



Refuge



For women and children.
Against domestic violence.



Cold Water Dip Challenge

8 March 2026. Your fundraising guide

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
24 Hour CALL FREE 0808 2000 247

BSL service: nationaldahelpline.org.uk/en/bsl

Live chat Mon–Fri 15.00–22.00
nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Thank you

for registering for our [#ColdDipForRefuge](#) on International Women's Day and for standing in solidarity with women and their children in their hour of need.

The money you raise by taking on a **Cold Dip on 8th March** will fund our life-saving services so we can listen, believe, understand, plan, organise and use all our expertise to help women and their children to get to safety.

Our fundraising pack contains everything you need to get started.

Any money you raise, big and small, ensures we can continue to support women and their children; every penny counts.

We must stand together for all women. So, when they're ready, we can help each woman get to safety – and their children too – and they can start to take back their freedom.

Thank you again for supporting Refuge, escaping safely all starts with a woman's courage. And you.

*Hannah
& Maddie*

Hannah and Maddie
Events Fundraising Team

events@refuge.org.uk

FOLLOW US

Find out more about what we do at www.refuge.org.uk, or by following us on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

The impact you have on survivors of domestic abuse

£15 could go towards essentials for a woman's first night at a refuge

£25 could go towards buying food supplies, toiletries and cleaning products to help a family stay safe and healthy after fleeing abuse

£45 could buy a cot, mattress and protector for a baby in a refuge

£80 could provide expert support to a survivor in her own language including via BSL

£150 could give two remote community workers mobile phones to provide a woman life-saving support

How to boost your fundraising

- ≥ Update your fundraising page to tell people WHY you are taking on the challenge. If you are able, tell your story or tell them what a donation could fund.
- ≥ Share the link to your fundraising page in WhatsApp groups, on email, via text and on your social media! Shout about your amazing challenge.
- ≥ Share your page on pay day.
- ≥ Share our downloadable assets on your fundraising page.
- ≥ When making a donation, ensure the person ticks the Gift Aid box if eligible so we can reclaim an extra 25p of every £1.
- ≥ Thank your donors at the end of the challenge.

By raising money for Refuge, you are having a direct impact on the thousands of survivors of domestic abuse we support every day.

JOIN THE COLD WATER DIP CHALLENGE FACEBOOK GROUP ≥



SET UP YOUR JUSTGIVING PAGE ≥



ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

Do a single cold water dip on 8 March 2026. Whether you choose open water swimming or an open air lido, it's important you do the challenge in the way that's right for you and your ability.

By setting up your fundraiser and sharing your story, you will inspire your friends and family to support you, and hopefully inspire others to take up the challenge too.

You can also join our community Facebook group where you will be able to reach out to others up and down the country who are also challenging themselves to fundraise for Refuge.



Prepare for your challenge

Q: WHERE CAN I SWIM?

A: No matter where you live in the UK, you will be able to find a place to do your Cold Water Dip Challenge. There are plenty of great websites to help you search for lakes, rivers, lidos or beaches near you and wildswimming.co.uk is a great place to start.

Q: CAN I DO THE CHALLENGE AT ANY TIME?

A: The challenge officially runs on 8 March as it's International Women's Day, but if you need to do your swim on a different day, that's fine too.

Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COLD WATER DIPPING?

A: Research suggests that cold water dipping improves mental health and immune function due to the sudden endorphin release when you're immersed in cold water. Your body will also pump more blood through your muscles to keep warm. Whatever the science, the sense of achievement will make you feel great.

Q: WHAT SAFETY MEASURES SHOULD I TAKE?

A: Cold water dipping carries risks so it's vital you put safety first. Here are our top five safety tips:

- ≥ Choose a spot where you can get in and out of the water quickly and easily
- ≥ Go with a friend for moral support
- ≥ Set a goal that is realistic for your experience level
- ≥ Go into the water warm and make sure you warm up quickly afterwards (your body temperature will continue dropping for ten minutes after getting out of the water)
- ≥ Never jump in, allow your body to adjust by easing into the water

REMEMBER:

You are taking part in this challenge at your own risk so please do assess your ability and seek medical advice before you take part. For further safety information please look at these cold water swimming resources ≥

**COLD WATER
SWIMMING
SAFETY GUIDE ≥**



**OPEN WATER
SWIMMING
SAFETY ≥**



HELP US TO HELP MORE WOMEN

When Beth* called the National Domestic Abuse Helpline she was in a desperate situation. Following an incident with her ex-partner the night before, she knew she needed to get her child and herself to safety.

Beth had previously contacted the Helpline online through the Live Chat service. This time, she knew where they were wasn't safe – she called the Helpline for support whilst she was packing her, and her child's belongings.

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When you're drowning it's not enough for somebody on the shore to just tell you to swim. You're drowning, you're panicking, and you're scared. You need someone who will give you a hand and try to pull you out rather than just standing on the shore saying, 'You're fine, you're strong. You can swim right? I know I saw you swimming.' But no, you cannot. You just cannot. You need someone to give you a hand. I think in my case the Helpline was able to offer a lifeline. It was like a hand when you cannot manage anymore."

**Name has been changed*



Your challenge countdown

5

Go to the [Facebook group](#) and check the pinned welcome post for details of how to set up your fundraiser.

4

Share your fundraiser and ask friends and family to donate.

3

Set your target – it should challenge you and motivate you. Whether it's £10 or £100, every pound helps.

2

Personalise your fundraising page with a photo and a message sharing the reason why you chose to support Refuge.

1

Download and share the graphics we'll be sharing in the Facebook group and via email.

GO!

Get ready for 8 March!

**JOIN THE COLD WATER DIP
CHALLENGE FACEBOOK
GROUP**



I'm doing the #ColdDipForRefuge Challenge

8 March 2025

My fundraising target is:

£

Please will you sponsor me at:

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Thank you for taking on the Cold Water Dip Challenge



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