

SERVICES AT A GLANCE
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Medway Domestic Abuse Information Line 01634 332091

Information is available for information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for the Medway area. Callers to this number can be provided with details of any of the services included in this pack.

The service is for those who are experiencing or those who have experienced domestic abuse.

Callers on their behalf are accepted.

There may be a slight delay but your call will be answered in person.

Your call may be answered by a male or a female.

A translation service can be requested.

One Stop Shop

A weekly service is now available in a safe and secure environment in Medway. In one place you will find help from a number of different agencies and professional advice to enable you to make informed choices about housing, legal matters, benefits and more.

This is a drop-in service, open every Tuesday between 0930 and midday at the Sunlight Centre, Richmond Road, Gillingham.

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WOMENS SUPPORT SERVICE

01622 761146

Help and Support for women affected by partners and ex-partners who use frightening and abusive behaviour.

Our organisation was created in October 1997 and is founded on well researched practices for effective intervention in relationships experiencing domestic abuse.

OUR CORE AIM IS:

To increase the safety of women and children and work in partnership to challenge the perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We can offer individually tailored advice to women, focusing on their current risk and options for safety.

We can provide telephone contact and practical assistance for women seeking help and advice.

At WSS we:

Assess the needs of women and their children, gain knowledge of the risks they face and work with them to improve their safety options.

Explore all options and not just seek to fix or end the relationship.

Acknowledge the abusers responsibility for the violence and avoid victim-blaming responses.

Identify the services most appropriate to women and children's current needs.

Assist women to access the help they require and make them aware of their rights.

October 2009

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MALE VICTIMS

Are you a man suffering from Domestic Abuse?

Domestic Abuse is the physical, emotional, sexual or mental abuse of one person by another with whom they have or have had an intimate relationship.

Domestic Abuse can also include family members.

Domestic Abuse is rarely a one off event. It tends to escalate in frequency and severity over time and can incorporate a range of behaviour.

Male victims of abuse are entitled to the same support and action as any female victim.

Men's advice line – 0808 801 0327

Man 2 Man – 020 8698 9649



HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Often leaving home is the last resort to escape a violent relationship and you might feel you have no choice but to flee your home. But you do have a choice! We can make you feel safer and your home more secure, so you can stay in your own home.

SANCTUARY SCHEME **Staying Put, Staying Safe**

Under the 'Sanctuary Scheme' the council will consider installing a number of measures to secure your home and improve your personal security. These range from a simple change of lock or fitting a heavy-duty door, and even a safe room. You don't need to leave your home because of violence; we may be able to make it a safer place to live.

Who is eligible?

The Sanctuary Scheme is for people at risk of homelessness, it is voluntary and open to;

- council tenants
- private sector tenants* Landlords' consent is required to fit additional security.
- owner-occupiers
- housing association tenants

It must be your home address that has the security measures fitted. You can approach us directly through the Homeless Persons' Unit, the Housing Advice Centre or be referred by a support agency, such as the police or Women's Aid. Your individual needs will then be assessed by experienced staff to ascertain if you are eligible for the scheme.

Additional support

We will work with you and other agencies, such as the police, social services and Women's Aid, to provide ongoing support if you are returning to your home under the scheme.

Contact: MEDWAY COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES 01634 333600

5 Shelter

Kent Advice Service
0344 515 1740

Shelter provides free, impartial advice and advocacy on homelessness, rent and mortgage arrears, repossessions, housing benefit, landlord and tenant disputes, harassment, illegal eviction, disrepair, other housing problems, Debt, Welfare Benefits and Community Care issues.

Advice in Person

Advice Centre
12-16 Ordnance Street, Chatham,
ME4 6SL

Monday	10.00am - 1.00pm
Tuesday	10.00am - 1.00pm 2.00pm - 4.30pm
Wednesday	10.00am - 1.00pm 2.00pm - 4.30pm
Friday	10.00am - 1.00pm

Telephone Advice - 0344 515 1740

Mon-Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm

We also have outreach sessions in Gravesham and Dartford. Please contact us for details.

Outside these hours please leave a message on the answering machine, or if your problem is an emergency telephone Shelter's free, national housing helpline* on 0808 800 4444 which is open between 8am and 8pm.

We use the Language Line translation service, which enables people whose first language is not English to speak to our housing advisers. For this service please telephone 0344 515 1740 or visit the Centre.

www.shelter.org.uk

Registered charity number 283710

October 2009

Shelter Kent Advice Service has been
awarded a Community Legal Service
Quality Mark

Community
Legal Service



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BASIC BENEFITS

Child benefit: This is payable if you have the responsibility of a child living with you. It is not means tested and is payable at a fixed rate for each child up to the age of 16 or, if they are still in full time education, aged 20. It is deducted as an income from Income Support but not from Working Families Tax Credit.

Child Benefit Enquiry Line: 0845 302 1444 8am to 8 pm

Income Support: This is a means tested benefit and 'tops up' other income (including maintenance payments) to a level pre-set by the Government. It is paid to people who are sick or disabled (prior to 27/10/09), lone parents or carers. If you work less than 16 hours a week you may still be entitled. Depending on individual circumstances, between £5 and £20 per week of your income can be ignored but the balance will be deducted from your benefit. If you are responsible for rent, council tax or hostel charges you will be eligible for help of up to 100% of the cost. Help towards mortgage interest payments will become available after a fixed period of time depending on your circumstances.

Income Support Enquiry Line: 0845 608 8501 New Claims: 0800 055 6688

Job Seekers Allowance: If you are not in one of the categories eligible to claim Income Support, or if you are but want to find work, you can register at a Jobcentre in your area. You do not have to go to the nearest one if this could pose a threat. There are many schemes both practical and financial to help you back into work.

JSA Enquiries: 0845 608 8501 New Claims: 0800 055 6688

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit: Working Tax Credit is means-tested benefit and tops up earnings of people working at least 16 hours per week. Maintenance payments are ignored when calculating your income. Child Tax Credit is a payment to support families with children. You do not have to be working to claim. Child Tax Credit will be paid in addition to Child Benefit and any Working Tax Credit.

Helpline: 0845 300 3900 Open 8 am to 8 pm.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax: If you do not receive Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance you may still be able to get help towards your rent and Council Tax. You should contact your Local Authority direct. If you flee your home because of violence or harassment, you may be entitled to Housing Benefit on two homes for up to 52 weeks, provided you intend to return to your original home.

Medway Council Benefits Helpline: 01634 332222

Mortgage Assistance: If you claim Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance (income related) or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, you will not be eligible for any help towards your mortgage interest for the first 13 weeks. There is a limit to the amount of loan eligible for help.

Enquiries: 0845 608 8501 New Claims: 0800 055 6688

Social Fund: To bridge the gap between making a claim and your first payday, you should ask for a crisis loan. If you need help to purchase items to set up a new home ask for details about Community Care Grants or budgeting loans. If you are unsure which one to claim your local Social Security office will advise you.

Social Fund Loan: 0845 608 8580 Crisis Loan: 0800 030 4355

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LEGAL ASSISTANCE WHAT CAN YOUR SOLICITOR DO FOR YOU?

You will need to meet with a solicitor either at their office or at a location convenient to you to establish if you are eligible for free legal help or if costs to you will be involved. After that your solicitor will be able to advise you by telephone or you will have further face to face meetings.

Your solicitor can help you to decide whether to take your partner to court for a non-molestation order or an occupation order. Your solicitor can go to court with you or arrange for another lawyer to go with you.

Your partner may be present at some of the court hearings.

Recent changes in the law now means that breach of an injunction is a criminal offence and your partner can be sentenced to a term of imprisonment or some other form of punishment.

Your solicitor can advise you about separating from your partner, and how to achieve a separation if your partner wants you to stay with them.

If you are married, your solicitor can advise you about getting a divorce.

Letters can be sent on your behalf to your partner or their solicitor. Your solicitor can also write on your behalf to organisations that you need deal with.

There is a local firm in Medway who are able to offer the above support and advice. There are few firms who currently offer public funding but DSD Solicitors can assist.

CONTACT: 01634 852700

Or: sfoster@dSDLaw.co.uk

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Citizens Advice Medway

We have Legal Service Commission (LSC) and Kent Police contracts to provide the whole range of family law support, including domestic violence/abuse, from 1st April 2008. To complement this, we also have LSC and Medway Council contracts to offer specialist welfare benefits, housing, employment and debt advice. We offer a complete holistic service that covers all aspects of family law and domestic violence/abuse. We will accept referrals from solicitors or other professionals who may be assisting you. Our specialist caseworkers will see people by appointment following referral, but you can also telephone the bureau yourself or pop in to see us. You can make an appointment on a dedicated phone line 0870 126 4095. We also accept enquiries by email to advice@medwaycab.cabnet.org.uk. If you have specific debt and/or housing problems you can telephone our dedicated helpline on 01634 380035.

Our Chatham CAB is open each weekday from 9.30am to 3.00pm. You can drop in during these times if there is an emergency and you require instant assistance. Please make this clear to reception staff. Whilst we cannot guarantee our availability, we may be able to offer assistance if you call outside of these hours if there is an emergency. You can also write to us at 5A New Road Avenue, Chatham ME4 6BB.

We are also a generalist advice service covering enquiries about housing, employment, debt, welfare benefits, consumer issues, family law and many other areas. The service is free to all and is independent and confidential. This is provided through the above contact details.

The service is free, confidential, independent and impartial and is offered to anyone regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality and disability or income level.

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REFUGE ACCOMMODATION

If you are experiencing domestic abuse from a current or former partner you have a right to leave home and are entitled to emergency temporary accommodation in a refuge.

- Refuges accommodate women and children who escape their homes from Domestic Abuse.
- You will be expected to move from your home town to a refuge in another area for safety reasons.
- Facilities: There are some refuges which provide self contained units with shared communal areas. Others provide fully shared communal facilities consisting of bathroom, lounge and kitchen where you will be provided with your own room.
- Referrals: Refuge staff will be required to complete a referral application with you usually over the phone. The majority of refuges will not accept anyone with a history of violence or arson or women with no recourse to public funds.
- Depending on the setting some refuges will only accommodate boys up to the ages of 15 years. Each refuge will have facilities for children and links to health visitors, nurseries and schools.
- Support: Once in refuge you will be allocated a support worker who will listen to and support you with anything you need including information on benefit claims, parenting and life skills for example.
- Rules: Each refuge will have their own set of house rules; the main one being that no male visitors are allowed on or around the premises.
- Moving On: You will be supported with moving on to permanent accommodation as refuges work closely with the council and will assist you with the moving on process. You may choose to apply to any area to settle regardless of local connection.

If you require refuge space call the Dove Project on 01702 300 006 for vacancies in Kent, Essex and Sussex or Women's Aid on 0808 200 0247 for vacancies in the UK. Both numbers are available 24 hours a day.

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Ravi – Asian Women's Refuge

For women and children experiencing domestic violence including abuse by other family members, forced marriage and elder abuse. Aims to have 100% Asian women but we do not turn other women away if there is space available. Specialist services for Muslim, Hindu and Sikh women.

Support offered in refuge:

Staff offer advocacy, information and support including benefits advice, life and parenting skills, health education and legal support. Practical help, help with safety and home security and community or social alarms. Access to local resources and good networks for immigration and legal matters. Support plus advice & advocacy on housing, budgeting, accessing schools, health services and employment services for women with English as a second language.

Languages

Staff speak Hindi, Malay, Punjabi, Tamil and Urdu.

Access to interpreters

The telephone Number is confidential, but can be obtained via Police, Social Services, Health Services and Housing.

Ravi Refuge can also be contacted through the following domestic violence helplines:

Moat Homes support services: 0845 359 6892 (office hrs only)

Dove Project: 01702 302 333

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (24 hours)
www.refuge.org.uk

Health Visiting Teams in Medway

Health Visiting teams in Medway are made up of qualified health visitors who lead teams that include registered general nurses, registered paediatric nurses, nursery nurses and experienced administrators. They provide a service, working in partnership with clients, professional groups and voluntary organisations to improve the health of individuals, families and communities.

The wide range of skills available within the health visiting teams enable them to contribute to many other services. However health visitors are highly skilled within the child and public health sectors therefore these skills are focused on areas where they can have most impact. In addition there are also specialist teams, which include health visitors, working with young parents.

The aim of the health visiting service is to assess the health needs of clients and with them plan and implement the way forward. With this aim in mind health visitors offer a visit to all families when there is a new child in the family.

- From the moment the midwife discharges you until your child starts school, the service can provide support and information to help you. We advise on many family health topics, not just those relating to children. Your health visiting team can initiate one to one help over a short period, helping you over difficulties you may experience as you learn what it means to be a parent. Teams can be contacted during office hours but also have message taking services at other times.

Where can they be contacted?

Health Visiting Teams are based in the community and can be contacted as follows (only larger bases detailed, they can put you in touch with other local clinics):

For Gillingham:
Balmoral Gardens Clinic
Balmoral Gardens
Gillingham Kent ME7 OPB
01634 281381

For Chatham:
Lordswood Healthy Living Centre
Sultan Road
Lordswood
Chatham ME5 8TJ
01634 337523

For Strood:
Keystone Centre
Gun Lane
Strood, Rochester Kent ME2 4UI
01634 717755

For Rochester:
Rochester Healthy Living Centre
Delce Road
Rochester
Kent ME1 2EL
01634 337500

For Rainham:
Rainham Healthy Living Centre
103-107 High Street Rainham ME8 8AA
01634 337698



MEDWAY COUNCIL Children's Services

We can offer support to children and families who are or have been living with domestic abuse

The emotional impact of domestic violence on the victim and children can be enormous and your local children's services can help support families who have been or are living in these circumstances.

A social worker can assess your child's needs and offer help with practical support, counselling or therapy. If the social worker is unable to provide you with the help needed, he/she will usually be able to offer you advice and support in approaching other agencies that can help you. Children's Services can also provide you with information about childminders, playgroups and nurseries, self-help groups and counselling services.

A social worker will understand that your problems may be of a very personal nature, and any information you give us will always be treated in strictest confidence. You can also have a friend or relative with you whenever you talk to staff. If you are unable to contact us yourself, you can ask someone else to do it for you.

We are here to help you and we won't judge you because you have been a victim of domestic violence. We know that just like most families you want the best for your children. Please contact us and we will do our best to get you the help you need.

How to contact us:

Contact: Medway Children's Services
Telephone Number: 01634 334466
Out of office Hours: 08457 626777

DOMESTIC ABUSE -- DON'T PUT UP WITH IT, WE CAN HELP

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SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRES - MEDWAY

Children's centres bring together early education, health and maternity services and are places that provide information and support to families with young children and are great places to meet new people. The sorts of services you may find in the 15 centres across Medway are:

- Drop in sessions for parents and children – play activities, music, story time and much more
- Ante natal classes and baby clinics
- Information and advice about breastfeeding, parenting and speech and language
- Services for children with special needs and disabilities
- High quality early education and childcare for children from birth to five years old, available in hours to suit working parents – at the Centre or in the local community
- Links to local schools and holiday play schemes
- Encouragement and support for parents thinking about training or finding a new job.

All Saint's Children's Centre	Magpie Hall Road, Chatham	338833
Bligh Children's Centre	Bligh Way, Strood	710154
Brompton Children's Centre	Brompton Westbrook Primary School Brompton	844152
Burnt Oak Children's Centre	Burnt Oak Primary School, Gillingham	334344
Gun Lane Children's Centre	All Faith's Community School, Strood	717115
Hand in Hand Children's Centre	Twydall Infant School, Gillingham	365985
Kingfisher Children's Centre	Kingfisher Primary School, Walderslade	335850
Lordswood Children's Centre	Lordswood Infant School, Lordswood	333670
Oaklands Children's Centre	Oaklands Infant School, Walderslade	861423
Saxon Way Children's Centre	Saxon Way Primary School, Gillingham	852320
St Margaret's at Troy Town Children's Centre	St Margaret's at Troy Town Primary School, Rochester	843843
St James' Children's Centre	St James' Primary School, Isle of Grain	270341
Temple Mill Children's Centre	Temple Mill Primary School, Strood	338200
Wayfield Children's Centre	Wayfield Primary School, Chatham	843544
Woodlands Children's Centre	Woodlands Primary School, Gillingham	338370

For further information about Sure Start Children's Centres in Medway please call the Family Information Service on 01634 335566

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Freedom Programme

A programme for women

The Freedom Programme is a nationally recognised, twelve-week programme which offers women an insight into abusive behaviour and its effects on the family. It is for women who have experienced or are experiencing all aspects of Domestic Abuse.

The aims of the programme are:

- To help women understand the beliefs held by abusive men and how those affect women.
- To understand the effects of domestic abuse on women and children.
- To help women recognise potentially abusive partners in the future.
- To help women gain self-esteem and the confidence to improve the quality of their lives.
- To introduce women to the community resources available.

For more information or to make a referral please telephone 07896 515321 or 01634 338848.



**Kent
Police**

Medway Police- How can we help?

If you or someone you know is the victim of Domestic Abuse.

Medway Police will deal promptly and positively with any domestic violence incident that they are called to attend in an emergency.

Medway Police have a Domestic Violence Unit who can give advice.

Where it is necessary, the person responsible for the violence can be arrested. Officers will try to assist you to take action that will protect you from further abuse.

Medway Police work closely with other local agencies and can liaise to assist you to get the support you need.

**What to do if you need help
In an emergency always dial 999**

Otherwise, contact the Medway Police Domestic Violence
Department on 01634 792306 / 7 / 8

You can ask Police to:

- Attend in an emergency.
- Talk to you separately from the abuser.
- Arrest the abuser when there is sufficient evidence of a crime.
- Assist you with organising transport to a safe place or refuge.
- Keep records of all reported incidents of domestic violence.

General police station enquiry line 01634 891055

**Medway Police Station
Eastbridge
Purser Way
Gillingham
Kent ME7 1NE**



CPS

The Crown Prosecution Service advises the Police on cases for possible prosecution and prosecutes people who have been charged with a criminal offence.

We regard domestic violence as particularly serious. Victims know and often live with or have lived with their abuser. Moreover, there is often a continuing threat to the victim's safety and, in the worst cases the victim's life and the lives of others may be at risk.

When we are deciding to prosecute, we have to consider whether there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction and if it is in the public interest to do so. This is done by reviewing each case against the Code for Crown Prosecutors. The Code gives guidance on the principles to be applied when making decisions about prosecutions.

The safety of the victim, children and any other person at risk will be priority for us. We, along with every other criminal justice agency, have a responsibility to treat victims and witnesses as individuals.

However, the decision to prosecute a case is our responsibility, not that of the victim. Each case is looked at impartially and objectively and with many factors taken into consideration. We understand that there are occasions when the victim will withdraw the complaint and the CPS will think very carefully about the interests of the victim before proceeding.

If you would like to know more about the CPS or would like a copies of either the Code for Crown Prosecutors or our Policy for Prosecuting Domestic Violence cases please contact us at:

The Crown Prosecution Service, Priory Gate, 29 Union Street,
Maidstone, Kent ME14 1PT
Tel: 01622 356300

www.cps.gov.uk

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Victim Support is an independent national charity, with specifically trained volunteers working in the community with a central administration office in Ashford. After initial contact by Victim Care Officers, volunteers contact victims of crime (including Domestic Violence victims) to offer free, confidential support and information.

Volunteers from Victim Support are specially trained to help victims of domestic abuse and may arrange to meet the victim away from the home address at a safe time and place, so that they can discuss their options. People are referred to Victim Support by the police and other organisations or can make direct contact themselves.

Volunteers offer the opportunity:

- to talk and acknowledge what is happening.
- to talk safely about feelings in confidence
- to be given the opportunity to recognise that they are not to blame.
- that no one deserves to be assaulted, humiliated or abused by a partner or a family member.
- help seeking the support that is available, together with emotional support

Volunteers help with:

- crisis planning
- putting people in touch with agencies who can help find a safe place for them and their children
- contacting housing authorities and many other agencies

Telephone Number: 0845 3899527

National helpline: 0845 30 30 900

Email: vs.kent@victimsupport.org.uk

The service we offer is both free and confidential



Sunlight Development Trust is a community owned and led charitable organisation that works across Medway to improve health and well being. The base for the Trust is the Sunlight Centre in Richmond Road, Gillingham and the involvement of local people and groups is an essential part of the way we work.

The centre includes a welcoming community café which is open to all. Enjoy a drink or snack in the café and find out about all the other services at the centre. These include internet access on the computers based in the café area, a GP surgery, pharmacy, community radio station, Parentis (parenting courses open to all), Health Visitors, complementary therapies, offices for a number of resident charities plus additional rooms for community groups to hire, a state of the art music recording studio and the list goes on...

We work across whole communities and nobody is excluded. If what you're looking for is not here we will be able to point you in the right direction.

Sunlight Centre, 105 Richmond Road, Gillingham, Kent. ME7 2HL

Tel: 01634 338600

Fax: 01634 338603

www.sunlighttrust.org.uk



Family Mediation

Family Mediation is a service for couples, parents and families involved at any stage of separation or divorce. It is a way to consider and resolve issues which may arise following the end of a relationship, such as future living or parenting arrangements, property and finance.

We provide a free initial meeting, usually together, to help you both decide whether mediation may offer you a way forward. This would then be followed by a series of joint meetings, if there is mutual consent to proceed. We offer:

- an impartial, trained mediator,
- the opportunity to remain in charge of your own decisions,
- a comprehensive statement of any proposals reached,
- respect for all concerned.

We will not judge you or your family, take sides, offer advice or talk to other people about what you tell us (unless children are at risk of significant harm).

Established in 1983, Kent Family Mediation is a non-profit making, registered charity. We are able to offer appointments at venues across Kent.

For more information please contact us at:

Kent Family Mediation Service 1st Floor, 6 Park Road, Sittingbourne, ME10 1DR.

Telephone 01795 429689, Fax 01795 476949,

e-mail contact@kentfms.co.uk
or visit our website at www.kentfms.co.uk

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Relate North Kent

Working with Domestic Violence

Our priorities for those people contacting us with experience of domestic violence and abuse are to:

- Increase the safety of victim / survivors and their children.
- Prevent domestic violence occurring / re-occurring.
- Help abusers to be accountable for their abusive behaviour.

We undertake an initial assessment of risk and safety before deciding whether couple counselling is suitable.

Where both partners agree to a non-violence contract with the counsellor, this will be reviewed at each session. If the couple are unable to work within the safety plan and domestic violence continues, then the counselling contract ends.

Victims may present alone and the counsellor's work will focus on the victim's safety and the safety of any children within the relationship.

To make an appointment for Counselling contact 01634 846914 or find out more at:

www.relatenorthkent.org.uk

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Witness Service Kent

Helping people in court

A service provided by Victim Support

The Witness Service provides a service for witnesses attending either the Crown Court or Magistrates Court to give evidence.

Appearing at court is often an unfamiliar experience and victims/witnesses may be unsure about what to expect. The Witness Service at the court has trained volunteers who would be glad to offer friendly guidance and support. The service is free and confidential. We can offer victims/witnesses and their family and friends:

- The opportunity to talk to someone in confidence (but not about the evidence)
- A pre-trial familiarization visit to the court and, where possible, an informative visit to the courtroom
- Information on court layout and procedures
- A quiet place to wait during their time in the court building
- Someone to accompany them in the courtroom if staff resources allow and the court permits
- Practical help, eg assistance with expense forms
- Access to those in a position to answer specific questions about their case
- An opportunity to talk about the experience of giving evidence following the case

Support is offered to prosecution and defence witnesses including victim witnesses and victims who may not be called as witnesses but attend court. Also, families and friends of victims and witnesses, professionals accompanying witnesses (e.g. teachers and social workers), Police Officers etc. Support is available before and on the day of the trial. Support is not available for defendants, nor are we yet able to support anyone at the County Court or Family Court. Victim Support cannot act as an Appropriate Adult.

**Contact: Shirley Tolhurst, Co-ordinator
Chatham Magistrates Court**

Telephone and fax no: 01634 815779
Email: medway.mcvs@victimsupport.cjsm.net

October 2009

Equinox

Equinox - The Victoria Centre

Equinox is a London based organisation with satellite offices in Kent and Sussex. We offer a range of services in all these areas to adults with alcohol and drug issues.

At the Victoria Centre in Rochester, we offer counselling for adults on a one-2-one basis. Clients can either be individuals with problematic alcohol use or those people directly affected by someone who misuses alcohol. In addition to the counselling we also provide counsellor facilitated, support and aftercare groups.

The Victoria Centre also operates a specialist floating support service for adults with drug and alcohol issues, who visit people in their own homes.

Services at the Victoria Centre are **free and confidential**. For any advice please contact us on the number given below.

Equinox – The Victoria Centre
25 Victoria Street
Rochester
Kent
ME1 1XJ

Tel: 01634 831 999
Fax: 01634 844 553

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Medway Substance Misuse

Medway Substance Misuse Care Management team is based at Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham.

Services offered:

- A comprehensive assessment for care management
- Support and advice to individuals when appropriate
- Support for people living with substance misuse problems, living in the community. This may include liaising with agencies who provide detox.
- Assessment, and where appropriate, funding for community or residential rehabilitation.
- Support through the rehabilitation and resettlement process.
- Working with people to reduce the risk of harm to themselves and others.
- General advocacy and support with social/practical difficulties.
- Joint work with other service agencies/professionals.
- Follow up and referral to other services where appropriate.
- Work with other agencies in providing a service to individuals who may have additional difficulties in addition to their substance misuse.
- Telephone advice via a duty worker on Thursdays between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.
- Provision of advice and information to other agencies.

We work with individuals between 18 and 64 years of age who wish to achieve abstinence.

Contact: **01634 337216/7.**



"Delivering excellent services to support your way of life"

The West Kent Lifeways team provides housing related support to around 360 clients across the Medway towns, with specialist contracts for Older Persons and clients with physical disabilities. We are based in Medway and are funded by a government grant called Supporting People. We can support tenants in the private sector, housing association and Medway Council tenants or owner occupiers.

We have an in-house Assessment Team, who carry out a detailed assessment on individuals referred to us. We review client's current housing situation, vulnerability and support needs, and summarise our recommendations to support the individual to live independently.

After this point, a Community Support Officer is assigned to the client, and provides assistance in any of the following areas and many more:

- ❖ Claiming benefits
- ❖ Managing debts
- ❖ Budgeting
- ❖ Managing tenancies
- ❖ Homelessness
- ❖ Dealing with correspondence
- ❖ Liaising with other agencies

Gateway is the new system for accessing Supporting People Services in Medway. If you wish to make a referral to Lifeways – please email: supportedhousing@medway.gov.uk

You will receive a return email with log-in details for the new Medway Council Gateway system. You will then be able to make your referral.

If you do not have access to email, please contact 01634 333561.

For more information on the services Lifeways provide, contact:

Tel: 01732 749400
Email: lifeways@wkha.org.uk
Website: www.westkent.org.uk



The Place2Be works inside schools to provide emotional support and nurture troubled children. By giving children the chance to explore their problems through talking, creative work and play, we enable them to cope now and make better-informed decisions about their lives and help prevent more serious mental health and behavioural problems in later life. When children are happier and less preoccupied with problems, they find it easier to learn and so their educational chances are much enhanced.

A Place for Parents

We also have a dedicated parent service - A Place for Parents – which is open to all mothers, fathers, grandparents and carers whose children are being supported by The Place2Be in one of the 11 Place2Be schools in Medway, or 150 schools nationwide.

It provides a safe space within school where parents can work with an experienced professional to explore and express their own thoughts and feelings.

Typical issues include lack of self-confidence or self esteem, doubts about being a 'good enough' parent, bereavement, and mental health issues such as depression, drinking problems, and moving on from domestic violence. The service is free and confidential, and acts quickly.

How families benefit

Our aim is for parents to become more self-aware, to gain in confidence and to develop ways of coping.

This makes them more at ease in their parenting roles and better able to develop positive and supportive relationships with their children.

To find out if we work in your child's school, call us on 0207 923 5500 or visit www.theplace2be.org.uk

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Other Useful Contact Numbers

Age Concern Advice Line – 08450 770 755

Broken Rainbow – 0845 260 4460

Service for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic abuse.

BT Advice Line – Malicious calls – 0800 666 700

BT Nuisance Call Advisory Bureau – 0800 661441

Community Legal Advice – 0845 345 4 345

A free and confidential advice service paid for by Legal Aid

Family Information Service – 01634 335566

Signposting to Children's Centres for help and advice for parents of under-5's in Medway

Kent Lesbian Line – (Thursdays only 7.30 -10 pm) – 01622 763573

Support and awareness around issues of lesbian domestic abuse

Medway & Swale Advocacy Partnerships – 01634 713739

Advocacy for mental health problems

National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0808 2000 247 (24hrs)

Racial Incidents Reporting Line – 0800 138 1624

The Respect Phonenumber – 0845 122 8609

Provides information and advice to perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and to victims and professionals

SAMARITANS – 01634 730981

0345 909 090 National link line number

Someone to talk to 24 hours a day

SHELTERLINE – 0808 800 4444

Emergency access to refuge services or housing advice

