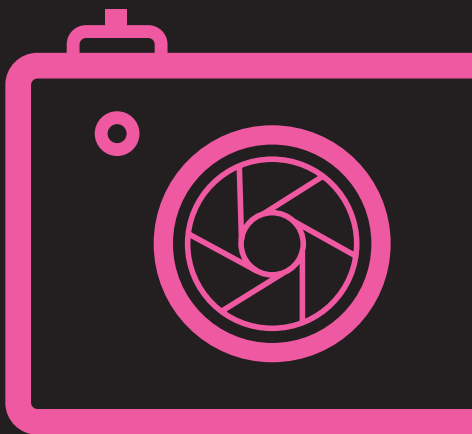


Refuge's Service Snapshot

2008 summary



Refuge



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.

What does a 'typical' day at Refuge look like?

Refuge undertook a survey across its services to create a 'snapshot' of what a 'typical' day at Refuge looks like. Everyone in the organisation (including at head office) was asked to keep a diary of their day on Thursday 16 October. In addition, those members of staff responsible for delivering services on the ground were asked to provide anonymous data about the women and children they were supporting. In total, 112 staff members participated.

Context

On Thursday 16 October, Refuge was supporting:

- 218 women in accommodation based services
- 146 women through floating support and community outreach services (including women using sanctuary schemes)
- 220 women through independent domestic violence advocacy services

Findings

From a random sample of **310 of the women** identified above:

- 165 women were accessing refuge accommodation

"It can be very distressing when a woman is on the street with nowhere to go and not enough money to buy herself a drink as she waits for a refuge space to become available"

- 49 women were accessing floating support

“A service user told me that she had thought nobody would ever care about her and her children”

- 67 women were accessing independent domestic violence advocacy¹

“I couldn’t believe it when the court granted bail conditions which allowed the perpetrator to attend his place of work - 10 feet from the matrimonial home”

Of the 310 women using Refuge’s services:

- 45 were accessing Refuge’s **specialist support services** for women from **black and minority ethnic** backgrounds
- 72 were accessing **psychological support** services from Refuge

“I met a woman and was able to advise her on coping strategies for her anxiety and depression”

Furthermore:

- Refuge staff came into contact with **32 different agencies** in their work to support victims of domestic violence – from the Community Safety Unit to the Witness Service

“I took a phone call from a doctor who had found a woman refuge space, but social services were refusing to give her a travel warrant to get there”

¹ Support workers for 29 women were working across these domestic violence services

No recourse to public funds

Refuge was supporting **24 women** with no access to welfare benefits in refuge accommodation

“Today I dealt with a no recourse call where the perpetrator was playing on the woman’s vulnerability around the fact that she had no support from the housing or benefits systems. He would make her leave the house when he wanted her to knowing that she had nowhere to go and she would have to beg him to return. She was being passed around from agency to agency but nobody was really listening to her and she was so happy that I did. I think this shows that as well as the practical support we provide, the helpline is valuable in that for many women it is just about being heard and believed”

- Refuge was supporting **16 women** with no access to welfare benefits across its other domestic violence services

Profile of women supported by Refuge:

- The youngest woman was 17 and the oldest was 61
- 170 women defined themselves as White British
- Women came from a total of **42 different countries** – from Albania to Colombia and from Uganda to Vietnam
- 107 women were fleeing from their husband
- 178 women were fleeing a boyfriend/partner

- 20 women were fleeing from a family member²
- 6 women were fleeing from a **forced marriage**
- 13 women were **disabled**

“A woman told me she was using the helpline as a source of strength not to take back the abuser – she told me how incredible the support is that we provide”

Children

- 12 women were **pregnant**
- 207 women had children
- The youngest child in refuge accommodation was just 2 weeks old; the oldest was 16

“The highlight of my day was attending the birthday party of a service user’s daughter”

- The children of 48 women were benefiting from a **children’s service** provided directly by Refuge
- The children of 75 women were in contact with their father
- 41 women were engaged in **child contact** proceedings

“I took a phone call from a psychologist supporting a 6 year old child whose mother was killed by the father. The aunt is now the sole care giver to her own 3 children plus those of the murdered woman – 6 in total”

² It was not known from whom 5 women were fleeing

Protection

250 women had reported the domestic violence that they experienced to the **police** and of the 250 reported incidents reported to the police, 109 resulted in arrest and prosecution³

“My day started at 12 midnight, when I was called out to a refuge. One of the service users had just received a threatening phone from her perpetrator who was out on bail”

- 55 women had **an injunction** out against the perpetrator
- 20 women were at high enough risk to have undergone a **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

“Writing thank you letters to donors and telling them what we could pay for with their money reinforces the fact that every little donation helps and that all our individual donors really are making a difference”

³ 49 of these women were accessing independent domestic violence advocacy services

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Registered charity
number: 277424

www.refuge.org.uk