

Mowbray Safeguarding Bulletin for Families- December 2022



Definition of domestic abuse

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 "personally connected" and the behaviour is abusive. Abuse can be direct or indirect (e.g. through a child). Children can be victims if they are related and see, hear or experience the abuse.

adapted from the [Domestic Abuse: Statutory Guidance \(2022\)](#)

Safeguarding children is everyone's business!

Domestic abuse is not just physical violence hence the move from talking about domestic violence to talking about domestic abuse. Many people experiencing violence report the psychological and emotional impact as having greater impact. Many people are manipulated and abused without physical violence. All of these experiences have an impact on children and young people.

Domestic abuse also falls within wider [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\)](#) and [Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse \(APVA\)](#) strategies.

Statistics

- At least 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.
- Around 1 in 7 men will be victims of domestic abuse.
- We think 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse.
- We know that there is a high degree of under-reporting from both males and females, this being linked to many different factors including shame, blaming themselves for their partner's behaviour, believing that it is an inherent part of the relationship. This therefore means that the real figures are likely to be significantly higher.

Impact on children and young people

Children are suffering multiple physical and mental health consequences as a result of exposure to domestic abuse. Children see parents or carers suffer, often at the hands of someone else they love. They suffer physical, sexual and emotional abuse themselves. Sometimes they are forced into colluding with the violent partner; sometimes they feel deeply responsible for the non-abusing parent or carer, or for their brothers and sisters. Children can be further affected when adult victims of domestic abuse sometimes find it difficult to be the caring, supportive parents they would want to be, even after leaving the abusive relationship, because they have been hurt and traumatised by their experiences.

Amongst other impacts, over half (52%) had behavioural problems, over a third (39%) had difficulties adjusting at school, and nearly two thirds (60%) felt responsible for negative events. A quarter of both boys and girls exposed to domestic abuse exhibit abusive behaviours themselves... children were more likely to show abusive behaviours after exposure to the domestic abuse had ended.

In relationships where there is domestic violence, children witness about three-quarters of the abusive incidents. About half the children in such families have themselves been badly hit or beaten. Sexual abuse and emotional abuse are also more likely to happen in these families.

Always ask yourself - **“What is it like to be a child living in that household?”**

If you feel like you're struggling right now, you're not alone. We've gathered contact information for some helplines, so you know where you can turn to if you need some help.

Domestic abuse*

National Domestic Abuse Helpline (free) | 0808 2000 247 | nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Men's Advice Line (free) | 0808 8010 327 | mensadviceline.org.uk

Galop (free, LGBT+) | 0800 999 5428 | galop.org.uk

*Please note there is new legislation regarding Domestic Abuse Bill 2021

This Bill explicitly recognises children as victims of Domestic Abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse