



Student Wellbeing Resource

Domestic Abuse

UPDATED
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Domestic Abuse

Overview

The UK government's definition of domestic abuse is 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.' Domestic abuse is hardly ever a one off incident – it is a range of behaviours that may or may not lead to physical injury but is often characterized by coercive control – a crime since December 2015, which more resembles kidnapping than assault and is about preventing someone from having the freedom to do what they want to do, about isolation, intimidation and humiliation. The definition of domestic abuse also includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Witnessing domestic abuse of a parent or carer is traumatising for children and young people. It can cause serious harm to their mental wellbeing and is very long lasting. There are many ways that children and young people may experience domestic abuse, these include, seeing the abuse; hearing the abuse from another room, seeing parents' injuries and distress after the incident and being injured themselves by being nearby or trying to stop the abuse. Living with ongoing coercive control can impact a child almost as much as the adult victim – their lives are constricted and they are always 'walking on eggshells'

As domestic abuse mainly happens in the home it is often difficult to tell if it is happening. Children who witness domestic abuse may become aggressive, withdrawn, display anti-social behaviours, suffer from depression or anxiety and not do well at school. If you think a child is living with domestic abuse consider a referral to safeguarding.

Key Facts

- An estimated 17,292 children have a female parent who is a victim of domestic abuse in Sheffield⁵.
- Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse⁶.
- A third of children witnessing domestic abuse also experienced another form of abuse⁷.
- In 50% of cases domestic abuse continues even after the parents have separated⁸.
- 1 in 5 teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends⁹.
- In a 2009 NSPCC survey, one quarter of girls aged 13-17 reported experiencing intimate partner violence; one in nine female respondents had experienced severe physical violence; and almost three quarters of girls had experienced emotional abuse¹⁰.

Young People - abuse within teen relationships

It is important to remember that young people can also experience domestic abuse in their own relationships. In fact both young women and young men (aged 16-19) are more likely to experience domestic abuse than adults². Young adolescents are just as likely to experience abuse as older teenagers are. Research by Bristol University and the NSPCC showed that 27% of teenage girls aged 13-17 had experienced sexual violence in their relationships. Based on Sheffield population figures and applying national prevalence data, there could be around 3,500 young people (of which 2,300 of these are female) living in Sheffield who have been a victim of domestic abuse in the last 12 months.

YWAVE research in to Young People's Domestic Abuse Services in Sheffield³ provides further insight into young people's awareness of domestic abuse:

- 5% of those surveyed did not know what a healthy relationship was.
- 17% would not be able to spot the signs of an unhealthy relationship
- Less than half (41.5%) would not know how to find information about healthy relationships.
- 4% did not know what the term domestic abuse meant.
- 44% said they would not know where to get help if they or someone else they knew was experiencing domestic abuse.
- One in five of the questionnaire respondents had experienced domestic abuse in their family life, their own relationship or both.

From 2017 questions about controlling behaviour have been included in the Our Voice Matters survey⁴ for year 10s school students. The

findings were that boys and girls were equally likely to understand they were in a controlling relationship but the level of the control, how much the young person likes the person who is being controlling and individual confidence levels are all factors as to whether the situation is considered to be OK and whether action would be taken by the young person to act to change or end the relationship. Whilst the statistical differences between gender responses are only marginal, it appears boys are slightly more likely to consider controlling behaviour is OK if they really like the person but more likely to act than their female counterparts, whilst the opposite applied to females; they were more likely to think the controlling behaviour was wrong but have less confidence and are therefore less likely to act to change the situation.

References

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

² Crime Survey of England and Wales 2016

³ http://www.chilypep.org.uk/uploads/pdfs/chilypep-ywave-report-final-print_1.pdf

⁴ <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/ovm>

⁵ <http://sheffiddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/resources/danac/>

⁶ Radford, L. et al (2011) Child abuse and neglect in the UK today.

^{7,10} *ibid*

⁸ Stanley et al 2009

⁹ Barter et al (2009) Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships. NSPCC and Bristol University.

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Resources

Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board procedures re. domestic abuse
http://sheffieldscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_dom_abuse.html?zoom_highlight=sexual+abuse

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/>

Women's Aid Federation England <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/children-and-domestic-abuse/>

<http://thehideout.org.uk/> a page created to help young people and children understand domestic abuse. It includes short cartoons, other children's stories and how to get help if they need it.

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/> website made for teens about domestic abuse in their own relationships.

<http://www.lovedontfeelbad.co.uk/> website developed by Women's Aid and Avon young providing a guide to healthy behaviour in intimate relationships for girls and young women

Sheffield young people domestic abuse pathway <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/07/Sheffield-Young-People-and-Domestic-Abuse-Pathway-July-2019.pdf>

Sheffield young people and domestic abuse traffic light tool <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/06/Young-People-and-Domestic-Abuse-Traffic-Light-Tool-April-2018.pdf>

Sheffield Speaks Out (Chilypep) a short film about young people and controlling relationships <http://www.chilypep.org.uk/with-young-people/ava-domestic-abuse/>

Recovery and empowerment partnership project:
<http://www.chilypep.org.uk/the-recovery-empowerment-partnership>

Website developed by Women's Aid aimed at teenage girls who may not realise they are experiencing relationship abuse. <https://loverespect.co.uk/>

Inspire to change programme - support for perpetrators of abuse
www.inspiretochange.co.uk

Best Practice

- Operation Encompass (from September 2019) – if schools are signed up to this scheme information is shared by the police via the Safeguarding Hub with a key person in school following police attendance at a domestic abuse incident. This will enable schools to monitor the child and offer appropriate support, if needed, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.
- If a parent is a victim of domestic abuse/ a child is witnessing domestic abuse at home signpost the parent to the free Domestic Abuse Helpline operated by IDAS info@idas.org.uk, or ring the Helpline yourself to get support as to next steps. There is also an online referral form at www.idas.org.uk
- Refer to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub if risk is ongoing or Early Help for children needing support after abuse

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✓ Best Practice (cont)

- Use the Sheffield Traffic Light tool for young people in abusive peer on peer relationships to assess risk
- Young people who are 16 or over and experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships should also be referred to IDAS - 0114 2493920 info@idas.org.uk.
- Inspire to Change is a voluntary programme which supports people who want to stop using abusive behaviour from age 16 upwards, there is a specific offer for young people around healthy relationships.

📍 Local Offers and Providers

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
Haven	Small group sessions that help children to manage feelings linked to domestic abuse. Primary school group programme – Helping Hands.	None initially	admin@havenorg.uk 0114 213 0590 www.havenorg.uk
IDAS	Domestic Abuse training for professionals – courses on young people and domestic abuse (with Sheffield Futures) and Safeguarding Children Affected by Domestic Abuse plus courses on a range of other aspects of domestic abuse. Support for victims of abuse aged 16 up.	Free	Website https://www.idas.org.uk/ Includes online referral form Training website https://courses.idas.org.uk/ 0114 249 3920 info@idas.org.uk

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Local Offers and Providers (cont)

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
Local Authority - Early Help	Parenting courses for mums who have experienced domestic abuse or dads who have been abusive to the mothers of their children.	Free	Request support on Early help Assessment part 1 Form www.sheffield.gov.uk/earlyhelp or for further advice call 0114 203 7485
Young Women's Housing Project	Group work / parenting group work for vulnerable young women / mothers (16-25 years) who have experienced sexual exploitation or abuse, or domestic abuse. By referral from a Service.	Free	0114 268 0580 ywhp@ywhp.org.uk
Vida Sheffield	Eva Therapy Service and group work for women and girls [from age 16] affected by any form of abuse or trauma. Training in mental health impacts of abuse and trauma on adults or children/ young people, and developing trauma informed responses.	Free Fee for training	0114 275 0101 admin@vidasheffield.org.uk www.vidasheffield.org.uk
Chilypep	Girls self-esteem course – Group work for girls to develop self-esteem, awareness and understanding around issues that affect girls and young women. 12 girls per programme.	£3500 per programme but some funded capacity available – please enquire (includes ASDAN accreditation)	training@chilypep.org.uk (0114) 234 8846
Chilypep	BRV Programme 10-week boys group programme. Boys participating will develop improved emotional literacy and a positive sense of self which is not governed by their life experiences be more able to identify inappropriate and harmful behaviours for themselves and others and be able to develop self-help and help seeking strategies to protect themselves and others from further harm and improve education and social outcomes. 12 boys per programme.	£3500 per programme (includes ASDAN accreditation)	training@chilypep.org.uk (0114) 234 8846