



DOMESTIC ABUSE

What is Domestic Abuse (DA)?

Hampshire Constabulary uses the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse which states:

*'Any incident or pattern of incidents of **controlling, coercive or 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'.*

This includes 'honour' based violence (HBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. **Family members** are mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, in-laws or stepfamily.

Types of abuse will vary but will often fall within the following headings:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
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'Controlling behaviour'

- Acts which are intended to control a person
- Make them feel dependent by isolating them from family, friends, and support
- Exploit them for personal gain
- Deprive them of the means needed for independence, resistance and/or escape
- Dictate their everyday behaviour

'Coercive behaviour'

Acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse, used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

What are the risks to my child?

Any person aged 16 or over can be at risk of domestic abuse anytime throughout their life, it is not just women at risk of being abused in a relationship, men are victims of domestic abuse too as well as parents at risk of abuse from their children.

Domestic abuse is not just use of violence; it happens through a wide range of abusive behaviours not always obvious or recognised by those affected.

Being a Victim or Abuser

The risk to young people becoming a victim, an abuser (offender), or both, is present throughout their life, which makes it crucial for adults to discuss and educate them about harm related topics to avoid failing to prepare them to recognise signs of abuse in an intimate relationship and within the family.

Effects on Mental Health and Wellbeing

The impact domestic abuse can have on a person's physical and mental wellbeing is huge. Victims often find themselves feeling isolated, lost, weak, scared, helpless and worthless, often leading to severe anxiety, depression, self-harm and in extreme cases suicide.

Committing offences

Where a young person may be charged with a domestic related offence, it is important they know that details will be held on record and can be disclosed to perspective employers or relevant departments when applying to travel abroad in the future.



What is the Law?

Domestic abuse itself is not an offence, just like bullying isn't; it is the acts and behaviours the abuser subjects their victim to that determines the offence, for example assault, theft, harassment and criminal damage.

A case of abuse will be dealt with as 'domestic' depending on the victim and offender being over 16 years old, have been intimate partners or are family members.

However, laws are in place for police to deal with specific Honour Based Abuse which includes:

Forced Marriage - The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Female

Genital Mutilation - Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Charges and Convictions

It is important young people know that being charged with an offence will result in having a criminal record which can impact their future.

When a case is reported to police, investigated and results in a young person being charged with an offence, they will then have a criminal record, which will feature on DBS vetting check in the future and can affect certain opportunities such as working with children.

If the young person investigated is not charged, the crime will still be recorded and details will be held on police record, this is not a criminal record.

Although not a criminal record, young people need to know that enhanced levels of vetting may still disclose details of their involvement in a case to future employers or travel departments.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders /Notices

DVPNs and DVPOs are civil orders that came into force in 2014 as tools for police and courts to use to protect people when charge or bail is not possible.

- A Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) is issued by police where there is evidence of violence or threat of violence and a DVPN is considered necessary to protect those involved.
- A Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) can only be issued by a court.

Orders are used to prevent an abuser from an address and/or from contacting a victim for up to 28 days.

Clare's Law

Introduced in March 2014, Clare's Law was named after Clare Wood who was murdered by her former boyfriend in Salford in 2009; the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) allows anyone who suspects a person they know is being abused by their current partner, to formally request information through the police about the partner's history of domestic abuse. This can provide victims with potentially life-saving information and reduce the risk of harm to them.

What can I do as a parent?



Recognising it is not easy to discuss topics such as domestic abuse with your child, there are numerous benefits of openly talking to them about this issue which include educating and empowering them to develop skills needed to make safe and responsible choices growing up.

Talk

Talking provides an opportunity to help them understand what makes a safe and loving relationship, both intimate and within the family, and to know what makes it unsafe and unhealthy. If no one helps them understand the difference, how can they develop the skills to know if they are a victim or an abuser in future relationships.

Educate

When talking to your child about domestic abuse, it is important to include information about risks, consequences, law, the difference of family and intimate relationships, as well as types of abusive behaviours like those identified by Women's Aid below:

Destructive verbal abuse	Shouting/ mocking/ accusing/ name-calling/ verbally threatening
Pressure	Sulk; threaten to withhold money; disconnect phones, take your transport/independence away; take children away; lie to your friends and family about you; tell you that you have no choice in any decisions; threaten to leave or commit suicide.
Disrespect	Persistently put you down in front of others; not listen or respond to you when you talk; interrupt your phone calls; take money from your purse without asking; refuse to help with childcare or housework.
Break trust	Lie to you; withhold information from you; act/be jealous; have other relationships; break promises and shared agreements.
Isolate	Monitor or block your phone calls; tell you where you can/cannot go and what you can/cannot do; prevent you from seeing friends and relatives
Harass	Follow you; check up on you; open your mail, check to see who has phoned you, embarrass/belittle you in public.
Threaten	Make angry gestures; use physical size to intimidate you; shout you down; destroy your possessions; break things, punch walls, threaten with a knife/gun, threaten to kill/harm you and the children.
Sexual violence	Use force, threats or intimidation to make you carry out sexual acts; have sex with you when you don't want to (Rape); any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation
Physical violence	Punch, slap, hit, bite, pinch, kick, pull hair, push, shove, burn, strangle.
Deny	Say abuse doesn't happen; say you are the cause; be publicly gentle and patient; cry/beg for forgiveness, say it will never happen again.

Reassure

It is so important your child knows you are always there to support them, if ever they find themselves worried or pressured by anyone or any situation.

This gives confidence when it's needed, to come to you at any time without fear of being judged, knowing they can confide in you and have your support in any risky or challenging situation.