



women's aid
until women & children are safe

Domestic abuse is a **national emergency**

How you can help

You're likely to support many affected survivors in your role. The right response can save lives. This resource is designed to help you become domestic-abuse-aware and provide a safe and appropriate response for survivors.

1. Understand abuse

Domestic abuse is rooted in coercive control. Every situation is unique but, common patterns often emerge, and recognising these early enables faster intervention, reduces harm, and saves lives.

When a survivor presents to you, remember that people do so in different ways and may be unsure if or how they want help. They can be anyone, from any background, appearing happy and thriving or quiet and struggling, including a parent, colleague, or friend.

The language a survivor uses can be revealing. It may suggest a lack of control over their own choices, alongside changes in behaviour driven by a need to stay safe.

Note: A perpetrator may contact you, seeking support to try and manipulate power structures and monitor the survivor's behaviour. If you suspect this, contact your local Women's Aid member organisation or Respect for advice. Respect run accredited perpetrator programmes.

2. Provide the right response

Act fast, with compassion, listen, and believe their account, taking a victim-survivor-led approach. Follow this with tailored signposting to a local specialist service where possible. They can provide the wrap-around support that leads to the best outcomes.

1 in 3

women have experienced
domestic abuse

But only **1 in 5** who experienced
it in the last 12 months reported it

Financial abuse

2nd

most common form
of domestic abuse

Yet

42%

of UK people wouldn't question
hidden paperwork*

24%

don't see bank account control as
abuse*

21%

believe removal from an insurance
policy is 'normal'*

*AXA UK Research 2026

^[1]Data taken from ONS' 'Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics' dataset, compiled from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, for the year ending March 2025.

^[2]Data taken from ONS' 'Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales' for year ending March 2023.

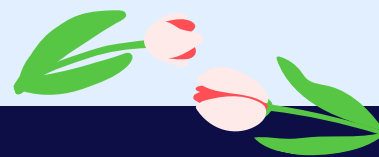
^[3]Data taken from ONS' 'Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics' dataset, compiled from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, for the year ending March 2025.

^[4]Figures from research conducted by AXA UK in December 2025, surveying 2,000 UK adults.

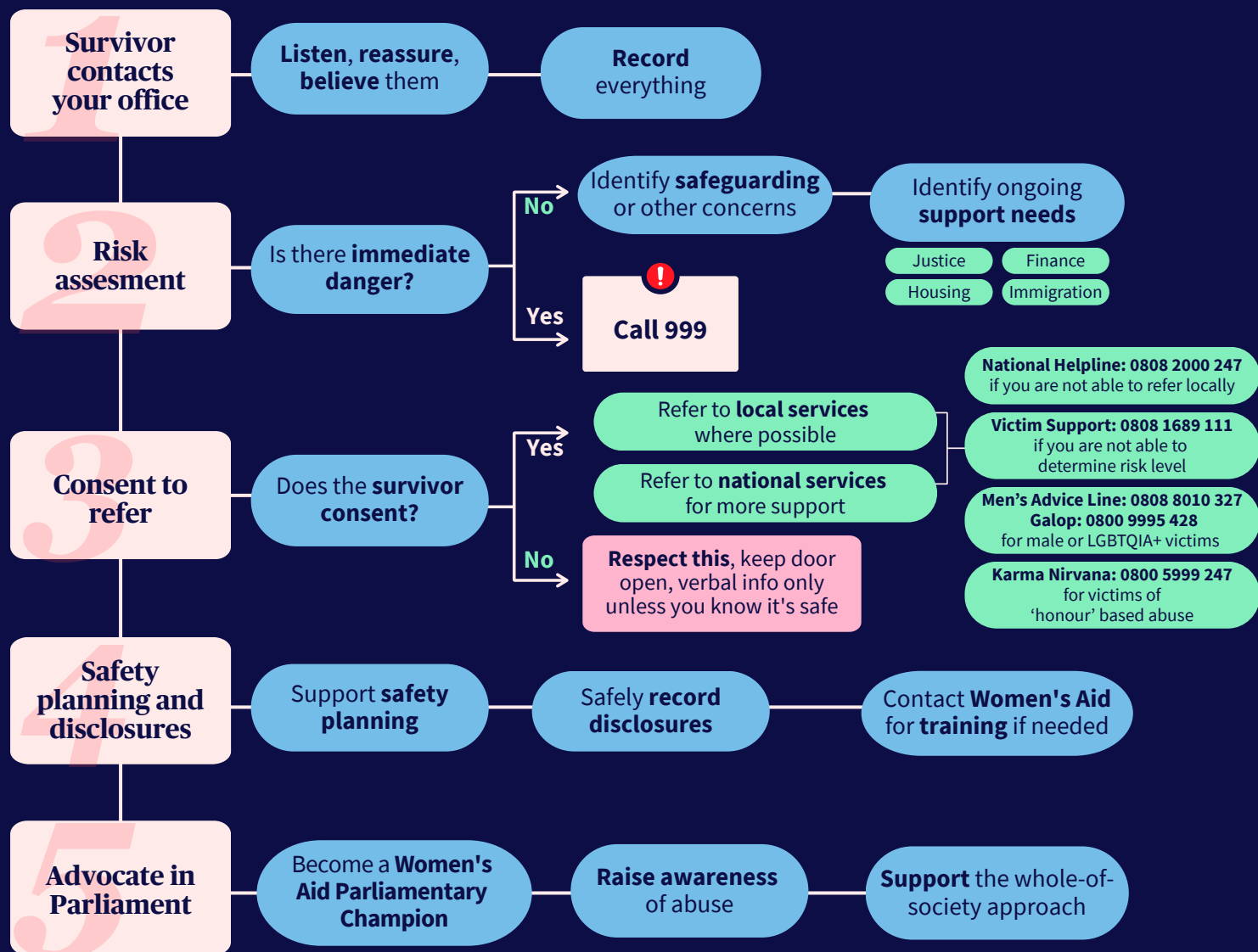


3. Remember:

- An accurate risk assessment is critical to reduce the risk of harm and save resources. Signpost survivors to a service that meets their needs.
- Survivors may not want to engage with the criminal justice system, and it may not be appropriate to suggest it. They should be supported to make their own choices.
- Domestic abuse doesn't discriminate, but some groups face greater barriers to support, safety, and justice. Women's Aid offers tailored training to help you respond effectively.



Supporting Survivors: A Step-by-Step Guide



Contact Women's Aid

As a network of over 180 specialist organisations, we can support you with local knowledge and connections to help make effective referrals that support both the victim-survivor and your local services.

Women's Aid's network of Parliamentary Champions raises the voices of survivors in Parliament. We provide our Champions with tailored briefings, Parliamentary Questions, debate proposals, and support. Use the QR code to access our contact information.



Contact AXA

AXA supports the cross-government *Freedom from Violence and Abuse Strategy* and its call for a whole-of-society approach to end domestic abuse. In 2025, AXA launched a programme with Women's Aid and Smart Works to help our insurance customers get out of abusive situations and stay out, linking survivors with immediate refuge, emergency funds, and employment help.

Use the QR code to visit our website, or contact AXA's Public Affairs team at ukpublicaffairs@axa-uk.co.uk

