Feel safe at home
Do any of these things happen in your family?

- There are bad arguments or fights.
- Your mum gets sworn at or called names.
- Your mum gets pushed, hit or kicked.
- Furniture and other things in the house get broken or smashed.
- Your pets get hurt.
- You and your brothers and sisters feel scared.
- You or your brothers and sisters get hurt.

If some or all of these kinds of things are happening in your family, then you might be living with domestic violence.
What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence usually happens between adults who live together or are in a relationship with each other. It can also happen after they have split up.

One adult (usually the man) bullies the other one (usually the woman); he might hurt her feelings, make her scared, or hit her.
It is not always men who hurt women, though. Sometimes women hurt men, or there can be violence between two men or two women. Sometimes other family members take part in the bullying and violence too.

Domestic violence in a family can happen in any place, and at any time. Often it happens at home and sometimes other people don’t know about it.

Domestic violence can hurt children too. Often children hear or see it going on between adults in their family, and sometimes they get caught in the middle of a fight.
How does it make you feel?

Living with domestic violence in your family can make you feel:

- sad and quiet
- worried about your mum
- scared
- confused
- tired
- angry
- lonely or not cared about
- left out
- afraid because you are getting hurt too.

You might also:

- find it hard to sleep
- have trouble doing your schoolwork
- think someone else at home is the favourite and gets treated better than you
- get into trouble a lot at home or at school.
It is normal to feel these things if there is domestic violence in your family

Here’s what some children say about domestic violence:

“It makes children feel sad and upset but they pretend that everything is ok.” (Girl, 10)

“You feel low and lonely.” (Boy, 10)

“You feel heartbroken and worried about Mum getting hurt.” (Girl, 8)

“You don’t feel cared about.” (Boy, 9)
What about your mum?

People in your family might try to keep the domestic violence a secret, and your mum might think that you don’t know it is happening. Maybe, like you, your mum is feeling upset and afraid. She is probably worried about lots of things, and she might not be able to spend a lot of time with you or look after you as much as she would like.

Remember, domestic violence is not your mum’s fault. If she is being hurt and scared by someone stronger than her, then she will probably find it very hard to stop them.