

Inter-Faith Group on Domestic Abuse

Faith communities working together to tackle Domestic Abuse

It is God's intention for all human beings, male, female, child and adult, to enjoy safety, freedom, dignity and fullness of life. Abuse in the home is a violation of God's wish for humanity as it can adversely affect an individual's relationship with God and also creates substantial damage in the family, in the community and in society as a whole.

It should be made clear that individuals have the right and the duty to protect themselves and the children from further abuse. It is unrealistic and dangerous to expect individuals affected by violence to live under the same roof as the abuser. All world faiths want to assure women in particular that safety from abuse is essential to the good of any marriage. Abuse contradicts the sanctity of the marriage, and the abuser betrays the integrity of the marriage vows. At the centre of any intervention work the safety of those being abused is paramount. At the same time the abusers must be held accountable for their actions. They also need to be guided towards the help they require to develop into people who will not damage those they love.

As Faith Communities, it is important to deal with this complex issue by working together in a multi-agency approach, including the education of young people in the formation of healthy and respectful attitudes towards themselves and others.

The willingness of Faith Communities to deal openly with the issues helps abused people to overcome any feelings of shame and isolation.

It is essential that all those affected by abuse should have the opportunity to enjoy safety, freedom, dignity and fullness of life.

The above statement is endorsed by the following: AMINA, The Muslim Women's Resource Centre; The Baha'i Council for Scotland; The Church of Scotland; The Guild; The Methodist Church; The Methodist Church Women's Network; The National Commission for Pastoral and Social Care; The Religious Society of Friends; The Roman Catholic Church (Bishops' Conference); The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities; Salvation Army; The Scottish Episcopal Church; The Mothers' Union; The Union of Catholic Mothers (Scotland); Women's Aid.

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**A commission of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland.
Catholic National Endowment Trust (also known as the Bishops' Conference of Scotland).**

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