



## Economic Abuse – The Impact on Children

In families where abuse is occurring, it is often hoped that children are protected by not seeing or hearing what's happening. There are however psychological, emotional, environmental and economic factors associated with abuse that can have significant impact on children, and often lead to poverty.

Their basic needs may not be met (such as food, clothing or shelter), along with other material, physical and emotional needs. Their social and educational wellbeing can also get disrupted and their relationships with extended family and friends can be impaired.

Financial challenges may limit access to medical assistance, school outings and social activities and having significant impact on children's developmental opportunities. Children may also experience social exclusion due to a lack of resources to pay for school fees, uniforms, travel costs, or attend school events or excursions.

*"There was never enough money. Any money we got for Birthdays or Christmas was taken. We would always be getting food parcels and sometimes our power was cut off."*

*"I had some friends but could never invite them over – I was embarrassed, sometimes we had food, but never any to share. There were no fun things to do at home because we couldn't afford it."*

*"I missed doing stuff at school and it wasn't a good feeling being pitied all the time by the teachers."*

When a parent is experiencing abuse, they can become, unintentionally, emotionally unavailable for the children and parenting skills can be impacted. Children can often be expected to negotiate issues that occur in the house when one parent is exercising control over another or be used as a pawn. They can exhibit fear, feel responsible, confused and isolated. Their confidence becomes eroded, they can experience low self-esteem and their overall wellbeing and psychological recovery can be impacted. In the long term, depending on their age, level of abuse, length of exposure etc...could lead to mental health issues, and other social or behaviour challenges.

*"There was a lot of arguing about money at home, I always felt I had to defend one parent. I had to grow up fast and look after myself."*

## **Economic Abuse – Getting Support**

**If your safety is at immediate risk, please ring the Police – 111**

### **Family Violence**

Women’s Refuge New Zealand – 0800 733 843 (crisis line) or [womensrefuge.org.nz](http://womensrefuge.org.nz)

Shakti – 0800 742 584 (24-hour, ethnic support) or [shakti-international.org/shakti-nz](http://shakti-international.org/shakti-nz)

Shine (Auckland) – 0508 774 633 or [2shine.org.nz](http://2shine.org.nz)

Aviva (Christchurch) – 0800 28482 669 or [avivafamilies.org.nz](http://avivafamilies.org.nz)

Are you ok - 0800 456 450 or [areyouok.org.nz](http://areyouok.org.nz)

Family violence Information Line - 0800 456 450 (9am-11pm every day)

Support for Men - [menshealthnz.org.nz/support-for-men](http://menshealthnz.org.nz/support-for-men)

### **Legal**

Community law - [communitylaw.org.nz](http://communitylaw.org.nz)

Citizens Advice Bureau – Phone 0800 367 222 or [www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz)

Youth Law – (under 25years old) – Phone 0800 884 529 or [youthlaw.co.nz](http://youthlaw.co.nz)

### **Financial**

Sorted – Phone 0800 345 123 or [sorted.org.nz](http://sorted.org.nz)

Money talks – Phone 0800 345 123 or text 4029 – [moneytalks.co.nz](http://moneytalks.co.nz) (live chat on website)

Good Shepherd NZ – (no interest and low interest loans throughout NZ) [goodshepherd.org.nz](http://goodshepherd.org.nz)

### **To find more services in your area**

Family and Community Services directory [familyservices.govt.nz/directory](http://familyservices.govt.nz/directory)