

Domestic Abuse



**Cambridgeshire
& Peterborough**
Domestic Abuse & Sexual
Violence Partnership

Opening closed doors.

Professionals Booklet



Domestic abuse can be: physical, emotional, sexual or financial and is all about control and power over another person aged 16 or over who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.

Definition of domestic abuse

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) 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;

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Personally Connected is defined as:

(a) they are, or have been, married to each other;

(b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;

(c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;

(f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));

(g) they are relatives.

The Law

A **coercive or controlling behaviour** offence came into force in December 2015, carrying a maximum 5 years’ imprisonment, a fine or both. The offence applies to relationships between intimate partners, former partners who still live together or family members.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders/Notices (DVPO/N) enable the police and magistrates to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident. A perpetrator can be banned with immediate effect from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim time to consider their options and get the support they need.

Under the **Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme** (also called Clare’s Law) an individual can ask police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past.

For more info visit

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

Some of the signs of domestic abuse:

- Changed behaviour in front of their partner
- Seeming nervous when they are with their partner, as if they are walking on eggshells
- Less confident or frightened – not their usual self
- Partner texts or calls constantly
- Cancelling plans at the last minute, or making excuses not to spend time with family/friends
- Bruises or injuries with unconvincing explanations
- Changes in appearance, for example, dressing more conservatively or stopping wearing makeup
- Taking more time than usual off sick from work.

Signs that someone might be controlling:

- Appearing jealous and possessive
- Cutting partner off from friends and family – trying to isolate them
- Getting angry or annoyed if partner is slightly late
- Criticising partner or putting them down
- Making it difficult for partner to spend time alone with friends/family or creating a bad atmosphere when in company.
- Accessing partners social media accounts
- Losing temper over something that seemed minor
- Controlling the money in the relationship.

What might a person who is being abused be feeling and experiencing?

The list below is not exhaustive. It applies to both men and women that are being abused and to both heterosexual and same sex relationships.

- S/he may be overwhelmed by fear - a fear of further violence or threats to children's safety.
- They may believe that they are to blame and that by changing their own behaviour the abuse will stop. Research shows that this is not the case.
- Victims may experience many conflicting emotions. Your friend may love their partner, but hate the violence. They may live in hope that the good side will reappear.
- He or she may be dependent upon their partner, emotionally and financially.
- Many people experiencing abuse feel shame, guilt and embarrassment.
- S/he may feel resigned and hopeless and find it hard to make decisions about the future.
- Men may feel that it is an attack on their masculinity.
- They may not believe that they are a victim of domestic abuse because they are male.
- Research suggests that there is something of a sexuality divide in male victim's experiences with gay men experiencing more frequent and severe violence.
- It is common to think that no one will believe them.
- If children are involved, the victim may worry that if they ask for help they will never see their children again.
- In a same-sex relationship an abusive partner may threaten to expose the victim's sexual orientation with family, friends and co-workers.

Key points for making domestic abuse enquiries

- Ask everyone, Ask early, and Keep asking – it may take a while to build trust
- Don't ask when the potential perpetrator is in the room or nearby
- Don't ask just as a tick box exercise – show genuine interest
- Ask open questions
- Don't side-line domestic abuse as not as important as other issues
- Respond positively – believe them, always
- Respond appropriately – ask what they would like you to do, ensure you know about signposting options
- Follow up – don't assume that it has gone away because you asked.
- Do not use family members or members of the victim or abuser's community as translators

Professional Guidance:

[NICE Domestic Violence and Abuse Multi-Agency Working for NHS staff](#)

[Responding Effectively to Violence and Abuse \(ReVA\) - Mental Health Guidance](#)

[Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Boards](#)

[Against Violence & Abuse \(AVA\) Complicated Matters](#)

Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service (IDVAS)

The IDVA service covers Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Professionals should complete a DASH Risk Assessment Checklist with the victim (available at https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136)

A score of 17 or more should be referred to MARAC – client consent is preferable but not essential. Scores of 14-16 can be referred to IDVA Service but need client consent.

The **Young People's IDVAs** work with young people aged 13 and over who are experiencing abuse in an intimate relationship. The YP IDVAs work with all risk levels. The YP IDVA Referral form/Risk Assessment Checklist can be found at http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136

The **Health IDVAs** accept referrals at all risk levels from A&E and Maternity Services at Addenbrooke's and Hinchingsbrooke Hospitals. The DASH Risk Assessment should be used

http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136

The **A8 IDVAs** work with victims of all risk levels who originate from Eastern European A8 countries. The DASH Risk Assessment should be used

http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136

If you have any questions, please email the Duty IDVA IDVA.Referrals@cambridgeshire.gov.uk (professionals only)

Domestic Abuse Outreach Services

The Outreach service operates across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and accepts referrals from both professionals and self referrals from victims/ survivors.

Outreach services can take the form of advice and information, support groups and peer support and are available to both male and female victims. Victims can self-refer to these services and the service will assess their suitability against what they can offer.

For Cambridge City/South Cambs/East Cambs call Cambridge Women's Aid on 01223 361214

For Hunts, Peterborough & Fenland call Refuge on 07787 255821.

Peterborough Women's Aid continues to operate a refuge in Peterborough for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Contact number 08454 103123.

Sexual Violence

CAPRCP - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership work with victims and survivors of sexual violence.

The Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service (ISVA) offers support to survivors of sexual violence and works across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

There is also support available for children via the ChISVA.

More information and referral forms can be found at:

<http://www.caprccp.org.uk>

For professional enquiries only, please contact 01733 225937 or email isva@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk

The Elms Sexual Assault Referral Centre supports victims of sexual violence and sexual abuse. The service is open 24/7 call on 01480 425003 or email theelms.sarc@nhs.net

Protecting children

Where there is domestic abuse between adults there is often child abuse.

All children and young people witnessing violence are now seen as victims under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Some may get caught up in the violence, or be a direct target themselves. Those who have experienced domestic violence will feel many different emotions and each will deal with it differently.

Adults often think that children and young people aren't really affected by domestic abuse if they don't see physical violence. This is not true. Children may hear a violent incident from the next room (which can be worse than witnessing it). They might see injuries later, be affected by a parent's unpredictable or controlling behavior, or be neglected as a result of the abuse.

How much a child is affected by living with domestic abuse depends on many factors. This includes their age, the nature of the abuse, what they are aware of, whether they have a 'safe significant adult' who can emotionally protect them, and their own temperament or personality.

The long-term effects on children who have experienced domestic abuse are profound, and can include depression, guilt, self-harm and suicide; misuse of alcohol or drugs; post-traumatic stress disorder and an inability to trust people.

What can you do?

Embrace Child Victims of Crime support children aged 7-19 (24 with additional needs) who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse. This service is across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. Referrals from professionals only via <https://embracecvoc.org.uk/>

Family Action___have two specialist Victim and Witness Care Co-ordinators for Young Victims of Crime referrals can be made to 01733 893361.

If you are concerned about a child's safety, report it to children's social care online at [Concerned? | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board](#) (safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

Protecting Adult Safeguarding Adults

Adults with care and support needs may be unable to protect themselves from abuse due to their care and support need, this may make them an 'adult at risk' (Care Act 2014)

Women with a disability are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as those without a disability.

In addition to the previous signs of abuse, adults at risk who are being abused may experience the following.

Personal care may be withheld if the abuser is also a Carer - for example refusing to provide assistance to use the toilet as a way of controlling the victim.

Financial abuse – the abuser may use their status as carer to spend their partner's money inappropriately and/or without their consent.

Psychological (Emotional) abuse – the abuser may tell their partner that no one else will love them or that if they leave they will have to go into a care home.

The abuser may use children as a hold over the victim – telling them that their children will be taken away if they report the abuse because they will not be able to look after them on their own.

Sexual abuse – the abuser may sexually assault or rape their partner who may not physically be able to stop them or understand what is happening to them.

Carers can also be victims of domestic abuse – this could be a long-standing situation or as a result of behaviour changes in their partner due to illness or disability. Carers may also be susceptible to abuse or neglect.

<https://www.caringtogether.org>

What can I do?

If you are concerned that any adult with care and support needs is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect speak to the adult at risk to find out what they want to happen and reassure them that there is support available.

[Concerned? | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

Safety Planning

A safety plan encourages people who are suffering from domestic abuse to think about ways to stay safe while still in the relationship, as well as if they decide to leave.

This may include:

- planning in advance how to respond in different situations, including crisis situations.
- keeping important and emergency phone numbers to hand, such as for local domestic abuse services, GP, social worker, school, solicitor.
- asking neighbours who your friend can trust to call police if they hear signs of an attack.
- rehearsing an escape plan, and agreeing a code word that can be used in normal conversation.
- packing an emergency bag and hiding it somewhere safe, such as at a neighbour's house, but avoiding mutual friends.
- Finding a low risk area of the house in case of attack, where they can escape and not get trapped and where there won't be potential weapons such as knives.

Preparing to leave Sometimes abusers will increase the violence if they think their victim is planning to leave, and will continue to be abusive after they have left.

It is advised to:

- plan to leave at a time when their abuser is not around.
- try to take everything they need with them, including important documents.
- take their children with them, or they may find it hard to have them living with them in the future.

Training

Domestic Abuse Basic Awareness eLearning via www.cambsdasv.org.uk

The [Cambridge & Peterborough Safeguarding Board](#) provides several training courses around domestic abuse

Forced Marriage Awareness elearning (Forced Marriage Unit)
<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/resources/awareness-of-forced-marriage-resource-pack/>

Sign up to be a DASV Champion

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership holds quarterly training sessions on a variety of topics for DASV Champions. If you'd like to sign up to be a DASV Champion please email DASVChampions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Support

Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire or East Cambridgeshire:

Cambridge Women's Aid 01223 361214

Fenland, Huntingdonshire or Peterborough:

Refuge on 07787 255821

Peterborough Women's Aid 08454 103123

Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership

<https://www.caprccp.org.uk/>

Cambridge Helpline 01223 245888

Peterborough Helpline 01733 852578

Sexual Assault Referral Centre 0800 193 5434

www.theelmssarc.org

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Victims and Witness Hub

0800 781 6818 <https://www.cambs.police.uk/information-and-services/Victims-and-Witnesses/Victim-and-Witness-Hub.aspx>

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247 www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327 www.mensadvice.org.uk

Galop Support for LGBT people 0800 999 5428 www.galop.org.uk

Karma Nirvana (HBV/FM) 0800 5999 247

www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Further information

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership www.cambsdasv.org.uk

The Hideout A website for children and young people

www.thehideout.org.uk

Home Office Domestic Abuse pages

www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse

Cambs Police www.cambs.police.uk/GetCloser/DomesticAbuse