent Solution

When you call 999, the person on the phone, will ask which emergency service is needed.

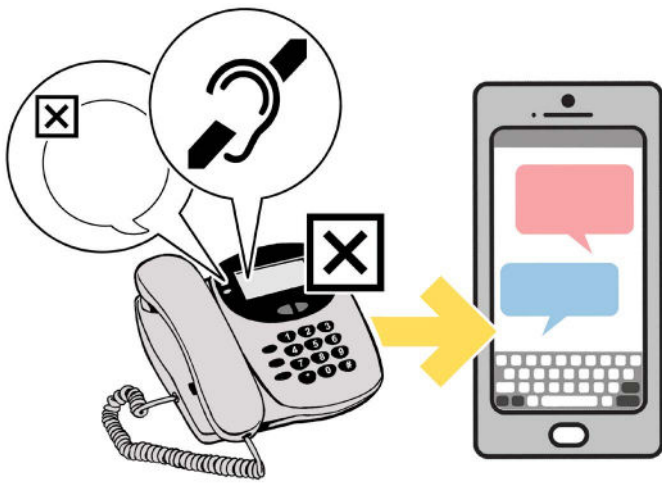


If you cannot say police or ambulance, you will be transferred to the Silent Solution system.



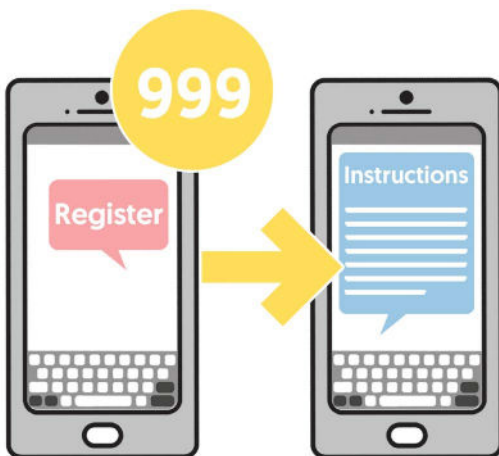
You will then hear a message which will ask you to **press 55**. If you press 55 your call will be sent to your local police force.

Click [here](#) to find out more.

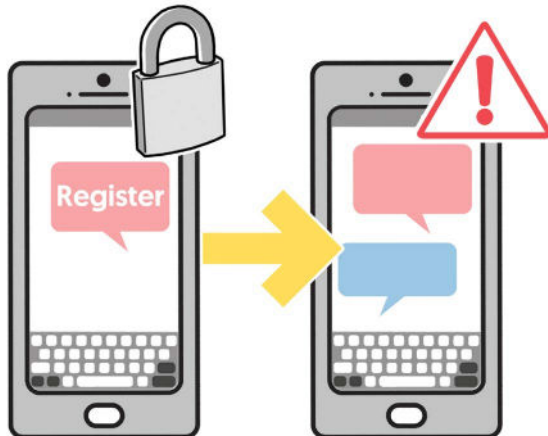


Emergency Text Service

If you can't call because you are deaf or have problems talking, you can register with the police text service.



Text REGISTER to 999. You will get a text which tells you what to do next.



Do this when it is safe so you can text when you are in danger.



Reporting a Crime

If you need to report a crime but you are not currently in danger, you can call the police on **101** or **report online**.



The police have a responsibility to protect you and your children. You should not be treated differently for any reason.

Safety Planning



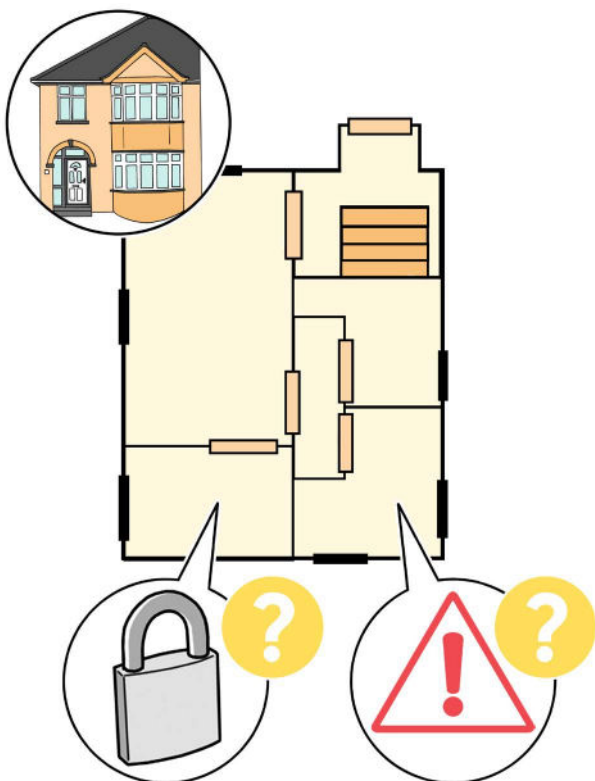
A personal safety plan helps you to think about how you can be safer.



It's important to think through how you might act in different situations and emergency situations.



Support services can help you put a safety plan in place.



Some questions to think through:

- Think through the layout of your house.

Which rooms are safest? For example, where you can easily leave the house.

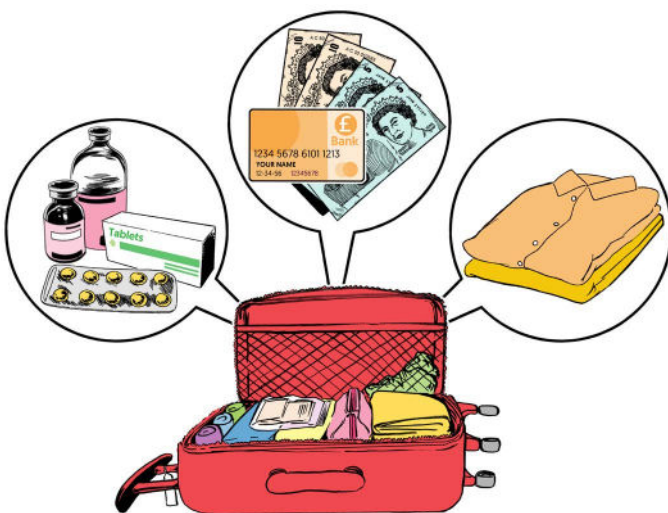
Which rooms should you try and stay away from when it's dangerous? For example, the kitchen.



- If your children are old enough, can you teach them how to call for help?



- If you had to leave in an emergency do you know where you would go?



- If you can, pack an emergency bag for you and your children and keep it somewhere safe.

Try to pack the things you need like medication, identification, money or bank cards, and clothing for you and your children.

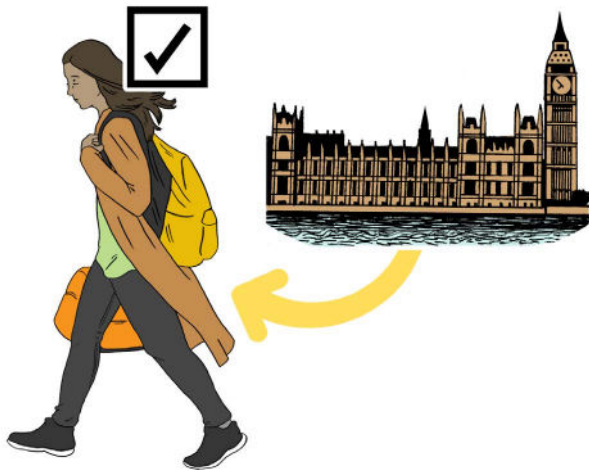
Do You Want to Leave?



It may feel more difficult than ever to leave right now.



Your abuser may tell you are not allowed to leave because of self-isolation.



But the **Government has said** that **you can leave your home if you are experiencing abuse.**



If you do decide to leave, it is best to plan this carefully as it can be a difficult time.

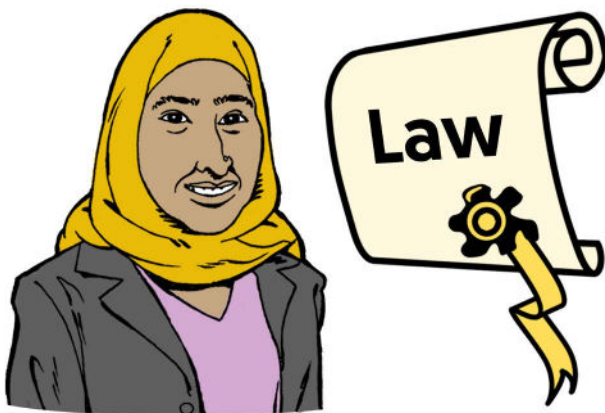


Support services can help you plan the safest way to leave.



Support services can give you advice on:

- Where you can stay if you can't stay at your house. For example a refuge service.



- What legal protections can help you.



- Child contact plans.



- Money problems.



- Immigrations barriers.

Help and Support



Support services can help you think through your safety options and give emotional support.



You can get support by calling a national helpline or online.



Local support services are still open and are changing the way they work to make sure you can still get the help you need.

National Helplines



All national helplines are free to call.



They also have interpreter services if English is not your first language.



England

Below are the contact details for helplines in England.

Karma Nirvana - Helpline for 'Honour' based abuse and Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is when someone, like your family try to make you get married when you don't want to.

Phone **0800 5999 247**

You can also contact them online **here**.

24h National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Phone **0808 2000 247**

You can get to the Helpline by using the BT Type Talk Service for deaf or hard of hearing callers.

You can also contact the helpline **online**.

Rape Crisis National Helpline – Sexual Violence

Phone **08088 029 999**

Open between 12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm every day

You can also get to it by Minicom on **0208 239 1124**.

The National Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender + Domestic Abuse Helpline

Phone **0800 999 5428**

Email **help@galop.org.uk**

Male Survivors - Men's Advice Line

Phone **0808 801 0327**

Email **info@mensadviceline.org.uk**



Wales

Below are the contact details for helplines in Wales.

24h Live Fear Free Helpline for Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse, & Sexual Violence

Phone **0808 80 10 800**

Text **07800 77333**

Email **info@livefearfreehelpline.wales**



Scotland

Below are the contact details for helplines in Scotland.

24h Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

You can call the Helpline using a text relay service

Phone **0800 027 1234**

Email **helpline@sdafmh.org.uk**

Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline

Phone **08088 01 03 02**

Text **077537 410 027**

Email **support@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk**



Northern Ireland

Below are the contact details for helplines in Northern Ireland.

24h Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

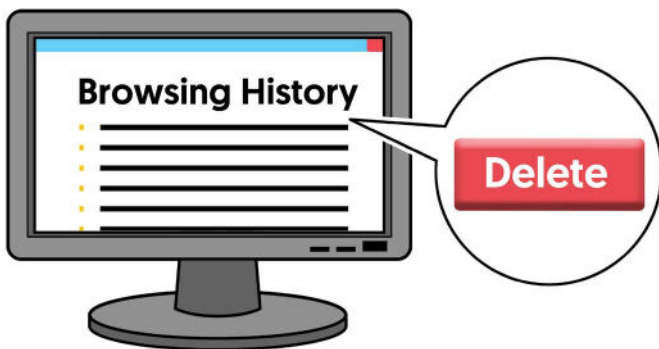
Phone **0808 802 1414**

Email **help@dsahelpline.org**

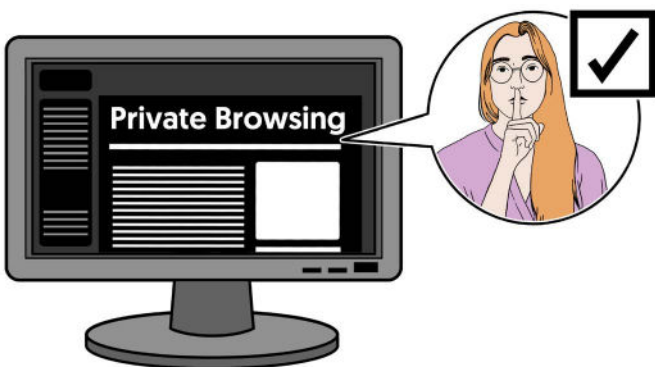
Online Support



Getting information online may feel like the best choice for you at this time.

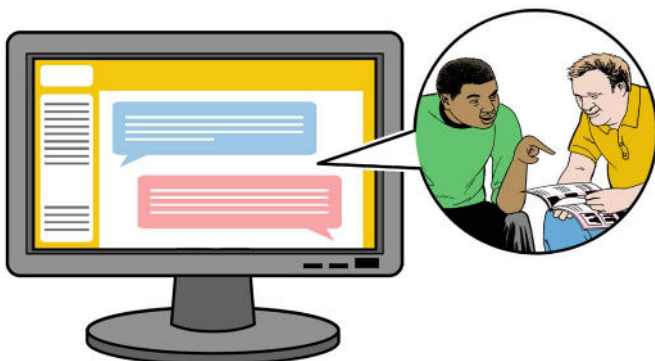


If you do go online, you may need to delete the records of what you having been looking at. These records are called your **browser history**.



Or use **private browsing** to hide your searches. Private browsing is a way of using the internet that does not record what you have been looking at.

For more information on how to stay safe online click [here](#).



Live Chat Services

You can get 1 to 1 support through online instant messenger service.

Please check opening times on the webpage.

Links for Live Chat Services

Women's Aid Federation of England Live Chat

Wales Live Fear Free Live Chat

Scottish Women's Aid Live Chat

Northern Ireland Domestic and Sexual Abuse Live Chat

Rape Crisis England & Wales Live Chat

Men's Advice Line Webchat for male survivors

Galop online chat for LGBT survivors



Support through email

Please look back at the email addresses we gave you in the national helplines section.

Women's Aid Federation of England also give support for domestic abuse survivors through email:

helpline@womensaid.org.uk



Peer support and survivor forums

These are online groups where survivors can talk with other people that have had the same or similar experiences.

For example

Wales – Welsh Women's Aid **Survivor Forum**

England – Women's Aid Federation of England **Survivor Forum**



Apps

There are mobile phone apps that can help you stay safe.

For example

Hollie Gazzard App

This turns your smartphone into a personal safety device. For example you can secretly let someone know you are in danger.

Brightsky App

This gives support and information to anyone that may be in an abusive relationship or to anyone worried about someone they know.

Specialist Support



Deaf and Disabled Survivors

Sign Health

Support for deaf people experiencing domestic abuse.

Website signhealth.org.uk

Text, WhatsApp or Facetime **07970 350366**

Phone **020 3947 2601**

Email da@signhealth.org.uk

Stay Safe East - London only

Support for deaf and disabled people experiencing domestic and sexual violence, hate crime and other types of abuse.

Website staysafe-east.org.uk

Email enquiries@staysafe-east.org.uk

Phone and text **07587 134 122** or **07539 468 764** Monday to Thursday 10AM to 5PM

Respond

Support for people with learning disabilities and or autism who have experienced trauma and abuse.

Website respond.org.uk

Phone **020 7383 0700**

Email admin@respond.org.uk



Black and Minoritised Women

Latin American Women's Right's Service

Domestic Abuse Helpline

Website lawrs.org.uk

Phone **0771 928 1714** - Monday to Thursday 10AM to 1PM

Phone **0759 597 0580** - Monday to Friday 10AM to 1PM

Email referrals@lawrs.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters Helpline

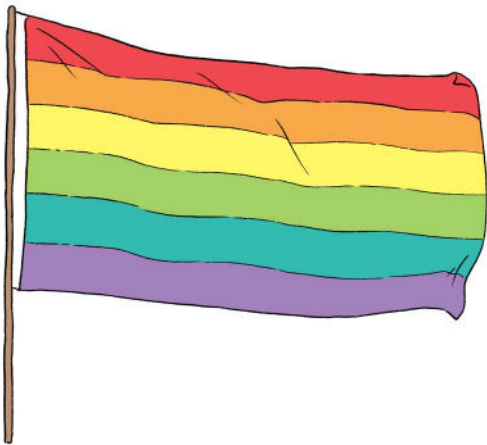
A national helpline for black and minoritised women and migrant women, including women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

Phone **0208 571 9595** - Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Online outreach advice surgery - Wednesday's 10am to 12pm

Imkaan

Imkaan's **Directory of Services**



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Support

Galop

Website **galop.org.uk**

Phone **0800 999 5428**

Email **help@galop.org.uk**

Local Support Services



You can still get support from your local support service, most likely by telephone or online.

To find out about the local support services available in your area please click on the below links.

Rape Crisis

England and Wales [Local Centres](#)

Scotland [Local Centres](#)

Rape Crisis Northern Ireland [Local Centre](#)

Imkaan

Imkaan [Directory of Services](#)

This is a list of specialist support services for black and minoritised women.

Women's Aid Directory of Services

Women's Aid Federation of England **Directory of Services**

Welsh Women's Aid **Directory of Services**

Scottish Women's Aid **Directory**

Women's Aid Northern Ireland **Directory**



Legal Advice

Support services can also help you get legal advice.

Rights of women

Rights of women run a legal helpline.

Immigration and asylum law line

Phone **020 7490 7689**

Family law and child contact

Phone **020 7251 6577**

Deaf and Disabled Survivors



Disabled survivors experience types of abuse that others don't, like 'carer abuse', and experience more barriers to getting support.



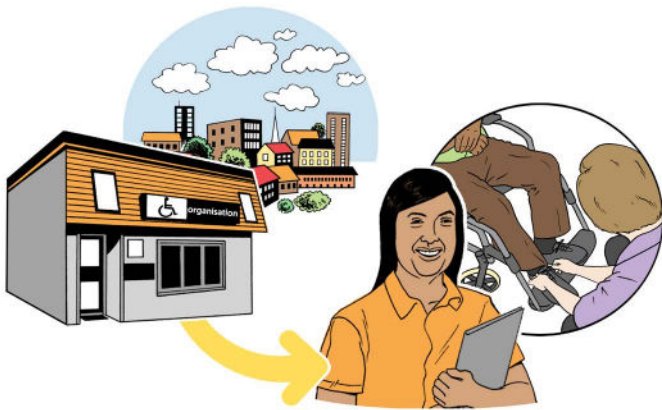
You may need help from the abuser to get washed or dressed, or to take your medication or to get food. The abuser may use this to hurt or control you.



But there is help. Domestic abuse support services can help, the police can help, Social services can help.



If you ring social services you must tell them you are in danger and need an emergency assessment. It's important to tell them what help you need with and why the abuser can't help.



Your local disability organisation can help you to get the support you need from social services.



Disability Rights UK gives advice for users of social care and personal assistance. Click [here](#).

Information in Accessible Formats

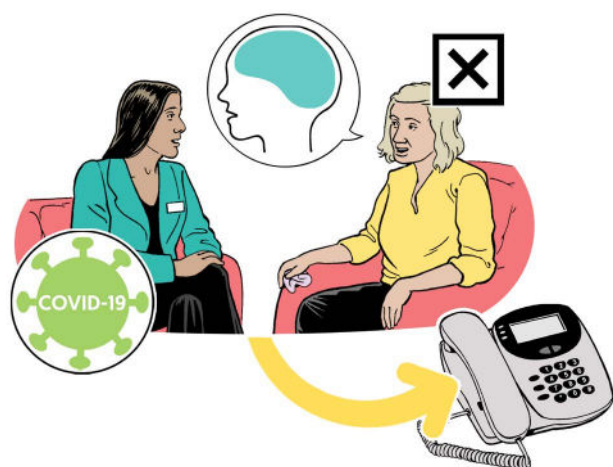
Sign Health has produced accessible videos about COVID-19 in British Sign Language, including updates after the daily government briefings. [Click here](#)

Sign Health has produced accessible short educational films on consent, sexting, so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage in British Sign Language. [Click here](#)

Mental Health



If you are or have experienced abuse, lockdown can be upsetting. It is important to put your health and wellbeing first.

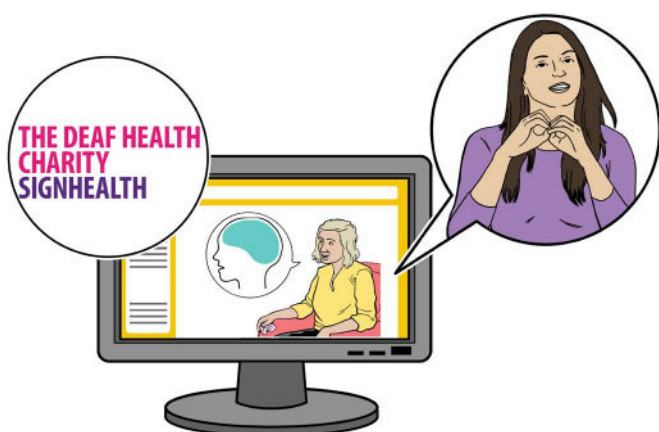


Counselling

If your counselling has stopped because of COVID-19, you may be able to continue to get support through a helpline.



Support Line have a confidential telephone helpline and email counselling service.



Sign Health are doing online therapy sessions in British Sign Language for Deaf People.



Mental Health Helplines

Mental health helplines can also support you.

Samaritans

Phone **116123**

Email **jo@samaritans.org.uk**

Mind

Phone **0300 123 3393**

Text **86463**

Email **info@mind.org.uk**

Shout!

24hr crisis text service for Deaf people.

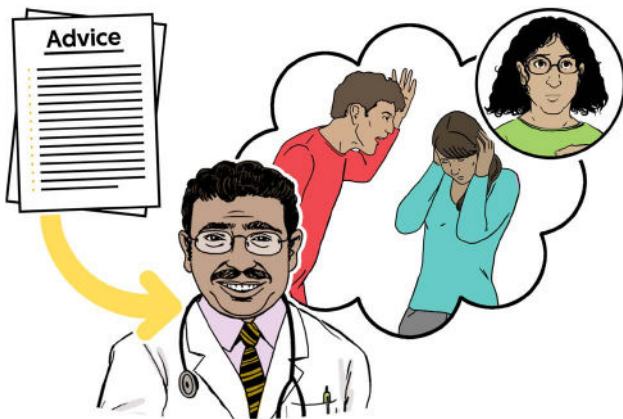
website **signhealth.org.uk**

Text DEAF to **85258**

Getting Help from your Doctor or Nurse



You can still book an appointment with your doctor. This will probably be over the phone or a video call.



Doctors have been sent advice on how to best support you if they know or think that you are experiencing abuse.



If it isn't safe to talk when they ring you, you can ask them to call back. Make sure that you are alone and cannot be overheard if you answer.



Let your GP or nurse know if you don't feel safe, are frightened, in danger or if the abuse is getting worse.



If it's not safe for you to ring a support service or the police, you can ask the GP or nurse to do this for you.

**We hope you have found this information helpful.
Please remember you are not alone. We are here for you.**



Images © CHANGE
www.changepeople.org