

## Help Is Available to You

Reading this brochure is a healthy step towards finding the help you need. You do not deserve to be abused. God does not want you to suffer as you are now. You are not alone; your pastor, church leaders, doctor, family members, friends, or a Christian counsellor may all serve as wonderful resources for you. There is help available to you!

- ◆ **Contact the authorities**, your pastor, doctor, family member, or a friend and let them know that you have been abused.
- ◆ Our country has laws against abuse. Find out how these can help you.
- ◆ The abuse may scar. You need to receive regular counselling sessions with a licensed counsellor.
- ◆ You may be the one abusing. There is help for you too. Contact the appropriate help line.
- ◆ You may have been hurt physically. Get your doctor to give you a thorough examination.
- ◆ Ask someone you feel comfortable with to be your prayer partner, to daily pray with you, and offer encouragement whenever you feel weak or lonely.
- ◆ Ask the Lord to give you emotional, physical and spiritual strength.

**"For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, 'fear not; I will help thee.'"**  
Isaiah 41:13

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

SEC Counselling Service	0845 741 3602
NEC Counselling Service	0161 740 3602
Women's Aid National Office (24 hour help-line)	0808 2000 247
Women's Aid National Office (Eire) (24 hour help-line)	00353 187 45303
Men's Advice Line	0208 644 9914
The NSPCC	0207 825 2500
Child-line	0800 1111
Church Leader Counselling Services	0207 902 9000

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## BREAKING The *SILENCE*

What is abusive behaviour?

*"I am with you and will save you, declares the Lord."*

*Jer. 30:11*



## What is Abuse?

*To abuse someone is to intentionally or unconsciously injure or damage him/her physically, psychologically, emotionally, or sexually with the purpose to intimidate, dominate, control and/or exercise power. Abuse can be isolated or habitual, premeditated or spontaneous. The one who inflicts the abuse is typically called the **abuser**, the one who is abused is typically called the **victim**.*

## Types of Abuse

### Physical:

Actions which cause humiliation, physical pain or injury, such as kicking, pushing or punching.

### Psychological/Emotional:

Actions which cause loss of self-esteem, and/or loss of self-determination, such as name calling, isolation, or criticising.

### Sexual:

Actions of a sexual nature that are unwelcome, uncomfortable, or forced; this includes rape.

### Spiritual Abuse:

The use of power within the framework of spiritual beliefs to satisfy a need at the expense of others.

### Child Abuse:

All of the above definitions, as well as neglect. This includes not providing for a child's basic needs such as love, food and clothing, and abandonment.

## Abuse is Wrong Because

### It destroys the body

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the

temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."  
I Corinthians 3:16, 17

### It robs children of their innocence

"But whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."  
Matthew 18:6

### It lowers self-esteem

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it might benefit those who listen."  
Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

### It warps the perception about God

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons [and daughters] of God."  
I John 3:1

### It is not God's plan for families

"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul, and mind' ... 'If you love one another then everyone will know you are my disciples.'"  
Matthew 22:37, John 13:35

### It is not God's plan for our lives

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.'"  
Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

## An Abusive Relationship Includes Behaviour Such As:

- ◆ Slapping, pushing, kicking, or hitting
- ◆ Refusing to let you have your own money or handle your own finances
- ◆ Being coerced or forced into any sexual related activities
- ◆ The abuser blaming you for their problems
- ◆ Feeling afraid to express your opinions or wishes
- ◆ The abuser being critical of all that you do and making fun of your appearance
- ◆ Extreme possessiveness or jealousy
- ◆ Being ignored when you say "No"
- ◆ Threatening or swearing
- ◆ Disrespecting you, your family, or friends
- ◆ Feeling uncomfortable

## These Common Beliefs Are Not True

- ◆ Abuse is only a momentary loss of temper
- ◆ Husbands must abuse their wives in order to gain respect
- ◆ Abuse only happens among uneducated people or in developing countries
- ◆ A victim could always leave an abusive relationship if they really wanted to
- ◆ Men cannot be abused by women
- ◆ Victims of abuse have psychological disorders
- ◆ Abuse is caused by the use of alcohol and drugs
- ◆ High levels of stress make people abuse
- ◆ Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other
- ◆ Abuse survivors exaggerate
- ◆ Some people ask, provoke, or want to be abused
- ◆ It is a sin for Christian victims to seek to prosecute their abusers
- ◆ Some people deserve to be abused