
Gender Based Violence against adults: Frequently Asked Questions

Q 1: I'm not sure if what I'm going through is abuse. What is the definition?

A: Abuse is when someone intentionally harms or injures another person. There are many kinds of abuse encountered by adults, including:

- physical abuse
- psychological abuse
- rape
- sexual assault
- verbal abuse
- elder abuse
- financial abuse
- spiritual abuse
- emotional abuse

Q 2: If I've only been abused one time, can I report this?

A: Yes, you can speak to our social workers who will assist you. You can also report the abuse at the nearest police station.

Q 3: Where can I get help if I am being abused?

A: If you or someone you know want help you can contact:

- Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (online trauma counselling 24hr/ 7 days trauma): 0800 428 428
- Police: 10111
- Department of Social Development Toll-Free Line: 0800 220 250
- Childline: 116
- The Human Trafficking Resource Line: 0800 222 777
- Western Cape Directory of Service for Victims of Crime and Violence
- SASSA 0800 60 10 11
- Western Cape Education Department Safe Schools : 0800 45 46 47
- You may also contact your nearest court for a protection order, clinic, or hospital.

Q 4: Must I report the abuser to the police first, in order to get help or be assisted with help in a shelter or by a social worker?

A: No, you do not have to report the abuser to the police first before you get assistance. You will be assisted regardless of whether you report the abuser to the police. If you choose to report the abuser to the police the social worker will assist you.

Q 5: What do I do if the person who is abusing me is my relative and/ guardian?

A: You can report the abuse to the police and also obtain a protection order against your relative/guardian. You can contact a social worker who will assess the case and activate the appropriate intervention.

Q 6: Is there a safe place I can go to after I have reported the abuse and it is not safe for me to return home?

A: Yes, the social worker will assess your case and will find a suitable place for you to be relocated to.

Q 7: Will my abuser know where I am relocated to?

A: No, the addresses of our shelters are not published to protect the residents. The abuser will not be informed of your location.

Q 8: I am a member of the LGBTQIA+ community can I also gain access to GBV services?

A: Yes, you can. Services offered by the WCG are **not** based on gender identity, race, sexual orientation or socio-economic situation.

Q 9: Can I alert a social worker to abuse on someone else's behalf to?

A: Yes, you can. You can report the abuse using the contact details in question 3.

Q 10: Are there any costs involved in reporting abuse?

A: No there are no costs involved in reporting abuse. Many shelters funded by DSD for victims of gender-based violence offer free services.

Q 11: Will I be supported after I have reported the abuse?

A: Yes, you will. The social worker assigned to your case will support you by providing you with the necessary information that you need to help you to heal.

Q 12: If I get help, will I need to face my abuser during the process?

A: In some cases, you may have to face the abuser again especially if you have laid a charge and the case goes to court. It is important to note that a social worker will assist and support you through the process.

Q 13: Can I only report abuse if it's still happening?

A: No, you can report the abuse after it has happened as well.

Q 14: Is there a time limit on how long after the abuse took place, that I can report it to the police and/ or to a social worker?

A: There is no time limit for reporting rape or any other sexual offence.