



## Children's services and victim blaming

I used to work as a family support worker for a local authority - not a social worker, but we often did support with families who had high levels of need. We would refer families to social care if we thought they needed help from a statutory agency, but it was difficult to meet thresholds (for lots of different reasons)

I worked with a family where the mum was horrifically abused by her partner, he threatened her with a knife, he said he was going to kill her and kept breaking into the property. She didn't want to move into a refuge away from her friends and family but I was very worried about the children (who were witnessing the violence).

I referred the family to social care and the social worker responsible for new cases said 'what does she expect, if she keeps taking him back?' I felt that there was a distinct lack of understanding of the issues related to domestic violence with some social workers.

They didn't take the controlling nature of the abuser into account and I felt that (in this case, at least), they just expected the woman to 'leave' by magically overcoming the control and being able to restore all the self-esteem that he'd taken away from her.

I'd hope that this is a one-off but it would be interesting if any social workers comment on this site.

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