

BVSC Domestic Abuse Survey Results

Analysis by Public Health, Birmingham City Council

October 2021

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Introduction

BVSC ran this Domestic Abuse Survey between August – October 2021, asking people about their experiences with domestic abuse (da) and relevant support services. The survey was aimed at survivors of domestic abuse. 106 people responded to the survey. The survey was introduced as below and was widely publicised online and through domestic abuse service providers and statutory partners.

Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment for Birmingham - Have Your Say!



Birmingham Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment

BVSC are working on behalf of Birmingham City Council (BCC) to ensure that a comprehensive Domestic Abuse assessment of need, mapping, review of strategy and implementation plan is carried out over the summer of 2021. On 29th April the Domestic Abuse Bill was signed into law. The **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** will provide further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse and strengthen measures to prevent and tackle perpetrators.

BVSC have been commissioned to undertake a comprehensive assessment of need in relation to domestic abuse in Birmingham. This assessment enables those affected by domestic abuse and services that work with people affected by domestic abuse, to have a voice. We have therefore designed two questionnaires to seek information from both those affected personally by domestic abuse and those who work with survivors of domestic abuse in Birmingham.

Note: Providers and support services can include voluntary, community, and faith sectors, as well as communities of interest. Providers do not need to be domestic abuse specialists - they can be providing support directly or indirectly to survivors of domestic abuse.

To complete the surveys please use the links below. We want to ensure that all voices are heard to help us identify gaps in services, which will support our recommendations and help us review the domestic abuse strategy. Please share the links with your relevant colleagues and networks.

Key Findings

BSWA, WE:ARE, the NHS, and the NDA helpline were frequently mentioned in terms of service usage.

Helplines: Just over half of respondents (54%) have used Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (BSWA), followed by their GP/NHS (29%), and the NDA Helpline (24%). Of those who answered 'Other', over half mentioned WE:ARE, formerly the Birmingham Freedom Project.

Other Services: The result is split in terms of whether respondents have used any other services. 42 people commented, with most people mentioning numerous different third sector organisations. This included nearly half of all respondents (19) mentioning WE:ARE.

Refuge: Over half did not use any of the refuges provided. It is unclear whether this means they used an unnamed refuge service or did not use one at all. For those who did reference specific refuges, it was through BSWA (38.7%), followed by the NHS, Roshni, and the NDA Helpline.

Housing: Respondents were split almost equally on whether they had ever needed housing. Just over 50% said they did need housing. Of the 26 respondents who commented, all but one had had to leave their home because of domestic abuse. Others were made homeless. Seven people said their needs weren't met by local authorities/charities, and some had to find their own way to support themselves. Four people felt they did get the right support to get safe housing.

Overall experience:

71 people left 205 comments about their experiences with particular services. Most comments were positive (60%), while **21%** were negative. Positive comments centred around helpfulness/usefulness, and positive attitudes/treatment. The services most frequently commented on were: WE:ARE (**51%** of respondents, **18%** of comments), BSWA (16% of comments), and the Police (15% of comments).

Positive experience/valued service characteristics:

74% said they could give examples of positive experiences. Around one-third said that the education they received from the service was a positive and helpful experience, helping some identify and understand signs of abuse or help with trauma. One-fifth had individual support workers/professionals who made all the difference to their experiences of feeling listened to and getting the support they needed and one-fifth said they had strong emotional and practical support (e.g. housing, legal advice) from services that helped a great deal. Because of all these positive factors, nearly one-third of commenters felt happier, empowered and/or more confident because of their experiences with services.

Positive comments on services:

WE:ARE had the highest total of positive comments (97% of comments about service), finding the service and people who work there positive and finding the courses really useful. BSWA had a more mixed response but was still more positive (58%) than negative. When respondents did have a mixed or negative experience, it was usually because of limited resources/help available.

Negative comments on services:

The police had the most comments by far (18) with the majority that commented saying they wouldn't use the police because of previous negative experiences with them. There were a few comments for most other services, but not enough to indicate any trends.

Would Not Use Service:

The most frequently cited reasons for not using a service included: not having heard of it before (50 comments, but 32 are from one respondent); having previous bad experiences with that service; or the service not being relevant to their needs.

Gaps in Support:

The biggest issue identified by respondents was the lack of understanding of domestic abuse issues in society and in services (25%), interlinked with the stigma and disbelief that DA victims face when trying to escape abuse. A lack of multi-agency support and inter-agency collaboration and communication emerged as an important issue (21%), along with the overall lack of a holistic approach to supporting DA victims.

Refused Access:

72% said they had not been refused access. However, 27% of respondents reported having difficulty getting access to housing/safe accommodation, 23% found it difficult to get help from third sector organisations, and 18% had problems with police/legal support. These comments are drawn from a relatively small sample, however, and make it difficult to establish generally applicable trends and/or themes.

Service experience for victims with children

Did the respondents have children:

63% said they were supported with children.

Received Support:

32% of respondents reported that their children were supported, but over 40% reported that they hadn't been.

Positive experience:

43% of respondents reported positive examples (31% said they couldn't). There were no dominant trends in the comments. Most people spoke about their individual experiences with specific third sector organisations. A quarter of commenters mentioned help from a specific support worker/professional as being a positive experience and one-fifth mentioned that courses/programmes dealing with the impact/signs of DA helped their children.

Gaps in support:

53% of respondents said there are gaps in children's support services. The main theme was that children's mental health and the trauma they faced because of DA was not being recognised, and that there was little or no follow-up care.



Who People Told About The Abuse And The Response Received

Who:

Most respondents who reported telling someone of the abuse experienced chose to tell a friend (64%) or family member (62%), followed by the Police, their GP, or Support Worker.

When it came to specifics, the following was most important: being able to trust that person/service (21%), or because they were close friends or family (21%).

Why:

In terms of why people chose to tell these different groups of people/services, one-third didn't have a specific reason: they said they needed help and thought these groups could help them. When specific reasons were given, the following were the most important: being able to trust that person/service (21%), or because they were close friends or family (21%).

Outcomes:

Just over half (51%) got the response they hoped for, but 36% didn't.

Good responses:

In terms of good responses, respondents reported feeling supported by friends or family, feeling that services responded well to their needs, had compassion, and quickly referred them to other appropriate services.

Negative responses:

In terms of negative responses, respondents reported finding others generally unhelpful, or uncaring; some said their account of abuse was not believed.



DA Workplace Policy And Procedures

Does the workplace have a policy or procedure:

Nearly 40% of respondents reported that they did not know whether their workplace had a DA policy/procedure. If those respondents who do not have a workplace are removed from the results, then the proportion of 'Don't Knows' rises to 55%. Only 22% said that they were aware of their workplace having a DA policy/procedure.

Have they accessed the policy: 40% of respondents said they had not accessed a workplace DA policy; only 13% said yes they had and of these half did not find it useful.

The results suggest that there is major room for improvement, with workplaces generally either lacking a DA policy/procedure, or failing to raise employee awareness of the policy, or failing to implement it effectively.

Raise awareness of DA

97% of respondents believe there should be more public awareness information around DA. 30% think it is important to raise awareness of the signs of abuse, including non-physical aspects of abuse, such as coercive control. Some said that schoolchildren, from early ages through to teenagers, should be taught about DA in school. Other comments mentioned specific ideas for raising awareness, DA-specific courses for adults, using awareness raising to combat stigma against DA victims, and bring more focus perpetrator & their accountability.

Additional Comments

Amongst those who gave additional comments the main themes were: making sure there was more help available for abuse victims and their families in their time of need, including helping them move forward in their lives and deal with the trauma; also, dealing with complex needs alongside DA.

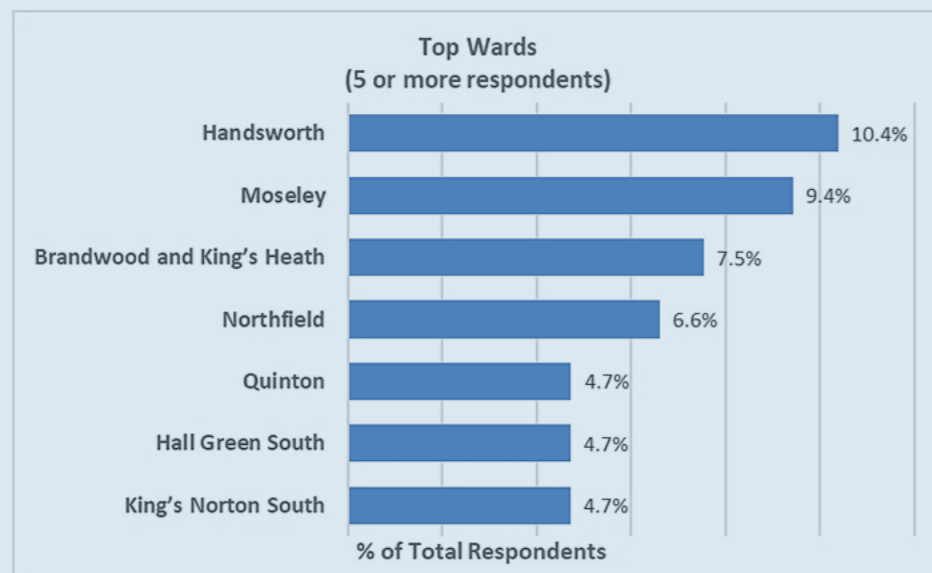
Summary

Here are the top demographics/characteristics of survey respondents:

- Top wards: Handsworth, Moseley, and Brandwood & King’s Heath
- Most both live and work in Birmingham
- Employment Status: Employed full or part time
- Most do not work in a domestic abuse support service
- Recent domestic abuse experience: 1-5 years ago
- Age: 46-55 years
- Gender: Female, same gender as assigned at birth
- Ethnicity: White
- Religion: Christianity followed by Muslim
- Most do not have a disability
- Sexuality: Heterosexual/Straight
- Relationships: Single, never married

Location

Figure 1: Wards



Aside from Handsworth, the top wards are found in southern Birmingham. In total, respondents came from **36 out of 69** wards across the city.

Wards with one to five respondents each are not being displayed to ensure no one can be identified from the data.

Employment

Do you work in Birmingham as well as live in Birmingham?

Table 1: Work in Birmingham

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	78	73.6%
No	28	26.4%
Total Respondents	106	100%

Most respondents (73.6%) work and live in Birmingham.

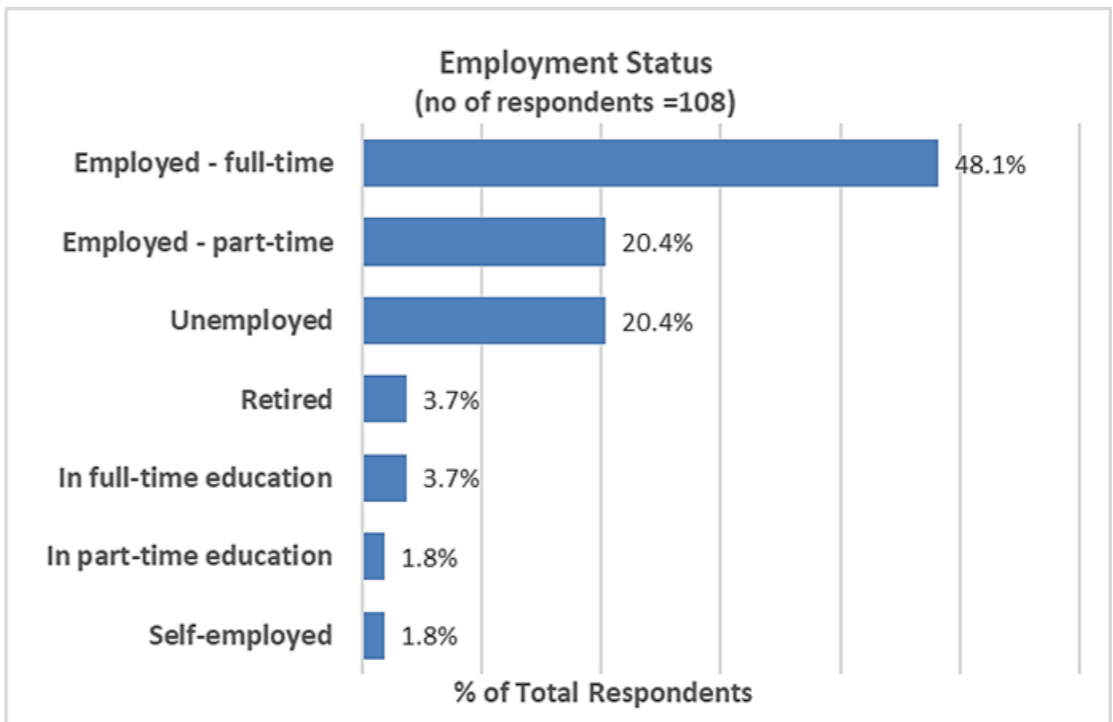


Figure 2: Employment Status

Most respondents (69%) are employed full or part-time, though 20% are unemployed.

Do you work in a service that provides domestic abuse support in Birmingham?

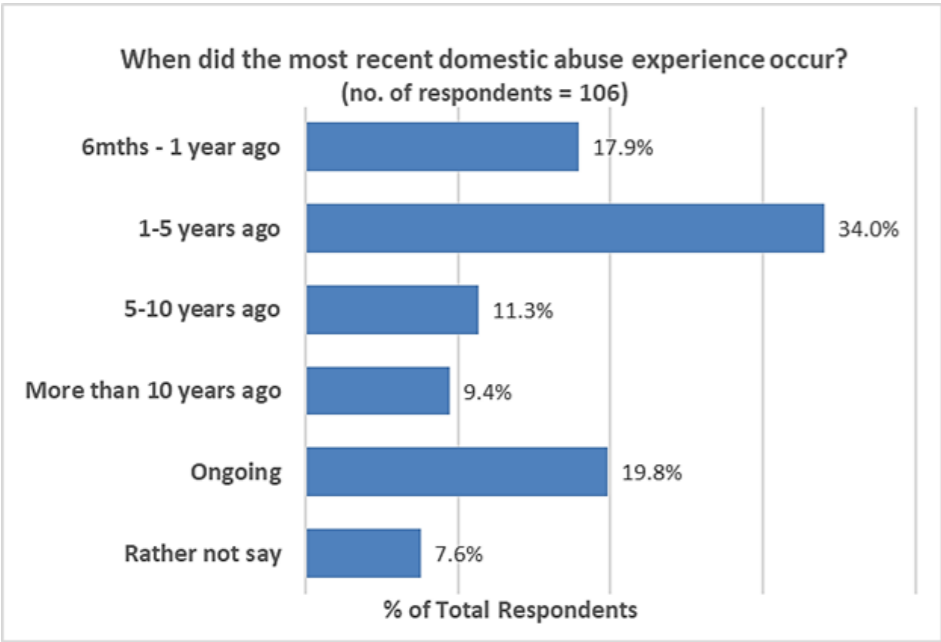
	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	20	18.9%
No	78	73.6%
Prefer not to say	8	7.5%
Total Respondents	106	100%

Table 2: Work in DA Service

Most respondents do not work in a domestic abuse support service.

Domestic Abuse Experience

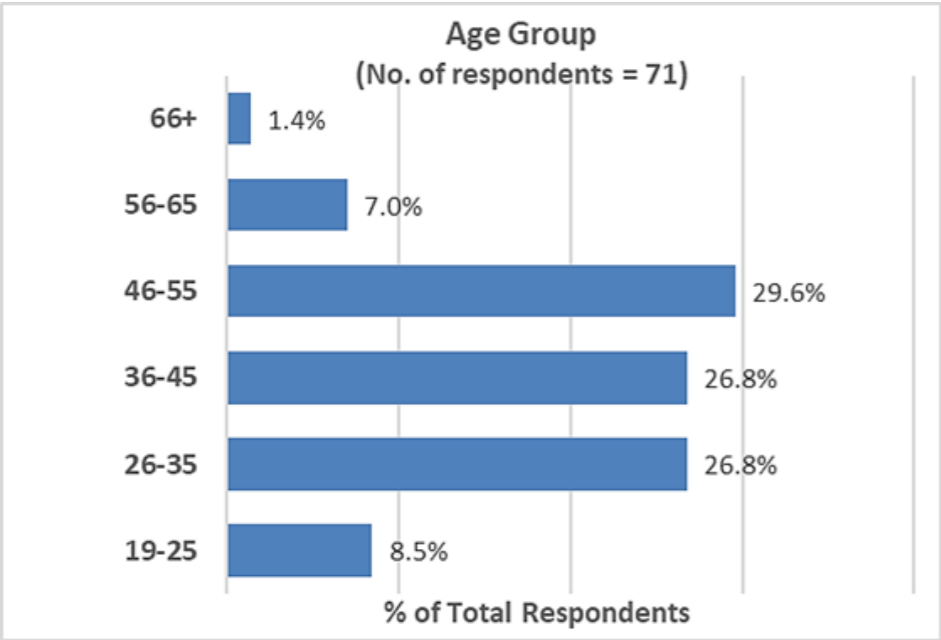
Figure 3: Most recent experience



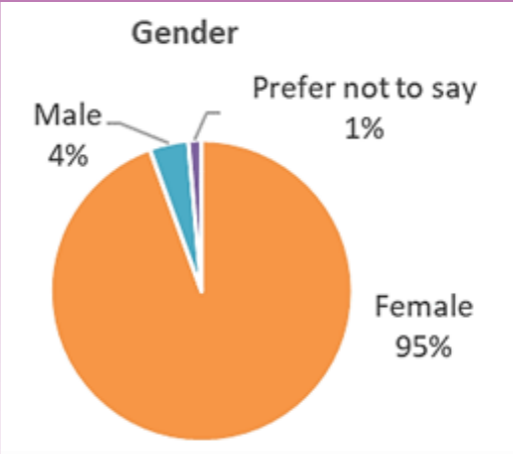
For just over half of all respondents (52%), the most recent domestic abuse occurred within the past five years. However, for almost 20% of respondents, the experience is still ongoing.

Age and Gender

Figure 4: Age



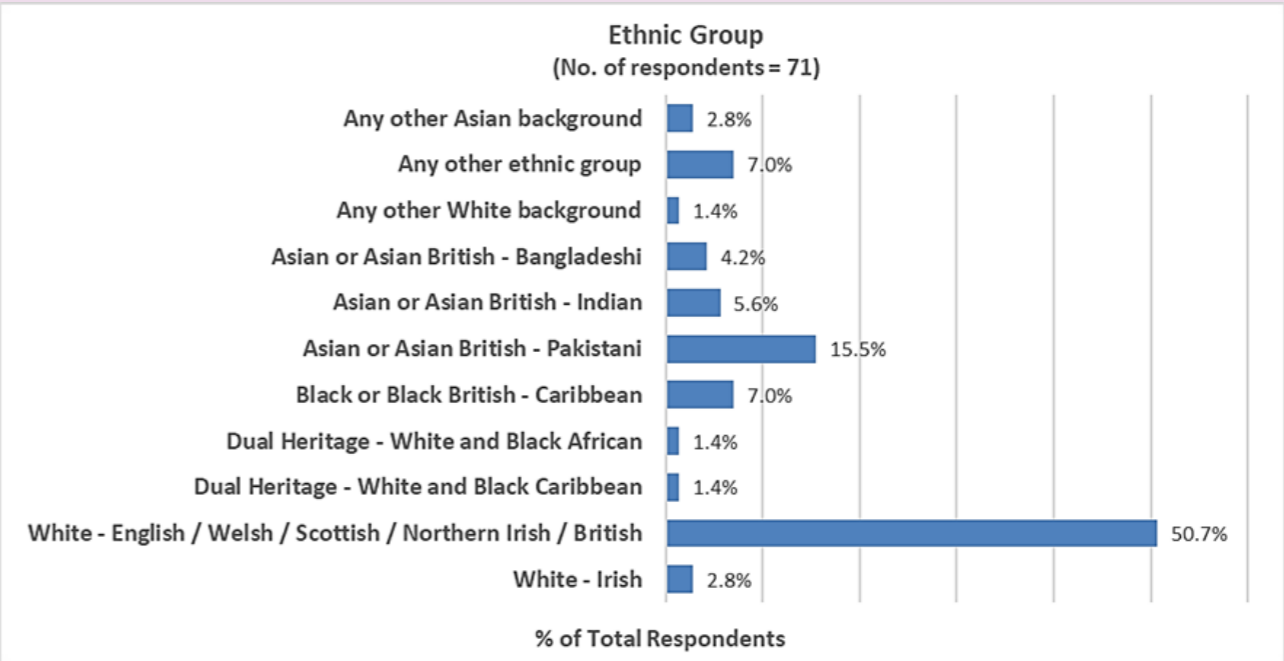
Over 80% of respondents were aged from 26 and 55 years.



Most respondents were female, and almost all respondents said their gender was the same as they were assigned at birth. 73 people answered this question.

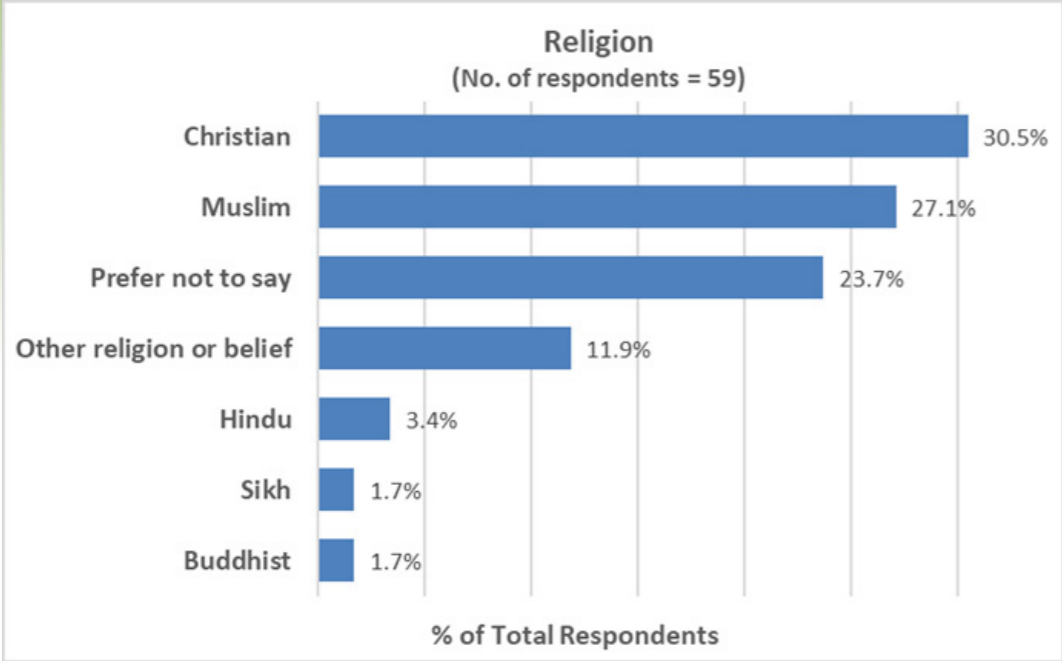
Ethnicity and Religion

Figure 6: Ethnicity



Just over half the respondents are of White ethnicity. Asian/Asian British ethnicity composes over a quarter of respondents, particularly Pakistani ethnicity.

Figure 7: Religion



The majority of respondents were Christian (30%) or Muslim (27%). There were also 12% who answered other religion or belief. It is unclear whether this contains those with no religion, or whether they chose not to answer the question.

Disability and Additional Needs

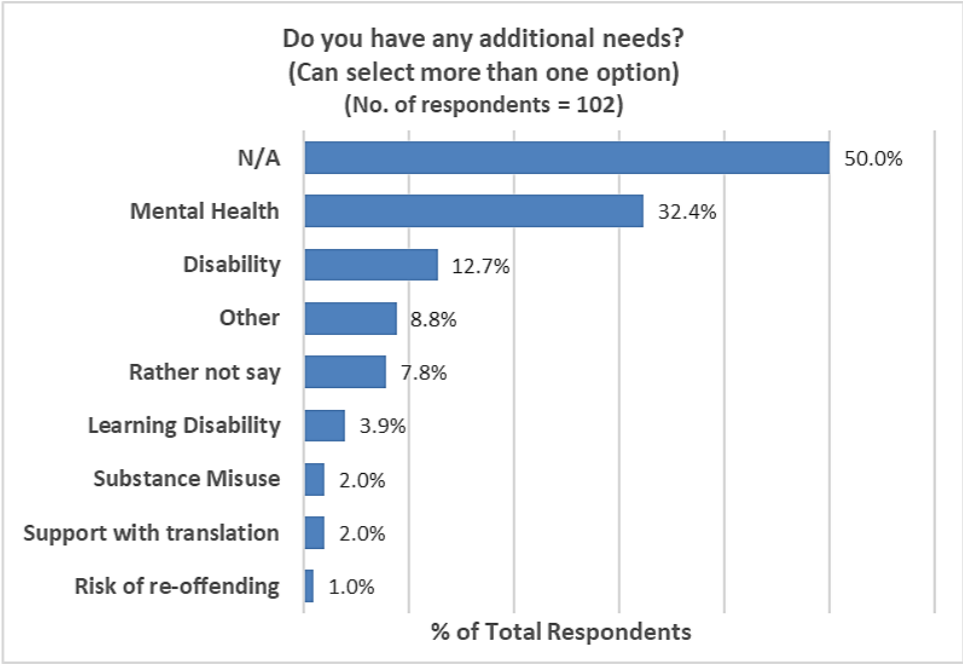
Do you consider yourself to have a disability as identified in the Equality Act 2010?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	19	26%
No	51	69.9%
Prefer not to say	3	4.1%
Total Respondents	73	100%

Table 3: Disability

Most respondents do not have a disability.

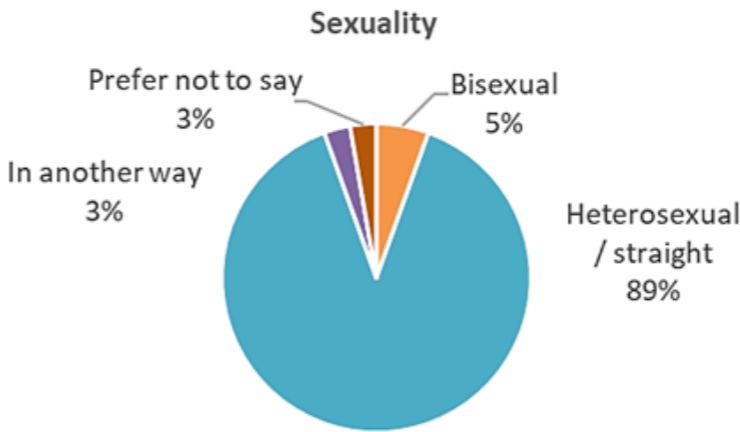
Figure 8: Additional Needs



Half of all respondents do not have additional needs. Nearly a third have mental health issues (32%), followed by a disability (13%). Of those who specified ‘other’ (9 respondents), 5 respondents had mental health issues.

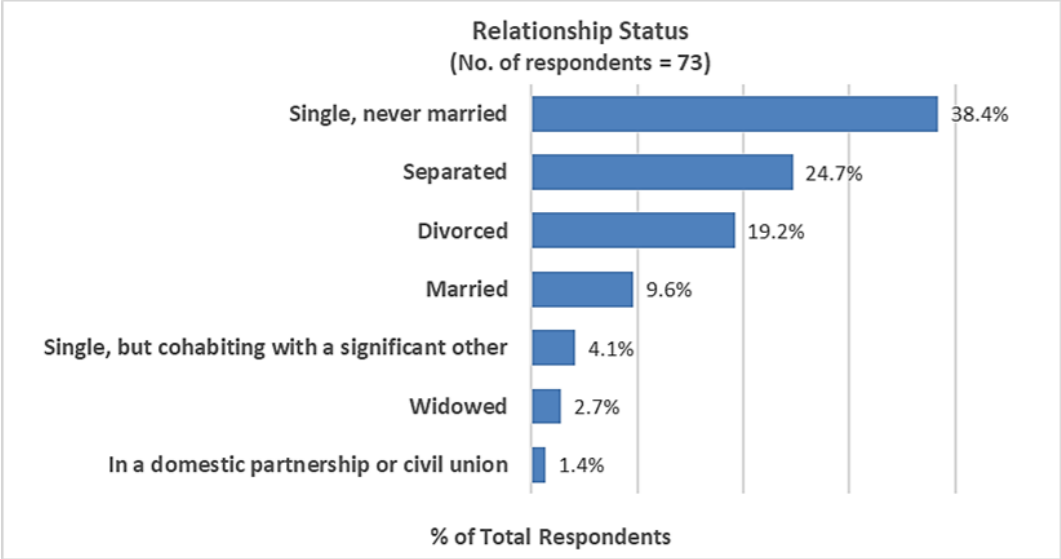
Sexuality and Relationships

Figure 9: Sexuality



Most respondents who answered identify as heterosexual/ straight. 73 people answered this question.

Figure 10: Relationship Status

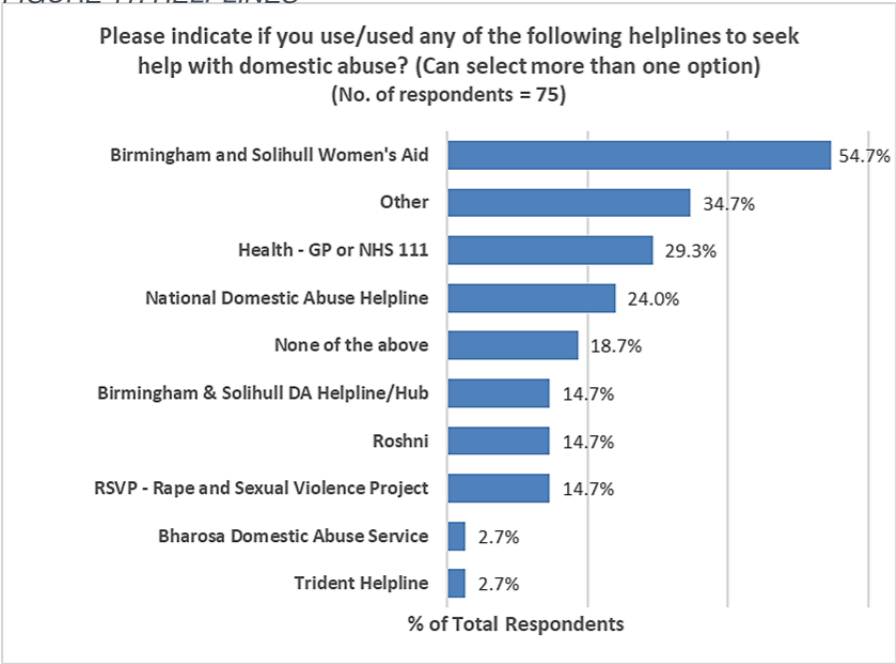


Only a small proportion of respondents are married (nearly 10%). The majority are either single and never married, separated or divorced.

Main Questions

Helplines

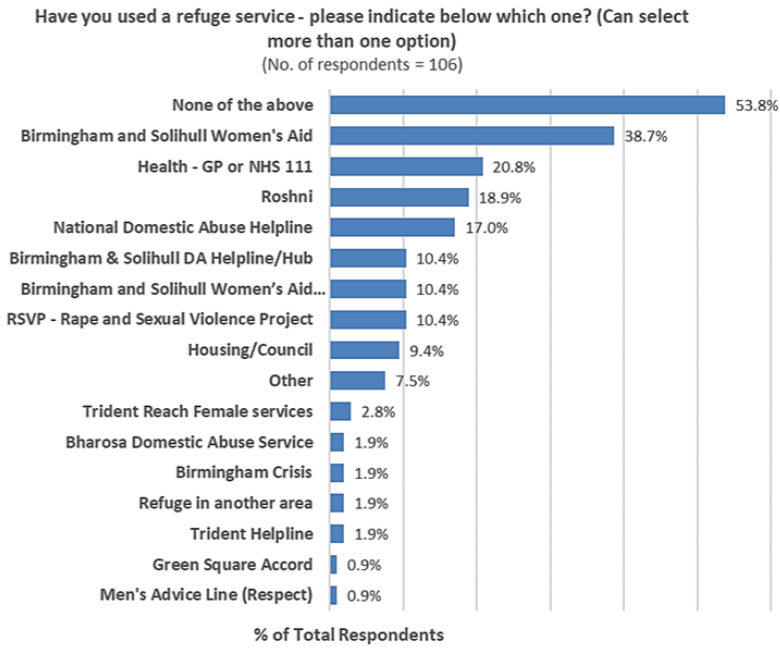
FIGURE 11: HELPLINES



Just over half of respondents (54%) have used Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (BSWA), followed by their GP/NHS (29%), and the NDA Helpline (24%). Of those who answered 'Other', over half mentioned WE:ARE, formerly the Birmingham Freedom Project.

Refuge Service

FIGURE 12: REFUGE SERVICE



Over half did not use any of the refuges provided. It is unclear whether this means they used an unnamed refuge service or did not use one at all. For those eight people who wrote under 'other', only three referenced specific refuges.

For those who did reference specific refuges, it was through BSWA (38.7%), followed by the NHS, Roshni, and the NDA Helpline.

Housing Need as a Result of DA

Did you have a housing need as a result of domestic abuse?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	41	51%
No	39	49%
Total Respondents	80	100%

TABLE 4: HOUSING NEED

Respondents were split almost equally on whether they had ever needed housing. With just over 50% saying they did need housing, this backs up widespread research that housing is a major issue for those fleeing domestic abuse and so is a key part of the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021.¹

Of those 26 people who commented, all but one had to leave their home because of domestic abuse. In two cases, they tried to move in with family,

but had to leave again as it wasn't safe. Others were made homeless. Seven people said their needs weren't met by local authorities/charities, and some had to find their own way to support themselves. Four people felt they did get the right support to get safe housing.

¹. [Domestic Abuse Act 2021.](#)

Other Services

TABLE 5: Service Usage

Have you used any other services in relation to domestic abuse?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	42	51.8%
No	39	48.2%
Total Respondents	81	100%

The result is split in terms of whether respondents have used any other services. 42 people commented, with most people mentioning numerous different third sector organisations. This included nearly half of commenters (19) mentioning WE:ARE.

Service Experience

For each service you used, please briefly describe your experience of that service.

This was a free text question only.

71 people left 205 comments about their experiences with particular services. Most comments were positive (60%), with a fifth being negative (21%). Positive comments centred around helpfulness/usefulness, and positive attitudes/treatment.

The top services commented on were: WE:ARE (51% of respondents, 18% of comments), BSWA (16% of comments), and the Police (15% of comments).

WE:ARE also had the highest total of positive comments (97% of comments about service), finding the service and people who work there positive and finding the courses really useful.

“Amazing, helped me learn what abuse is and made me realise it wasn't my fault and I also made a lot of friends and women who understood, I truly believe if it was not for them I may not be round and also gave support and help with my children.”

BSWA had a more mixed response but was still more positive (58%) than negative, saying they were helpful/useful and a positive attitude. When respondents did have a mixed or negative experience, it was usually because of limited resources/help available.

“Helpful in identifying that I and child were experiencing coercive control but less helpful about how to deal with it (post separation abuse) - could only suggest lawyers.”

The majority of comments about experience with the Police were negative (58%). Respondents found them generally unhelpful, with some issues over hostile attitudes. A few people did have a positive experience, though (16%).

“Not that good as I encounter a few who believed the perpetrator and thought I was the problem. Clearly not trained to spot abuse.”

Unpopular Service

Are there any services you would not use - please explain why?

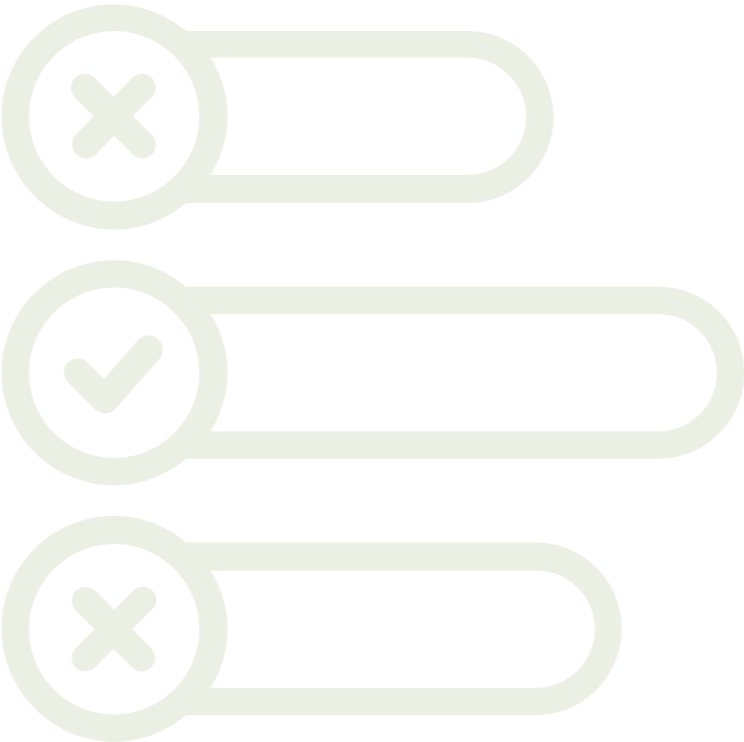
This was a free text question only. 37 people left 126 comments about their experiences with services, including one person who answered on all 32 service options.

The police had the most comments by far (18 comments*). The majority commented they **wouldn't use the police because of previous negative experiences** with them.

"Experienced compassion through the phone when reporting an incident but felt unheard and belittled by the police officers that came and took my details."

There were a few comments for most other services, but not enough to indicate any trends. The most popular themes for why people did not use a service included: not having heard of it before (50 comments, but 32 of these are from one person); having previous bad experiences with that service; or the service not being relevant to their needs (such as not using a charity for men because they were a woman).

*To Note: the 18 police comments included an extra two found under the 'Other' option.



Gaps

Would you say there were gaps in support in relation to domestic abuse?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	55	69%
No	25	31%
Total Respondents	80	100%

TABLE 6: GAPS IN SUPPORT

There were 80 respondents to this question, with the majority (69%) saying there were gaps in support.

52 people commented on this question. The biggest issue was the **lack of understanding of domestic abuse issues in society and in services** (25%). This was often about not understanding the problems that DA victims face, or the different aspects of DA. There were also issue with services not recognising signs of DA, or being able to identify how to best help victims and the support they need.

"The social services, police and officials often don't have a good understanding for what the survivor has experienced and then continue to traumatise without realising. A combination of experts in the field working with services officially, could bridge these gaps."

"The first gap is the lack of education and understanding by the front line services. I have had awful experiences with the police and social services who weren't even interested in hearing or asking about anything to do with the DV I was experiencing. I only managed to find WE:ARE because of a chance conversation with a woman at a playgroup."

This was often interlinked with the stigma that DA victims face when trying to escape the situation, with hostility or disbelief from society and services standing in the way of them being taken seriously and getting the help they need. In a couple of cases, victims felt that the perpetrator got more help or sympathy than they did.

"... Social Services not believing the situation and treating myself and my sister like criminals."

Another major theme (21%) was lack of multi-agency support, as well as inter-agency collaboration and communication to identify a holistic approach to supporting victims of DA. Victims will often need help in more than one area - housing, legal, counselling - and the lack of collaboration between services is a barrier. Services were not always able to signpost victims to appropriate support services.

Other issues include victims feelings there was not enough support generally; there being a lack of resources/ funding for services; feeling left alone to support themselves throughout the whole experience; gaps in housing and legal support; and being blocked from support because of not being poor or unemployed.

Positive Experiences

Can you give examples of positive experiences you have had in regard to the support you have received from domestic abuse services

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	58	74%
No	20	26%
Total Respondents	78	100%

TABLE 7: POSITIVE

There were 78 respondents to this question, with the majority (74%) saying they could give examples of positive experiences.

61 people commented on this question. A third of these commenters said that the **education they received from the service** was a positive experience, whether through a course or other tools of support. For some, **it helped them identify and understand signs of abuse** or help with trauma.

“Helped me identify forms of abuse which in turn helped me rebuild myself and start to regain control of my life.”

Having a kind, non-judgemental and **supportive environment where victims felt believed** and safe was part of the positive experience for a quarter of commenters. Some felt like they had found a place they could be themselves and their children could be safe. A fifth **had individual support workers/ professionals** who made all the difference to their experiences of feeling listened to and getting the support they need.

“Cranstoun. My worker was working above and beyond and I would have been lost without her help in the first 12 months.”

Over 20% of commenters said they had **strong emotional and practical support** (e.g. housing, legal advice) from services that helped a great deal.

Because of all these positive factors, nearly a third of commenters felt **happier, empowered and/or more confident** because of their experiences with services.

“They have given me all the help that I needed from Roshni and have shown me a life to live as I had given up hope.”

“My self esteem, confidence and perseverance has now paid off because I stuck at attending the courses and appointments. I now have peace for the 1st time in 50 years, I’m started to make new friends and I’m able to have the confidence to say NO.”

There were also a third who generally had positive experiences and support from services but didn’t go into detail about why.

Nearly a third of commenters talked about their positive experiences with WE:ARE/ The Freedom Project, making it the most mentioned service for this question.

“We:are They were so supportive and helpful. Gave me time to chat and support from others.”

Refused Access

Have you ever been refused access to a service/refuge in relation to domestic abuse?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	23	28%
No	58	72%
Total Respondents	87	100%

TABLE 8: ACCESS TO SERVICE

There were 81 people who answered this question, with the majority (72%) who said they had not been refused access.

22 people commented on this question, which makes it difficult to establish trends and themes with such a small sample. However, there were six people (27% of respondents) who had **difficulty getting access to housing/ safe accommodation**, five people (23%) who found it difficult to get help

from third sector organisations, and four people (18%) who had problems with police/legal support.

“I have attempted to ask for help with a change of areas and been met with a pure lack of empathy for the situation I’m in and told I have to do what everyone else has to do and start the process over.”

Supported When Single or With Children

Were you supported as a single person, or with children?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Single Person	29	37%
With Children	49	63%
Grand Total	78	100%

TABLE 9: Support Circumstance

There were 78 people who answered this question, with the majority (63%) saying they were supported with children.

25 people commented on the question, however there was confusion over what to write as a comment. Some people gave details of their children, and some of their support experiences. Those who gave details of their children had a mix of numbers and ages of children. Of those who discussed their

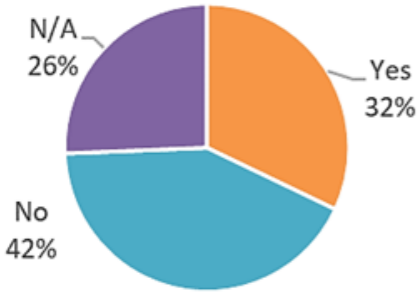
experiences with children, six had/ have problems with receiving support, five had good experiences, and one person had a mixed experience.

“My younger daughter is still living with her father who abused me. Social services have just told me to ‘take it back to court’.”

Children – Receive Support

FIGURE 13: CHILDREN SUPPORT

Did you receive any support for children affected?
(e.g. children's support worker, counselling)?



There were 78 people who answered this question, with a third (32%) saying their children were supported, but over 40% saying they didn't.

34 people commented on the question, and it's difficult to establish trends and themes with a small sample. In trying to seek support, 12 had positive experiences (35%), 11 people had negative experience, and 7 had mixed experiences.

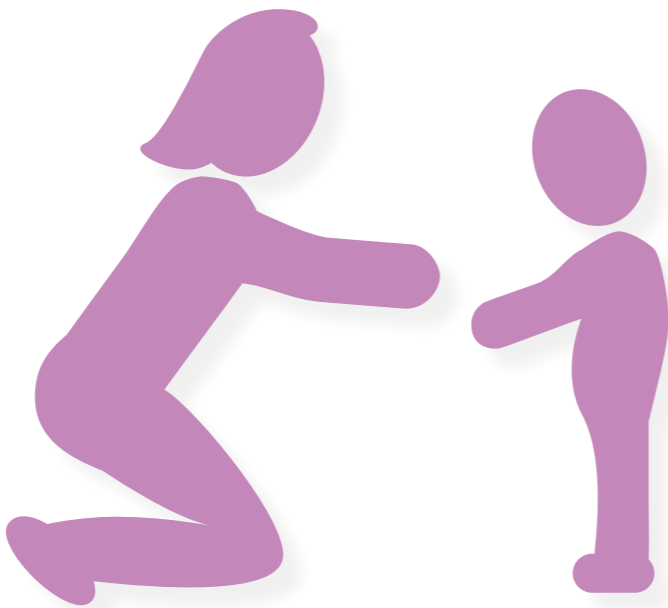
The negative experiences are due to a mix of reasons, with the only trend emerging that the **perpetrator still has some level of control over the kids** (5 comments), such as still having partial custody or not allowing the kids to have counselling.

"I have shared custody with the perpetrator and he abuses them everyday..."

For positive experience, **having a children's support worker** was regarded as key by 6 commenters.

"I received support for my children. My children received a support worker who works a long with the children. Support worker set activities for the children and had play sessions."

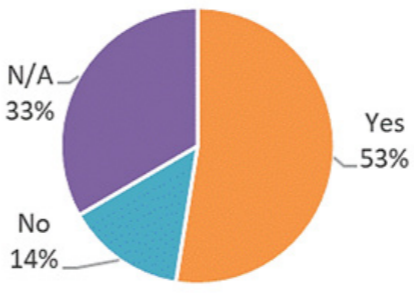
The main services mentioned for positive experiences with children were Roshni and WE:ARE.



Children – Receive Support

FIGURE 13: CHILDREN SUPPORT

In your experience, are there any gaps in services to support children?



There were 78 people who answered this question, with just over half (53%) saying there are gaps in children's support services.

31 people commented on the question, and it's difficult to establish trends and themes with a small sample so please treat all analysis with caution. The main theme was that **children's mental health and the trauma** they faced because of DA was **not being recognised**, and that there was little or no follow-up care.

"The school won't log incidents, the courts ignore diaries kept, children's voices aren't heard or even if they aren't listened to."

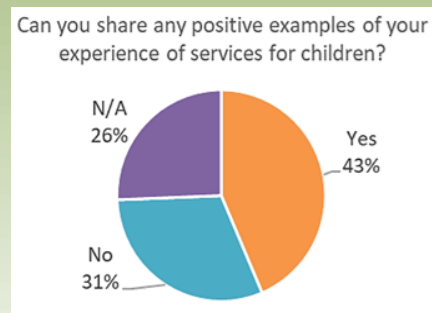
"There is no support for children! Once the children are removed from the perpetrator, Social services think everything has been fixed. This isn't the case. They get no support to deal with what has happened or what they've been through."

Aside from that, eight commenters said there was **not enough support for children generally**, and five said some or more counselling needed to be offered to children. This ties in with the theme that children's mental health is not being recognised.

"There is no support unless you actively seek it whilst in crisis. Any support that is offered is limited and short term or there is a long waiting list to access services."

Children – Positive Examples

FIGURE 15: SHARE POSITIVE EXAMPLES



There were 78 people who answered this question, with just 43% saying they can share positive examples, and 31% saying they can't.

23 people commented on the question, and it's difficult to establish trends and themes with a small sample so please treat all analysis with caution.

There were no strong trends with the comments, with most people talking about their individual experiences with specific third sector organisations. Four people mentioned WE:ARE, with other organisation mentioned once, such as Roshni, Breaking the Silence, NSPCC, Think Family, etc.

“Think Family Birmingham came to see me and my children which is helpful as we were isolated.”

A quarter of commenters mentioned **help from a specific support worker/professional** as being a positive experience.

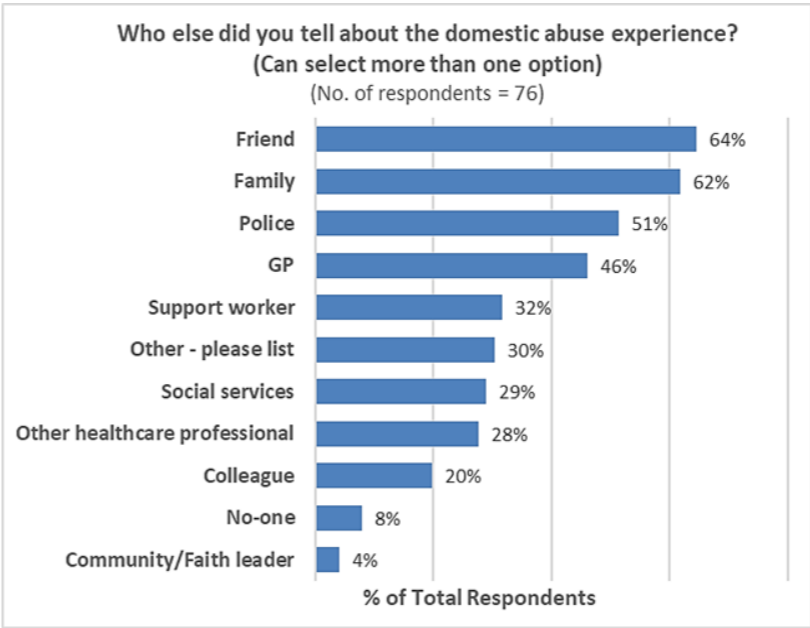
“The support worker has helped my child a lot in different ways and teaching him what he needed. managed to get my child in a place in school.”

A fifth mentioned that **courses/ programmes dealing with the impact/ signs** of DA helped their children.

“I have done programmes with WE:ARE about helping your children process what has happened, how to understand them and how to parent through trauma. No other service gives this or even acknowledges that it is a thing.”

Who Did You Tell

FIGURE 16: WHO



There were 76 people who answered this question. Most people told their friends (64%) and family (62%), followed the Police, their GP, or Support Worker.

Related question: Please tell us why you chose to talk to these specific people

In terms of why people chose to talk to these different groups of people/services, a third didn't have a specific reason, but just said they needed help and thought these groups could help them.

When it came to specifics, the following was most important: being able to trust that person/service (21%), or because they were close friends or family (21%). Given that over 60% told their friends and/or family, this is not surprising. When in a vulnerable situation, people will reach out to those they trust and know the best.

“Trust, they asked; they enabled me to reality check; they offered a safe, confidential place.”

“I had spoken to my family because I didn't what to do and who I can get the help from. My family then took me to the police and I was brought here at Roshni.”

Other reasons included: desperation as they didn't know where else to go, other people had noticed or suspected something, they felt they would be safer contacting that person/ service, or someone else suggested or referred them to that service.

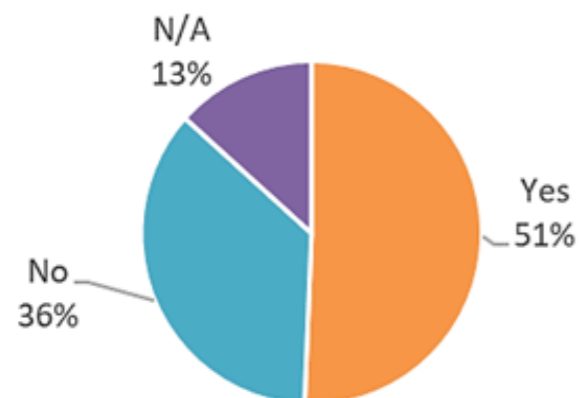
“...because you could see the scars and bruises so I had no choice but sadly was not believed.”

“People were starting to notice and I spoke to some family members a long time after I left the relationship, when I felt ready.”

Hoped For Response

FIGURE 17: HOPED RESPONSE

Did you get the response you hoped for?



There were 75 people who answered this question. Just over half (51%) got the response they hoped for, with just over a third who didn't (36%).

39 people commented on whether they got their hoped-for response, with 65% each saying yes and no to that. A further 28% had a mixed experience, with some good and bad reactions from friends and family and/or services.

"Although, family member was supportive the Police contact and engagement was unhelpful."

There was a wide range of responses as to what responses people got, both good and bad. In terms of good, **people felt supported by their friends and family, felt that services responded well to their needs, had compassion, and quickly referred to appropriate services.**

"I received the best response that I hoped for. I was brought to Roshni and now I feel I can breath."

"Concern, compassion, no pressure but mention of options & ongoing support as I needed it, a friend finding somewhere for me to move out to. My GP identified when I later fell into a depression and has been wonderful in supporting me realistically & rehabilitatively with that. And they continue to be brilliant."

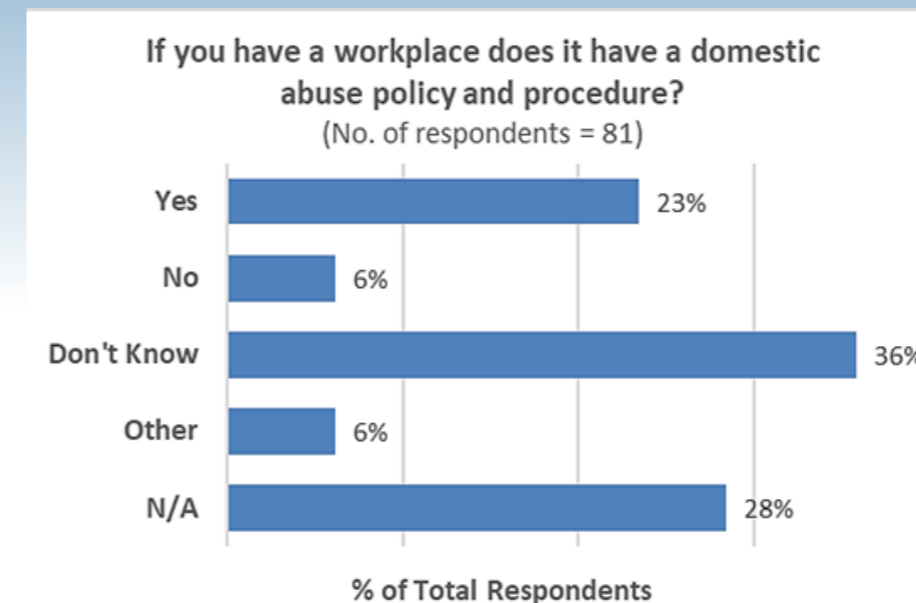
In terms of bad responses, there was a wide range of experiences, including people who found others either **generally unhelpful, or that they didn't care or believe the victim** about the abuse.

"they raised safeguarding which as mentioned before did not go well and actually made things worse."

"Family were dismissive (I only have male family members), they normalised the abuse."

Workplace – Policy and Procedure

FIGURE 18: POLICY OR PROCEDURE IN PLACE



There were 76 people who answered this question.

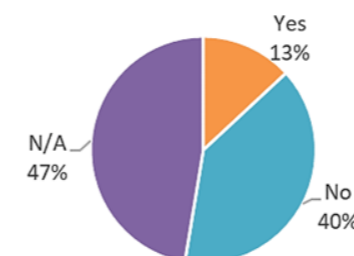
Only a quarter said yes, and nearly 40% didn't know.

If those who answered not applicable (e.g. do not have a workplace) are removed, the proportion of Don't Know goes up to over half (55%). This suggests that workplaces either do not have a policy or have not made it sufficiently known.

Workplace – Sought Support Through Policy

FIGURE 19: POLICY SUPPORT

Have you sought support through the policy?



There were 76 people who answered this question.

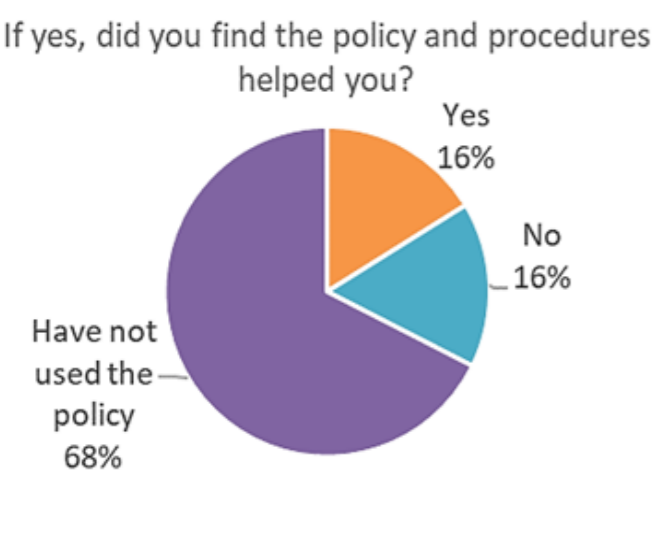
Only 13% said yes, and 40% said no. Those who answered not applicable could potentially be people who do not have a workplace or know of a policy. However, this could also apply to those who said 'No', too.

Only 11 people commented in total, with a mix of responses.

There were only 4 comments from those who said 'no' and no themes or trends within the comments. Two of those did receive support from their manager, with an example below:

"My manager turned a blind eye to my absence to attend freedom project."

FIGURE 20: IF YES, WAS IT HELPFUL



Excluding the N/As, 37 people answered on whether the policies/procedures helped. Most have not used the policy (68%). Only 6 total respondents said yes.

Overall, this set of questions on workplace policy and procedures suggest there is **significant room for improvement in this area by employers to support vulnerable employees.**

Public Awareness for Information

Do you believe there should be more public awareness information around domestic abuse?

	Total Respondents	% Total Respondents
Yes	74	97%
No	2	3%
Total Respondents	76	100%

FIGURE 21: More Information



76 people answered this question. The overwhelming majority believed there should be more public awareness information around DA, with only 2 saying no.

33 people gave further thoughts on why or how this should happen.

Nearly a third of commenters (30%) thought it was **important to raise awareness of the signs of abuse**, either for the victim or their friends/family to recognise and help. This **included raising particular awareness of non-physical aspects of abuse**, such as coercive control as some may not realise that this can be domestic abuse, too.

“The general public [is] very ignorant about Coercive control, my abuser would constantly tell me that as long as he wasn’t hitting me he wasn’t doing anything wrong.”

Another important aspect was **raising more awareness of what DA support services are out there**, with better signposting, so that victims know who and where they can get appropriate help and refuge.

“Most women don’t know where to go for help when they are going through domestic abuse and most women have language problem as they don’t know which organisation to contact and what sort of help they can get from them.”

Some commenters said that schoolchildren, from early ages through to teenagers, should be taught about it in schools, in terms of unhealthy behaviours, attitudes, and warning signs of DA. This is not just about helping them to see if it’s happening in their family now but preparing them to recognise unhealthy relationships in the future.

“We should teach children to be aware of what’s DA and what behaviours are not normal. As a teacher we never talk about these things in school. May be if people were made more aware of this we wouldn’t see that many people staying thinking this is normal, their fault or that things will get better.”

Further comments discussed other specific idea for raising awareness, DA specific courses for adults, using awareness raising to combat stigma against DA victims, and bring more focus perpetrator & their accountability.

“I’m sure if people were more aware that there was never a reason to abuse us in the first place and that it was the abuser who was in the wrong all the time perhaps people’s views would change.”

Additional Comments

If you have any additional comments regarding domestic abuse in Birmingham please add them

This was a free text question only.

30 people provided additional comments.

The main theme was around making sure **there was more help available for abuse victims and their families**, to support them in their time of need, such as helping them move forward in their lives and deal with the trauma, or dealing with complex needs along with DA.

“I really hope more support for victims will be accessible to more people and children. Awareness of how the perpetrator operates is important and recovery for victims, mostly women and children needs to be more readily accessible and available. Trauma training and recovery is paramount in our society now.”

Seven people (27%) mentioned negative experiences with services, whether it was the **attitude of staff, the lack of support**, or just generally failing victims and their families. There were only four people who mentioned positive experiences, two of the comments were regarding WE ARE.

There was also concern about the impact on children and support for them.

“I think Birmingham is failing women suffering domestic abuse and they don’t realise the impact this will have on the children. Lack of support for women leaves not only them vulnerable but their children also.”



