

On 24 September 2009...

365 women and **360 children and young people** were in a Women's Aid refuge

642 women and **307 children and young people** were supported by a Women's aid group

101 women contacted Women's Aid for the first time

47 women requested refuge - **12 women** were denied access to refuge due to a lack of space and **5 children and young people** were turned away due to a lack of space

For further **information, contact:**

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For the contact details of your local Women's Aid Group visit our website-
www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk

On the 24th September 2009, Women's Aid groups across Scotland took part in a 24 hour census to identify how many women, children and young people were supported on that day, in refuge or through outreach services.

Refuge is a specialist service that is offered by Women's Aid groups across Scotland and groups also provide other kinds of critical support to women and their children. This can include emotional support, practical assistance and information and signposting to other services.

Of the women that contacted Women's Aid on this day:

295

were looking for emotional support

242

required practical assistance (assist with paperwork, attend appointments, move furniture to new home, transportation)

105

were seeking general information about domestic abuse or Women's Aid services

101 women contacted Women's Aid for the first time. Women were most likely to have heard about Women's Aid from friends or from health and social services.

47 women (and their children) requested refuge. Of these, Women's Aid groups were able to accommodate 18 women and 6 children. However 31 women and 25 children were not accommodated. The main reason for this was a lack of appropriate refuge space. 12 women and five children were turned away because there was no space for them. The rest were unable to access refuge for a range of reasons. These included difficulties with public transport and other accessibility issues.

Women who were not able to get into refuge were most likely to stay with their families or friends or get temporary accommodation through local authorities. Some had to return to their abusive partner.

Four women had to be turned away because they had 'no recourse to public funds', meaning that, because of their insecure immigration status, they were not entitled to welfare benefits or temporary or permanent local authority housing. This meant that they could not be accommodated by a Women's Aid group. For these women the options are even more limited, and most are forced to return to their partner.

What Women's Aid groups do...

Refuge accommodation

Provide protection, sanctuary, shelter and a safe haven for women and children who have to leave their home because of domestic abuse

Moving on from refuge - Follow on resettlement support services

Supporting women and children with the transition to a new home, school and community.

Outreach services – working in the community

Outreach services are provided to women experiencing domestic abuse who are living in the community rather than in refuge. This can range from providing individual support to women, to providing a drop-in service at a local health centre.

Information

Women's Aid groups provide information on women's housing options, benefits entitlement and legal rights and support women to access legal advice locally. Women can access this service in person by calling into the local Women's Aid's office or by telephone.

Advocacy

Advocacy support covers everything from safety planning for a woman and her children, accompanying women to the police or housing departments, registering with a G.P., enrolling children at a new school and supporting them through legal action and the court system.

Training and awareness raising

Developing the understanding of people working in front-line services who will come into contact on a daily basis with women who are experiencing domestic abuse. Women's Aid groups also provide sessions in school, to raise awareness of domestic abuse and promote healthy, respectful relationships.

Children and young people's services

Dedicated services to children and young people, mirroring those provided to their mothers. Children's support workers work with children in refuge, and when they move into their new home and also provide an outreach service to children and young people in the community.