

HELP-LINE LINK

Home Violence, Bullying, Drug & Alcohol Dependency, Money - anything. We listen, and then link you with Professional Organisations that can help.

SNAP, a registered charity and voluntary group established over seventeen years, has relentlessly campaigned for the recognition of the problems domestic violence causes within the community. At the beginning there were no statutory organisations within our area offering a telephone help-line and this kind of provision.

From this the project grew to supporting a plan that would enable St Neots to have its own Women's Refuge. SNAP members expounded a great deal of energy and many hours of working with not only statutory agencies, but with all of the political parties whose support they needed to make this Refuge happen.

SNAP grew and had more help-lines and linked with not only Women's Aid throughout the country but also had police services who used the group in the evenings and weekends when many of the agencies were not working.

For the last few years SNAP as well as operating telephone lines for women have also increased their knowledge and understanding of work with all members of the family i.e. men, grandparents and children who may be involved with domestic violence and the group have done specific pieces of work in each area. To date, SNAP are overwhelmed with calls from female, male and same sex victims some of which have been very complex indeed.

In conclusion, SNAP continues to campaign for the same services for every domestic violence/abuse victim. Otherwise, we are never going to 'break the cycle of abuse'. It is heartening to know that the truth is, at long last, coming out via the younger generation such as University students' dissertations and also society as a whole.

SNAP 01480 396500

Front cover designed by past Ernullf Students

WE NEED AND APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!

- I can help
- I am sending my gift of £.....
- I can Volunteer
- I can donate
- I would like a speaker for my group

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Please return to:
SNAP
PO Box 57
St Neots
Cambridgeshire
PE19 1AA

www.snapdomesticviolence.org.uk

Registered Charity no 1082185

Patrons:
Pat Gregory - Ex-Mayor of St Neots,
David Harty - St Neots Town, District & County Councillor,
Lord Vincent Constantine B.KTO.



False Allegations

: **SNAP** :

01480 396500

Children are often harmed by false claims because they can lead to them being kept away from a loving parent when their mother and father divorce or separate.

Throughout the UK, false allegations of domestic violence and child abuse are used in the family courts on a daily basis by a resident parent. The parent, predominately the mother making the allegation, far too often succeeds and therefore is able to dictate the outcome of contact and residence applications with impunity because the family court rarely holds the accuser accountable for their conduct.

It is our opinion that any person knowingly and deliberately making false accusations of any kind is creating the greatest violation of due process in our family courts.

Separating parents are viewed as two legal components by the family courts:

One, the resident parent who lives with the child/children.

Two, the non-resident parent who does not live with the child/children.

The family courts treat each parent completely differently. The non-resident parent's only legal right is that they can apply to the courts for contact. They do not have any other significant or presumptive right over their children.

In a court of law, most people believe it is their right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty if they are accused of criminal offences such as domestic violence or child abuse. This principle only applies in criminal trials that prove a person is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. **This principle does not apply** in family courts due to the fact they are civil proceedings. Here, the best interest test is applied and all decisions are made on a balance of probability.

Family court judges do not believe it would be in the child's best interest to question whether it is true or false what the resident parent has said. They think to do so would undermine their authority as the primary care giver.

Source: http://www.mensaid.com/false_allegations/index.htm

In some cases, mediators and social workers etc. support the accuser and ignore the facts given by the falsely accused person. The heart of the matter is that a false allegation gives the resident parent (mostly the mother) exclusive control of the other parent through child custody.

They will also **use** their child/children as 'pawns' so that they can gain benefits such as property and money. The abusers are selfish and revengeful and do not care what their children or their fathers feel.

FACT: In a letter sent to Men's Aid dated 10 April 2006 from Her Majesty's Court Services (hmcs) the following statements are made:

False Allegations

Telephone SNAP and speak confidentially to one of our experienced and friendly helpline advisors.

Pass the brochure to a friend if you suspect they are being subjected to any form of Domestic Violence.

Ring SNAP
01480 396500

or email

anne@snapdomesticviolence.org.uk
rosemary@snapdomesticviolence.org.uk
dave@snapdomesticviolence.org.uk

WHAT SERVICE CAN SNAP OFFER?

- Someone to talk and confide with.
- Friendly and constructive advice.
- Complete confidentiality.
- Understanding Advisors.

When asked **"Why domestic violence cases are being tried in the family courts on a balance of probability given that it is a criminal offence"** the response was:

You asked why the civil burden of proof is applied to domestic violence in the family courts. You also refer to domestic violence as a crime. Firstly, there is no actual crime of domestic violence in the criminal courts - domestic violence is dealt with depending on the charge being made, assault or grievous bodily harm for example. The criminal burden of proof of 'beyond reasonable doubt' is applied. Domestic violence cases are dealt with in the family courts because the applicant has chosen to apply for a civil injunction (a non-molestation or occupation order). The

burden of proof applied is the balance of probability. The respondent to the family case, to take your example the father, has the opportunity to respond to the applicant's allegations of domestic violence at the full hearing. The court will consider all the issues presented and make a decision on the balance of probability."

As a result of being separated from their father (and their mother in a few cases), children have a higher risk of child abuse. In addition, they are more likely to have academic difficulties, contact problems and involvement with the criminal justice system.

Source:

http://www.mensaid.com/false_allegations/hmcsfalse_allegations_and_domestic_violence.htm

FACT: 19 Jul 2005 : Column 1607W—continued
Domestic Violence

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many (a) men and (b) women have been (i) charged and (ii) convicted of offences relating to the making of false allegations concerning domestic violence in each of the last five calendar years. [12434]

19 Jul 2005 : Column 1608W

Fiona Mactaggart: Statistics on persons charged with an offence are not centrally collected. Neither is it possible to identify those defendants on the Home Office court proceedings database convicted of offences relating to the making of false allegations concerning domestic violence, as circumstances surrounding an offence are not collected.

Source:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm050719/text/50719w26.htm>

FACT: In a letter sent to Men's Aid dated 14 November 2002 from the Professional Standards Department, Thames Valley Police Headquarters, Kidlington regarding false allegations, here is their response:

" it is most unlikely that the police will become involved, unless asked to do so by the Judge in the case. (The Lord Chief Justice has given advice to that effect and it is part of our Force policy.)"

FACT: 76% of children whose parents go through the family courts suffer from false allegations

Source: http://www.mankind.org.uk/domestic_abuse.html

Do you not think that it would be in a child's best interest if these false allegations were checked out?

Do you think that the government should collect statistics on how many people make false allegations of domestic violence and child abuse?