

# Difficulties at home

## You don't have to cope alone

Young people often experience tensions at home. Your relationships with the people you live with can be the source of all kinds of problems. Sometimes the situation is more serious than others, but whatever is going on, it can take up a lot of your head-space and make you feel bad.

Remember, it's not your fault and you don't have to cope alone.

**“Talk it through with someone you trust, like a parent/carer, teacher or friend, and get the help and support you need.”**

Or get in touch with one of the support organisations listed under 'Useful Contacts'. When communication breaks down you can lose perspective on what is happening. The key is to find ways to build up your resilience, so that you can cope better.

You may be experiencing abuse (physical, emotional or sexual) at home, or maybe you have a parent/carer or sibling who is taking drugs or drinking too much and you feel that things are getting out of control. It can be just as upsetting to feel caught up in problems between other family members. It is important that you keep yourself safe. Talk to someone to get some help and support.

## Domestic violence

**“Domestic violence includes threatening behaviour, violence, psychological, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.”**

It also includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called honour killings. Domestic abuse is a crime and a major social problem affecting many families.

If you are worried about domestic violence, talk to someone who understands such as your school nurse or the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline 0808 2000 247.

## Living with parents

If living at home with your parents is a problem, there may be steps you can take to improve things. Find out what to do if you don't feel safe at home.

Don't feel you have to move before you're ready. But if you don't feel safe at home, or if your parents tell you to leave, get advice on what to do next. Once you are 16 years old, if your parents ask you to leave, you probably have to go.

If you're under 16, your parents have a legal responsibility to look after you and make sure you have somewhere safe to stay otherwise you can get help from social services. However, if you are not getting on with them, they may make you leave anyway.

Get advice immediately if you find yourself in this situation. Call Shelter's free housing advice helpline on 0808 800 4444 for advice on where to stay.

Think about the practicalities of leaving home and getting your own place (rent, bills, doing your own washing and cleaning and so on) as well as all the good things. If you know anyone who has recently left home, talk to them about their experiences.

### **Talk to your family about wanting to leave home**

Explain your reasons to your family for wanting to leave home. They may be able to help you find a new home or help you to organise all the things you need to live on your own. They may even be able to help you with a tenancy deposit.

Visit your council's housing options centre to discuss your options.

### **Running away**

There are a number of reasons why you may want to leave home, but getting help while you're still at home is usually a better option than running away.

Source: [Shelter.org.uk](http://Shelter.org.uk)