

Safeguarding 7 minute briefing: Domestic Violence and Abuse

What can I do?

For support, contact Cornwall domestic abuse and sexual violence service, Safer Futures:

saferfutures.org.uk 0300 777 4777 (9am – 5pm, Mon – Fri)

Or:

Cornwall Refuge Trust's 24hr helpline on 01872 225629 for support outside of those hours.

If anyone is in immediate danger call Devon and Cornwall Police~ 999

Background

The Definition of "domestic abuse" in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 is: Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- the behaviour is abusive.

What else should I consider?

Parents experiencing DVA may also experience issues such as mental health problems & substance misuse. The impact of combinations of factors have been found to increase the risk of harm to children. We need to be mindful of how these issues interlink and assess the impact of the issues together and separately to ensure interventions put in place are effective in promoting the safety and wellbeing of all members of a household.

What are the indicators that a child is living in a home where DVA is happening*?

- frequent or reoccurring injuries with unlikely or no explanations
- low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm
- behavioural issues, antisocial or criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, absenteeism, or a reluctance to go home



[Click here for quiz](#)

Background cont.

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following: (a) physical or sexual abuse; (b) violent or threatening behaviour; (c) controlling or coercive behaviour; (d) economic abuse; (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse; and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Why it is important

Each year nearly 2 million people in the UK suffer some form of domestic abuse - 1.3 million female victims (8.2% of the population) and 600,000 male victims (4%). 7 women a month are killed by a current or former partner in England and Wales and 130,000 children live in homes where there is high-risk domestic abuse All agencies must ensure their staff, carers and volunteers are fully aware of the impact DVA can have on victims and their children and how to safeguard them.

What are the indicators an adult is experiencing DVA*?

- frequent or reoccurring injuries with unlikely explanations
- appearing frightened, ashamed and evasive
- stress or anxiety disorders; isolation from friends, family or colleagues; depression, panic attacks or other symptoms; alcohol and/or drug abuse; suicide attempts