

casa de la mujer*



Guide on Gender-Based Violence

 Zaragoza
AYUNTAMIENTO



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Presentation

Violence against women is the worst manifestation of inequality between men and women, of a social system in which an imbalance of power is maintained in relationships.

Saragossa City Council is committed in the fight against gender violence and in promoting as many actions as are necessary to achieve the eradication of machista attitudes and behaviours, to move forward on the road to a society free of violence, and more just and egalitarian between men and women.

The Equality Service, through the **Casa de la Mujer** (Women's Shelter), offers attention and aid to women who suffer from violence, as well as their sons and daughters. The Municipal Program of Integral Assistance, offers information and hospitality, psychological, social, educational, legal, employment and lodging assistance are offered.

This guide is an instrument to:

- learn and know what can be done against gender violence.
- learn to recognize it in conduct and situations that can go unnoticed or those to which importance is not given.
- understand what happens to women in these situations and what women feel when they suffer violence.
- answer the questions that a woman may ask when she lives through a situation of abuse, with regard to what is happening and the resources that she can go to for help.

What is gender violence?, Am I being abused?

Gender violence is violence that is perpetrated on women by men with whom they have or have had a couple relationship.

Gender violence is a social problem, which has its roots in the inequality between men and women that has always existed and still continues in our society.

The violence that men practice on women has the purpose of trying to have them under control and disempower them, to achieve their submission and their psychological dependence.

Violence becomes a form of direct **domination** because it produces fear, blockage, control and damage.

It can be manifested through the following conduct:

Physical abuse:

Hitting, pushing, beating...

Psychological abuse:

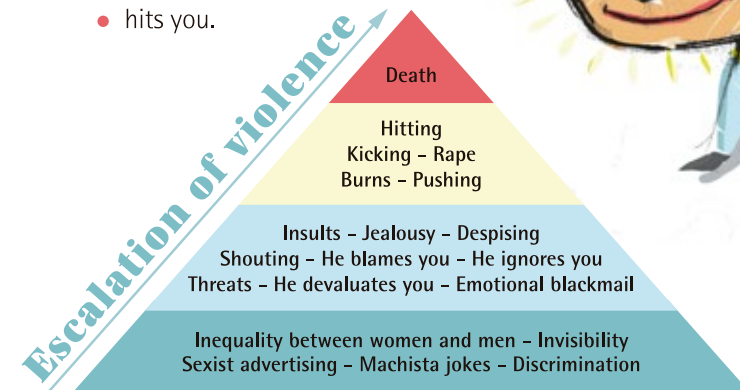
Threats, humiliations, demands of submission, insults, family and social isolation...

Sexual abuse:

Any sexual act forced by the partner with violence or intimidation.

You are living gender violence if your partner, husband, ex-partner:

- controls you, harasses you and decides for you.
- prevents you from seeing your family, your friends...
- prevents, limits or controls access to money, study or work.
- forces you to have sexual relations.
- discredits you, or mocks your actions.
- controls your mobile phone, your social network activity, etc.
- punishes you with silence or will not listen when you express yourself.
- undermines your authority in your sons/daughters presence.
- threatens you with taking away your sons/daughters if you leave him.
- insults you, threatens you, and humiliates you.
- hits you.



It is important to become aware of the first signs that can go unnoticed.

How does violence develop?

Violence grows little by little; it can go unnoticed and tends to repeat itself. It occurs with increasing frequency and intensity. It has serious consequences on your physical and mental health.

In the violent relationship a **CYCLE** is produced in which these phases are distinguished: the tension accumulation phase, the explosion phase and the honeymoon or repentance phase.

In the abusive relationship, this cycle repeats itself over time; the repentance phase tends to disappear, and the phases of tension building and aggression become acute. As a result of this, you have fewer and fewer psychological resources to escape the situation.

Tension building phase:

At the beginning, psychological abuse appears: mood changes, shouting, demands, breaking of objects, etc.

You feel guilty for what happens, of the mood changes of your partner, and you begin to behave passively and submissively as a reaction to the situation, thinking that in this way, you can avoid conflict and violence.



Explosion or aggression phase:

An increase in tension is produced, physical, psychological or sexual abuse of intense character occurs.

You feel that you have no control over the situation and you may not be able to react, you center on protecting yourself.



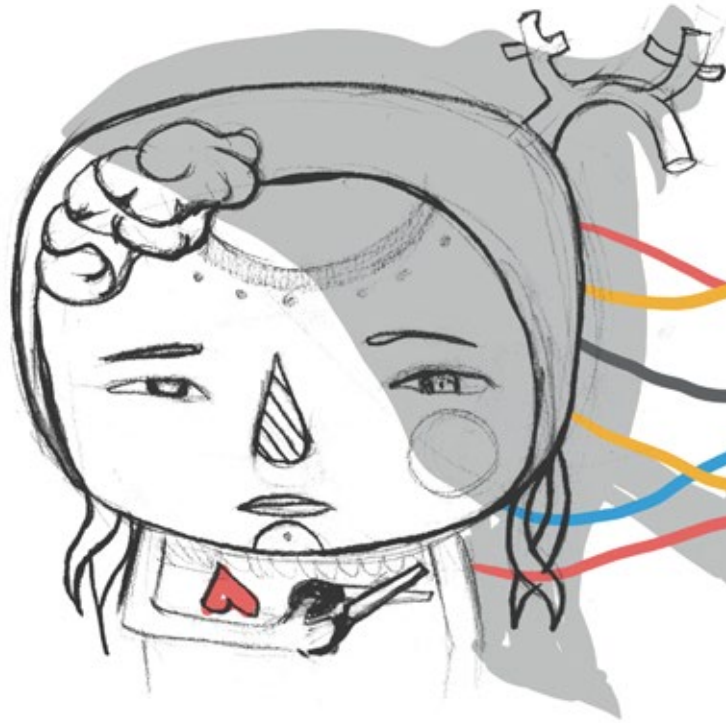
Honeymoon phase:

Your partner repents and asks you to forgive him. You want to believe him when he promises that "it won't happen again", that he will be able to control himself and therefore, to change.

In this phase, the tension decreases, finally disappearing. He may give you gifts, details, shows of affection, so that you believe that he truly has changed.

But after some time has passed, situations occur again that once again, cause tension and therefore, cause a new aggression.





Why is a violent relationship not broken?

It is difficult to leave a violent relationship.

You remain in a violent relationship as a result of a traumatic experience lived.



A series of **beliefs** and **thoughts** are generated such as:
"I don't know what to do to change things"
"Nothing can be done" or "Whatever I do, it doesn't matter"
"If I did.." or "If I didn't do..."
"It's my fault" or "maybe he'll change..."
"I won't be able to go on alone"
"I'm afraid of how he will react"

These beliefs and thoughts cause low self-esteem, insecurity, confusion, incapability to make decisions..and cause you to **remain** in the relationship.



How does an abuser behave?

In order to dominate the relationship, he can use any of the following types of behaviour:

- He holds you responsible for the aggression, making you feel guilty when he affirms that you are lying, that you are crazy or that you are provoking him.
- He explains the abuse so that it appears that what he did is acceptable.
- He plays down the importance of the aggression: "I didn't hit her, I only pushed her".
- He justifies his behaviour with being unemployed, excessive expenses, his problems with alcohol...He never feels responsible.
- He assures that he doesn't remember what happened, that he didn't know what he was doing, that it didn't happen like you say it did, that you're exaggerating, etc.

How does a situation of gender violence affect me?

Living in an abusive relationship is a traumatic experience, which has physical and psychological consequences.

If you are or you have been in a relationship with gender violence, you can suffer:

Psychological Consequences

Anxiety, fear, depression and feelings of low self-esteem, sense of threat, social isolation, concealment of what has happened, feelings of guilt, nervousness, unrest, memory problems (confusion, attention problems), perception of not being able to get out of the situation.

Physical Consequences

Headaches, fatigue, muscular pain, insomnia, traumas, problems in pregnancy, infertility, serious injuries,... may result in death.



"What is happening to you is the result of the abuse you are experiencing or you have experienced"



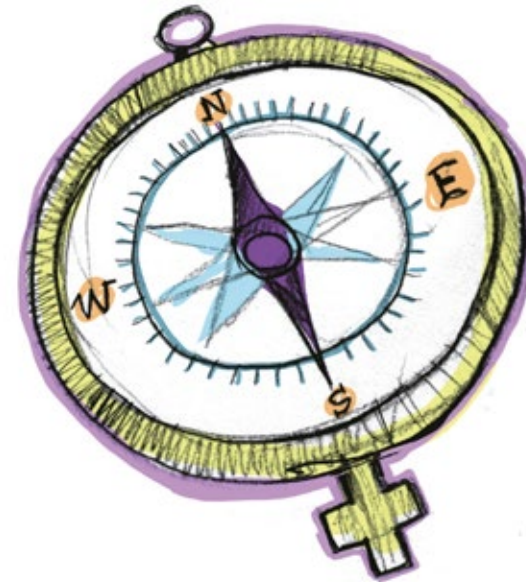


*"Sons and daughters
also need a space
for attention"*

And how does this situation affect my sons and daughters?

You may think that separation from your partner will produce more damage to your sons and daughters than tolerating the relationship, but when there exist situations of gender violence, putting an end to them will favour your emotional development and stability.

As a consequence of living through these situations, your sons/-daughters may express their discontent in different ways: behaving badly, quarrelling with their classmates, lowering their performance in class, sadness, sleeping poorly, more childish behaviour, wanting to protect their mother or imitate the violent conduct they have seen...



Can I get out of this situation?

From the time that you become aware of the situation, you are on the road to your recovery and taking control of your life.

- Trust in your capacity and personal resources to be able to face this situation. **You can.**
- Don't be afraid to speak, say what is happening to you. **You haven't done anything wrong.**
- Seek the necessary help for you and your sons and daughters; there are resources for this purpose. **We can help you.**

From victim to SURVIVOR

"I have learned to set limits,
I respect myself and I value myself"

"I fight every day to learn to love myself"

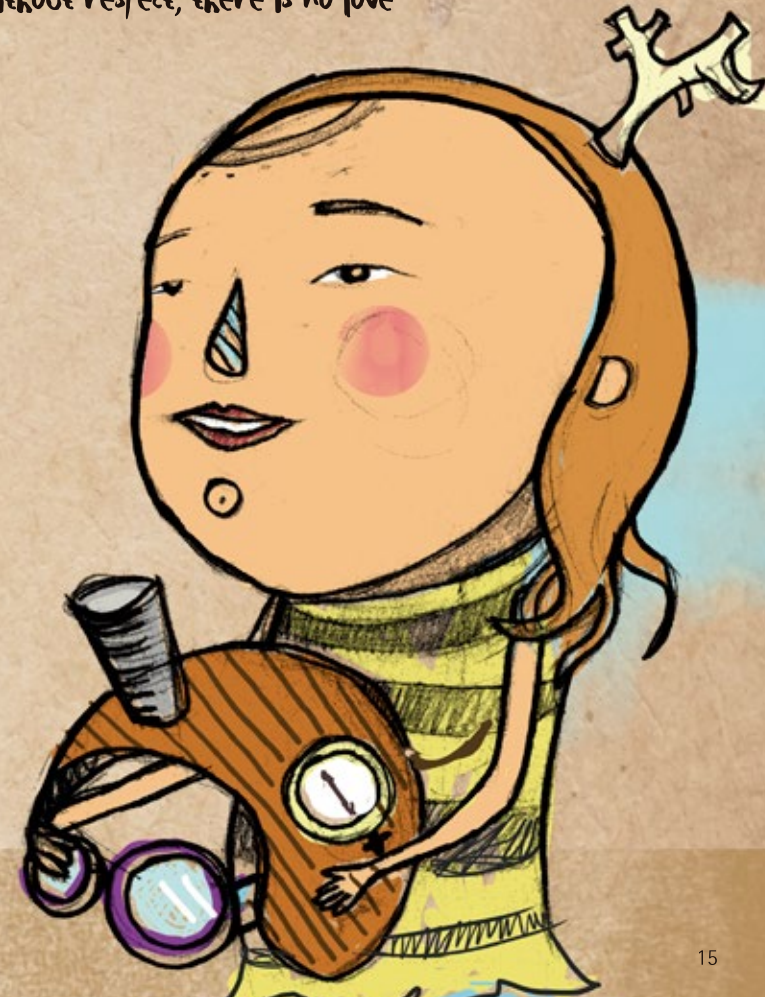
"My life is my own"

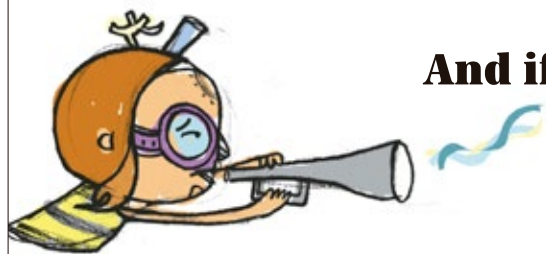
"For a long time, I was what I was able to be,
Now I am what I want to be"

"My children and I are more at peace"



"Love does not hurt... it feels good
Love is not a heavy weight... it lightens
Love does not bind... it gives wings
Love does not condemn... it understands
Love is generosity;
Without respect, there is no love"





And if I report it?

Reporting it is important:

- so that justice and the police can implement protective measures.
- to document the abuse in a court and/or divorce process.
- to break the silence and help other women to break it.
- to raise awareness in society and in the institutions of the severity of this social problem.

Before reporting, request the presence of a lawyer or a public defender in gender violence, to inform you, advise you, resolve your doubts and accompany you.

Free service, calling telephone no. **900 504 405**

In addition:

- It is best to be accompanied by someone you trust.
- Take the time you need to explain everything that has happened, both this time and on previous occasions.
- If you have medical reports, submit them.
- Make it known if your sons/daughters have been present in the aggressions or if they may be at risk.
- Ask all the questions you need to ask; read the complaint before signing it. It is important that the situation you have experienced is reflected in the complaint.

When you make the complaint, you can request a Protective Order. With it you can obtain:

- **Criminal Measures:** a restraining order against the aggressor, prohibition of communication, remandment in prison...
- **Civil Measures:** such as awarding use and enjoyment of the family home, regulation of the custody and visiting regime of sons and daughters, economic contribution for your sons and daughters, etc.
- **Social Measures:** such as emergency housing, economic benefits,...

It can be requested from the police, in court, victim assistance office or in social services, from where it is submitted to the court.

It is best to do so before the police, at the same time as you make the complaint.

Once the complaint has been made and the protective order has been requested, the judge will call for a speedy trial in a maximum period of 72 hours, after which a Protective Order will be issued with the appropriate measures.

What rights do I have as a victim of gender violence?

- To **information** about measures for your protection, your rights, aid and existing resources.
- To **integral assistance**: emergency, support and hospitality and recovery for you and your sons/daughters.
- To free **legal assistance**.
- **Workers' rights** accrediting the situation of victim of gender violence:
 - Reduction or reorganization of the work time, geographic mobility, change of work centre.
 - Suspension of the employment relationship with reservation of job post and the "voluntary" termination of the work contract, with the right to unemployment benefits.
 - Absences or lack of punctuality at work due to the physical or psychological situation derived from gender violence will be considered justified.
 - Suspension of social security contributions for the self-employed.



- **Economic rights** accrediting the situation of victim of gender violence and depending on the income:
 - Active Insertion Income (AII), managed through Employment Offices.
 - Single-payment economic aid managed in the Aragonese Women's Institute (AWI).
- If you are an immigrant and you are in an irregular situation (without papers), you also have your rights and this does not affect your administrative situation.
- You can also request an interpreter.



Where can they help me?

Municipal programme of integral assistance to victims of gender violence.



Don't keep quiet. Speak out, listen, seek another way to live, another present.

At the Equality Service of Saragossa City Council in the Casa de la Mujer (Women's Shelter), integral assistance is offered to women who are victims of gender violence, as well as to their sons and daughters.

You will receive **immediate, free and personalized assistance**. We will respect your decisions, guaranteeing confidentiality, informing you of your rights, of the resources to which you have access, guiding throughout the process.

You can come directly to the Casa de la Mujer (Women's Shelter) or contact us by telephone to arrange an appointment, indicating that it involves a matter of gender violence, and you will have your first interview with a social worker. To receive this assistance, it is not necessary to make an official complaint, or to be separated. If you are an immigrant, regardless of your administrative situation, we will provide you with the attention you need.

We are a group of different professionals who work as a team and who will evaluate your situation and establish with you the best way of helping you.

- **Social assistance.** To provide information, orientation and advice regarding rights and existing resources.
- **Psychological assistance.** To facilitate your integral recovery as well as that of your sons/daughters, reinforcing your self-esteem and independence, to overcome the effects of the violence suffered, in a space for listening, support, and orientation.
- **Educational assistance.** To support your role as a mother and help your sons and daughters to work through the situations experienced.

Temporary Lodging

If for different reasons, you need to leave your residence, we can offer you lodging.

You can stay there temporarily, alone or with your sons/daughters, to find physical and emotional safety and start a separation and recovery process.

Job orientation

At the Casa de la Mujer (Women's Shelter) you will find information, support and assistance in your search for employment.

Legal orientation

We have a free service providing information, orientation and legal advice about women's rights in situations of gender violence.

The counselling service also includes other subjects and specialities such as Family Law, Criminal Law, Labour Law, and Inheritances.

Useful TELEPHONE Numbers

FREE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS; they do not leave a record of calls, they provide 24-hour assistance in different languages, every day of the year. For emergency situations and to request information:

- 900 504 405
- 016
- 900 116 016. For persons with functional auditory diversity.

LAW ENFORCEMENT FORCES AND AGENCIES

- **NATIONAL POLICE:** 091
- **UFAM:** Family and Women's Assistance Unit. C/ Campoamor, nº 16. Telephone no.: 976 347 597 - 976 347 602
- **LOCAL POLICE:** 092
- **EMUME:** Women and Minors Unit. Civil Guard Headquarters. Avda. César Augusto, 8-10. Teléfono: 976 711 400, ext. 272, 274

CASA DE LA MUJER. SERVICIO DE IGUALDAD AYUNTAMIENTO DE ZARAGOZA WOMEN'S SHELTER. MUNICIPAL EQUALITY SERVICE

(Assists women who live in the city of Saragossa).
C/Don Juan de Aragón, nº 2. Telephone no.: 976 726 040.
Email: casamujer@zaragoza.es
www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/sectores/mujer
Opening hours from 9:00h to 14:00h and from 16:00h to 19:00h.

INSTITUTO ARAGONÉS DE LA MUJER. GOBIERNO DE ARAGÓN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE OF ARAGON. GOVERNMENT OF ARAGON

(Assists women residents in Aragon).
C/Dr. Fleming, nº 16, 5ª Planta. Telephone no.: 976 716 720

casa de la mujer*

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