



IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

24 hour emergency services

Police emergency number: **110**
Police emergency helpline for victims: **0800-28 00 110**

Womens refuges:

Frauenhaus AWO:

0421-23 96 11

Autonomes Frauenhaus:

0421-34 95 73

Frauenhaus Nord:

0421-63 64 874

24-hour helpline

08000-11 60 16

(in different languages)

Advice for Women

Female staff at the women's refuges can advise you over the phone (see above)

Neue Wege:

0421-79 47 118

Helpline and advice centre for female rape victims:

0421-15 181

Office for Social Services –

Central Referrals Office:

0421-36 10

Police Crime Prevention Centre:

0421-36 21 90 03

Advice for Immigrants

Specialist Services for Migration and Integration, AWO e.V.:

0421-33 77 188

Association of Bi-national Families:

0421-55 40 20 or

0421-52 51 104

Refugee Advice Centre:

Refugio **0421-37 60 749**

Separation, Divorce, Stalking

Children's Protection

Centre Bremen –

Kinderschutz-Zentrum Bremen:

0421-24 01 12 20

Stalking-KIT:

0421-79 28 28 90

Familiennetz Bremen

0421-79 08 918

Advice for men

Neue Wege:

0421-64 51 56

Men against Male Violence –

Männer gegen Männer-Gewalt:

0421-30 39 422

Specialist Services for the

Prevention of Violence –

Fachstelle Gewaltprävention:

0421-79 42 567

Help for children and young people

Emergency Helpline in

the Girls'House Bremen –

Mädchennotruf im Mädchen-

haus Bremen e. V.:

0421-34 11 20

Children's and Young People's

Helpline:

0421-69 91 133

Boys' Help Centre –

Bremer JungenBüro:

0421-59 86 51 60

Children's Protection

Centre Bremen –

Kinderschutz-Zentrum Bremen:

0421-24 01 12 20

Kids and Youth Helpline –

Nummer gegen Kummer:

0800-11 10 333

Free legal advice

Bremen Chamber of Labour –

Arbeitskammer Bremen:

0421-36 30 10

Law Society –

Anwaltsverein Bremen:

04 21-32 17 78

www.anwaltsverein-

bremen.de/buergerservice/

rechtsberatung.html

Voluntary Services

Crime Victims' Aid Association –

Weisser Ring:

0421-45 85 29 25

You can get more information on

all these subjects at

www.gewaltgegenfrauen.

bremen.de

TALK TO SOMEBODY!

Finding someone I can trust, who will listen. Who will listen to me and who can bear to hear my story. Every woman has a right to be helped, whichever path she chooses to take. Many women say that this was the only way they managed to escape, even though it was hard finding the right solution.

The first step – finding someone to trust. Friends, relatives or neighbours may have gone through similar difficulties. Perhaps they can help you.

You can take advantage of professional support. It is free. Do not be afraid to ring up an advice centre. You can talk to female staff there who will help you find your own personal solution at your own pace. They will help you work through the after-effects of violence and find a way out of situations which threaten your safety. They will help you get legal aid and advise you about your children or about financial matters. You do not have to work out all the answers on your own.

Advisors are bound to confidentiality. You can get help anonymously if you wish.

Impressum

ZGF

Published by: Bremische Zentralstelle für die Verwirklichung der Gleichberechtigung der Frau (ZGF)

Concept and editorial: Margaretha Kurmann, ZGF · Design: Silke Ulrich · Drawings: Betie Pankoke

Druck: Gegendruck · 2013 · Translation: Glenys Gill

Distributed by:



HELP IN AN EMERGENCY

Some situations are too dangerous to handle on your own.

Find a safe place to go – perhaps a neighbour's flat. If you are injured you can go to a hospital emergency room at any time. You can go to a Women's Shelter, – immediately. If necessary, they will come and collect you, or move you away from Bremen. You can ring them day or night. **The police are always on call.** They are there to protect you and your children. They can immediately issue a restraining order to an abusive husband or partner, and, if necessary, they will arrest him. He will have to give up his door key and may not enter your home for a few days.

You can apply to the courts for protection. In that case your abusive partner or husband will not be allowed to come near you. He will be forbidden from phoning you or sending you text messages. **It is important to collect evidence of violent behaviour.** Write down what happened, when, and who saw it. Make sure the police tell a doctor to secure medical evidence.

I'm going to get help now...



Have phone numbers where you can find them in an emergency. Keep a packed bag somewhere outside your home. Make arrangements with someone you trust. Make sure your children know how to get help in an emergency.

TIPS FOR IMMIGRANTS

No woman has to accept violence – whatever her nationality or status. The German Protection against Violence Act and the Right to receive Assistance Law are valid for everyone. In the case of a separation from your husband or partner, women without an income are entitled to financial assistance from the state. **Even after a separation most women are entitled to remain in Germany, – especially in cases where they have been abused by their husbands or partners.** Involving the police or moving into a women's refuge makes no difference to your residence rights. Women are eligible for independent resident status after they have lived in Germany with their husband or partner for at least three years. In other cases a hardship ruling will determine whether or not they can stay, so it is important to gather evidence of the abuse. **Apply for an independent residence permit or for asylum.** If you have difficulty with the language, a translator will help you.

They know what to do...



Legal procedures can be very complicated. Experts will be able to help you. There are several advice centres for immigrants in Bremen. To find one near you ring **(0421) 361 2683** Advice for refugees at Refugio – www.refugio-bremen.de. Advice on questions about bi-nationality at iaf e.V. – www.iaf-bremen.de

IS YOUR HUSBAND OR PARTNER ABUSIVE?



VIOLENCE IS REAL

Women can experience abuse anywhere, but mostly abuse occurs at home, within a relationship. It makes no difference where you come from, how old you are or what qualifications you have, whether you go out to work, or how much you earn.

No man has the right to physically or mentally harm "his" wife or partner. He has no right to force her to have sex with him, or to bully, insult, threaten or humiliate her. Every woman has the right to live how she wants, to go where she wants and meet who she wants, – whether she is married or living in a relationship, or with her family.

Rape, constant humiliation or outbursts of violence – abuse is different in every case. But there are patterns many women will recognise: – insulting and unacceptable behaviour; violent outbursts which become worse and more frequent; regrets and promises that "it won't happen again!". And it is never "his" fault, or he says, "Look what you made me do!"

You are protected by law



Whether you are married or single, or come from another country – You have a right to protection from violence! You can get information around the clock, in different languages, anonymously. Helpline ring 08000-116016 Or visit the websites www.gewaltgegenfrauen.bremen.de or www.hilfetelefon.de

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Whether we live in a traditional marriage or a modern partnership – family is often the most important thing in our lives. It is where we want to feel secure and happy. It is very hard when an abusive husband, partner or family member threatens our image of a happy family. Which is why we often deny abuse or play it down.

Most women feel very alone in this situation. They have no one they can talk to, and feel that what is happening to them is somehow their own fault. They feel ashamed for letting everyone down and for not being good wives and mothers. They are afraid the abuse will start again, – and they are exhausted from the constant effort of coping with it all.

These are some of the reasons why so many women stay silent. And this is what helps abusive men get away with their bad behaviour. Everything stays the same. For everybody.

Look for someone you can trust, maybe a friend or neighbour. You can get advice at family and social centres such as Haus der Familie, Mütterzentrum, or Neue Wege. You can get help anonymously and do not have to give your name. Addresses are on the last page.

I can do it!



ABUSE MAKES YOU ILL

Abuse can make you ill. Sleeplessness, memory loss or lack of concentration are common. You may stop trusting anyone or ever feeling happy. Or you may be in pain or constantly afraid, you may be addicted or depressed or feel ill for weeks, months or even years. Women who have suffered abuse for a long time often cannot imagine any other life. Fear of change is normal in this situation, especially if you were also abused as a child.

Abuse can make your children ill too. They see and hear everything and worry that something bad will happen to them, or to their brothers and sisters, and they want to take care of their mother. Children suffer if they are not allowed to talk about what is going on. They feel responsible. They stop trusting their parents or they lose their respect for them. And they learn from their parents' examples.

You can't protect your children as long as you are living in an abusive situation. But you can get help and support for them.

I need help



Mental and emotional pain needs time to heal too. Talk to your doctor or visit www.psychotraumatologie-bremen.de/akp-traumatherapie.html to find a therapist. Children need to talk to people who are not directly involved in their situation. There are helplines for children and young people.

STAY OR GO?

All families are different and all women react differently. Some leave immediately when a husband or partner becomes abusive. Some leave later on, and some stay for years. Most are afraid that life will be even worse on their own after a separation. Children and relatives depend on them. Some women try to compromise, and carry on living with their husbands or partners. The first steps towards change are the hardest, and the rest won't be easy. There are so many things to take care of. How do the children feel? What will we live on? Will I be able to find a flat? What about my old friends? It is common to feel unhappy and discouraged at this point. If you are planning even a temporary separation, there are lots of things to cope with. You will have to apply for sole access to your home, custody of your children and sort out visitation rights for your partner. You will need maintenance and child support. There are experts who can help you with all these things.

I can cope!



WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM?

In a relationship it is usually the man who is abusive or violent towards "his" woman. This has a lot to do with the way men and women see themselves and each other, consciously or unconsciously. Men who are abusive towards their wives or partners do not respect them as people in their own right. They use violence and bullying in order to feel superior and maintain control. Often they feel insecure or helpless themselves.

Many women are financially dependent on an abusive partner. They may have children together, or have common friends and relatives. Many women try hard to do everything right, they excuse his behaviour or believe they must have done something wrong to provoke him. But the fact is: Any situation can lead to abuse.

Women in abusive relationships are a part of that relationship. But that does not mean that they are responsible for the violence. The partner is responsible. And he can change his behaviour.

He can get help too...



There are advisory services for men who want to change their behaviour. They can talk to other men who understand how abusive relationships come about. Information at www.4uman.info.de