

“You know a Jewish woman suffering from domestic abuse”:

Domestic Abuse and the British Jewish Community

A research report prepared for Jewish Women’s Aid



J E W I S H W O M E N ' S A I D

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION, CHAPTER ONE

Jewish Women's Aid

Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) is the only specialist UK charity that works with Jewish women, and their children, affected by domestic abuse. It has two core aims:

- *To provide high quality, confidential, accessible and empowering domestic abuse services for Jewish women, and their children*
- *Through education and awareness raising, to work towards a future when all sectors of the Jewish community have a zero tolerance attitude towards domestic violence*

JWA traces its origins to Leeds in the 1980s, when a helpline was set up by volunteers. From this initiative, JWA expanded and now has a headquarters in London. Since the late 1990s, the charity has become increasingly professional, with 5 full time staff, 9 part time staff, 8 counsellors and 151 volunteers.

Services provided by Jewish Women's Aid

- A helpline which is national, confidential, free to call and operates Monday-Thursday 9:30-21:30
- A community support service, offering advice and help on safety, legal, housing, financial, emotional and family issues, with bases in Stamford Hill, Barnet, Redbridge and the North of England
- The only secure refuge where Kashrut, Shabbat and festivals are fully observed, with a two-strong staff team
- A newly appointed, dedicated children's worker who works with individual children affected by abuse and offers after school outings and group work
- Professional, confidential, free counselling to those experiencing domestic abuse, both face to face and by phone
- Educational and awareness raising programmes delivered in Jewish schools on healthy relationships, and to adult community groups and communal professionals

Jewish Women's Aid offers help to any woman who self identifies as Jewish, and understands herself to have experienced domestic violence as an adult, perpetrated by another adult (either an intimate partner or another family or household member).

CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW OF DV IN THE UK, WITH REFERENCE TO ABROAD

Defining Domestic Violence

Jewish Women's Aid defines domestic violence as "physical, psychological, financial or emotional abuse that takes place within an intimate or family type relationship. It comes from the abuser's desire to exert power and control over the victim. Domestic violence is most commonly experienced by women and perpetrated by men. It is repetitive and life-threatening, and can destroy the lives of women and children. One woman in four will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. A woman experiencing DV may be anyone you come into contact with; your mother, your sister, your daughter, a friend, colleague, or neighbour. Domestic violence is never the fault of the woman experiencing it is the responsibility of the perpetrator."

This can be compared to the current Government's definition of violence against women (which includes domestic violence) as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."

Threats to funding for domestic violence charities

Statutory funding for domestic violence charities is under threat, particularly through the abolition of the ringfencing for the Supporting People Grant.

Domestic Violence is not just physical violence

Domestic violence can occur in many different forms, including physical, emotional, economic, or spiritual abuse. Spiritual abuse is identified as belittling a woman's spiritual worth, belief or deeds; preventing a woman from performing spiritual acts or causing a woman to transgress against spiritual obligations

Domestic Violence affects 1 in 4 women, regardless of many social positionalities but with some identifiable 'at risk categories'

The British Crime Survey is identified as the strongest (although still imperfect) method of collecting statistics relating to domestic violence, and confirms that 1 in 4 British women will experience domestic violence over the course of their lifetimes, regardless of social positionalities. However, there are certain risk factors that can increase the likelihood of being abused (although these do not represent a causal relationship). These risk factors include motherhood; unemployment; and witnessing DV as a child.

Domestic Violence has a high cost to society

It is estimated that the total cost of DV to the British economy is over £15 bn a year (Walby 2009).

Legal responses to DV have become more stringent and there are more convictions, but legal interventions are still not always welcome by women being abused

In 2004, the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act came into effect, tightening legislation and the Crown Prosecution Service claims that domestic violence convictions are on the rise due to the specialist domestic violence courts which now exist. There is also evidence that some women feel increasingly comfortable calling the police, although some women still choose not to involve them for fear of ruining a partner's life with a criminal record.

Service-based responses to domestic violence are the 'front line' of help for women and men impacted by DV, but there are significant gaps in services across the country, particularly for Black and Minority Ethnic Women

Support services can be broadly characterised as refuge based or non-refuge based services. Access to these services is a post-code lottery, with Coy et. al. (2009) finding that over 1/3 of local authorities had no specialist domestic violence provision. There is even less provision across the UK specifically for minority ethnic women, with less than one in ten local authorities providing any culturally sensitive services.

Faith-based responses to domestic violence are widely recognised as vital

Jewish charities are seen as the poster-child for the Big Society, given their long standing communal infrastructure for looking after each other. The Chief Rabbi has recently publically supported the work JWA does, and JWA has backing from all of the major denominations. There are also many Jewish texts which can be referred to in order to condemn domestic violence

CHAPTER THREE, GENERAL OPINION SURVEY

Large Survey of Jewish Women: demographics and background information

The survey yielded 842 responses, 788 of which were women. A majority of female respondents were at least university educated; 41% of respondents were from north or northwest London and 40% were from the home counties. The mean respondent age was 49, with a range from 18-88. Women identified themselves as coming from across the denominational spectrum (55% Mainstream Orthodox; 24% Progressive (Reform and Liberal); 10% Masorti; 8% strictly Orthodox; 2% Sephardi or had multiple affiliations. Affiliation was not always an indicator of religious outlook; 41% of female respondents identified as 'somewhat religious'; 21% as 'religious'; 21% somewhat secular.

Experiences of Domestic Violence in keeping with national statistics

26% of survey respondents had personally experienced domestic violence and just over 55% of respondents indicated that they knew someone else who had experienced domestic violence. Sixty-eight percent of respondents believe that domestic violence occurs in the Jewish community at about the same rate as the general population.

Over half of respondents were not aware of a rabbi in their community publicly addressing the issue of domestic abuse

62% of respondents had not heard a rabbi condemning abuse. Of those respondents who had heard a rabbi speak about domestic violence, 88% had condemned the abuse. 24% of Masorti respondents reported that they had heard a rabbi condemn DV, compared to 21% of Progressive respondents; 17% among strictly Orthodox and 11% among mainstream Orthodox.

Domestic Violence recognised as a diverse crime

Amongst respondents who either had experienced DV or knew someone who had, 76% identified all of the items listed as domestic abuse (ranging from emotional, economic, to spiritual or control of the children – see appendix B for details of full survey questions). Threatening to kill someone, stalking, threatening to take the children away were all regarded as domestic violence by the vast majority of respondents. Dictating family religious observance and constantly checking on whereabouts were not considered domestic violence as frequently, although these were still regarded as DV by the majority of survey respondents

Survey respondents claimed that they would access a wide range of support if they were experiencing domestic violence

Fifty-one percent of respondents ranked friends, family and neighbours as a primary source of support; 1/3 of respondents indicated that police would be a source of support, although for some respondents this claim was purely hypothetical and might not reflect what might happen when faced with the situation. JWA was ranked as a primary or secondary source of support by 73% of respondents.

A Jewish specific domestic violence service was deemed important

Seventy-eight percent of respondents indicated that a Jewish-specific service was necessary; ten percent indicated that such a survey was only needed for Orthodox women, 82% of respondents agreed that they would think about contacting JWA if faced with abuse.

CHAPTER FOUR, JEWISH VOICES SPEAK OUT: CLIENT DATA

Interviews with a diverse range of women

Twenty current or former JWA clients were interviewed. The women ranged in age from 26-60 and identified across the denominational spectrum, from unaffiliated to strictly Orthodox. Nineteen of the women had experienced partner-based violence and the other interviewee had been abused

both by her step-mother and brother. The perpetrators were all identified as Jewish and had enacted a range of violence, including emotional, physical, spiritual and economic abuses.

The following themes were echoed in almost all interviews:

- Low self-worth; internalising negative comments from abuser
- Retrospective awareness of warning signs ('I should have known')
- Lasting effects of emotional abuse ('words DO hurt')
- Instigation of abuse during, or straight after, first pregnancy
- Financial dependence on perpetrator and financial illiteracy
- Mixed feelings on police involvement
- Differing experiences of rabbinical support
- Contemplation of suicide
- Praise for Jewish Women's Aid

CHAPTER FIVE; RECOMMENDATIONS

JWA recommends the following:

- JWA calls on synagogues, communal organisations and communal leaders to do everything in their power to educate their respective communities about the spectrum of domestic abuse, which includes emotional abuse, as a painful form of violence against women.
- The Jewish refuge provided by JWA is the only kosher and Shabbat observant refuge in Europe, and is therefore of great importance to many Jewish women. JWA is facing statutory funding cuts and the continued existence of the refuge is thus in danger. JWA therefore asks the British Jewish community to continue its valued support to ensure that this vital service can continue.
- Education is key to breaking the cycle of domestic abuse. JWA commits to providing healthy relationships programmes and asks other communal organisations to work in partnership to deliver these programmes to the widest range of young people as possible.
- Young women need increased financial awareness training, regardless of their experiences of domestic abuse, and Jewish organisations should seek to provide these courses (supported by JWA as and when appropriate).
- Domestic abuse often begins in pregnancy or soon after. Therefore, Jewish communal organisations who have contact with pregnant women or women who have just given birth should take any opportunity to educate them about healthy relationships and signs of abuse.
- Jewish women seek support from rabbinical authorities, who can be helpful and supportive. JWA will seek to set up a Rabbinical Domestic Abuse Group to guide their work, and as a resource for women seeking rabbinical advice.
- The voices of Jewish women who have experienced domestic abuse are powerful and the use of personal stories touches people deeply. JWA commits to keeping client voices at the centre of their work, incorporating these women's voices into all presentations and educational materials.

- JWA calls on the Jewish community to consider the establishment of perpetrator programmes for abusive men, in accordance with nationally recognised models, to prevent domestic violence from occurring.
- Jewish experiences of domestic abuse should also be understood in the context of the experience of other in Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities . JWA commits to making an increased contribution to these BME organisations, so as to ensure that issues pertinent to the Jewish community are always considered.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This report has been written at the request of Jewish Women's Aid (JWA). JWA commissioned this research to better understand several key factors influencing their work: general Jewish opinion and knowledge about domestic violence; the ways in which current and former clients come to JWA and how useful they find its services; and the position of JWA in the UK and in comparison to other Jewish domestic violence charities in Israel, the USA and Canada.

The researchers determined that the best way of ascertaining information about these areas of interest was to conduct a three- stage research project. Firstly, a literature review was undertaken to contextualise the work JWA does in both a national and international context. This literature review informs chapter two of this research report, which provides an overview of domestic violence in the UK with references throughout to three countries of interest to Jewish Women's Aid (because of the presence of Jewish-specific domestic violence charities), namely Canada, the United States, and Israel.

Secondly, the researchers conducted a domestic violence Jewish general opinion survey, which yielded 842 complete responses. The survey was largely taken by women and this response rate makes this survey, to the knowledge of the authors and JWA, the largest Jewish survey on a women's issue ever conducted¹. This report discusses the findings from the survey; see chapter three for details, including a discussion of the methodology employed.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the researchers conducted face –to- face interviews with twenty current or former JWA clients, who agreed to speak to them after communication from JWA employees. Chapter four of this report gives voice to the personal suffering experienced by women; it illuminates the 'real life stories' behind the statistics.

The report concludes with recommendations that JWA will be implementing to continue combating domestic violence in all of its forms; these recommendations are based both on the findings arising from the general survey and client interviews, and from examples of best practice from domestic violence charities in the UK and abroad.

I. Jewish Women's Aid

JWA traces its origins to Leeds in the 1980s, when a helpline was set up by volunteers. From this initiative, JWA expanded and now has a headquarters in London. The original volunteer-based ethos of JWA is still an integral part of the organisation's philosophy, as the helpline continues to

¹ JWA recognises that domestic violence affects men as well as women, and extends beyond the individual directly affected to impact on the entirety of family life. However, because JWA is a women's organisation, their objective in conducting the survey was to understand how Jewish general opinion on domestic violence might shape their own work with Jewish women.

be staffed by trained by volunteers. Since the late 1990s, however, the charity has become increasingly professional, with 5 full time staff, 9 part time staff, 8 counsellors and 151 volunteers.

JWA also has longstanding ties with other British Jewish charitable organisations, such as Jewish Care and Norwood, and often works in collaboration to provide a comprehensive programme of care to its clients.

Services Provided by JWA

Jewish Women's Aid

Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) is the only specialist UK charity that works with Jewish women, and their children, affected by domestic abuse. It has two core aims:

- To provide high quality, confidential, accessible and empowering domestic abuse services for Jewish women, and their children
- Through education and awareness raising, to work towards a future when all sectors of the Jewish community have a zero tolerance attitude towards domestic violence

Services provided by Jewish Women's Aid

- A helpline which is national, confidential, free to call and operates Monday-Thursday 9:30-21:30
- A community support service, offering advice and help on safety, legal, housing, financial, emotional and family issues, with bases in Stamford Hill, Barnet, Redbridge and the North of England
- The only secure refuge where Kashrut, Shabbat and festivals are fully observed, with a two-strong staff team
- A newly appointed, dedicated children's worker who works with individual children affected by abuse and offers after school outings and group work
- Professional, confidential, free counselling to those experiencing domestic abuse, both face to face and by phone
- Educational and awareness raising programmes delivered in Jewish schools on healthy relationships, and to adult community groups and communal professionals

Who uses JWA's services?

Jewish Women's Aid is a cross-communal organisation which offers help to any woman who both self-identifies as Jewish *and* understands herself to have experienced domestic violence as an adult, perpetrated by another adult (either an intimate partner or another family or household member). JWA does not discriminate based on religious affiliation, nor does it judge a woman's experiences as to severity or depth of violence.

JWA's helpline is the most frequently used service, with 600 calls taken in 2009-10. Many women call once to speak to someone, but do not go on to use other JWA services. Women also call more

than once, when they feel physically or emotionally threatened or need to speak to someone. The Community Support Services are also highly utilised, with 99 people referred to the service in 2009-10 (a large jump from 62 in 2009), and 125 receiving at least some support from this service throughout the year. Of the 99 people referred in 2009-10, only 12 of these people were 'one-off' clients, meaning contact was only made once. Therefore, it is clear that most women who contact community support go on to use the services offered.

There were also over 356 counseling sessions held, for a total of 51 clients. Take-up of this service has increased from 11 in 2005 to 49 clients seeing JWA counselors in 2009-10.

The refuge data indicates that in recent years turnover of clients has increased a little. The refuge housed 27 women in 2009-10.

What about men?

Jewish Women's Aid acknowledges that DV is an issue that affects men as well as women. However, national data has consistently shown that male to female abuse is more prevalent. Established as an organisation that supports Jewish women, JWA does not currently run programmes for men, but will always signpost men or concerned relatives that contact the organisation to appropriate support agencies

CHAPTER TWO: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: AN OVERVIEW OF CONTEXT, FACTS AND FIGURES

This section will discuss domestic violence in the UK national context. References, comparisons and contrasts to other national contexts (USA, Canada, and Israel) are included throughout the chapter.

I. Defining Domestic Violence²

Spotlight: Domestic violence or abuse as defined by Jewish Women's Aid

Domestic Violence is physical, psychological, financial or emotional abuse that takes place within an intimate or family type relationship. It comes from the abuser's desire to exert power and control over the victim. Domestic violence is most commonly experienced by women and perpetrated by men. It is repetitive and life-threatening, and can destroy the lives of women and children. One woman in four will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. A woman experiencing domestic violence may be anyone you come into contact with; your mother, your sister, your daughter, a friend, colleague, or neighbour. Domestic violence is never the fault of the woman who is experiencing it. It is the responsibility of the perpetrator (<http://www.jwa.org.uk>).

There is no singular accepted definition of domestic violence (DV) in the United Kingdom, let alone internationally. Indeed, what domestic violence is, and what it is not, varies significantly from country to country, and even from organisation to organisation within a particular country. Yet the differences between these definitions should not be ignored or discounted as relevant. As Allagia and Vine (2006) claim, the terminology used to define the parameters around 'domestic violence' subtly alter the definition of the problem (i.e. what is domestic violence and what is not); differing definitions also determine who 'counts' as someone who has experienced DV and who does not. For example, 'woman abuse' limits discussions of domestic violence to female sufferers and 'intimate partner abuse' limits the parameters of domestic violence to conflict between partners. Indeed, even the broader phrase 'domestic violence' may often skew understandings of abuse towards physically violent behaviour that happens strictly within the home. It is therefore important to recognise from the outset of this report that definitions of domestic violence (such as the ones explored below) are socially constructed to reflect specific interests and understandings of power relations; organisations working on issues related to DV can limit the scope of their work through the definition of domestic violence they chose to employ (Loeske 1992; Muehlenhard and Kimes 1999; Bograd 1999; Goodmark 2009).

² Throughout this report, the authors reference domestic violence (DV) and domestic abuse interchangeably. This deliberate decision is to be as inclusive as possible when referencing the various forms abuse and violence take, which are different for each woman affected.

Spotlight: Parameters of JWA's domestic violence work

JWA's definition of domestic violence is necessarily broad enough to include violence experienced by women from people other than intimate partners; therefore JWA offers help to adult women who are experiencing abuse from any adult and not just a partner.

JWA's definition also makes clear that, as an organisation, they understand DV as a gendered crime, most often committed by men against women. While JWA does not deny that men are sometimes abused, the remit of their work as a women's organisation does not extend to care for men in need of help. JWA also does not include child abuse in their definition of domestic violence, although they do work closely with children who have witnessed abuse taking place between adult family members in their household.

Domestic violence or abuse as defined in the UK Context

One of the broadest definitions relating to domestic violence used in the UK is the United Nation's Declaration on Violence Against Women in 1993. This declaration includes a definition of domestic violence within a broader characterisation of violence against women more generally, and was adopted by the Coalition Government as their working definition of domestic violence in November 2010:

*The term 'violence against women' means **any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life***³. Accordingly, violence against women encompasses but is not limited to the following:

- a) *Physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;*
- b) *Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;*
- c) *Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs*

(UN Declaration on Violence Against Women 1993)⁴.

Domestic violence specifically is addressed by section 'a' of this definition of violence against women; *domestic* violence occurs in private or within the family or household unit. DV is strategically positioned as part of a wider discourse on human rights. By arguing that a woman's human rights trump any cultural imperative used to justify hurting her, defining DV as a human rights issue has been used to de-associate domestic violence from culture or tradition. This strategy is employed to override cultural arguments in support of marginalising women or causing them physical or emotional pain as a means of expressing cultural or religious belief (Moller Okin 1999; London Metropolitan Police 2001; Barnish 2004). This definition also purposefully references 'non spousal violence', thereby making clear that domestic violence extends to other family relationships that may be influenced by unequal power relationships.

³ This section in bold is the current Government definition of domestic violence

⁴ The full declaration can be read at <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

However, this definition has been criticised for failing to adequately represent the lived experience of domestic violence (Platiner 1995; Meyer and Prugel 1999; Merry 2003). Although 'domestic' infers the home, actual experiences of domestic violence often expand out of the private realm of the household; domestic violence can be closely related to (even impossible to disaggregate from) other forms of abuse and can manifest itself in a range of abusive, coercive and controlling behaviours. Indeed, much 'domestic violence' continues after a partnership or a household has been split up, with the perpetrator continuing (on in some cases beginning) to engage in controlling behaviours, including (but not limited to) stalking, monitoring phone calls, sending threatening messages via text, email, phone or social media (Kelly 2000, 2007; Kimmel 2002; Maypole 2009). Accordingly, more comprehensive definitions of domestic violence recognise that defining DV solely occurring 'with the private realm' does a disservice to those women who find that previously intimate partners (no longer living with the woman) continue to exert control and inspire fear within their lives.

This more fluid understanding of DV is reflected in the following definition, previously used by the Labour Government:

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality (Toolkit 2008: 16)⁵.

This definition references 'emotional' abuse, which is not specifically mentioned by the UN. The inclusion of 'emotional abuse' in a definition of domestic violence allows for more nuanced thinking about the experience of a survivor of DV, since physical violence rarely happens without emotional violence concurrent to it, or predating it⁶. For instance, qualitative interview-based research such as Abrahams (2010) has shown just how long-lasting the emotional scars acquired through domestic violence can be and the ways in which experiences of domestic violence are carried with a woman for life and affect her future wellbeing, ranging from feelings of personal insecurity to economic instability (as will be discussed).

Yet the Labour Government definition is not without its critics as well. The Labour Government's definition referred to domestic violence as an 'incident', when domestic violence is most often not experienced as a one-off occurrence. For this reason, the Court system often uses definitions of domestic violence that recognise DV as the culmination of patterns or series of abusive incidences.

⁵ This can be compared to the City of London's definition of domestic violence: 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality' (Safer Cities City of London Domestic Violence Strategy 2009-2010, see http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/84402A0C-3FDC-4641-AAEC-5BF21E3A87E6/0/LO_DVStrategy2009.pdf).

⁶ It also gives weight to emotional abuse as *equally as serious* as physical abuse (the recognition of which proves difficult even for women experiencing it, see chapter four for survivor testimony on this issue).

In its '*Domestic Violence Policy*', the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service defines domestic violence as a range of violent and abusive behaviours:

Patterns of behaviour characterised by the misuse of power and control by one person over another who are or have been in an intimate relationship. It can occur in mixed gender relationships and same gender relationships and has profound consequences for the lives of children, individuals, families and communities. It may be physical, sexual, emotional and/or psychological. The latter may include intimidation, harassment, damage to property, threats and financial abuse⁷.

This definition recognises that domestic violence is often a repetitive event that may make itself visible through incidences of physical violence, but which also works in much more subtle (yet equally as controlling and coercive ways), such as through the control of a 'victim's' finances, property damage, continual verbal harassment, spiritual abuse and constant fear and stress.

Therefore, any static, singular definition of domestic violence is insufficiently complex to capture any and all aspects of domestic violence. Indeed, definitions of DV tend to work only as monitoring mechanisms for certain types of violence, and can therefore never encompass every woman's experience of violence perpetrated against her by a partner or former partner (Toolkit 2008: 16).

Domestic Violence/Abuse as defined in this report

This report covers topics relating to domestic violence/abuse as defined by JWA, although the research underpinning this reports suggests that Jews define domestic violence in broad and differing ways (see chapter three). As such this report discusses domestic violence as experienced by women over the age of eighteen, and perpetrated by adult men. While the vast majority of the research relates to partner-partner violence, other intimate family member violence is also included⁸.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON: DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, USA

The U. S. Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) defines domestic violence as a "pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner". The definition adds that domestic violence "can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender", and that it can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic, and psychological abuse. Each State has slightly differing definitions of domestic violence (especially for criminal justice purposes), but even these differing definitions tend to share many characteristics (or at least the ethos) of the definition above⁹.

Conservative/Coalition Domestic Violence Policy

On the 25 of November 2010, the Coalition Government published their *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls*. As part of the Strategic Vision, the paper claims: "Violence against

⁷ See http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/news/2005/domestic_violence_addressed.aspx

⁸ This report does not attempt to discuss the complexities of parental abuse of children specifically, including sexual, physical or emotional child abuse, although it does not deny the significant overlaps between domestic violence and child abuse, and does include discussions of children who are affected by living in a household where domestic violence is occurring between adult family members.

⁹ The full definition is <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/domviolence.htm>

women and girls is a gender-based crime which requires a focused and robust cross-government approach” (Home Office 2010: 5). As well as calling for all departments to adopt the UN definition of violence against women (discussed above), the strategic vision of the government also set out a plan “for a society in which no woman or girl has to live in fear of violence” (ibid) which requires: the prevention of violence; provision of adequate levels of support where violence does occur; works in partnership to obtain best results; and action to reduce the risks to women and girls *and* ensure perpetrators are brought justice (2010: 5)¹⁰.

The most significant legal development thus far in this parliament include the Supreme Court ruling *Yemshaw v London Borough of Hounslow*¹¹, which ordered local authorities to accept that domestic violence did not necessarily need to include acts of physical violence.

Yet despite strong assurances of the Government’s lack of tolerance for domestic violence and its proactive approach to combating it, research conducted by Channel Four News in February 2011 found that more than half of domestic violence services across the country are unsure as to whether or not they will be able to remain fully open after March 2011, in what opponents of the Government’s ‘Big Society’ scheme call an obvious failing of the Coalition’s plans to boost the voluntary sector¹².

As part of the ‘Big Society’, Local Authorities set their own agendas and budgets. However, councils are facing severe funding cuts and many are reducing Local Authority Grants, which fund domestic violence charities. The Channel Four News report found that “services as far afield as Devon, Hull, North Somerset and Nottinghamshire have all been warned there may be no money available to them in 2011”¹³. Women’s Aid has also conducted a survey that found that only a quarter of refuges have had their contracts extended beyond March 2011. This survey found that 37% of services say they may close.

Channel Four quotes the Chief Executive of Women’s Aid as saying: “The scary thing is, if domestic violence services are cut, there will be more risks of homicides. Two women are killed a week-the cost of a homicide is, on average, £1 million. So if you invest in prevention and early intervention scheme, you avoid escalating violence and not only are you saving lives, you’re also saving money” (ibid).

¹⁰ See <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/>

¹¹ http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/decided-cases/docs/UKSC_2010_0060_PressSummary.pdf

¹² ¹² Article can be found at <http://www.channel4.com/news/half-of-domestic-violence-services-could-lose-funding>.

¹³ (<http://www.channel4.com/news/half-of-domestic-violence-services-could-lose-funding>).

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON: ISRAELI DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION:

Protection available under the law for victims of family violence falls under the 1991 Prevention of Violence within the Family Act. The Domestic Violence Prevention Law empowered family courts to issue protective orders against violent spouses. In 1998, Israel adopted a comprehensive Sexual Harassment Prevention Law, which defines sexual harassment, makes it a criminal offence and also cause for a civil suit against the perpetrator and his employer.

Funding for Domestic Violence Charities

As it currently stands, statutory funding for domestic violence charities comes from a variety of different schemes, most of which are channeled through local authorities by Government. One of the key funding streams has been from Supporting People, a pot of money that is reserved to accommodate the most vulnerable people in society. This funding stream has an annual budget of £1.6 bn across the country, and this money has been mostly protected by the Coalition, which has pledged to protect 99p out of every £1 spent on Supporting People in the last year. However, the Channel Four news report claimed that this money is not as protected as it might first appear, because Supporting People is not ring-fenced, “so cash-strapped councils are using the money for other vital services. And secondly, some larger councils have faced disproportionate cuts in their Supporting People fund as a result of the formula for local council funding” (ibid).

The Government issued a response to the Channel Four news report, stating “The Home Secretary also announced ...the allocation of more than £28 million for specialist services to tackle violence against women ...While we recognise the challenges councils are facing we do expect to see them match the Government’s commitment to help the most vulnerable people in society. There is no excuse for councils to be targeting any disproportionate spending reductions on programmes that support the most vulnerable people in their communities”(ibid).

INTERNATIONAL: COMPARISON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FUNDING, ISRAEL AND CANADA

Ruth Rasnic, the Founder and CEO of No 2 Violence in Israel said that her organisation is funded through a variety of means. “The shelters receive 65-70% of the expenses from the Ministry of Welfare. The balance comes from foundations, private donors, fund raising, telemarketing, and the like”. The Director of Jewish Women’s International Canada Penny Korwitz described their work as funded by a membership scheme; women join JWI Canada and their membership fees provide the bulk of the budget for their work in education and prevention, as well as funding for their single family shelters.

II. What form(s) does Domestic Violence usually take?

There is no one 'form' of domestic violence. However, 'typical' expressions of domestic violence can be understood as relating to the following categories.

Common Forms of Domestic Abuse (GLDVP 2008: 21)	
Type of Abuse	Form it may take
Financial/Economic	Prevent woman from getting a job; harassing a woman at work; denying a woman access to money; stealing a woman's or children's money; gambling in a way that threatens a family's standard of living; conducting surveillance of a woman's expenditure and activities; making major financial decisions alone; running up debts; withholding money to enforce a course of action, dictating expenditure
Psychological	Threats to: harm or kill woman or children; commit suicide; place a woman with disabilities in care; report a woman to social services or immigration; take children away; harm or kill others; harm or kill unborn child; section her under Mental Health Act; never leave her alone; 'out' her as gay; inform others about health status. Also isolating her from friends and family or denying the abuse.
Physical Abuse	Murder; causing miscarriage; pinching; punching; kicking; biting; pulling hair; smothering; strangling; drowning; stabbing; burning; starving; withholding medication; throwing objects
Using isolation	Locking in house or other place; constant phone calls to check on partner's whereabouts; denying access to transport; following partner; preventing from using phone or receiving mail; controlling who partner sees or what she does; humiliating partner in front of others; preventing partner from learning English; using immigration status to control partner
Denying abuse	Blaming partner for causing the abuse; denying abuse has occurred; playing down the effects of the abuse; saying injuries were caused by survivor's own clumsiness; blaming alcohol or drugs; attributing the cause to racism or homophobia
Sexual abuse	Rape; sexual; assault with an object; forcing partner to commit sexual acts; forcing into prostitution or sex with other people; forcing partner to see or use/perform pornography; controlling when and where they have sex; controlling whether or not they have safe sex; sexual name calling; imposing a dress code

The above table represents the most common 'types' of domestic violence abuse discussed in most literature. It should be noted that 'religious' or 'spiritual' abuse is not discussed in mainstream

literature, even within women's organisations that include help for religious women as part of their specific ethos.

Spiritual Abuse

For many Jewish women, particularly those women who are members of strictly religious communities, religious or spiritual abuse is reported as the most painful part of their experiences of domestic violence. In an article entitled *Spiritual Abuse: an Additional Dimension of Abuse Experienced by Abused Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Jewish Lives*, Dehan and Levi argue that conceptualising domestic violence solely by the above categories denies the most important guiding factor in religious women's lives, namely belief and spirituality. They argue that a complex understanding of spiritual abuse is "required, in addition to physical, physiological, sexual and economic abuse, to adequately reflect the experience of abused religious women" (2009: 1295).

Dehan and Livi identify the following prominent components of spiritual abuse: a) belittling a woman's spiritual worth, belief or deeds; b) preventing a woman from performing spiritual acts; and c) causing the woman to transgress against spiritual obligations or prohibitions. Dehan and Livi claim: "[b]ecause for abused women spirituality may be an important, if not the only means, of giving meaning to a life otherwise perceived as chaotic and without significance, damaging their spiritual life or spiritual self means damaging their very identity and wellbeing" (ibid:1300). Spiritual abuse thus happens not only at the interpersonal realm, but is also conducted in relation to a transcendental power; "spiritual abuse puts the woman's spiritual life, spiritual self, and spiritual well-being at risk" (1302).

This understanding of spiritual abuse heavily emphasises attempts to bar women from practicing their faith. However, spiritual or religious abuse also includes attempts to use religion to control or coerce women, both of which were evident during the interviews with current and former JWA clients (see chapter four). Additionally, the general opinion survey demonstrated that the majority of respondents considered 'dictating family religious observance' to be a form of abuse (see chapter three).

III: Domestic Violence/Abuse Statistics UK

The UK context: Condoning Domestic Violence

In 2009, Ipsos Mori found that 1 in 7 people in the UK believe it is acceptable in some circumstances for a man to hit his wife or girlfriend if she is dressed in “sexy or revealing clothes in public”. The findings of the poll, conducted for the Home Office, also disclosed that about a quarter of people believe that wearing sexy or revealing clothing should lead to a woman being held partly responsible for being raped or sexually assaulted. Although a majority of 1,065 people over 18 questioned believed that it is never acceptable to hit or slap a woman, the poll found that those aged 25-39 were more likely to consider that there were circumstances in which it was acceptable to hit or slap a woman¹⁴.

In the UK each year, “three million women experience rape, domestic violence, stalking or other violence. Many millions more are dealing with abuse experienced in the past” (Coy et. al. 2009: 6). More than one in four women in England and Wales since age 16 has experienced at least one incident of domestic abuse (amounting to 4.8 million women) and one million women a year in England and Wales experience at least one incident of domestic abuse, or nearly 20,000 women a week (VAWG 2009: 14)¹⁵. Jewish women are British women, and since domestic abuse does not discriminate on the basis of religion or belief, Jewish women have been assumed to suffer from DV at the same rate as the general population. This assumption has been proven correct by the responses to the general opinion survey (see chapter three).

However, it is widely acknowledged that statistics related to domestic violence are almost always based on ‘underreporting’ of actual incidences, even though research shows that domestic violence accounts for at least fifteen percent of all violent incidences reported to the police in the UK and seventeen percent in London (GLDVP 2008: 3, 24)¹⁶. Barnish (2004) claims that many factors such as fear, loyalty, embarrassment, and self-protective reluctance to recall traumatic memories that suppress disclosure rates by victims in domestic violence should be of concern. Harne and Radford (2008) add that some women do not understand, or want to name, what is happening to them as domestic violence. Also, most statistics related to domestic violence are calculated according to reported crimes—i.e. an incident has to be brought to the attention of the police or other officials before it is recorded. Yet, many people do not involve the police and thus may continue to suffer unreported domestic violence.

¹⁴ Research available at: http://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/doc/english/violence-against-women-poll_2009.pdf

¹⁵ Greenan (2005) has tried to replicate this information for Scotland. She argues that data about domestic violence is largely available through the Scottish Police Force and have been collected since 1999. These statistics obviously rely on incidences reported to the police. Greenan reports that there were 36, 010 incidences recorded in 2002, the majority of which (59%) did not go on to be recorded as a crime or an offence. 90% of the incidents involved a female victim and male perpetrator. Women’s Voluntary Organisations in Scotland also provide statistics about the number of women experiencing DV: for example, the 40 affiliated local groups of Scottish Women’s Aid received 72, 029 requests for help between 2002-2003.

¹⁶ Under-reporting is also caused by differing definitions of domestic violence. For instance, the total figures are larger when non-partner abuse is included, and smaller when the figures are limited strictly to partner-partner violence.

Additionally, data collection strategies can lead to the under-reporting of domestic violence, including the strategies used to collect the data. For example, statistics are gathered by organisations with differing definitions of domestic violence. As such, the number of incidences identified will rise if a survey defines domestic violence widely and includes minor acts of aggression, while limiting domestic violence to severe physical or sexual violence will make the statistics lower (Dobash et. al. 1992).

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the USA has collected extensive national statistics on domestic violence. Every fifteen seconds, a woman in America experiences some form of domestic violence. It is estimated that on average, more than three women are murdered every day in the USA by an intimate partner (husband or boyfriend). Over one year, almost 1,200 American women will be murdered by their partners.

In 2008, it was found that almost million women suffered injuries from an intimate partner. Like in the UK, nearly one in four women in the USA reports having experienced violence by a current or former partner. In 2007, there were 248,300 rapes or sexual assaults reported, which equates to more than 500 a day and which represented a dramatic increase from 2005 (190,600). In addition, the United States Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that 3.4 million people say they are victims of stalking each year in the USA, with 20 stalking victimisations per 1,000 females aged 18 or older. Like in the UK, women aged 20-24 are most likely to become involved in an abusive relationship.

British Crime Survey

One of the most predominant ways of collecting statistics relating to domestic violence is through surveys related to crime, most notably statistics produced annually for the British Crime Survey (BCS) in England and Wales. The Home Office introduced the BCS in England and Wales in 1982, in recognition of the fact that not all incidences of 'crime' are recorded as such. The BCS is thus primarily a 'victimisation' survey, in which respondents are asked specifically about particular incidences of crime that they may have experienced over the past year.

The British Crime Survey is based on the premise that a self-reporting survey is the most accurate way to 'count crime', since approaching people directly is assumed to be a reliable way to collect 'facts' about crime. However, it soon became evident that people who had experienced domestic violence, when approached by a stranger, remained reluctant to talk to them about their experiences, meaning that the collection of DV statistics remained unreliable (Harne and Radford 2008).

In 1996, in order to tackle some of these problems, the Home Office introduced new methodology for collecting data relating to DV. These methods were further developed in the 2001 BCS, during which a detailed interpersonal violence computerised self-completion scheme was first given to

respondents. Since women had not responded well to telling a stranger about such personal experiences, the new methodology involved bringing a laptop and asking women to fill out their responses directly on the computer. However, problems still remain: respondents are still interviewed only in private homes, meaning that those women living in temporary accommodation or refuges are left out, and there is also very little interviewers could know about various tensions in the home that might make a woman wary to answer even a computerised survey truthfully (for instance, if an abuser was in the room or even in the house or likely to come home).

Keeping these limitations in mind, plus the fact that Jewish women *are* British women and may therefore be included within these findings, the following statistics from the BCS 2008-2009 should be seen as potentially under-representative of the 'true' extent of domestic violence.

INTERNATIONAL: CANADIAN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SURVEY

A Canadian Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS) is conducted, although not annually. 29% of women participating in this survey (who had ever had a partner) reported being physically or sexual assaulted during their lives. 3 in 4 of these women had also experienced emotional abuse and 18% of women who reported no physical violence had experienced emotional abuse. 65% of those who had been assaulted had experienced this more than once, and 32% had been assaulted on more than one occasion. One to two women are murdered by a current or former partner each week in Canada; spousal violence makes up the single largest category of convictions involving violent offences in non-specialised adult courts in Canada (Statistics Canada (<http://www.hcsc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/violence-eng.php>)).

British Crime Survey Data 2008-2009	
Description	% of surveyed female sample who claimed to have experienced
Experienced DV at least once over the age of sixteen	28%
Experienced DV in the past year	6%
DV experience described as partner abuse (non-sexual), any time	21%
Type of DV experience described as partner abuse (sexual), any time	2—3%
Type of DV experience described as non-partner abuse (other family members, sexual and not sexual)	8%
Type of abuse described as stalking or harassment, past year	4%
No longer experiencing abuse because terminated relationship	69%

IV: Who experiences domestic violence/abuse?

Spotlight: JWA's avoidance of the term 'victim'

The word 'victim', commonly used in reference to those persons who have been directly abused by a perpetrator of domestic violence, is sometimes understood as pejorative, in that it necessarily pacifies the recipient of the violence. Many domestic violence charities, including JWA, prefer to call the people using their services 'clients' or 'survivors'. However, in this report, the word victim will continue to be used to indicate those people (women specifically) who have been directly affected by domestic violence. This term is used so as to encompass of women as wide a range as possible—from those women who really do become domestic violence victims in that they are killed or have their lives otherwise ruined by DV, to those women who can best be described as survivors, who have managed to escape an abusive situation and have gone a long way to conquering the emotional and mental demons which often are a part of living with (and after) domestic violence.

It is clear that not all domestic violence/abuse sufferers are women; however, identifying women as the primary 'victims' of domestic abuse is in keeping with most social constructionist theories. Firstly, these theories claim that women are *pure victims*, meaning that domestic violence is different from 'mutual combat' whereby violence is jointly produced. Within relationships involving domestic abuse, women's violence is primarily understood as a form of self-defence. The notion of women as 'pure victims' relies upon a mutual construction of men as *offenders*, and as offenders often with pre-intentions of causing harm (Loseke 1992).

Limiting our discussion of 'victims' of DV to women is also in keeping with global statistics, which consistently show that women are much more likely to be victims of domestic violence than men. Research by Women's Aid has repeatedly demonstrated that domestic violence effects 1 in 4 (25%) women over a lifetime, regardless of age, social class, disability or lifestyle¹⁷.

¹⁷ Women's Aid statistics can be accessed at:
http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic_violence_topic.asp?section=0001000100220041§ionTitle=Domestic+violence+%28general%29.

V: Risk Factors

Although it has been proven that domestic abuse cuts across all social differences and positionalities (Burgess-Proctor 2006), it should also be noted that some risk factors have been identified. Importantly, risk factors should not be understood as causal factors; falling into one of the categories below does not mean that sharing this characteristic in any way *causes* someone to experience domestic violence. For example, youth has been identified as a risk factor for domestic violence. However, just because a woman is young, does not mean she will experience DV, only that she is more at risk than an older woman¹⁸.

Of particular importance are the risk factors relating to pregnancy and having children. As will be discussed in relation to the qualitative findings from interviews with JWA current and former clients (chapter four), domestic violence was frequently first experienced either while pregnant or immediately after giving birth to one's first child. Indeed, many women experienced post natal depression, either in addition to, or as well as, the beginning stages of serial domestic abuse (again, see chapter 4 for further discussion).

¹⁸ This list has been prepared in relation to domestic violence only. A list relating to other acts of violence against women, such as honour based killings, female genital mutilation, or forced marriage would include other risk factors.

Risk Factors (summary of Barnish 2004: 26-47)

Category	Factor that may increase risk	Details and Studies
Demographic	Youth	Youth is a risk factor for domestic violence victimisation both in the UK and in an international context, with women under twenty-five being at the highest risk of experiencing abuse (Walby and Allen 2004), although this figure may be slightly distorted by the willingness of younger women to report incidences of domestic violence (Mirrlees-Black 1999). Additionally, some national surveys using broader definitions of abuse (not confined to partner-based violence) have not found this same age gap (Gillioz 1997).
	Motherhood	Having children almost doubles the risk for women (Walby and Allen 2004). Some studies have found an association between having a higher number of children and domestic abuse, although most evidence points to this being a consequence rather than a cause of abuse (Jewkes 2002).
Situational	Separation	Separation often leads to a breakdown in the man's control of the woman and/or a perceived threat of abandonment that can intensify efforts to regain control (Kimmel 2002). For example, UK women who had separated from a partner were far more likely to have been a victim of domestic violence in the previous year (22%) according to Mirrlees-Black (1999).
	Unemployment	There is some evidence that working outside the home offers some protection (Mirrlees-Black 1999; WHO 2002), although employed women with unemployed husbands may be at greater risk (Babcock et al 1993). However, Falmer and Tiefenthaler (2004) maintain after controlling for the simultaneity of violence and work, women experiencing domestic violence are more likely to work than women who are not abused. While women who are victims of intimate partner abuse claimed that it was hard to leave their home to work, these negative effects may be offset by strong incentives to increase their economic independence by earning money.
Personal	Illness and/or disability	Smith (2008) found that women with a disability were twice as likely to experience all types of abuse. The risk of abuse increased when coupled with any other the other factors listed.
	Drug and alcohol use	There is research to suggest that victims and survivors of DV are more likely to use drugs or alcohol to excess, although evidence also suggests that some women use drugs and alcohol to help them cope with the effects of the violence or to self-medicate (Bergen 1995; Finney 2004).
	Previous experience of abuse	Coid (2000) found that the risk of experiencing domestic violence was found to be four times higher for women who were severely beaten in childhood, and is higher for women who had suffered penetrative sexual abuse when young.
	Previously witnessed DV as a child	The Home Office guidance on working with child victims of domestic violence entitled <i>Tackling Domestic Violence: providing for children who have witnessed DV</i> ; see section eight on children for a description of the effects of DV on a child as they grow up (Mullender 2004).

VI: Economic Cost to Society

Beyond the emotional and physical personal cost of domestic violence, the residual effects of domestic violence are strongly felt by the British economy. Indeed, the women interviewed for this report often spoke of the trauma of losing financial security; many had never been in charge of their own finances and felt trapped in their abusive relationship because they did not know how they would survive without their partner's money (see discussion in chapter four). Society does indeed 'pay' for allowing domestic violence to continue.

It is estimated that violence against women costs society £36.7 billion annually (Home Office 2010: 7). In addition there are hidden costs. Police have to attend the same households time and time again. Abused women and children end up in casualty wards, or in bed and breakfast hotels. Costs arise from children having to be put into care and sometimes many assaulted women are unable to contribute to the workforce. Violence causes physical damage ranging from death in extreme cases, to bruises. Women also suffer scarring and physical disability and sexual offences bring the risk of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and forced pregnancies, all of which are at high cost to the NHS.

In 2009, Sylvia Walby of Lancaster University updated a previous study on the economic costs of domestic violence and found that the cost of domestic violence in lost economic output is down by nearly 30% since 2001, according to her updated research for the Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence (CAADV)¹⁹. This research shows that while the cost of domestic violence is still substantial, the investment in public services by the previous government did 'pay off' by reducing the cost of lost economic output due to working days lost because of injuries from £2.7bn in 2001 to £1.9bn in 2008. If a calculation of the human and emotional cost of DV is taken into account, the total cost of domestic violence fell from £22.8bn in 2001 to £15.7bn in 2008²⁰.

¹⁹ The executive summary of this research is available at:

<http://domino.lancs.ac.uk/info/lunews.nsf/1/4359E325A02EB6F880257680004DA6B5>

²⁰ This research can be accessed at: https://www.caadv.org.uk/new_cost_of_dv_2009.php

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON: COST OF DV IN THE USA AND CANADA

USA: Estimates of the cost of violence in the United States of America reach 3.3% of the gross domestic product. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that the cost of domestic violence each year is over \$8 billion. This cost includes medical care, mental health services, and lost productivity (<http://www.now.org/issues/violence/stats.html>). Interpersonal violence is defined to include violence between family members and intimate partners and violence between acquaintances and strangers that is not intended to further the aims of any formally defined group or cause. Self-directed violence, war, state-sponsored violence and other collective violence are specifically excluded from these definitions.

Canada: The Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children in Ontario, Canada, has estimated that a total of more than C\$1.5 billion is spent on the health related costs of domestic violence every year (Day, 1995 cited in National Crime Prevention Centre, 1996). In another Canadian study, Kerr and McLean (1996) estimated the economic costs of domestic violence in the province of British Columbia. The costs included a range of indirect/tangible costs and the intangible/indirect cost of time lost from work. Estimated costs of policing, corrections, criminal injury compensation, victim assistance programs, counseling for women, aboriginal programs, mental and drug related care, income assistance, sexual and women assault centres, women's loss of work time, programs for children who witness violence and treatment programs for assaultive men, came to C\$385 million. Income assistance comprised the largest component of these costs while the second largest component was women's loss of work time at C\$54 million. Yet both pieces of research claim that these estimates are low, given that many women will, for example, take off sick for work without identifying domestic violence as the underlying cause.

VII: Responses to Domestic Violence: The Law and the Police

Legislation

In 2004, the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act came into effect in the UK, with new sections added and implemented as recently as July 2007. This legislation is commonly understood as the first piece of law to directly address DV for thirty years, although there were other pieces of legislation that impacted on those who suffered from (the effects of) domestic violence.

This legislation sought to do the following:

- Make common assault an arrestable offence (although this has since been repealed by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005).
- Extension of restraining orders to any offence – on conviction or acquittal if there is a continued risk.
- Extending availability of injunctions to same sex couples and those who have never cohabited.
- Breach of non-molestation order is now a criminal offence²¹
- New offence of causing death of a child or vulnerable adult
- Statutory Domestic Violence homicide reviews for adults
- Victims' Code of Practice and Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses. The Code should ensure that domestic violence survivors are given clear information about the whole criminal justice process from the reporting of an incident through to prosecution and sentencing and inform of what support is available²².

Police and Prosecution

It is estimated that only a minority of incidents of domestic violence are ever even reported to the police, ranging from 23% (Walby and Allen 2004) to 35% (Home Office 2002; Dodd et. al. 2004). The 2008/2009 British Crime Survey found that although $\frac{3}{4}$ of people who had experienced intimate partner violence in the past year told someone about what had happened, only 16% told the police (as opposed to 59% who told friends and relatives and 12% told someone at work). Women were much more likely to tell the police than men (20% versus 10%). When asked why

²¹ This particular aspect of the legislation has been controversial, since there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some women are put-off calling the police or taking an abusive partner to court because they do not want to bear the responsibility for causing their partner or former partner (and often father of their children) to have a criminal record. Indeed, many women interviewed for this project agreed that they were extremely reluctant to call the police, with law enforcement often only get involved when a neighbour intervened.

²² Counter-intuitively, while the eligibility for protection under domestic violence legislation was expanding, the number of people applying for personal protection orders appeared to be declining; Burton claims that many partners are reticent to 'criminalise' their partners' offenses (Burton 2009). She writes: "There was some fluctuation in the number of applications for non-molestation orders in the first five years following implementation of the FLA. In 1998 there were 19,365 applications, but the number of applications dropped the following year and then dramatically in 2000, when only 15,734 applications were made. There is no obvious explanation for the sharp drop in applications in 2000, but it was followed by an increase in applications over the next two years, taking the overall numbers of applications in 2002 to a level just below those made in 1998. Since 2002 the numbers of applications for non-molestation orders has steadily declined, with a 15% reduction in applications between 2002 and 2006, from 19,131 to 16,937". This debate highlights the tension for some of making a 'private' matter a 'public' debate (by bringing charges against the perpetrator (<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/section?content=a913428420&fulltext=713240928>).

they chose *not* to tell the police, 51% claimed that the incident/incidences had been 'trivial', 28% claimed it was a 'private matter' and 13% 'did not think that the police would be any help'(Women's Resource Centre 2010)²³.

These statistics support the widely touted finding that a woman is assaulted 35 times before her first call to the police (Jaffe 1982). Yet calls to the police are not guarantees of safety. For example, as recently as March 2010, a woman in Greater Manchester was stabbed by her ex-partner after having called the police eleven times, five of which were made in the week before she died. After this incident, the Independent Police Complaints Commission commissioner Naseem Malik told the BBC that the police force is still plagued by "shocking lack of understanding about the nature of domestic violence"²⁴.

Despite worries relating to police protection for victims from DV perpetrators, many women still *do* choose to involve the police. Survivors who want an arrest made tend to have suffered more frequent and severe abuse in the preceding six months; they also tend to have partners with prior arrest warrants. In a study of Scottish convictions, Lewis et al (2000) found that motivation for the children's well-being, along with questions such as "will it teach him a lesson?" or "will it anger him?" lead to police involvement.

At the turn of the 21st century, Stanko (2000) estimated that the police received 1,300 phone calls on domestic violence a day, or 570,000 each year. Additionally, the police are more likely to receive calls related to domestic abuse at certain times of the year, such as New Year's Eve or around major sporting events. For example, the Police reported a "massive increase" in calls regarding domestic violence immediately following England's defeat to Germany in the 2010 World Cup. This statistic mirrors Home Office Research that has found that the number of cases of domestic violence rise by as much as 30% on England match days²⁵.

²³ See report at www.wrc.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2010/s/statistics_about_women_in_the_uk_2009_25_5_10_la_test_nn_sr1.doc

²⁴ See http://www.thefword.org.uk/blog/2010/03/greater_manches

²⁵ See 2010 <http://manchestermule.com/article/police-record-massive-increase-in-domestic-abuse-calls-after-england-world-cup-exit>.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON: POLICE IN CANADA

The first pro-arrest domestic violence policy was adopted in London, Ontario in 1981. However, domestic violence is not a chargeable offense in all of Canada and must be prosecuted through different legislation such as sexual offences; homicide - murder, attempted murder, infanticide and manslaughter; or criminal harassment (sometimes called "stalking").

In addition, some provinces have specific domestic violence legislation. For example, Manitoba has the *Domestic Violence Stalking, Prevention, Protection and Compensation Act* (29 June, 1998); Prince Edward Island has the *Victims of Family Violence Act* (December 16, 1996); and there is the Yukon Territory's *Family Violence Prevention Act* (11 December, 1997).

Courts and Convictions

In 2005/2006, specialist domestic violence courts (SDVCs) were established in England and Wales that enable police, prosecutors, courts and specialist services to work together and track cases, support victims, and bring offenders to justice. The CPS reported that the 2011 target of 128 specialist DV courts was met and exceeded, with 141 courts in place by 1 April 2010.

Crown Prosecution Service Domestic Violence Conviction Data (2005-2010) (CPS 2010: 12) ^{26, 27}										
	2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010	
	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%	Volume	%
Convictions	29,719	59.7%	37,383	65.2%	43,977	68.9%	48,465	72.2%	53,347	72.0%
Unsuccessful	20,063	40.3%	19,978	34.8%	19,842	31.1%	18,629	27.8%	20,766	28%
Total	49,782		57,361		63,819		67,094		74,113	

The CPS claims that conviction rates increased by 29% in between 2006 and 2010 (2010: 23). Additionally, the volume of cases increased by 16% in between 2007-2010. The CPS notes that: "the presence of the national network of domestic violence co-coordinators and/or Violence Against Women coordinators means that there is a well-established operational and strategic network of experienced prosecutors, who are crucial in ensuring the implementation of the policy, locally". In addition, "the extension of restraining orders to all criminal offenses on conviction, and in certain instances, acquittal was introduced in September 2009. This provision better enabled the CPS to protect victims of domestic abuse who are frequently in fear of further violence" (2010: 20). All of these factors combined to make the prosecution of domestic violence increasingly achievable.

²⁶ Data in this section has been taken from Crown Prosecution Service's Violence Against Women Crime Report 2009-2010, available at: http://cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/CPS_VAW_report_2010.pdf.

²⁷ In the cases above, 93% involved a male perpetrator; 7% a female perpetrator (CPS 2010P: 20).

VIII: Service based response to Domestic Violence

What is a support service?

Law enforcement and legislation is an important part of a strategy to combat domestic violence. However, for many women, support services, which allow them to try and regain some sense of a normal life, prove even more valuable.

Support services for domestic violence sufferers in the UK can be categorised as follows:

Refuge-based services: Refuge houses provide emergency and temporary accommodation, together with a package of support, information and advocacy (see below).

Non-refuge-based services provide outreach, floating support and other services for women and children.

REFUGE BASED SERVICES:

Refuges are an important service for women affected by domestic violence, although the extent to which women choose to enter them is unclear. Indeed, even the knowledge that a refuge exists is enough to inspire some women to leave, as was the case for two of the interviewees for this research project, who left their husbands due to courage gathered when they realised they had a safe, Jewish space to which to turn (see chapter four).

The UK has a strong legacy of providing shelter for women at risk from intimate partners; indeed, the first shelter for so-called 'battered women' known in the world opened in London in the 1970's—a shelter which inspired a number of new shelters to open up all over the United States and Canada.

Women's Aid defines a refuge as a safe house where women and children who are experiencing domestic violence can stay free from abuse. The addresses and phone numbers of these homes are kept confidential so as to maximise protection of women.

Children can usually stay with their mother at a refuge, although some refuges only take male children up to a certain age (as young as eleven or twelve). Most refuges are run by support workers, who will be able to assist women with issues such as benefits claims, re-housing, legal issues, or accessing other services.

International Comparison: Refuges in Israel

There are 13 existing shelters in Israel, one is Haredi, 2 are for Arab women with Arab staff members. 10 are general shelters for any woman in need - if we have accommodation. Jewish – Orthodox, observant and secular. Arab & Druze, Christian, foreign as well as illegal women. As Ruth Rasnic pointed out, it is vital in Israel to have separate provisions for Haredi women, and also for Arab women. However, secular and less religious Jews live very peacefully together in the mixed shelters.

Estimates of how many women stay in refuge accommodation each year

Every year, Women's Aid conducts a national survey in order to estimate the number of women seeking assistance for domestic violence. This survey is conducted in three parts and includes a questionnaire for all women's aid organisations across the UK; a 'Day to Count' census service snapshot, where each organisation is asked to 'count' the number of women using their services on that day; and a service-users feed-back survey. This data is exclusively based on English service providers.

The most recent data available is for the year 2008-2009, with a total of 246 organisations responding to the call for data collection (or 73% of the total number of Women's Aid organisations) (Women's Aid 2009: 11).

Below is a table showing the number of women who used refuge accommodation in England during the year 2008-2009.

Women and Children Resident in Refuge Accommodation in England 2008-2009 (Women's Aid 2009: 13)			
Responding Organisations: Total number of women residents	Estimated total (women)	Responding organisations: Total number of children resident	Estimated total (children)
12,229	16,750	13,873	19,005

Responding organisations claimed that 12,229 women and 13,873 children used refuge accommodation over the course of 2008-2009, from which they estimated that a total of 16,750 women and 19,005 children in England were in refuge accommodation for some period of time during the year 2008-2009.

Specialist Refuges

There are over 500 refuges in England and Wales, including specialist BME refuges for women from South Asian, Afro-Caribbean, Turkish, Iranian, Latin American and Jewish women. Culturally sensitive services are available at these refuges. In these refuges, staff almost always come from the same cultural background as the women they are supporting. They are able to operate within the community without drawing attention to themselves and they understand the challenges faced by the women they are working with.

Paying for a refuge

A woman will have to pay for a refuge space, but she may be able to claim benefits if she has left home as a single person and can claim social security benefit for herself and her children.

However, she will often have to share the cost of bills within the refuge (such as electricity) (Toolkit 2008).

Housing beyond a Refuge

There are also other housing options. There are options for women in extremely dangerous situations via Homeless Persons Unit, Citizens Advice Bureau or Shelterline. There are also sanctuary options, which enable women to stay in their own homes and evict the abuser.

NON- REFUGE BASED SERVICES

Many women prefer not to access housing through domestic violence or women's charities, but are still in need of much support from the other services they offer. The most important of these services are:

- **'Floating support' and outreach** schemes providing advocacy and support to families living in the community
- **Resettlement services** - enabling women and their children to make new lives in the community after leaving a refuge or, indeed, helping to find housing after leaving the marital home
- **Drop-in centres and survivors' support groups**-helping to combat feelings of isolation
- **Telephone help lines**-helplines are often used by women to make first contact with a charity and to receive immediate advice
- **Counseling services**-counseling helps women come to terms with what has happened to them and learn how to rebuild trust and emotional stability
- **Specialist court advocacy services** (provided through IDVAs - Independent Domestic Violence Advisers)-many women have previously had little or no experience of the court system and may not have kept detailed records of their experiences, making court procedures even more difficult. Women are often court advocates

Total number of women and children using non-refuge based services (organisations responding to Women's Aid survey only) (Women's Aid 2009: 15)

	Responding Organisations	Total number of women using this service	Total number of children using this service
Local/regional helpline	111 (55%)	128,776	n/a
Floating support	68 (34%)	4,355	161
Drop-In	50 (25%)	9,623	150
Independent Domestic Violence Advisor	55 (27%)	19,951	n/a
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor	7 (3%)	450	n/a
Support Group	62 (31%)	3925	1020
Resettlement Service	67 (33%)	1568	296
Women's support service linked to perpetrator programme	21 (10%)	939	n/a
Outreach service	114 (57%)	24,339	5,682
Other non refuge based service	63 (31%)	15,392	4766

IX: GAPS IN SERVICES

Despite the large number of women using these and other services, it must be noted that support for survivors of domestic violence is, according to Coy et al. (2009), a “postcode lottery”. In 2007, the first Map of Gaps was published, which found that over 1/3 of local authorities had no specialised domestic violence service provision at all. A range of services is defined as nine or more services, and only a minority of local authorities had a range of services. The follow-up Map of Gaps 2009 found that specialized domestic violence service provision had decreased by .3% since 2007 (ibid: 41). Interestingly, Glasgow has the best provision in Britain, whereas the East, South East and South West of England are the poorest served²⁸.

BME Specific Services

Problematically, less than one in ten local authorities have specialist services for women from minority ethnic communities, which includes services that are sensitive to religious needs such as Jews (Coy et. al. 2009: 7). Nearly fifty percent (48.7%) of all specialist BME services are located in London, meaning that black or minority ethnic women living outside London are at a significant disadvantage when trying to access specialist DV services. For example, Coy et. al. (2009) found that there are no specialised BME services in the South West or the South East of England (ibid: 47).

Parmar and Sampson have argued:

As domestic violence is an issue that affects people from all ethnic groups, efforts must be made to ensure that all women are offered support services accessible to them. Being sensitive to, and aware of, the specific issues that affect Black and other minority ethnic group (BME) women should be integrated into the delivery of all support services. Whether the services are aimed at BME women or not, the issue of ethnicity should not be marginalized (2009: 1).

It is difficult for most women to leave abusive situations, but research conducted within specialist BME women’s groups shows that BME women can take even longer (although there is no known figure for how long it takes Jewish women to leave, many of the women interviewed for this project had been with abusive partners for over twenty years before leaving, see chapter four). This is because women from BME communities, particularly those subject to immigration control, can sometimes have additional barriers to overcome when attempting to escape domestic violence.

²⁸ Available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/map-of-gaps/>

Barriers to seeking help for BME women

The following is a list of some barriers, which are not exhaustive:

- Guilt, shame, confusion, lack of confidence, low self-esteem and uncertainty.
- Fear of not being believed or supported by family, community or wider society.
- Religious and cultural pressures, such as notions of *shame* and *family honour*
- Social ostracism/treated as an outcast, reprisals and further violence or harassment.
- Social and racial isolation.
- Lack of English or language problems.
- Ignorance of rights and services.
- Fear and experiences of sexual discrimination.
- Fear of and experiences of racial harassment or discrimination.
- Fear of removal or deportation.
- Fear of losing children to social services or to their partner and his family; or being unable to provide for them.
- Inadequate services or responses from agencies, including failure to intervene and protect victims in the name of cultural sensitivity.
- Fear that agencies are corrupt and unsympathetic, based on experiences in their homelands.

In 2008, Imkaan, a national second tier charity dedicated to the development of the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) sector, claimed that services for BME women affected by domestic violence (as well as other forms of crime) have decreased by 50% and should be considered in a state of 'crisis'. Their paper *A Matter of Life and Death: the loss of specialist services for BAMER women and children experiencing violence* called on the Government to reverse the trend of closing BAMER services, since there is strong evidence to suggest that black women (in particular) are much more at risk of being 'missed' by the system and left vulnerable. They asked that the following be recognised:

- Guidance to Local Authorities and funders to recognise the value of single-issue funded groups working with BAMER women and children experiencing violence. This should include an immediate withdrawal of the cohesion guidance.
- A fairer approach to commissioning which encourages the delivery of services by a range of providers including smaller-scale projects that target vulnerable and excluded communities.
- A thorough needs assessment of vulnerable BAMER women which examines gaps and the types of service interventions that are most effective for BAMER women experiencing violence with the full involvement of the BAMER women's sector in analysing the data and shaping appropriate policy and service responses.
- The development of minimum standards and best practice for Commissioners with the involvement of the BAMER women's sector on the value and need for holistic services for women and children experiencing violence with a specific reference to the value of BAMER led specific provision²⁹.

Many of the BME specialist organisations offer sensitive services based on religious belief, and for this reason, Jewish specific services such as JWA can be considered a part of the BME service provider sector. Indeed, the importance of faith based responses to violence against women and

²⁹ Research available at:

http://www.wrc.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2008/b/1_bamer_leaflet.pdf

domestic violence has been widely acknowledged and was confirmed by this research project's finding that the vast majority of those who took the general opinion survey agreed that a specifically Jewish domestic violence service is necessary (see chapter three).

X: Recognition of Importance of Faith Based Responses to DV

The importance of faith-based responses to DV has widely been acknowledged, often largely to address the gap in service for minority ethnic women. In a Toolkit developed for faith leaders in London (prior to the Coalition government coming to power), the Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP) argues:

London is recognised as one of the most diverse cities in the world, and this includes faith. In the last census, London was found to have the highest proportion of Muslims (8.5%), Hindus (4.1%) Jewish people (2.1%) Buddhists (0.8%) and people of other religions (0.5%) in the UK, with 58% of Londoners identifying as Christian. It is clear that both faith and domestic violence are part of many Londoners lives. For domestic violence survivors who identify with a particular faith, their faith or aspects of it may serve as either a “roadblock” or a “resource” in dealing with their experiences of violence (2008: 3).

The GLDVP claim that faith leaders can either be a roadblock to protection from domestic violence, or they can be an important resource for women and men suffering from it and this assertion is corroborated by both our qualitative findings and the general opinion survey, see chapters three and four). Research also indicates that although religious leaders are a resource for emotional comfort and provide practical assistance, they may also perpetuate silence. This finding rang true for the current and former clients, who had dramatically differing experiences of rabbinical support, ranging from denial to unwavering support and refuge (see chapter four).

Pyles (2007) concludes that many religious communities are not adequately equipped to respond to the problem of domestic violence in a way that is safe for women and often fail to communicate that domestic violence is not justified by the faith; community condemnation of domestic violence should focus on the perpetrators of violence not the survivors; and that the community should acknowledge and support survivors of domestic violence, and domestic violence has no place in healthy and respectful relationships. Unfortunately, the UK Jewish community needs to improve its religious responses to domestic violence, as was evident from the large percentage of respondents to the general survey who had never heard a rabbi publically condemn domestic violence (see chapter three).

The role of Jewish charities in serving the Big Society and minority women

In his speech to the Board of Deputies of British Jews’ 250 anniversary dinner, the Chancellor George Osborne claimed that the Jewish community is a model for the Big Society and that other communities could in the UK should model their work on UK Jewish communal organisations. He said:

Society is made stronger when we all take part in trying to achieve our common goals. This is my personal belief. It is my belief as a Conservative politician. And it is what this coalition Government believes. We together face huge challenges – economic, social, international – and we will only overcome them if we all work together in the common interest. This

motivates us to build the Big Society. Of course, we could learn a thing or two about big societies from the Jewish community...You have an enviable tradition of charitable endeavour and voluntary work. In other words, you look out for each other. Institutions like Norwood, Jewish Care, World Jewish Relief, the Community Security Trust, they are hugely successful and are exactly the sort of thing we need to make the Big Society a reality³⁰.

British Jews do indeed have a strong ethos of intra-communal help, which the Coalition government hopes other communities will mimic. This care ethos extends to the domestic violence sector.

*Rabbinical Support for Jewish domestic violence suffers*³¹

On the 27 of November 2010, the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks issued a strong condemnation of domestic violence. In an address broadcast on the web, the Chief Rabbi said (quoted here in full):

In the Ketubah, the marriage contract, a husband undertakes to “work for and cherish” his wife. The sages said that “A man should love his wife as himself, and honour her more than himself.” He should not be angry or vituperative or create a mood of fear within the home (Rambam, Ishut 15: 19). According to a midrash, when Jacob momentarily displayed anger toward Rachel, G-d said “Is that the way to answer a woman in distress”? (Bereishith Rabbah 71: 7)

Yet domestic violence still exists. 25 November is an International Day Against Violence Against Women, and it is appropriate that we think about it within the Jewish community as well. Abuse comes in many forms: physical, emotional and psychological, and we in the Jewish community are not immune to it.

We would like to think otherwise, knowing how much Judaism sanctifies the home and idealises the relationship between husband and wife. But we cannot wish a problem away. It exists. That is why I – and our rabbinate – support the work of Jewish Women’s Aid and other agencies working in the field.

Jewish Women's Aid provides refuge and resettlement for wives and children who face domestic violence. It runs a confidential helpline staffed by trained volunteers. It offers therapeutic counseling. And it runs programmes in Jewish schools, educating teenagers about healthy relationships and the dangers when they break down.

The home is protected space. That is its beauty. But it brings with it the risk that behaviour that would not be countenanced anywhere else can happen there precisely because of its privacy. Insult, intimidation, the use of force, emotional blackmail and physical violence can happen behind closed doors without anyone else knowing. When it comes to abuse, the home provides the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity³².

The Chief Rabbi emphasises the sanctity of the Jewish home, but also urges his listeners to admit that the special space created in a Jewish home is not always holy and virtuous, and to continue to deny the existence of domestic violence in Jewish homes is to aid the abusers and not the

³⁰ Available at: <http://www.boardofdeputies.org.uk/page.php/George%20Osborne%20Speech/382/103/1>

³¹ Other prominent non- religious figures in the UK have also condemned domestic violence. The General Synod of the Anglican Church passed a motion on domestic violence in 2004. See: https://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/general_synod_debates,_monday,_12_july,_pm.html

³² Please see <http://www.chief Rabbi.org/ReadArtical.aspx?id=1707>.

afflicted. He claims that Jewish tradition tells us clearly that, as Jews, we must not allow sufferers to stand -alone and in order to stand with them, we must acknowledge and work to eradicate the evil that is domestic violence.

In addition to the Chief Rabbi's support, Jewish Women's Aid has received backing from all major UK denominations and anticipates a long lasting relationship moving forward.

Jewish writings and texts to support condemnation of domestic violence

I [a rabbi] began to be haunted by the concept of "Do not stand idly by while your neighbor's blood is being spilled" (Leviticus 19:16), which the Talmud interprets to mean that one has an obligation to divert harm from coming to another person. When staff of social agencies told me that their efforts to alert the Jewish community to the problem of spouse abuse were being ignored, and that I should address the problem because with my credentials as a rabbi and psychiatrist I might be better believed, I began to feel uneasy at remaining silent. Someone then pointed out to me that the Talmud says that "Anyone who has the ability to correct a situation and is derelict in doing so, bears the responsibility for whatever results therefrom" (Shabbos 54b), I realized that I have no option, and that I must speak out. There will be those who will say that such subjects should not be aired publicly, and that to do so is chilul Hashem, a disgrace to the sanctity of Judaism...I understand this position, but if I must choose between being reprimanded by those who believe that this problem should be concealed or by a wife who has suffered (along with her children) from an abusive husband, and could not receive help because no one believed her, I know where I must make my choice.

Rabbi Abraham J Twerski, M.D.

In his book *The Shame Borne in Silence: Spousal Abuse in the Jewish Community*, Rabbi Tweski details the religious Jewish argument against domestic abuse. Fundamentally, he claims that anyone capable of committing violence against a family member is inherently violating the underlying principle of Torah, "that everything...was created for the sole purpose of bringing glory and honor to G-d...The derivative of this is that in Torah life there is no room for considerations such as 'What is it that I want?'.... [and] it should be immediately obvious that if one were to set aside one's own drives...there would be no potential whatever for wife abuse...anyone who abuses...is derelict in the fundamental underpinnings of Torah" (50-52).

There are many Jewish resources that highlight the absolute incompatibility between domestic violence and Jewish belief. For example, the volume of the Talmud *Ethics of the Fathers* contains teachings relating to humility, forgiveness, generosity, the importance of being slow to anger and, additionally, easy to appease. It also teaches respect of others, refusing to entertain personal glorification, demonstrating control over oneself, doing all possible to avoid strife, being peaceful, avoiding rage, envy and temptation, minimising indulgence in physical pleasures (Twerski 1996: 13).

Rabbi Twerski argues that Jewish communities are often in denial, claiming that abuse does not happen in Jewish families because there is such a strong emphasis on the importance of love and devotion within a peaceful family unit—*shalom bayis*, a peaceful home, is a basic tenant of a Jewish household. However, he points out that for many Jews, enacting *Judaism* is done imperfectly and ignoring family discord to preserve the outward appearance of *shalom bayis*—or indeed insisting that a woman must not be doing her part to maintain a peaceful home if she is suffering due to the abuse of another family member, is distinctly un-Jewish (Twerski 1996: 33).

Unfortunately, there are other aspects of Jewish belief that are often misinterpreted, including particular important texts. For example, *Genesis 3:16* states “He shall rule over you”, ‘he’ referring to man. However, Twerski urges rabbinical authorities to clarify texts that can seem misleading; for example, the Midrash clarifies the statement above in saying: “This does *not* mean absolute rule. A man dare not harm his wife” (*Bereishis Rabbah 20:18*). Indeed, halachic and ethical writings are emphatically opposed to any form of wife beating or abuse and rabbis are well placed to speak about the religious obligations incumbent on Jews of both sexes to cherish and honour each other (Shaare Teshuva 3:77; Even Hoezer 154:3; Kesubos 185).

CHAPTER THREE: FINDINGS FROM THE GENERAL OPINION SURVEY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

JWA commissioned a general opinion and experience survey on the topic of domestic abuse in the Jewish community. The full survey questions are included in this report as Appendix B. As far as we know, this survey is the first to provide information on this subject.

Survey Monkey was identified as a desirable tool for the survey. Survey Monkey is low-cost, web-based survey management tool that facilitates public surveys and aggregates responses for analysis. The survey was deliberately short—taking most people between five and ten minutes—to maximise responses. Promotional material, as well as the survey itself, emphasised that respondents did not need to have personal experience of domestic violence. The survey was distributed through the following methods: emails to Jewish charitable organisations; Facebook advertisements; Limmud advertisements; an email to JWA’s list of supporters and an email to a list of Jewish professionals across the UK (recipients were encouraged to forward the survey link to Jewish friends and colleagues); information in synagogue newsletters; emails sent to (and forwarded on from) regional representative councils; and advertisements in the Jewish Chronicle and the Jewish Telegraph.

The survey respondents were self-selected; therefore, the survey results make no claim to be statistically representative of Jewish opinion. It may be, for example, that people with personal experiences of DV, or knowledge of someone close to them experiencing DV, were more likely to fill out the survey. It is also possible that people sympathetic to JWA objectives were more inclined to take the survey.

To compensate for the non-random nature of the survey, survey respondent demographics were compared to UK Census statistics—including specific data on the Jewish population—and the 2009 Women’s Report: Connection, Continuity and Community (CCC). As reported below, the respondent sample represents a reasonable cross-section of Jewish people (mostly women) in the UK according to age and religious affiliation, as well as experience, knowledge and opinions of DV. In recognition of the novel nature of the survey, as well as the reasonable sample of respondents that was achieved, the survey findings should be regarded as credible and relevant.

Survey response

The survey was available from 15 November 2010 to 15 January 2011. The survey yielded 842 complete responses. The definition of a “complete” response was that a respondent saw all of the survey questions and did not prematurely exit the survey, though “skipped” responses were permitted.

Respondent demographics

Just 6% (54 respondents) were male. Mean respondent age was 49 years (range: 18-88) for women and 50 years (range: 22-83) for men. The age distribution of female respondents compares favourably to the recent CCC study.

Figure 1. Age, female respondents



A majority of female respondents (69%) were at least university-educated and 35% had postgraduate training; however, a higher percentage of respondents had no qualification than would have been expected based on the 2001 Census data for all Jewish women (Figure 2). Among male respondents, 46% had postgraduate training and 30% were university educated (data not demonstrated).

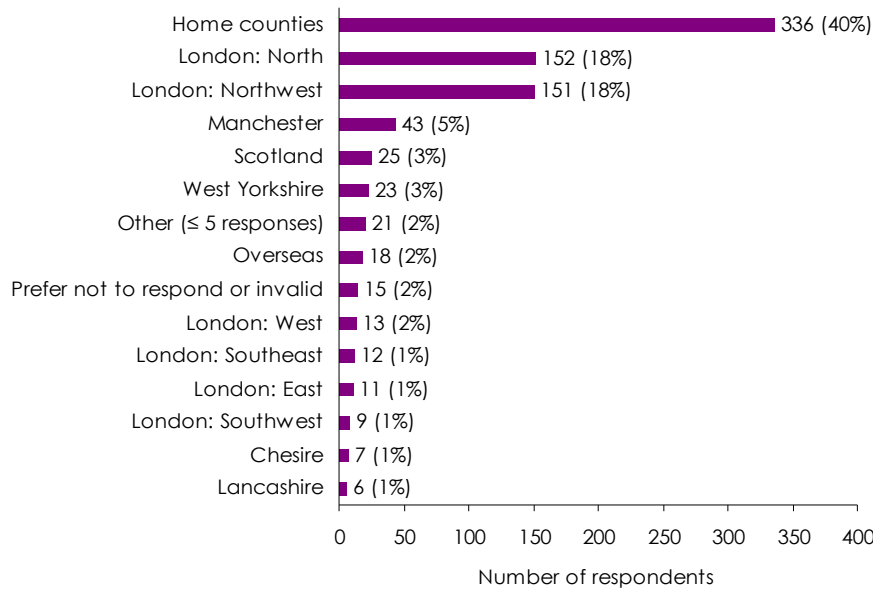
Forty percent of respondents were from the Home Counties and 41% were from London (Figure 3). Thirty-six percent of respondents were from north or northwest London; 14% of total respondents had Barnet postcodes, 1% had Hackney postcodes and 1% had Haringey postcodes in north London (data not demonstrated). Harrow, Watford and Ilford postcodes combined accounted for 77% of respondents from the Home Counties (Figure 4).

Figure 2. Education, female respondents



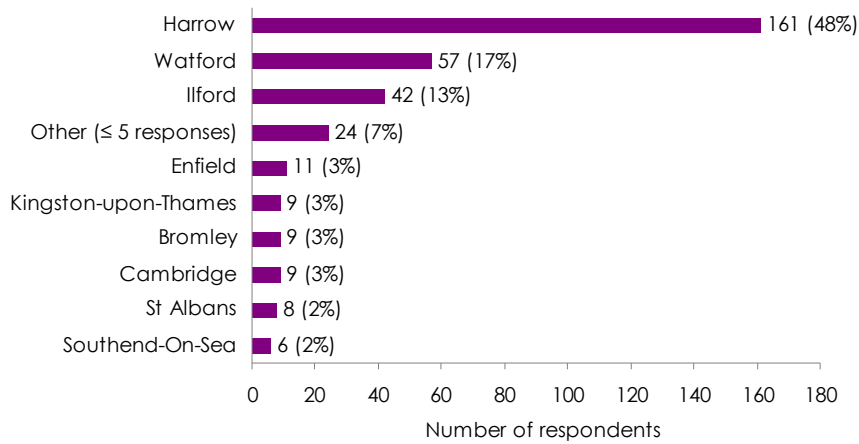
Note: The JWA survey questioned respondents specifically on university qualifications, and hence is not directly comparable to “all other qualifications” reported in the other studies.

Figure 3. Geographic area



Note: “Other” includes Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Lanarkshire, West Midlands, Sheffield, Derbyshire, Liverpool, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Birmingham, Glamorganshire, Cardiff.

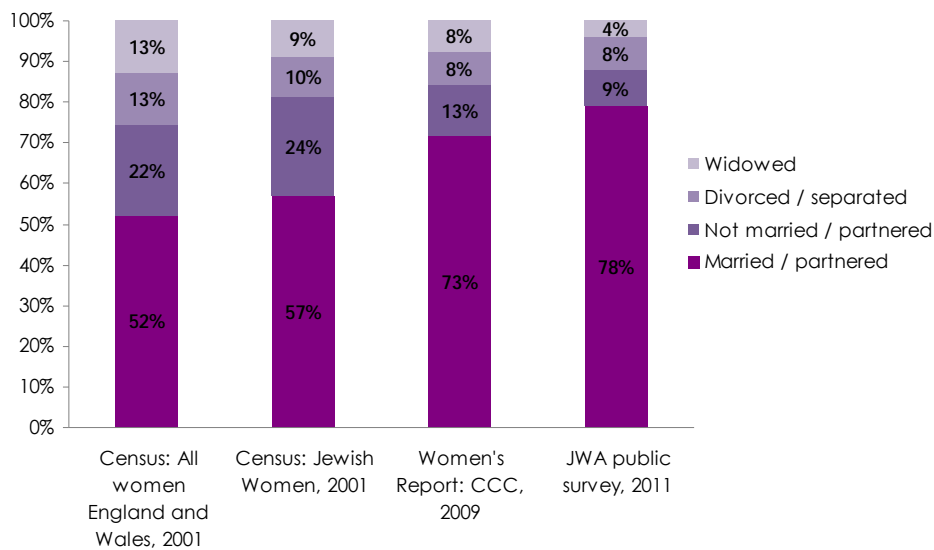
Figure 4. Home Counties detail



Note: "Other" includes Slough, Ipswich, Dartford, Uxbridge, Croydon, Romford, Oxford, Chelmsford, Hemel Hempstead, Twickenham

Seventy-eight percent of female respondents were married or partnered (<1% in a civil partnership), 9% were single, 8% were divorced or separated, 4% were widowed (Figure 5). The proportion of married women who took the JWA survey was higher than the comparable Census estimate of the UK Jewish population (57%) (Figure 5). It is at least possible that married or partnered women were more likely to find the JWA survey relevant.

Figure 5. Relationship status, female respondents

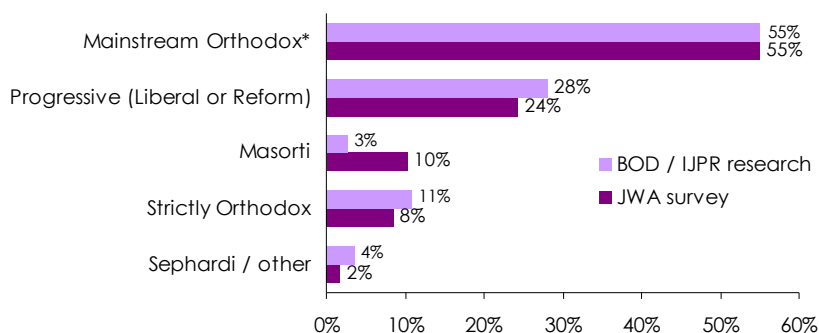


Respondent religious affiliation and observance

In terms of religious affiliation, 84 respondents (10%) identified as “not formally affiliated”. Among affiliated respondents, 55% were Mainstream Orthodox, 24% were Progressive (including Liberal and Reform), 10% were Masorti, 8% were Strictly Orthodox and 2% were Sephardi or had multiple affiliations (Figure 6). This distribution compares favourably with recent data on synagogue membership compiled by the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) and Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) (n=82,963) (Figure 6). The notable exception is Masorti affiliation (3% of estimated Jewish synagogue affiliation based on BOD / JPR survey, compared to 10% of JWA survey respondents). Based on respondents’ answers to other questions and detailed postcode data, it appears there may have been a clear condemnation of domestic violence from some Masorti rabbis in the greater London area; this may have contributed to the high number of responses from the Masorti community. Eleven percent of respondents to the BOD / JPR national synagogue survey reported Strictly Orthodox affiliation, compared to 8% of JWA survey respondents. Although the JWA survey response from this community is lower than the estimated national proportion, this response rate is higher than was originally anticipated for this survey.

Twenty-three percent of all female respondents were Mainstream Orthodox and aged 50-69 years (Figure 7). Data on religious observance among female respondents was compared to the 2009 CCC Women’s Report. Consistent with that survey, the JWA survey data indicated that religious affiliation is not a complete indicator of religious outlook; 41% of female respondents to this survey identified as “somewhat religious”, 21% as “religious” and 21% identified as “somewhat secular” (data not demonstrated). Seventy-eight percent of Strictly Orthodox female respondents identified as “Religious”, compared to 22% of Mainstream Orthodox, 13% of Progressive and 12% of Masorti respondents (Figure 8)³³.

Figure 6. Religious affiliation



*Note: n=746 / 842 JWA survey respondents identified a religious affiliation; Progressive includes Liberal and Reform; Other includes more than one affiliation. * BOD / JPR research reported “Central Orthodox” affiliation; **Not reported in the BOD / JPR research.*

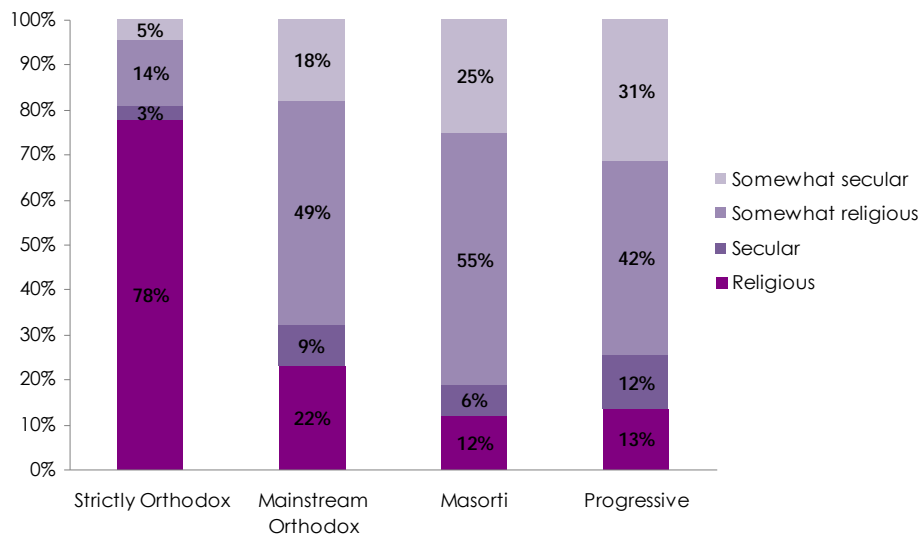
³³ The former and current clients interviewed for chapter four also came from a wide denominational affiliation/levels of observance spectrum; see next chapter for details.

Figure 7. Respondent religious affiliation by age and gender, female respondents

	Age <20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	Total
Women								
Mainstream Orthodox	1 (0.1)	47 (6)	51 (6)	78 (10)	85 (11)	97 (12)	21 (3)	380 (48)
Progressive	1 (0.1)	21 (3)	22 (3)	26 (3)	36 (5)	44 (6)	21 (3)	171 (22)
Strictly Orthodox	0 (0)	15 (2)	13 (2)	6 (0.8)	10 (1)	12 (2)	4 (0.5)	60 (8)
Masorti	0 (0)	7 (0.9)	14 (2)	19 (2)	12 (2)	17 (2)	3 (0.4)	72 (9)
Not formally affiliated	0 (0)	13 (2)	22 (3)	15 (2)	11 (1)	18 (2)	2 (0.3)	81 (10)
Other	0 (0)	2 (0.3)	1 (0.1)	3 (0.4)	3 (0.4)	2 (0.3)	1 (0.1)	12 (2)
Prefer not to say	0 (0)	2 (0.3)	3 (0.4)	2 (0.3)	1 (0.1)	4 (0.5)	0 (0)	12 (2)
Total	2 (0.3)	107 (14)	126 (16)	149 (19)	158 (20)	194 (25)	52 (7)	788 (100)

Note: Presented as number of respondents (% of total female respondents).

Figure 8. Religious observance by affiliation, female respondents



Respondent experience of domestic abuse

Personal experience. Over 26% of survey respondents—17% of men and 27% of women—indicated they had personally experienced domestic abuse (Figure 9). This figure is comparable to the national statistic, which indicates 25% of women in the UK experience some form of domestic violence in their lifetimes. Fourteen percent of total respondents indicated they had experienced

abuse from a former partner (7% of men and 15% of women), 4% of total respondents had experienced abuse from a current partner (0% of men and 4% of women), 0.2% of total respondents had experienced abuse from both a former and current partner (0% of men and 0.3% of women) and 8% of total respondents had experienced abuse from a family member (9% of men and 8% of women).

Experience of friends, family or acquaintances. Just over 55% of survey respondents (39% of men and 56% of women) indicated they knew someone else who had experienced domestic abuse (Figure 10). In total, 60% of all respondents had either personally experienced domestic abuse or knew someone who had. The percentage of respondents that had experienced domestic abuse or knew someone who had was highest among respondents age 40-49 years (69%), and lowest among respondents age 30-39 (54%). Among respondents of different religious affiliations, respondents without any current synagogue affiliation demonstrated the highest percentage of respondents who had either experienced domestic abuse or knew someone who had (40%), while the percentage was comparable among respondents grouped by religious affiliation (Strictly Orthodox: 29%, Mainstream Orthodox: 22%, Masorti: 25%, Progressive: 26%) (data not demonstrated).

Figure 9. Have you experienced domestic abuse? If so, who was the perpetrator?

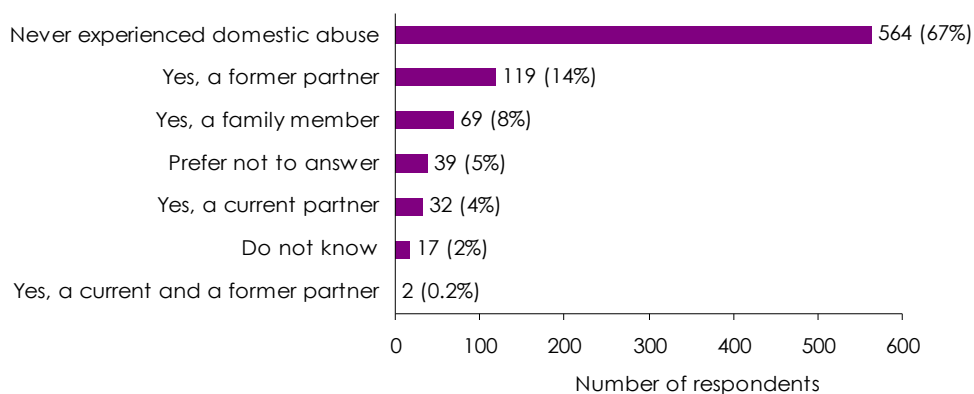
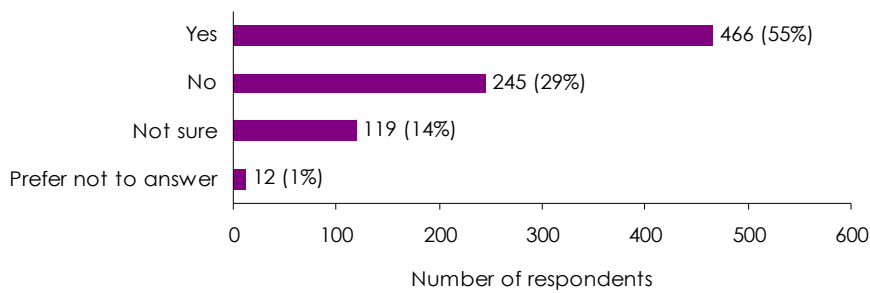


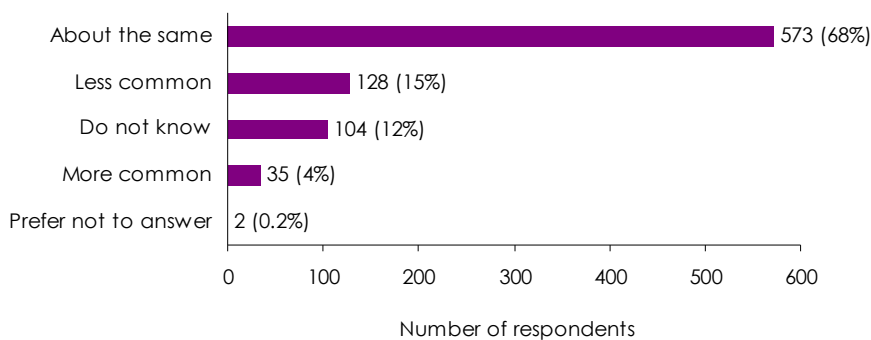
Figure 10. Do you know someone else who has experienced domestic abuse?



Respondent opinions and awareness of domestic abuse

Perceived prevalence of domestic violence. Sixty-eight percent of respondents believed that domestic abuse occurs at about the same rate in the Jewish community as in the general population (Figure 11). Among respondents who had neither experienced domestic abuse nor knew someone who had, 64% believed that such abuse occurs at about the same rate in Jewish community, compared to 71% among respondents who either had personal experience with domestic abuse or knew someone who had (data not demonstrated). Among respondents by age category, 74% of respondents age 70+ years believed that domestic abuse occurs at the same rate in the Jewish community as in the general population, compared to 62% of respondents under 30 years of age (data not demonstrated). Twenty-two percent of Strictly Orthodox respondents believed such abuse is less common in the Jewish community, compared to 21% of Masorti respondents, 15% of Mainstream Orthodox and 16% of Progressive respondents (data not demonstrated)³⁴.

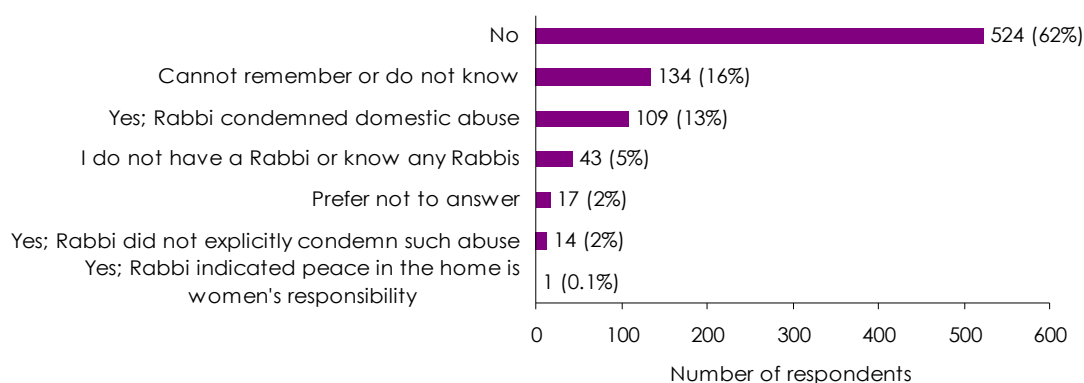
Figure 11. Do you think that domestic abuse is more common, less common or occurs at the same rate in the Jewish community as in the general population?



³⁴ Interestingly, many of the former and current JWA clients spoke about their desire to know that they were not the only Jewish women experiencing domestic violence; that more public acknowledgement of DV in the Jewish community would bring them comfort (see the next chapter for further discussion).

Rabbi communications on domestic violence. Sixty-two percent of respondents indicated that they were not aware of a Rabbi in their community publicly addressing the issue of domestic abuse in the community (Figure 12). Among those who had heard a Rabbi addressing this issue, 88% indicated that the Rabbi explicitly condemned such abuse (Figure 12). Twenty-four percent of Masorti respondents reported that a Rabbi had specifically addressed domestic abuse, compared to 21% among Progressive respondents, 17% among Strictly Orthodox and 11% among Mainstream Orthodox (data not demonstrated)³⁵.

Figure 12. Have you heard a Rabbi in your community addressing domestic abuse?



Definition of domestic violence. Respondents were asked to identify items that constitute domestic abuse from a list, which was derived primarily from the most recent version of the British Crime Survey and supplemented with questions from a similar survey of the Jewish community in the United States (JWI: 2004) (Figure 13). Among respondents who either had experienced domestic abuse personally or knew someone who had, 76% identified all of the items in the list as domestic abuse, compared to 69% of people who had neither personally experienced domestic abuse nor knew someone who had (Figure 13). Seventy-four percent of female respondents and 59% of male respondents, respectively, believed all of the options should be considered domestic abuse (Figure 13). Based on religious affiliation, 80% of Progressive respondents indicated all of the options constituted domestic abuse, compared to 73% each of Masorti and Mainstream Orthodox respondents and 63% of Strictly Orthodox respondents (data not demonstrated).

Ranked sources of support. Fifty-one percent of respondents ranked friends, family and neighbours as a primary source of support they would seek in the event of domestic abuse, or sources of support to which they would refer others in the same situation (Figure 14). About a third

³⁵ This question is extremely important, because JWA clients spoke about their desire for rabbinical support in such distressing situations. Some women had extremely positive reassurance from their rabbis, while others struggled to find a rabbi to speak with about domestic violence. See chapter four for further discussion.

of respondents (34%) indicated that the police would be a primary source of support. Thirty percent and 29% of respondents indicated that a health professional or national helpline would be a primary source of support, respectively. Just under a third of respondents indicated that a Rabbi would be a primary or secondary source of support, while 23% of respondents indicated that they would not seek or advise someone to seek support from a Rabbi if faced with domestic abuse (Figure 14). Forty percent of Progressive respondents indicated that a Rabbi would be a primary source of support, compared to 35% of Mainstream Orthodox respondents, 22% of Strictly Orthodox respondents and 4% of Masorti respondents (data not demonstrated).

JWA was ranked as a primary or secondary source of support by 73% percent of respondents (Figure 14). Among Masorti respondents, 78% of indicated that JWA would be a primary or secondary source of support, compared to 77% Mainstream Orthodox respondents, 68% of Progressive respondents and 67% of Strictly Orthodox Respondents (data not demonstrated).

Figure 13. What should be considered domestic abuse?

Options	Respondents experienced domestic abuse or knew someone who did (533/842 [60%] respondents)	Respondents neither experienced domestic abuse nor knew someone who did (399/842 [40%] respondents)	Respondent is male (54/842 [6%] respondents)
Dictating family religious observance.	396 (79%)	249 (73%)	34 (63%)
Constantly checking up on someone's whereabouts.	434 (86%)	278 (82%)	40 (74%)
Treating someone like a servant, not sharing big decisions	478 (95%)	309 (91%)	48 (89%)
Withholding money or spending family income without consent.	472 (94%)	303 (89%)	47 (87%)
Restricting use of other family property, such as a car.	453 (90%)	292 (86%)	42 (78%)
Preventing someone from seeing friends and relatives.	483 (96%)	320 (94%)	48 (89%)
Preventing someone from getting or keeping a job.	476 (95%)	310 (91%)	46 (85%)
Driving recklessly to make someone feel threatened.	479 (95%)	315 (93%)	46 (85%)
Belittling someone to the extent that they feel worthless.	492 (98%)	323 (95%)	51 (94%)
Pushing, slapping, choking holding down, kicking, biting or pushing.	497 (99%)	334 (99%)	53 (98%)
Using a weapon against someone, for example a stick or a knife.	497 (99%)	333 (98%)	53 (98%)
Threatening to hurt someone or threatening to destroy property	492 (98%)	332 (98%)	52 (96%)
Threatening someone with a weapon, for example a stick or a knife.	494 (98%)	332 (98%)	53 (98%)
Threatening to kill someone.	495 (98%)	333 (98%)	53 (98%)
Stalking or following someone.	492 (98%)	328 (97%)	53 (98%)
Sending threatening messages via phone, email or text.	495 (98%)	327 (96%)	53 (98%)
Threatening to take the children away.	495 (98%)	326 (96%)	51 (94%)
Coercing a partner to have sex.	492 (98%)	324 (96%)	52 (96%)
All of these.	383 (76%)	234 (69%)	32 (59%)
None of these.	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	1 (2%)

Figure 14. Ranked sources of that would be sought in the event of domestic abuse

	Primary source of support	Secondary source of support	Last resort for support	Would not access this type of support
Friends / relatives / neighbours	429 (51%)	156 (19%)	41 (5%)	42 (5%)
Jewish Women's Aid (JWA)	369 (44%)	240 (29%)	39 (5%)	22 (3%)
Police	285 (34%)	156 (19%)	142 (17%)	36 (4%)
Health professional	255 (30%)	259 (31%)	53 (6%)	48 (6%)
National helpline	248 (29%)	192 (23%)	64 (8%)	46 (5%)
Secular specialist support services	196 (23%)	182 (22%)	89 (11%)	68 (8%)
Counsellor / therapist	194 (23%)	236 (28%)	70 (8%)	53 (6%)
Legal professional	145 (17%)	232 (28%)	124 (15%)	49 (6%)
Rabbi	63 (7%)	190 (23%)	141 (17%)	195 (23%)
Jewish Marriage Council	62 (7%)	163 (19%)	83 (10%)	205 (24%)
Social services (such as housing agency)	51 (6%)	148 (18%)	125 (15%)	195 (23%)
Jewish Care	47 (6%)	130 (15%)	67 (8%)	252 (30%)
Norwood	43 (5%)	118 (14%)	56 (7%)	274 (33%)
Someone at work	26 (3%)	114 (14%)	144 (17%)	239 (28%)
Do not know	14 (2%)	2 (0.2%)	12 (1%)	29 (3%)

NB: Not all survey respondents ranked all options.

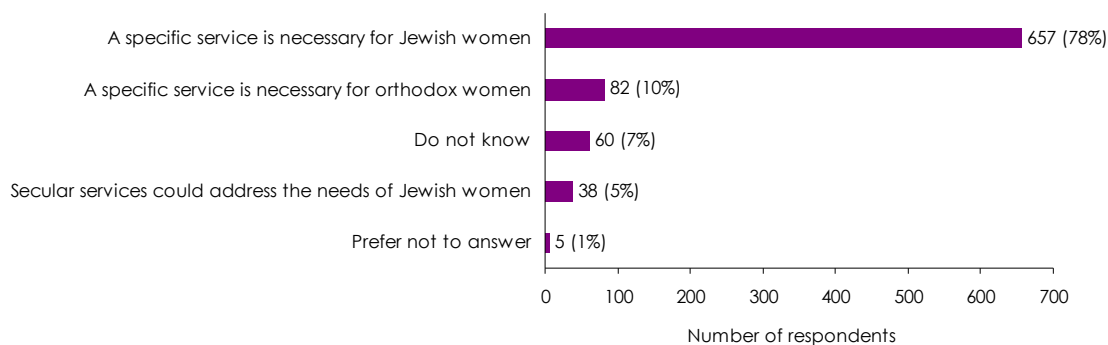
Respondent opinions and awareness of Jewish Women's Aid

Perceived value of specialised services. Seventy-eight percent of respondents indicated that a Jewish-specific domestic abuse organisation is helpful for the Jewish community (Figure 15). Ten percent of respondents indicated that such a service is only necessary for orthodox women and 5% of respondents indicated that secular services could fully address the needs of Jewish women. Ninety percent of Strictly Orthodox respondents indicated that a specialised service was necessary for Jewish women, compared to 62% of Progressive respondents, 83% of Masorti respondents and 85% of Mainstream Orthodox respondents (data not demonstrated).

Awareness of Jewish Women's Aid (JWA). Eighty-four percent of respondents were aware of JWA prior to taking the survey, while 16% were not aware of JWA (data not demonstrated). Among services offered by JWA, 74% of total respondents were aware of JWA's helpline, 68% of respondents were aware of JWA's counselling services, 50% were aware of JWA's secure refuge, 45% were aware of JWA's education and awareness programmes (Figure 16)³⁶.

Perceived value of Jewish Women's Aid. When respondents were asked whether they would refer someone to JWA in the event of domestic abuse, 82% responded affirmatively (Figure 17). The percentage of affiliated Masorti, Mainstream Orthodox, Strictly Orthodox and Progressive respondents that responded affirmatively were 88%, 86%, 81% and 80%, respectively³⁷.

Figure 15. Do you feel that a Jewish-specific domestic abuse organisation is helpful, or could Jewish women be served by a secular service?



³⁶ Women interviewed described finding out about JWA in a variety of ways, including from the toilet-door poster campaign and from friends or family (see next chapter).

³⁷ All of the women interviewed stressed how important it was to them to have a Jewish specific service to seek help from; see chapter four.

Figure 16. Previous awareness of services offered by Jewish Women's Aid

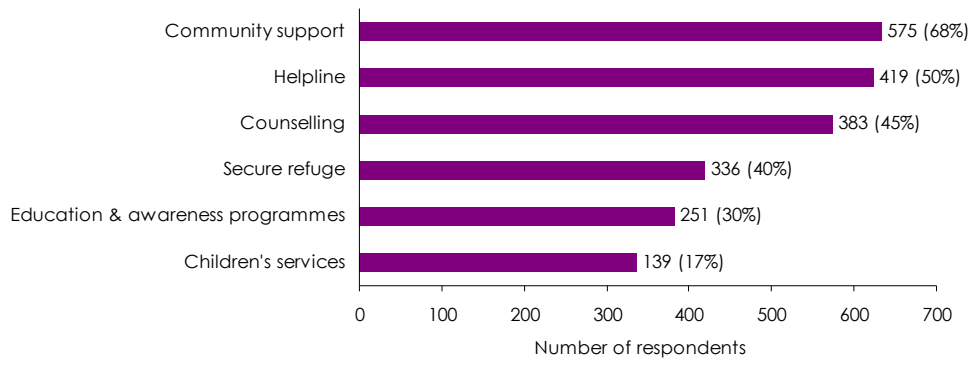
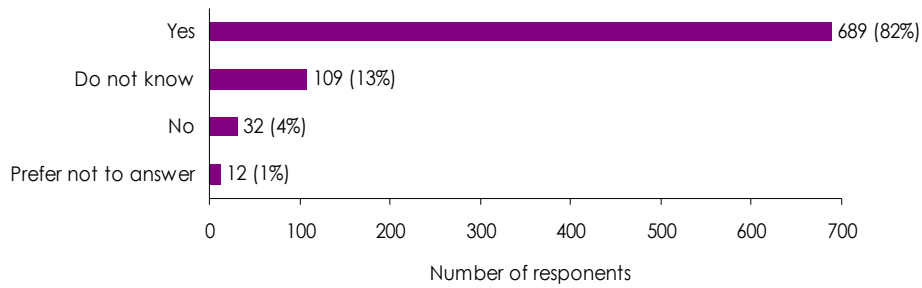
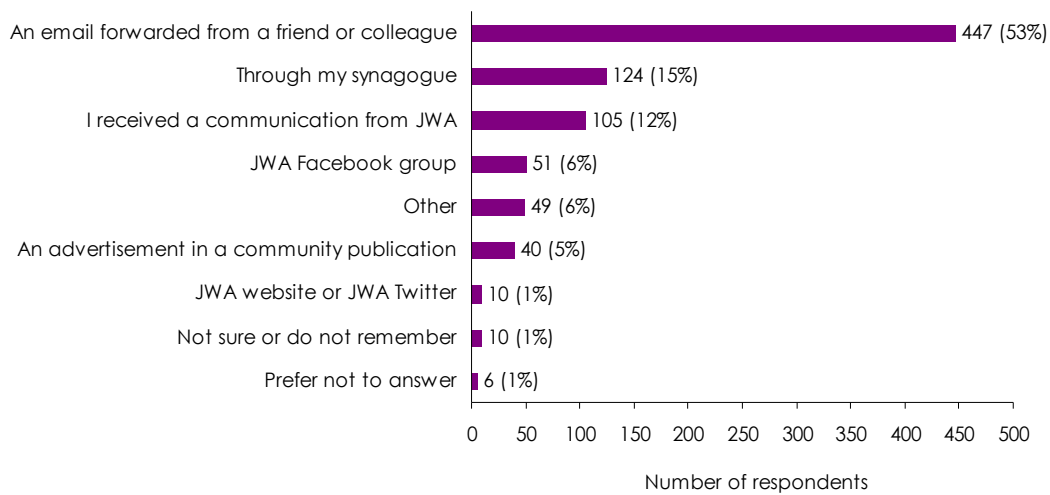


Figure 17. If a Jewish person that you know experienced domestic abuse, would you refer the person to a Jewish Women's Aid service?



Survey awareness. A majority of respondents (53%) were made aware of the JWA survey through an email forwarded from a friend or colleague (Figure 18). Fifteen percent of respondents heard about the survey through their synagogue, 12% of respondents received a communication from JWA, 7% were aware of the survey by virtue of JWA’s website or social media (Facebook and Twitter) and 5% of respondents were aware of the survey based on an advertisement in a community publication.

Figure 18. How did you hear about this survey?



CHAPTER FOUR JEWISH VOICES SPEAK OUT: CLIENT DATA

To supplement the findings of the general opinion survey, data was collected on the experiences of current and past JWA clients. This data was collected through face-to-face interview. In this chapter, the voices of British Jewish women who have experienced domestic violence are given prominence.

This data is not representative, and is not intended to speak for all JWA clients or Jewish women experiencing abuse. Instead, this chapter provides an overview of shared challenges these twenty women faced, as expressed in their own words.

Client Respondents: Interviews

Finding women to interview about their personal experiences of domestic violence was challenging, given JWA's commitment to complete and total confidentiality between the organisation and both its current and former clients. As such, only the professional staff was able to contact women who have used their services; these details were unable to be passed along to the researchers.

The JWA staff worked tirelessly to call everyone on their database listed as having used JWA's services over the past five years. However, it was discovered that much of the contact information is out of date, as women had moved or changed phone numbers. Of approximately 300 women in the database since 2007, current safe contact details were only found for 80 and contact via phone was made with 67 of these women. Of these 67 women, a face to face interview was arranged with 19 women and a phone interview with 1 woman in hiding. The interviews took place at a safe and quiet place of the woman's choosing; 15 of the women chose for the interviewer to come to their homes, and five women met the interviewer at JWA's offices. All of these women were guaranteed complete confidentiality and anonymity. Accordingly, only broad comments can be included in this report so as to provide the highest level of privacy to these women, many of whom were worried about recriminations from former partners for taking part in this research.

Demographics of Client Respondents: Interviews

The twenty women interviewed were evenly spread across an age range between 26 to 60 years old, and had experienced abuse for as few as four months and as long as 31 years before leaving for good. All but one lived in the Greater London area (and primarily, although not exclusively, North London and the Home Counties), with one woman in hiding somewhere in the UK. Eighteen women identified as British; one woman identified herself as a South African living in the UK for 38 years and another woman described herself as Israeli, living in the UK for nine years.

The women came from differing denominational affiliations; six out of twenty identified as modern Orthodox; three women described themselves as strictly Orthodox; four women were unaffiliated; four women were Progressive (Liberal or Reform); and four other women did not identify themselves as part of this spectrum and preferred to use words such as spiritual or Israeli. Twelve of the women identified themselves as religious or somewhat religious and the other eight women identified themselves as secular or somewhat secular.

Nineteen of these twenty women had experienced partner-based violence and all nineteen had been married to the abuser; one woman had been abused concurrently by a step-mother and a brother. None of these women still lived with the abuser(s) (although many still had contact because of children, as all nineteen women had children) and, interestingly, none of the nineteen women (who had experienced partner abuse) had remarried and the one young woman who had been abused by family members did not foresee herself able to commit to a partner due to “*overwhelming trust issues*”. Fourteen of the nineteen women to have experienced partner violence were now divorced, with five still involved in court processes relating to relations between themselves, their children and the perpetrator.

Traits of Perpetrators

During the interviews, the researcher asked many questions about the perpetrator of the violence. Women who had experienced abuse from more than one perpetrator during their lifetimes (three of the twenty women) were asked to think about their most recent perpetrator, which inevitably meant discussing a husband or ex-husband.

Nineteen of the twenty-one perpetrators discussed were male³⁸; one woman had experienced abuse from her step-mother. Seventeen women identified their perpetrators as British, two were identified as Canadian and one was American. All twenty-one perpetrators were identified as Jewish.

Experience of Abuse

Eight of the women interviewed had experienced at least one act of physical violence at the hands of the perpetrators. Six of these eight women said that they experienced physical violence against them repeatedly.

Twelve women described the abuse they experienced as ‘mostly emotionally abusive’, although when pressed, many of these women admitted that the perpetrator often used his physical size to block them into corners or to restrain them; these women did not consider themselves to have

³⁸ There were twenty women interviewed, but twenty-one perpetrators discussed since one woman suffered abuse from her step-mother and brother at the same time.

experienced physical violence because they had never been pushed or hit, but did admit that they often felt threatened by the perpetrator in some physical manner.

Thirteen of the twenty women interviewed considered themselves to have been sexually abused in some way, and six more women felt that they had been forced to have sex against their will at least once. Sexual violence often overlapped with religious violence, with women describing perpetrators who refused to accept their desire to maintain strict codes of sexual ethics, including instances where perpetrators violated *niddah*³⁹. Six women were aware that their partners had been having affairs (with more suspecting so), and two women knew that their partners had visited prostitutes while still in the marriage.

Recurrent themes in interviews

This section will highlight recurrent themes arising from the interviews. These themes have been chosen because they were repeatedly raised by the women themselves throughout the interview. Again, although in no way a representative sample, the consistency with which these themes were mentioned points to particular issues that have arisen for Jewish women experiencing domestic violence in the UK.

Low Self Worth

The overwhelming shared sentiment arising from all interviewees was a feeling of low self-worth. All twenty women spoke of internalising the perpetrator's disparaging and insulting comments and of often felt as if they 'deserved' to be abused. Powerfully, many women spoke of wishing they were at fault, since they felt they had control over their own behavior but realized that they could not control the rage or indiscriminate violence directed their way:

I was hoping against hope that someone, a doctor, would tell me that it was all me—that I was the problem, that it was me who was crazy and that I was causing him to hurt me. That I deserved it. Because I can change, I can be the one with the problem. But I knew if it was him, that I couldn't control it and I either had to live with his behaviour or leave.

Many women also felt that they had no choice but to put up with the abuse, because divorce was only a last option for themselves or for their children. Some of these women had turned to family in hopes of help escaping an abusive marriage, only to be told to "*work at it*", "*Jews don't divorce*" and that it was their duty as a wife to work to keep "*shalom bayis*".

Women also found that they had a hard time identifying as someone who had experienced domestic violence during their ordeal, and it was still difficult for many to accept this terminology, even years after. As one woman said, "*when people read out a definition of domestic violence to me, then yes, I know I fit it exactly. But the language, the words, I feel as if it gives him all the*

³⁹ A period of separation during female menstruation, when a husband and wife do not come into contact.

control again. I don't mind saying, yes, I suffered emotionally, I suffered physically, but domestic violence still scares me. I don't know how to explain it".

This sentiment was echoed repeatedly. These women had decided to contact a domestic violence service provider, and yet still many preferred not to think of themselves as victims of domestic abuse. The women overwhelmingly communicated that there is “*something about*” the words ‘domestic violence’ that still carries a stigma or a connotation that they do not quite feel comfortable with. Most women were prepared to identify what had happened to them as violence (be it emotional, physical or both), but were still uncomfortable when the word ‘domestic’ was added to it.

Retrospective Awareness of Warning Signs

All nineteen women abused by partners spoke of having “ignored” warning signs. Some of the warning signs identified were considered minor by the women-- just small things that they almost did not even notice at the time but, with hindsight, were good indicators of worse abuse to come in the future.

Sheila⁴⁰, a twenty six year old strictly religious woman with one small child, said:

Two weeks into the dating, something weird happened, like a really stupid thing where he basically way, way over-reacted to something that was just, it was some kind of mistake or something, and he like wouldn't believe almost that it wasn't anything to get worked up about. I just thought it was weird. I just thought it was really strange. So I went home and I thought about it and I just thought... I remember I sent him an email expressing that I was very confused and very disappointed in his ridiculous over-reaction and also the lack of trust and I was quite offended because thank God, I basically have been a stable person in the London Jewish community for most of my whole life.

So I was upset, and his response was, I can't remember, to be honest. Maybe he called me. He didn't say I'm very sorry I over-reacted, it's because I had this bad experience before or whatever. He didn't say anything like that. So I said to him I'm upset, I don't think this is going to work, goodbye. I then got a phone call a day later or that day, I think it was that day, from one of his rabbi's and he was at Yeshiva at the time. The rabbi told me I was lucky to have this match, that he was very excellent, and so I let it slide. It was the beginning of me thinking that I am just too sensitive.

Sheila dated her husband for three weeks, and was engaged for only a further three weeks. Sheila was already engaged when her husband began to show some negative characteristics, but:

I perceived that once I was engaged it was as if I was married. I didn't realise at the time that I'm not married, and that if there are red flags whilst I'm engaged, there is absolutely no reason why I shouldn't look into them and be aware of the fact that it could be that we need to get disengaged. It never even occurred to me. We were engaged, and that was basically as if we were married and the only difference is we can't live together yet, and I still can't touch him, but basically we are married. So, the few things that did come up, I appeased him in whatever way was necessary.

⁴⁰ All names and identifying characteristics have been changed.

Other women understood the incidents that happened before marriage as signs of their future husband's devotion to them, only later to realise that his desire "*to control me was not out of care and compassion, but out of a sick need to control everything I did*". Susan, a modern Orthodox fifty year old woman, said:

He was very controlling when we were going out. We had a lot of... it was a very rocky road, but I felt very sorry for him. He didn't have any siblings, his mother was only five years younger than my grandmother, and his father died when he was a young child, because he was a lot older than her and they had children late. She couldn't have children and he came long. So he was an only child. Looking back, some of the times I met him, he was absolutely vile to me. He was absolutely vile but I made excuses. I thought well, he doesn't know. He spoke to me very badly all the time. He was often late, but God forbid I was one second late. He would kill me, And I felt really bad for him and I would spend the whole time trying to be sorry, when really, I should have told him to get stuffed.

For more than half the women interviewed, their husbands were their first romantic partners, they remembered feeling a sense of at being the object of such affectionate (later termed controlling) natures at the beginning—Kim, a thirty five year old non-affiliated woman, said: "*I felt so special, like he was doting on me. Yes, sometimes it was horrible and uncomfortable, and even humiliating to be yelled at in public, but then it was still so good to be the object of attention from a man, a man everybody liked*".

Mistaking control for care was echoed by almost every woman interviewed, and small issues of control often escalated to overwhelming rage and violence soon after marriage. Women spoke repeatedly about the need to appease their partners, constantly thinking about ways to avoid their anger and to arrange their schedules so as to avoid conflict:

I would arrange it that I just never did anything around him. I was working part time as a nanny, and so it only left me a few hours before he would get home from studying to do everything—to cook, to clean, to do anything. I would just sit still when he was there—to do anything else was a risk to me, a risk to my safety. I didn't even feel I could leave a room without permission, I knew he would come after me.

Lasting effects of emotional violence over and above physical violence

Some women interviewed had experienced extreme physical violence:

He beat me regularly, just on a whim—often just for fun, it seemed. He also did it to remind the children of his manliness, of him being in charge. I broke bones, and got away for a long time pretending I was clumsy

The last straw was when my head was smashed between the cabinet door, and I blacked out for who knows how long

Extremely disturbingly, women often felt that their abusers had co-conspirators in family and friends who were aware of the violence taking place:

So what happened was that I was at my sister-in-law's and it was the middle of winter, and I had a tee shirt on with short sleeves because I wanted my arms... My arms were black and blue. I wanted to show them, but I wasn't able to articulate. We were all together. And my cousin said, what's wrong with her arm? First of all, it's the middle of winter. Why is she dressed like that? She has bruises on her arms. What's wrong with her? And then they're all saying, oh, well, you know what she's like. She doesn't know what she's doing. She's gone mad, and she walks into things and knocks herself over and everything. After she'd gone out of the room, my husband and his sister are talking, and she... her trade, she's a criminal defence lawyer, that's her job. Right? So I'm sitting there. I'm not deaf. So she said, are you hitting her? What's going on? And she said to him: for G-d's sake, don't be a bloody fool, she says to her brother. She says, if you can't control yourself, **at least don't hit her where everybody can see it.** So when the bruises started healing up, then he started banging my head: against the wall, against the floor.

Yet despite such violence and a sometimes shocking lack of support from family and friends, *all* women who had experienced physical violence agreed that the emotional violence perpetrated against them was “*so, so much worse. I am still alive, he didn't kill me, physically, but for a long time I was emotionally dead. How are you supposed to go on when you have been told how worthless, ugly, and a drain you are, over and over again, for years?*”

These women often felt that family and friends regarded emotional violence as “*not violence at all; if you don't have a black eye, nobody cares what he does to you*”. And yet emotional violence is systematic and ultimately more scarring. Francis, a sixty year old Reform woman said:

he would be... it's like he was grinding me down slowly, and then after a while, it would build up again and it would all be lovey-dovey a bit, and then I would feel better in myself because I'd made the choice of making him feel special, and then something else would happen and it would all go back. He just... he calls them heated altercations. That's how... that is what he says to anyone. He says yes, we've had some heated altercations, yes, not a recognition of his campaign to make it clear that he hated me and that I should hate my worthless self. For instance, and please forgive me for saying this, but I would have rather he had been physically abusive, I think maybe that would have made it easier to leave. But instead, Before our son was born, I was heavily pregnant, he looked in my eyes, straight in my eyes once, and I know it was a verbal thing, but he really with sincerity said I really hope you die in childbirth, and give me my son to myself. I don't... there are certain things that will never... well, a lot of it will never... it will never erase from my memory, ever, and there are certain things that will always be with me.

Instigation of Violence during, or straight after, first pregnancy

Nineteen women interviewed had children (i.e. every women who had experienced partner violence) and sixteen of these women identified the beginning of significant and continuous abuse as during, or straight after, their first pregnancies (although many admitted that, in retrospect, there had been warning signs, often before their marriage or engagement).

We were married for five years, and that was all fine. And now looking back, it's because I certainly adored him, and I did everything I could to please him. I went with him to all his hobbies, took part in everything he was interested in, bought him his favourite food. Start to finish, I just... and I was happy. Having said that, there were the occasional outbursts. But of course, once my daughter was born... and she was a baby, I just quietly went crazy, because he was yelling: get that kid to be quiet. I've got work tomorrow. Just get it to shut

up, I don't care how you do it, but I need my sleep. He used to come home: why isn't my dinner ready? This is cold. I've got no shirts to wear today. Where are they? There's no supper. And he was shouting, shouting. I thought I was a bad mother and a bad wife. So I think the crisis point came because there were three or four days went by. I hadn't eaten or drunk anything because I was so worried about looking after her, afraid when he was coming home that there was going to be shouting, thinking, oh, God, I haven't got supper ready. I haven't done his shirts. I was terrified. So I got ill, ended up in hospital, because when you're not eating, you go a bit hyper anyway. And I had two weeks in Barnet General with a three-month-old baby. Nightmare. Absolute nightmare.

Other women identified pregnancy with physical humiliation:

During my first pregnancy, the abuse really started. I heard voices late one night, and then I was ripped out of my bed, eight months pregnant. I was taken downstairs, and [my husband] blindfolded me. He stripped me naked, and let his friends look at me. Naked and almost giving birth. I did not even know what was happening, who was looking at me. And this was only the beginning.

Finally, two women were denied the opportunity to carry (at least one of their) pregnancies to full term, despite their own desire to do so:

He said, oh what's all this? And he was all happy that I'd made a nice dinner and I said, I've got something to tell you. He said okay, he didn't consider anything but he knew it was probably something nice. He probably thought I was going to take him on holiday, I don't know. Anyway, I told him; I said you know I went to the doctor today? He said, did you? Why didn't you tell me, I would've taken you? And that's when that started, the whole doctor thing. That was the only time I ever went to a doctor on my own when we were married. What did he say? I said well, we're going to have a baby. He went what? And the blood drained from his face. He stood up at the table. He was absolutely horrified. He said right, you're not going to have it. He said, have you told anyone that you're pregnant? I said no, I wanted to tell you first, and he said you're not having it. I said what? He said, you're not having it and that was that⁴¹.

Women spoke about perpetrators becoming jealous of the baby even before it was born, with some speaking about physical and emotional violence directed towards her while pregnant, calling her fat and ugly all the time. For those women whose partners shared their joy during pregnancy, many reported that their partner acted detached from the infant upon birth and refused to share, or in some cases take part at all, with child rearing activities. A thirty-six year old Israeli-born woman said:

He thought I loved the baby and I don't care about him anymore. And he thought he was missing out. He said probably I'm never going to have a life again or we didn't have to have a child then. So after a while he started to go out. He used to say to me... I thought he can't go out with me anymore, so you can go out with your friends, don't help me, you go out in the night. And what happened, he never helped he used to go out and I feel that things are not right, just arguing and never happy.

⁴¹ Additionally, one woman was forced to have children against her will and gave birth to eight children in ten years, and felt incapable of raising them in an abusive home. She eventually had to send the children to relatives in another country and go into hiding herself and has consequently not seen her children in ten years.

In addition, five of the women interviewed also had serious bouts of post-natal depression, and did not know whether this depression would have occurred without the abuse, or if the abuse was as much to blame as the 'baby blues'.

Financial Dependence on Perpetrator

Only three of the twenty women had full time jobs outside of the home while experiencing domestic abuse, and one woman was working part time. Of these three full time working women, one woman spoke of being forced to work, when she had expressed her desire to stay home and raise her children which was not entertained by her partner. Conversely, many of the other women had expressed a desire to work, and were forbidden by their husbands. These women were often given 'pocket money', but did not have any independent financial resources or recourses to savings (which ultimately made leaving that much more difficult).

I know it probably sounds crazy to you, but I had never written a cheque, never paid a bill, never did anything. When my grandmother died, she left me some money. And I just handed it to him, and he invested it in a flat without ever telling me. I never knew because I was financially illiterate. The only time I knew was when we got divorced and he got to keep the flat he bought with my grandmother's money.

Another woman said:

If I wanted to go shopping, he would come with me. If I wanted groceries, he would make a list and write out how much everything would cost. And if I got there and it was any more, I wouldn't be able to get anything. He did not even let me have a bank card. Just literally pocket money. He liked me to look nice and to do things that cost money, but they weren't ever my choice. He even chose my hair dye colour and would pick me up at the salon to inspect it and then pay. I was so fearful that he would hate it and take it out on me, and refuse to pay the salon. Everytime I was nervous.

The financial effects of abuse were felt long after the interviewee had left the perpetrator. Fourteen women had experienced dramatic shifts in financial stability after leaving their abusers:

Having come from a very privileged background, not because I'm being a bighead here, I really did. I didn't actually realise, I thought everybody was like me. My dad had boats and we had holiday homes and I went horse riding. We had beautiful... land around our house and a big house. We all had our own room and our own bathroom. I then made my own money when I was older, and I drove fancy cars and when I lived with my husband and three kids, we had eight bedrooms. We were the envy of everyone, if only they knew what was going on behind closed doors. That I feared for my life. I had to leave the privilege. Now I am penniless, I have nothing. I sleep on the couch and my kids share rooms in our council house. But I have no more fat lips, no more emotional torture, no more fear when I wake up. Well, some, like, leftover fear, but no money could make me go back to that. Still, it was, it is, very difficult to go from having everything I want to nothing. And he still has everything.

Another woman echoed these sentiments:

I do have times when my fridge is almost empty and I'm waiting for my next money to come in, and it's really hard. My children had a comfortable middle-class existence. The house we were in when I was married, my kitchen was as big as the whole of this downstairs house. It is hard for me, worse for the kids. They miss out on so much; he doesn't give them anything.

Mixed feelings on police involvement

The women interviewed were, on the whole, reluctant to involve the police, for a variety of different reasons. Some women were nervous "*the neighbours will see, and it will be all over shul, all over everywhere*". Other women wanted to protect their children from the consequences of police involvement:

So I said, I'm not doing your washing. I said, you're engaged to somebody else. I'm not doing the washing. We must have been divorced, because he was engaged. So I got all his dirty washing out of the baskets and I just put it together in a pile in the corner of the utility, on the floor, but I didn't throw it on the floor. I just put it in a pile and said, do your own dirty washing. He just went mental. He just slammed me against the side. I was facing towards the unit. He slammed me forward, and then he opened the left-hand cupboard, and I didn't see it. It caught me just here. I turned round; I just screamed get away from me, at which point he just started punching and punching, and he perforated the cornea in my left eye, which is when I then had to have emergency surgery, and my son pulled him off me and called the police. But he got away with it. We went to Court. I told the police from the outset that I would not allow my son in Court. I said, there's no way I'm putting my child through that. I said, he might be a 16 year-old boy – he was at the time – but it's still his father. I said, I can't ask my son to stand up and talk against his father; I can't do it.

For other women, police involvement was a positive turning point in their lives. For the young woman who had been abused, emotionally, physically and sexually by her step-mother and brother, the police stepped in when she was admitted to the hospital with a broken leg:

[My step mom] had broken my leg, with [my brother] standing watch over us, and I had to go to the hospital. It was not a choice. I had spent nearly two years not leaving the house, virtually under house arrest, and still I went. And the police were called to the hospital, and I had to tell them, and they helped me get to safety and hiding. I do not know if I ever would have been brave enough to call them on my own, but in the end, I think I am alive because of them.

Yet other women felt that the police did not protect them to the fullest extent:

The female police officer looked at me and said, if you press charges, you could give the father of your children a record. I know I wouldn't do that, I wouldn't want to be responsible for that. So I didn't. There I was, lying on the floor, having had the **** kicked out of me, and I did not do anything. I was made to feel like the bad guy.

Experiences of Rabbinical Support

The women interviewed had dramatically differing experiences of rabbinical support. Seventeen of the twenty women interviewed had never heard a rabbi publically condemn domestic violence, which often made them hesitant to feel they could turn to the rabbi. For four of the women, their

husbands were “*too involved*” in shul life; their husbands were good friends with the rabbis and the women did not feel they would be believed.

Four other women had turned to a rabbi; however, three women had to go to at least two rabbis before they found someone “*who would believe me. I couldn’t believe it when my rabbi turned me away, crying, with a box of chocolates. But I knew I needed religious guidance, so I kept looking and finally found a wonderful rabbi*”. Those women who did find support from a rabbi found it invaluable.

I was worried because my mom had been telling me that it didn’t matter, I could not get divorced, to just stick it out. However, I will never forget the relief when the rabbi finally told me, ‘If you are worried about breaking up a Jewish marriage, it does not sound to me like what you have is a marriage. His behaviour is not behaviour befitting of a husband. You don’t have a marriage, so do not worry about walking away from him’. This simple statement changed my life.

Additionally, seven of the women had negative experiences regarding the Beth Din and the divorce process. They found it hurtful that they had to undertake negotiations to receive a Get from someone who had treated them so inhumanely:

So in the one [court] hearing we went to, he said he needed a break with his solicitor. He came back 15 minutes later and he had written this whole draft out and he threw it at me across the table, he says sign that and I’ll give you a Get. It basically said I [name] completely... I don’t know the words he used, I don’t know if I’m using the right words, but basically, I exonerate you from any type of abuse. And this is him saying it for me to sign, saying that I profusely apologise to you for any kind of thoughts that I may have had that you’ve done this, this and this and this, and I retract everything I’ve ever said to anyone about any kind of violence or any kind of... any... and at the time, I even contemplated signing it, and I called my brother who’s... he’s very religious, and he called the Beth Din there and then. You know what they said? They said to sign it. It could have ruined my life, ruined my ability to get anything for myself. I was so hurt by that. I almost signed, because I respect them, but I didn’t and I am thankful that I did not. I don’t know their motivations—I think they were just trying to facilitate me getting a Get, but they didn’t appreciate the consequences. That getting a Get wasn’t the only thing important to me—it is important people believe me, know what happened.

Although three women felt they had become closer to Judaism as a result of the violence perpetrated against them, twelve women said they felt ‘more distant’. They find it:

I find it hard to look at Jewish men, I now see them all as fronting and pretending, when obviously lots of them are wonderful, but I now associate these horrible things with being Jewish. And that hurts me, I want it to be important, but besides for JWA, I just felt cut off from the Jewish community because of all this. And it still hurts. It is a deep wound.

Contemplation of Suicide

Unfortunately, suicidal thoughts were all too common amongst JWA clients; death was regarded as a solution to problems that would not otherwise go away, particularly since women knew they would have to remain in at least some contact with the perpetrator after separating, because of

their children. Deliberate suicidal actions often followed incidents, although often the events preceding suicide attempts were relatively minor compared to previous incidents and were just described as *“the last straw”*. One woman described a suicide attempt in the following way:

Literally the door shut, he didn't say anything on the way home, I didn't know how to interpret his silences. They seemed like bad mood silences, but I was almost too nervous to say anything. I didn't want to say anything. So we got home, the door shut, and he said to me I can't believe you. You are disgusting; it basically went on and on and on. I was so shocked. He just went on, and then I had nowhere to go but I just thought, I internalized it, he's right and I'm an awful person. I literally went into severe depression that night and I actually tried to kill myself that night. I have come close before. When I'd just left my husband there was a two or three month period when I was in severe depression and I was close in terms of I'd count tablets and I would hold them, I felt better just holding them. I counted tablets and I once went on a bridge, things like that, but I'd never actually, actually tried to kill myself before. That night, and it's like ridiculous saying, but I took [type of food], which I'm fatally allergic to, out of the fridge, and I licked it. I know it doesn't sound like that much, but technically I would have died if God hadn't done a miracle. I sat down to die. I was sitting in the kitchen next to the radiator to die and nothing happened.

Other women shared similar stories:

At the time I was in a very bad place and I was having quite dark thoughts about jumping off bridges. And then, after what was a relatively minor incident when I saw him following me in the street, just when I met a friend for coffee, on my way home I came close to pushing myself off the bridge, but I just visualized my children: I couldn't do it to them. My best friend, when I was a child, her mother committed suicide, so I do know what that does to children, and she never got over her mother. In fact, that's probably my darkest moment when I did that.

When asked why they had not gone through with it (when attempts were not actually made), women invariably spoke of their children:

If I kill myself because he abused me, then I am actually letting him kill the lives of my children. So I got off the railing on the bridge, just climbed down and got back in my car and called Jewish Women's Aid, as much for my children as myself.

Despite horrible and traumatic experiences of suicidal thoughts and actions, all of these women spoke about feeling much more stable and happy after using JWA's services, largely crediting JWA with the recovery that, ultimately, helped to save their lives.

Coming to, and experiences working with, Jewish Women's Aid

The Women came to JWA via differing channels. About half the women came to JWA before leaving their partners, and the rest had either left their partner but were not yet divorced, or divorced but were only then able to seek support what they had experienced. The women were seeking a range of help and advice, from counseling only to integrated support from the community support workers with housing, financial matters and the needs of their children. Two of the women sought shelter in the JWA refuge and were recommended to JWA from national domestic violence

charities. A couple of women remembered seeing posters for JWA on shul bathroom doors⁴², two women heard about JWA from a rabbi, one woman had typed 'Jewish help for abused women' into a search engine, while the rest were recommended by friends and family members.

Without exception, all twenty women described JWA as an *"invaluable"* service that had made a significant contribution to their wellbeing; *"I think they're amazing, and I think you can't put too high a value on that"*, *"I can honestly say that I am not sure I would still be here, and certainly not with my head held high, without JWA"*. All twenty women said that a Jewish specific service was entirely necessary, often sharing sentiments such as: *"With JWA, you do not have to undergo that exhausting cultural translation"*. For example,

I am not even that religious, but still, I feel so much more comfortable talking to JWA staff. I am proud of being Jewish and I do have an affinity to my culture, but I am not Orthodox or religious. Still, I felt so much more of a connection, a validation that this does happen to women like me. They spoke my language, so to speak.

The presence of a kosher, *Shomer Shabbat* refuge was of great comfort to many women, most of whom had never spent time there.

In all honesty, I knew I could go to a friend's, but knowing that the refuge was there, when [JWA staff] told me such a place existed, it gave me the courage I needed, to leave. Just knowing it was there, I took a tour, just seeing it and knowing it was safe, and Jewish, it made me able to go. I attribute knowing it was there to the courage I found to leave him.

For the two women who had lived in the Refuge, the experience of living in it was much more pleasant than other places they had previously been:

The kosher thing, it almost... I did not know where to go. I went to another refuge, and it was really difficult, the eating. And obviously I had to do things in extreme situations, but when a place became available at JWA's refuge, it was such a relief. And I have my own space, and I can come and go as I want. I don't even talk that much to the other residents, but there is a camaraderie-knowing we are all going through it, and we will get through it.

Both the JWA professional staff and volunteers were praised over and over again. Staff members were identified individually, and called *"life lines"*, *"angels"* and *"first ports of call"*. More than once, stories were told to the researcher that demonstrated ways in which the JWA staff had gone above and beyond the call of duty:

I actually had, while I was [at JWA's offices], I had a sudden... My memory went. I had a total wipe-out. And I went to see one of the ladies at 5:30 in the afternoon, and at 10:00 at night, I was sitting there. I didn't know where I was, I didn't know who she was, I didn't know where I lived, I had a total...Blacked out. And she stayed with me. She was very good because she didn't... 10:00 at night...She was still with me. She took me up to Barnet General. After that I got... Made sure I was okay. It was something some people might not do. She was a friend, she was exactly what a professional should be, but many aren't.

⁴² Many synagogues in the UK have agreed to hang posters with JWA's information on them in toilet stalls in synagogue bathrooms. Toilet stalls have been identified as the only women-only space safe enough to hang the posters, and for women to copy down the necessary information.

The prompt and personal service was also highly praised:

I called another helpline, and no-one picked up. When I called the JWA helpline, it was picked up immediately, I was asked if I needed housing, and I was told someone would call me back, and they did. My husband never kept his word, never followed through, and it was the start of gaining trust back that JWA did this.

Finally, the counseling services were universally regarded as invaluable. Women tended to appreciate what they called a 'tough love approach' held by the counselors:

We got to a point and [the counselor] said we've already talked about this. I don't like to go into things again. It is not helping you basically to go over it again. You have the knowledge, and it obviously just needs time. So I actually agreed with her, I think I t was just making it worst, to be honest, just going over and over. So we decided to end it, but she said she was always there if I need her. It is a balance, of professional help, personal compassion and tough love.

The women used JWA's services for differing lengths of time, from a few months to a few years working with their counselor. Some women left JWA on their own accord, while others had their cases closed because they were considered out of danger. Many women found leaving Jewish Women's Aid to be a traumatic experience, as it meant that they had to "*get on with life, without a crutch. I still saw a therapist, but when they closed my case, I just found it so hard. If I wasn't dealing with this, this abuse, then what was I? I didn't have an existence independent of it*". Yet most women recognised that it was time for them to try and live "*a life PV, post violence*" and that, should they need to, they could return to JWA for additional help.

Women praised the "*personal touch*" and appreciated that the case workers insured that they matched themselves to people who could relate to them:

I first saw one case worker, but it just made more sense for me to see [another community outreach worker] who came from a very similar background, who knew exactly what I was talking about because she was from a very similar part of the community. It was so thoughtful, to set me up with someone who I would just click with. This extra step made it so special, and where else could you get that?

Without exception, these women felt that their lives had been transformed by Jewish Women's Aid:

I don't even know how to put into words, what they did for me. That is why I am doing this interview, because it is hard for me, you know, to talk about this stuff. But if I can give them back even a small favour, then I will do it. Please just let them know how much it means to me, even now, knowing they are there, that they care, that there are Jewish women who care and who know and believed me. Their belief, that first day of feeling I finally found someone who could and would help me, that is why I am saying this. To say thank you.

Jewish Women's Aid provides a comprehensive, client-centred approach which has been to the benefit of its clients. The work done by JWA does not go un-appreciated and has, quite literally, saved the lives of many women. The services provided stretch far beyond the budget restrictions of such a small, charitable organisation, and this work is done quietly and with no public recognition. Jewish Women's Aid is run by women, for women, and is fueled by a deep sense of respect, justice and compassion.

CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS

This last section synthesises the findings from both the general opinion survey and the findings from interview data. Drawing on areas of best practice from the United States, Israel and Canada (as discussed in interviews with staff members from various Jewish domestic violence charities both in the UK and abroad), recommendations will be made based on successful programmes both in the UK and abroad.

Position Statement

JWA calls on the Jewish community to publically acknowledge that it is not immune from domestic violence and to recognise that the prevalence rates broadly echo national data. In order to continue to effectively work towards eradicating domestic violence in the Jewish community, JWA makes the following recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** JWA calls on synagogues, communal organisations and communal leaders to do everything in their power to educate their respective communities about the spectrum of domestic abuse, which includes emotional abuse, as a painful form of violence against women.

Jewish Women's Aid already offers a strong education programme on healthy relationships. However despite this work, many of their clients still feel as if domestic violence carries a strong stigma; *"it makes it seem like I failed in my marriage"* was one frequently made comment, while other women said *"I wasn't physically abused, so calling myself a victim of domestic violence does not seem appropriate. I feel like I am lying, like people are looking to see my broken leg"*.

Domestic violence is not an issue of hierarchy; there is no *worse* or *better* form of domestic abuse, which should be condemned in all of its forms. As women told the researcher, emotional abuse was often much harder for women to come to terms with and should be acknowledged publically as a serious form of abuse. Although a high percentage of people in the public opinion survey acknowledged that all the different incidents listed in the question 'Which of the following should be considered domestic abuse' were examples of abusive behaviour, JWA's work is not complete until 100% of people respond in that way. Emotional and verbal abuse is just as serious as physical violence, as are religious or financial abuse.

Moreover, the reticence to publically discuss domestic violence often contributes to already strong feelings of shame; many women were even told by family members that *"family fights are between you and your husband, do not air your dirty laundry to anyone else"*. Many women feared that they would be shunned by the Jewish community in particular. Yet sadly, just like cancer and other diseases, the Jewish community is not immune and must therefore discuss these issues openly.

An overt recognition that victims of domestic violence hold no blame may allow us to reach many more Jewish women.

The importance of breaking the cycle of domestic violence cannot be underestimated, as studies show that domestic abuse is a learned behaviour. Mullender claims: "it is rarely possible to conceal abuse from children or to prevent their being frightened and confused by it" (1996: 141). British Crime Surveys consistently find that approximately half of those who suffered domestic violence in the previous year are living with children aged sixteen and under.

Additionally, the National Children's Home (NCH) Action for Children Study (2002) found that children living in homes with domestic violence frequently experienced direct physical and sexual assault, with as many as ten percent witnessing their mother experiencing sexual assault.

However, there are many other ways which abusers may 'involve' children in the abuse, ranging from forcing them to witness abuse to physically harming them as well (Mullender 2006: 34).

Importantly, even those children who are not directly physically affected by the abuse will suffer indirectly and emotionally from domestic violence. Children may have to leave home quite suddenly and may have to live in a refuge or temporary accommodation. Children are often a motivator for women to seek help (Zink et al 2003), but the continued threat from an abusive partner can linger for both mother and children and have long lasting emotional consequences.

- **Recommendation 2:** The Jewish refuge provided by JWA is the only kosher and Shabbat observant refuge in Europe, and is therefore of great importance to many Jewish women. JWA is facing statutory funding cuts and the continued existence of the refuge is thus in danger. JWA therefore asks the British Jewish community to continue its valued support to ensure that this vital service can continue.

"Just knowing the refuge is there, that makes all the difference": this sentiment was expressed again and again by the current and former clients interviewed. Jewish Women's International Canada's Chief Executive Penny Krowitz said that the women using their services shared the same feeling: *"our shelters are the corner stones of our service provision. They are a vital service; just knowing they are there can be enough to allow a woman to leave, especially because she knows she can bring her whole family"*. Jewish domestic violence shelters run by JWI Canada are single family dwellings, so that women are able to bring all of their children, regardless of whether or not they are under a certain age or female.

In order to maintain single -family residences, a much larger budget than is available to JWA would be needed. However, the importance of the refuge remains true and support for housing for Jewish domestic violence sufferers in the form of shelter is an integral part of the services delivered by JWA.

Additionally, JWA faces a host of funding cuts in 2011, which both prevent them from expanding the services they offer, including emergency shelter, but may also jeopardise those services that

are currently available. Like many other domestic violence charities across the UK (as discussed in chapter two), future funding for JWA is uncertain and all of these recommendations made in this paper are contingent on JWA's ability to secure future funding to at least its current level.

Jewish Women's Aid is well known within the British Jewish community (as found by the General Opinion Survey), although all of the services it offers are not as well recognised. In addition, women who use its services are full of praise for the care and attention they receive.

A high percentage of the general opinion survey respondents (just over 55%) indicated that they knew someone else who had experienced domestic violence. Indeed, 60% of respondents had either personally experienced DV, or knew someone who had. Although self-selected respondents to a survey on domestic violence may represent a biased sample of people responding *because* they know someone who has experienced DV, or have a personal experience of it. Still, this survey does point to a worrying high number of Jewish women in the UK whose lives have somehow been affected by domestic violence. JWA will work tirelessly to try and reduce these figures and will continue to need funding to support its refuge, so that Jewish women have a safe space in which to live, both as women leaving violent relationships and as Jews.

- **Recommendation 3:** Education is key to breaking the cycle of domestic abuse. JWA commits to providing healthy relationships programmes and asks other communal organisations to work in partnership to deliver these programmes to the widest range of young people as possible.
- **Recommendation 4:** Young women need increased financial awareness training, regardless of their experiences of domestic abuse, and Jewish organisations should seek to provide these courses (supported by JWA as and when appropriate).

One of the things we realized very early on is that young girls, even highly educated ones, are very un- financially literate. They might have post graduate degrees from the best universities in the world, but that does not guarantee that they are money- savvy whatsoever. We need to make sure that Jewish girls are capable of understanding money—what to do with it, how to manage it. —*Lori Weinstein, Chief Executive JWI*

JWA believes that prevention is the most important way to try and eradicate domestic violence; the cycle needs to be broken, and a large part of that work needs to be done taught at a young age, so young people know what to look for in a healthy relationship. This type of work is already being undertaken. Yet what is not yet available is a series of 'Financial Literacy' for girls. JWA believes that a financial education is as much of a tool for averting domestic violence as any other emotional literacy class. These classes could be effectively run in Jewish community centres or by shuls themselves and could make use of older membership, asking them (particularly financial aware females) to offer classes and mentorship to young girls. Too many women stay in

relationships because they worry about how they will afford to support themselves or their children if they choose to leave. This dependence on an abuser for money is not reason enough to stay, as JWA already helps women to access benefits and support. Yet what is still needed are classes that will make young women less fearful of being in charge of financial responsibilities should the situation ever arise.

JWA will also continue to deliver healthy relationship programmes to schools, shuls and any other interested party. This work is an invaluable tool for breaking the cycle of abuse.

- **Recommendation 5:** Domestic abuse often begins in pregnancy or soon after. Therefore, Jewish communal organisations who have contact with pregnant women or women who have just given birth should take any opportunity to educate them about healthy relationships and signs of abuse.

Ante-natal classes capture a target audience of women potentially at risk of domestic violence, as is clear from our interviews with former service users. Jewish Women's Aid recommends that all ante-natal classes include a short seminar on potential signs of domestic violence, as well as a tutorial on healthy relationships at the early stages of parenting, which include explicit reference to statistics related to domestic violence and pregnancy. There are a number of Jewish providers of these services, such as shul toddler groups, the London Jewish Family Centre, and Norwood, all of which JWA is happy to work with to develop workshops on pregnancy, early parenthood and protection for women.

- **Recommendation 6:** Jewish women seek support from rabbinical authorities, who can be helpful and supportive. JWA will seek to set up a Rabbinical Domestic Abuse Group to guide their work, and as a resource for women seeking rabbinical advice.

In the United States, Jewish Women's International has a Clergy Task Force that meets regularly to address issues of domestic violence from a Jewish perspective. Rooted in learning, the Clergy Task Force has produced a Clergy guide on domestic violence, which is widely distributed to rabbis across the United States. *"The one thing we have learned, like really, really, had imprinted on our brain, is the importance of rabbinical support for our work against domestic violence. Women, and men, listen to their rabbis, they want, they yearn, to hear them condemn what is happening and point out Jewish reasons why such behaviour is unacceptable"*—Lori Weinstein, *JWI Chief Executive*

The findings from both the survey and the interviews point out the obvious need for such a service in the UK, since many women draw great comfort from having a supportive rabbi to turn to in times of trouble. Unfortunately, many women are worried about the consequences of divulging such personal information to a rabbi, and would be greatly encouraged by continued rabbinic public condemnation of domestic violence. While the Chief Rabbi openly applauded the work JWA has

undertaken in late 2010, more public support from rabbinical authorities would go a long way towards publicising the Jewish communities' intolerance of domestic violence. Indeed, 62% of respondents to the general opinion survey were not aware of, or claimed not to have ever heard, a rabbi publically condemn domestic violence. However, the survey also points out what JWA already knew to be true: domestic violence affects Jewish women at the same frequency as it does any other community. JWA calls on rabbis in the UK to speak openly about these issues.

One respondent to the general opinion survey wrote that she did not think a rabbi should be expected to condemn domestic violence because *"like eating pork, it is just not something Jews do. Rabbis don't stand up and condemn eating pork, because they know we know we shouldn't do it. Same with domestic violence"*.

Jewish Women's Aid agrees that this logic is probably shared by some rabbis, who do not specifically avoid talking about domestic violence, but instead just assume that his or her congregants intuitively know that *of course* domestic violence is unacceptable. However, there are perpetrators of domestic violence in every shul, and both they and the victims of their violence can benefit immensely from public explanations of why domestic violence is an abomination to Judaism and humanity.

The domestic violence charity *No2Violence* in Israel, founded by Ruth Rasnic in 1977, has managed to develop a strong rabbinical support system, often through the rebbetzin. Ms. Rasnic says:

Many Rabbis think we do very important work. I myself have met up with several Chief Rabbis in Israel and addressed the issue of D.V. We are on excellent terms with the Chabbad Rabbis in all our 3 shelters, as well as the local Chief Rabbi of each town. Last January I was invited to lecture before the wives of all the Chief Rabbis in Israel, at the annual conference of the Chief Rabbis in Eilat. I was made very welcome and saw how much they needed this session – since they empathized but were unaware of so much I could share with them.

JWA will look to convene a Rabbinic Domestic Abuse Group, guided by the success of the Clergy Task Force in the United States. This group will provide rabbinical teaching material on domestic violence: what religious texts say about it, and what religious authorities must know in order to appropriately assist members of their congregations affected by it. Rebbetzin will be encouraged to attend, although JWA is keen to avoid labeling domestic violence as an issue only for women, as it affects the entirety of the community.

- **Recommendation 7:** The voices of Jewish women who have experienced domestic abuse are powerful and the use of personal stories touches people deeply. JWA commits to keeping client voices at the centre of their work, incorporating these women's voices into all presentations and educational materials.

Jewish Women's International in the United States has developed a comprehensive speaker's bureau, of Jewish women who have experienced domestic violence and are now in the position to speak about their experiences.

JWA believes that one of the most effective ways to highlight the human face of domestic violence is to hear stories from women who have experienced it. These stories serve to demonstrate that domestic violence happens to 'women like me', something which Jewish women seem to know in theory (with a high proportion of the general opinion survey agreeing that DV happens with the same frequency in the Jewish community as it does in any other community), but perhaps being face to face with a woman with a similar life story will inspire people to stop any tolerance for DV.

JWA will continue to ensure that the voices of (anonymised) Jewish women who have experienced domestic violence are heard through their promotional materials and all speeches given by JWA staff. Just as is demonstrated in chapter four, the stories behind the statistics are powerful and serve as an all too human reminder of our need to protect the well-being of all of our neighbours.

- **Recommendation 8:** JWA calls on the Jewish community to consider the establishment of perpetrator programmes for abusive men, in accordance with nationally recognised models, to prevent domestic violence from occurring.

Jewish Women's Aid is a *women's* organisation, and as such is not capable of either providing assistance for men affected by domestic violence, nor offering perpetrator programmes; this exclusion of men is a common challenge in other countries, and Penny Krowitz from Jewish Women International Canada suggested that JWA continue to remain a women's only organisation, which had worked well in Canada. Other UK domestic violence charities face the same challenge; Parveen Javed said: "We provide service for women only but support men as well if they are referred to us."

JWA is also able to offer men basic advice of where they might be able to seek help, either as a perpetrator or a victim, but cannot deliver this support itself. However, the importance of such work should not be undermined and, as a religiously sensitive service is needed for Jewish women, the same services should be made available for men. This area represents a gap in the strong charitable services available to the Jewish community, again pointing to an avoidance of the issue. JWA calls on the British Jewish charitable sector to work together to create programmes for people who are instigating domestic violence, so as to try and break the cycle and set as many Jewish

people free from the daily terror of living with an abuser. Only when such programmes exist will there be a fully comprehensive approach to combatting domestic violence in the Jewish community.

- **Recommendation 9:** Jewish experiences of domestic abuse should also be understood in the context of the experience of other in Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities . JWA commits to making an increased contribution to these BME organisations, so as to ensure that issues pertinent to the Jewish community are always considered.

The Pakastani Resource Centre in the UK believes that in order for a community to change its response to domestic violence, its members must become empowered to learn and to hear what domestic violence means for individual women. This process is intimately connected to the provision of culturally sensitive services, which allow women to feel safe and comfortable. The change needs to happen organically, from within a community not from the outside. Parveen Javed, from the Resource Centre, said:

Our aims and objectives are to ensure that we provide a culturally appropriate and sensitive service. To empower South Asian communities to confront some of the problems they may experience and to provide information about Asian ideas of personhood, culture and belief systems to statutory mainstream services and other voluntary organisations. We are committed to providing a highly sensitive service to people of all BME communities. This is accomplished by providing services, which are culturally and religious and sensitive at grass root level. We provide a service tailored around individual person. We are non-judgmental and will only provide a service that the individual is happy to take. We will not enforce any part of the service and add to their anxiety and adhere to the confidentiality and other policies that are in place.

There is clear Jewish public support for religiously sensitive and specific services. The general opinion survey demonstrated that 78% of respondents felt a Jewish specific survey was necessary for women experiencing domestic violence; a further 10% thought such a service was necessary, but only for Orthodox women. Only 5% of respondents felt that secular services are capable of meeting the needs of Jewish women. For these reasons, it is important that charities like JWA are able to access all the support offered to the BME charity sector, and continue to ensure that Jewish voices and needs are taken into account by BME organisations.

APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF JEWS IN THE UK, CANADA, USA, AND ISRAEL AND EXAMPLES OF JEWISH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHARITIES ABROAD

Jews in the UK

According to an analysis of the 2001 Census conducted by Graham, Schmool and Waterman (2007), there are currently 267,000 Jews living in the United Kingdom. 48% of these Jews were men, and 52% were women. 96.7% of British Jews live in England. British Jews are older than the average age of the whole British population. The median age of females in the UK was 38.1, but for Jewish females it was 44.3. The median age of men in the UK was 36.1, but for Jewish males it was 41.2 (with Scottish Jewish men being, on average, 47.5 years).

In 2001 in the UK, there were 111,697 married Jewish individuals, but over 27% of Jewish people aged between 45-59 had divorced, separated or remarried.

Please see chapter two for information about DV in the UK.

Jews in Canada

In the 2001 Canadian Census, 329,995 people (out of 30,007,094) reported 'Jews by religion' but 348,605 people ticked 'Jews by ethnicity', with most Jews identifying as both, but some only as one or the other. 49.4% of Canadian Jews are male, and 50.6% are female. The Canadian Jewish population is also aging; in 2001, the 45-64 age group had increased dramatically since 1991. There were 98,115 individuals in this cohort in 2001, compared to 68,305 in 1991. This cohort represents the "baby-boomer" generation (who would now be ten years older). The median age of the national Jewish population (40.2 years) is somewhat older than that of Canada's overall population (37.3 years).

Like the UK, Jews in Canada are increasingly likely to remain single or to get a divorce. This trend is in keeping with the general Canadian population; in 2007, married people in Canada were in the minority for the first time. Unfortunately, the 2001 Census information on divorce was not organized by religion in Canada⁴³.

Sample of Services offered for Jewish women experiencing DV in Canada

ASTEh: Offers alternative, short term emergency housing for abused Jewish women and children. It is a kosher shelter but is housed in a regular apartment block and there is a high respect for anonymity and confidentiality. Many women who come to ASTEH come from other shelters.

⁴³ See http://www.cdnwomen.org/en/section05/3_5_1_1-violence_facts.html.

Canadian Coalition of Women for the Get: A charitable organisation dedicated to helping women obtain a 'get' necessary for a religious divorce. This charity offers extensive aid for women in abusive relationships.

Jewish Family Services: There are many different chapters of JFS across Canada. This organisation aims to: "strengthens the community by helping people in the spirit of Jewish tradition and values." Although not specifically for women affected by domestic violence, this charity offers counseling services that are specifically for Jewish people and many women are therefore referred to them.

Jewish Women's International (Canada): offers domestic violence training programmes; a clergy task force; a national alliance and a healthy relationships programme. This is the sister organisation of JWI in the States.

Jews in the USA

There are approximately 5.2 million Jews living in the United States (out of 308,745,538). Yet like most countries around the world, the Jewish population is aging; the Jewish population is also substantially older than that of the total U.S. population. The median age of American Jews increased from 37 in 1990 to 41 in 2000. The median for men is slightly lower than that of women (40 versus 42). The median age of the total U.S. population is 35. 9% of American Jews are male, 51% female, the same as the total U.S. population.

Over half (54%) of Jewish adults 18 years of age and older are currently married and a quarter (26%) single, never married. Among the total U.S. population 18 and older, a slightly higher percentage (57%) are married and a slightly lower percentage (24%) are single, never married. In addition, 9% of Jewish adults are divorced, 4% separated and 7% widowed. The parallel numbers for the total U.S. population are virtually the same (10%, 2% and 7%, respectively).

Examples of Jewish service providers in the USA

Jewish Women International (JWI), www.jwi.org, was founded in 1897 as an auxiliary to the men's group B'nai Brith. Since the 1990's, JWI's main focal point has been Domestic Abuse. Their website regarding Domestic Abuse is extensive and comprehensive. JWI's Legal Project Website provides information to battered women and their advocates about the legal system and other resources. JWI began hosting an International Conference on Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community in 2003 and it continues every other year. The JWI National Alliance hosts monthly teleconferences on varied topics relevant to domestic abuse. JWI developed an education program for teens to develop healthy and non-abusive relationships. JWI's National Library Initiative collects children's books for domestic violence programs. The Mother's Day Flower Project sends flowers to mothers in shelters.

Hadassah, www.hadassah.org, during the Silent Witness March on Washington made sure the women from Israel killed by their husbands were represented in the event. Hadassah, a Zionist organization, is the single largest women's organization in USA and therefore has a particular obligation to women's rights and concerns. Hadassah has condemned all forms of violence against women including domestic violence with special emphasis on domestic violence in the

Jewish community. Hadassah has called on the U. S. Government to recognize gender-based violence as grounds for asylum; adapt the asylum process to accommodate women fleeing gender-based violence, including providing female officers to hear their cases, and training immigration officers and judges on issues relating to gender-based violence; and create a high-level office within the Department of Homeland Security to oversee all issues relating to asylum and expedited removal. Hadassah has condemned the trafficking of women when women are forced, defrauded, or coerced into labor or sexual exploitation within and across national borders. Hadassah's monthly magazine almost always features an article on domestic violence.

National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), www.ncjw.org, is a grassroots, volunteer organization that has been at the forefront of social change in the United States for over a century. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW takes a progressive stance on issues such as child welfare, women's rights, and reproductive freedom. NCJW strives for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children and families and by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. On the grassroots level, NCJW sections around the country are involved in a variety of domestic violence prevention programs, including Court Watch programs, teen dating violence education, and Silent Witness and Clothesline projects.

Na'amat USA, www.naamat.org [also operating in Israel], for more than 80 years has had one mission: to support the women and children of Israel. To accomplish its mission, NA'AMAT — through its sister organization in Israel— provides a broad range of social services, from day care centers to domestic violence shelters.

JSafe, www.jSafe.org, was founded by Orthodox rabbi, Mark Dratch, to set standards for training and certification of Jewish religious institutions and to hold Jewish professionals responsible in the area of domestic abuse and making sure congregations have an effective protocol for dealing with both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

Faith Trust Institute (FTI), www.faithtrustinstitute.org, is an international, multi-faith organization working to end sexual and domestic violence. FTI addresses the religious and cultural issues related to abuse. FaithTrust Institute works with many communities, including Asian and Pacific Islander, Buddhist, Jewish, Latino/a, Muslim, Black, Anglo, Indigenous, Protestant and Roman Catholic. FTI is a catalyst for change within religious institutions and their work continues until churches and synagogues, stakes and assemblies, mosques and temples are effectively responding to victims and abusers, bringing forth healing and justice. As has been noted in this review, FTI recognizes that religious teachings can serve as either a resource or a roadblock in addressing the issue of domestic violence. Religious communities have been aided by FTI in acting on their responsibility to minimize any barriers facing abused congregation members and maximize the resources that exist within our religious traditions. FTI (1997) produced the video about Jewish Domestic Violence, To Save a Life.

Shelters: It is unknown precisely how many Jewish domestic violence shelters there are in the USA, but it is known that they are predominately based in and around New York. For example, Far Rockaway, NY shelter is *kosher*. However, the need for specifically Jewish shelters does not seem overwhelming for two reasons: firstly, unlike in the UK, the USA Government forbids shelters from asking specifically about a woman's religious background if they want to receive Government funding. Secondly, many of the country's domestic violence programs have worked hard to meet cultural, religious, or ethnic needs of client populations. Some have partnered with religious programs for sensitivity and cultural competence activities. Jewish groups have educated

domestic violence programs on anti-Semitism and Jewish cultural competence. Many domestic violence programs have the possibility for Jewish clients to keep *kosher* or at least not have pork meals. Jewish groups sometimes outfit and provide for shelters plastic trunks with non-perishable *kosher* food, prayer books, Sabbath or electric candles, separate dishes and cutlery, and other holiday items. Providing the resources has been collaborative between domestic violence programs and Jewish organizations. A program letting it be known that *kosher* food can be made available make services for a Jewish woman more welcoming.

CHANA: exists to make sure women who are abused get the support and concrete assistance they need. Based in Baltimore, Maryland, CHANA provides a telephone helpline, individual and group counseling, legal assistance, a safe-house, and many outreach and education programs -- all with a Jewish focus and targeted to Jews across the religious spectrum. To accomplish its goals, CHANA partners with Jewish Family Services and the House of Ruth (the largest local domestic violence organization), and works with over one hundred volunteers. In its first five years, CHANA has responded to over six hundred calls to the Helpline and has provided ongoing individual counseling to over one hundred women. To date, the Baltimore Jewish community is one of only a few nationwide (including New York City, Seattle and Philadelphia) that have developed Jewish-focused domestic violence services. The need elsewhere is great to address the specific needs of Jewish victims of domestic violence.

Jews in Israel

Out of the 7,684,000 residents of Israel, approximately 4.95 -5.4 million are Jewish (or roughly 37% of worldwide Jewry). In 2000, 48.35% of Jewish children 14 and under lived in Israel. By 2020, that number is expected to reach 59.20%. Fertility in Israel is among the highest in all so-called developed nation, with an average of 3 children per women compared with 1.7 in other OECD countries (largely attributable to religious communities in Israel).

Like the other countries, Jewish men and women in Israel exist in almost equal measure. According to the statistics, there are 979 men for every 1,000 women. In the under-37 set there are actually more men, but in the over-75 age group this is offset by some 673 men for every 1,000 women.

Statistics also indicate a greater percentage of single men and women among the Jewish population, particularly in the younger demographic. The numbers reflect a growing trend to marry at a later age. In 2006, 76 percent of Jewish males in the 20 to 29-year-old demographic were not married, compared to 73 percent in 2000, while 60 percent of women were single in 2006 compared to 54 percent in 2000.

Examples of Jewish domestic violence services in Israel

The Family Center at Yad Sarah provides treatment not only for victims of domestic abuse, but also for the men who are violent, and for the children who are “witnesses” and at greater risk to become perpetrators as adults.

Bat Melech: A woman's shelter specifically for religious women in Israel called Bat Melech. The facility is set up with the special needs of the religious community in mind – Shabbat is observed, kashrut is kept (separate kitchen utensils are provided for women whose kashrut observances are stricter), and there is space for families with many children.

L.O. Combat Violence Against Women: began in September 1977 and has been at the forefront of raising awareness of domestic violence within Israel. They currently run three shelters with over 10,000 women and their children (children make up 60-65% of the shelter population). They also run education programs and lecture series

The **Haifa Women's Crisis Shelter** was established in August 1995 as a shelter for women victims of domestic violence and their children. The shelter is located in Haifa, Israel, and it serves women from all over Israel. The Shelter's mission is to provide physical and emotional protection and legal aid for its residents, and to take care of the various needs of the women and children who come to the shelter.

Women Against Violence (Nazareth): A large women's organisation working to end violence against women in the Palestinian community.

WIZO International: is dedicated to advancing the place of women in Israeli society. One of their main projects is domestic violence. They run the following:

Two Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence

WIZO's shelters, operated in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, offer a protective framework for the battered women and their children, whilst preparing them for an independent life in which they will be free of violence. There is an extensive rehabilitation process with psychologists, social workers, para-professional personnel and WIZO volunteers trained in providing assistance to families that have been victims of domestic violence. In addition, the women in the shelters receive legal assistance.

- **Half-Way House: Rehabilitation Project**

The Half-Way House is a unique project offering independent housing assistance to women that are ready to leave the shelter. During this period, the women learn to function as a single-parent family, away from the cycle of violence. The professional staff offer counseling services as well as legal advice and emotional support.

- **3 Centers for the Prevention and Treatment of Violence in the Family**

WIZO centers in Ramat Gan, Jerusalem and Ashkelon, operate in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and local authorities. They offer both treatment and prevention of the phenomenon of domestic violence within a community framework, without removing family members from their regular environment. These centres are especially unique as they provide treatment for the entire family unit, assuring immediate assistance during crisis, operating therapeutic workshops for abusive spouses and providing support groups. The centres are also committed to developing community awareness to the problems of violence.

- **National Hotline for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Children at Risk**

WIZO's telephone hotline is staffed by professionally trained volunteers. This service, which is operated in conjunction with the Ministry of Welfare, allows callers to remain anonymous, and provides important assistance for victims in need of advice or vital assistance

APPENDIX B:

Jewish Women's Aid opinion survey questions

1. What is your age? _____ years
2. What is your gender? ___ Female ___ Male
3. What are the first three digits of your UK postcode? *For example, for SW11, you will enter S in the first box, W in the second box, and 11 in the third box. If you live in SW1, you will enter S in the first box, W in the second box and 1 in the third box.*

____ _ ____ postcode – or – country of residence if not UK: _____

4. What is your highest completed level of education? Please tick one.

Less than secondary school.

GCSEs.

A-levels.

University graduate.

Post-graduate studies.

Prefer not to answer.

5. What is your relationship status? Please tick one.

Single.

In a relationship.

Married.

Living with partner.

Divorced or separated.

Widowed.

Prefer not to answer.

6. What is your religious affiliation? Please tick one.

- I am not formally affiliated to any synagogue.
- Progressive Judaism.
- Reform Judaism.
- Masorti Judaism.
- Mainstream Orthodox Judaism.
- Union of Hebrew Orthodox Congregations.
- Strictly Orthodox.
- Prefer not to say.
- Other: Please describe: _____

7. What is your level of religious observance? Please tick one.

- Secular.
- Somewhat secular.
- Somewhat religious.
- Religious.
- Prefer not to answer.
- Other: Please describe: _____

8. Which of the following should be considered domestic abuse between intimate partners or family members? By partner, we mean any boyfriend or girlfriend, as well as a husband or wife. Select all that apply.

- None of these.
- All of these.
- Dictating family religious observance.
- Constantly checking up on someone's whereabouts.
- Treating someone like a servant and not sharing big decisions.
- Preventing someone from having a fair share of the household money, withholding money, or spending family income without consent.
- Restricting use of other family property, such as a car.
- Preventing someone from seeing friends and relatives.
- Preventing someone from getting or keeping a job.
- Driving recklessly to make someone feel threatened.

- Belittling someone to the extent that they feel worthless.
- Pushing, slapping, choking holding someone down, kicking, biting, pushing, hitting with a fist or something else, throwing something at someone.
- Using a weapon against someone, for example a stick or a knife.
- Threatening to hurt someone or threatening to destroy property.
- Threatening someone with a weapon, for example a stick or a knife.
- Threatening to kill someone.
- Stalking or following someone.
- Sending threatening messages via phone, email or text.
- Threatening to take the children away.
- Coercing a partner to have sex.
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

9. Domestic abuse can take the form of physical or sexual violence, emotional or financial manipulation and control, and includes threats, stalking, harassment and bullying. One in four women in the UK experiences domestic abuse in her lifetime.

Do you think that domestic abuse is more common, less common or occurs at about the same rate in the Jewish community as in the general population? Please tick one.

- More common.
- Less common.
- About the same.
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

10. Do you know someone else (for example, a family member, friend or neighbour) who has experienced domestic abuse? Please tick one.

- Yes.
- No.
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

11. In your life have you experienced domestic abuse? Please tick one.

- No, I have never experienced domestic abuse.
- Yes, I have experienced domestic abuse from a family member (not partner).
- Yes, I have experienced domestic abuse from a current partner.
- Yes, I have experienced domestic abuse from a former partner.
- Yes, I have experienced domestic abuse from a current and a former partner.
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

If you have experienced domestic violence, please describe it briefly:

12. Have you heard or are you aware of a Rabbi in your community publicly addressing domestic abuse? Please tick one.

- Not applicable - I do not have a Rabbi or know any Rabbis.
- No.
- Yes, but the Rabbi did not explicitly condemn such abuse.
- Yes, but the Rabbi indicated that it was the responsibility of women to keep peace in the home.
- Yes, and the Rabbi condemned domestic abuse.
- Cannot remember / do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.
- Please add additional comments if you wish:

13. Had you heard of Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) before today's survey?

- Yes.
- No.

14. Jewish Women's Aid offers a variety of services. Please identify the services that you were aware of before this survey. Select all that apply.

- A helpline.
- Support for women living in the community affected by domestic abuse.
- Counselling services.
- Children's services.
- Education and awareness raising programmes.
- The only secure refuge in the UK where Kashrut, Shabbat and festivals are fully observed.
- None of these.
- All of these.

15. Do you feel that a Jewish-specific domestic abuse organisation is helpful for the community, or could Jewish women be served by a secular service? Please tick one.

- I feel that a specific service is necessary for Jewish women.
- I believe a specific service is necessary, but only for orthodox women.
- I feel that secular services could fully address the needs of Jewish women.
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

Please add additional comments if you wish:

16. If you or a Jewish person that you know experienced domestic abuse, would you refer the person to a Jewish Women's Aid service?

- Yes.
- No. Please explain why you would not refer someone to JWA:

- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

17. If you or someone you know experienced domestic abuse, please rank any of the following sources of support in the order in which you would seek assistance for yourself (or where you would advise someone to seek assistance), according to: 1 = "Primary source of support", 2 = "Secondary source of support", 3 = "Last resort for support", 4 = "I would not access this type of support."

- Friends / relatives / neighbours.

- Rabbi.
- Health professional (e.g. doctor, nurse, health visitor, etc).
- Police.
- Someone at work.
- Jewish Women's Aid (JWA).
- Norwood.
- Jewish Care.
- Jewish Marriage Council.
- Secular specialist support services (e.g. women's refuge/group/centre, such as Women's Aid).
- Social services, housing department, benefits agency / Job Centre.
- Legal professional.
- Counsellor / therapist.
- National domestic violence helpline or another helpline (e.g. a rape crisis line, Childline).
- Someone else. Please explain: _____
- Not any of these. Please explain: _____
- Do not know.
- Prefer not to answer.

18. How did you hear about today's survey?

- Through my synagogue.
- An advertisement in a community publication.
- Limmud
- JWA Facebook group.
- I am already a JWA supporter, and I received a communication from JWA.
- An email forwarded from a friend or colleague.
- Not sure / do not remember.
- Prefer not to answer.
- Other: Please describe: _____

Thank you for your participation, your opinions are valued.

More information about Jewish Women's Aid is available at: www.jwa.org.uk.

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