

Fact Sheet – Domestic Abuse

What is Domestic Abuse?

The Government definition of domestic abuse is:

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:

- **Psychological**
- **Physical**
- **Sexual**
- **Financial**
- **Emotional**

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

It 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.

Why does it matter?

Domestic is a hidden crime and it **causes significant harm** to both **children** and **adults**. Almost 1 in 3 women aged between 16 and 59 will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. In the year ending March 2019, 1.6 million women experienced domestic abuse and on average 2 women a week are killed by their current or former partner.ⁱ

20% of children in the UK have lived with an adult perpetrating domestic violence and 62% of those living in households where there is domestic violence are directly harmed.

In Salford, in 2018/19 there were 6928 incidents of domestic abuse and 5056 domestic abuse crimes reported to Greater Manchester Police (GMP). 600 cases were identified as being high risk of death or serious injury. Domestic Abuse was an underlying factor in around 60% of Child Protection Plans (2018-19) and a cause of concern identified by either an adult / child or family in 32% (1526) of Child and Family Assessments carried out between April 2018 and March 2020.

In Salford, our approach involves supporting and empowering adults and children affected by domestic abuse, whilst holding perpetrators to account for their behaviour and encouraging perpetrators to stop their abusive behaviour.

What might domestic abuse look like?

Type of abuse	What is it?	Things to be concerned about
Emotional and Psychological	Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a person. This can include making threats to harm them or their children or commit suicide. It can involve telling lies about them, making them doubt themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening, shouting, mocking or name calling; • A change in character when a particular person is present.
Physical	It’s important to remember that physical abuse is intentionally causing physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained injuries or regular visits to A&E or the GP;

	harm to a person. It can include: punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical injuries or marks such as bruises, burn marks, scalds. • Discomfort / wincing when someone moves • Damage to property / breakages • Noise from the property – screaming, shouting or even loud music to drown out other noises
Sexual	<p>This is when a person is forced or tricked into having sex when they don't want to or performing sexual activities.</p> <p>Some adults or younger people might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong and they might be afraid to tell someone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in character, signs of distress, • Concerns regarding pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. • Depressed, withdrawn, anxious
Financial	<p>This can include things such as taking a person's money, withholding money, taking out loans or credit and running up debts in another person's name.</p> <p>I can also involve doing things that can jeopardise a person's job.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained lack of money to buy essential items • Someone being in control of their bank cards or money. • Unable to pay rent or other bills
Stalking / Harassment	following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you, embarrassing you in public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone regularly being accompanied to places / appointments
Gaslighting	This is term used to describe abusive behaviour that makes the victim start to doubt their memory, judgement or even their sanity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Blaming themselves for the abuse • Feeling oversensitive or that everything they do is wrong
Love bombing	This is over the top demonstrations of affection, often used at the start of a relationship or the relationship moving far too fast, and may be a warning sign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of or expensive gifts • Excessive compliments • Wanting to spend • Dramatic reaction if you don't go along with their wishes and can make the person feel like they are 'walking on egg shells'

What should I do if I am concerned that someone is being abused?

If there is an **immediate risk of harm** to the person you are worried about, you must contact the police via **999**.

Only if it's **safe to do so**, and you are able to speak to the person **without** the suspected perpetrator being there, you can **ask them** if they are experiencing domestic abuse. **Be curious.**

Ways to ask:

"I'm worried about you...tell me, have you ever felt afraid of your partner"

"What happens in your relationship when you disagree?"

"Tell me about your home-life and/or relationship with your husband/partner/family?"

"Has someone hurt you? Do you feel safe?"

"Are you ever afraid of, humiliated or hurt by anyone?"

Specific things to consider during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Lockdown measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 mean that victims of domestic abuse may have been trapped at home with abusive partners or family members. There are fewer opportunities for both adults and children to escape to places of safety and seek support such as seeing friends or family, going to work or going to school.

Things you could ask:

- Is everything ok for you (and the children) at home?
- For the purpose of ensuring your safety, can I ask is there any possibility that this call could be overheard by any person who has caused you harm or who you feel threatened by?
- How are you finding being isolated, are you able to take some time out for yourself?
- Are you staying in contact with friends and extended family?
- Are you able to get to the shops/take exercise? Is this on your own or always with a family member?
- What does a typical day look like for you?
- Are you getting help at home?

Other questions you could ask, depending on the family, your role and your instincts:

- Do you feel safe in your home?
- Would you like support? If yes – do you want me to ring police?
- If they say no to police - advise that support agencies still working by telephone or online
- Ask, if it is safe for them to jot down a number or view information on the internet? (if they say yes, ask them to remember to delete internet searches)
- Is it safe for us to send you information about services/support by email or text message?

Responding to a disclosure

If they do disclose abuse to you, listen, don't judge them and record what they've told you.

If you don't feel able to ask and you are worried about someone, then discuss your concerns with your manager / safeguarding lead.

NEVER tell someone to leave an abusive relationship. This can increase the risk of death or serious harm. If possible, you should encourage them to seek specialist help so they can put a safety plan in place.

Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment Risk Indicator Checklist (Known as DASH or RIC or DASH RIC)

This is national tool which is used to assess the risk of harm to the victim. It involves asking the person a series of questions. If a person scores 14 or more they should be referred to MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference). Please speak to the Domestic Abuse or Safeguarding Lead within your organisation.

So called, 'Honour Based Abuse'

"An incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/ or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour."

Forced Marriage

A Forced Marriage (FM) is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is now a specific offence under s121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and comes into force on 16 June 2014 and it is a form of child abuse.

A Forced Marriage Protection Order can be used to prevent someone being forced to marry.

If you are concerned someone is being forced to marry, contact the [Home Office Forced Marriage Unit](#) – 0207 008 0151

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures involving the removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 made failing to protect a girl from FGM a criminal offence; it places a duty on health, social care workers and teachers to notify the police of any known cases involving girls under 18; it also introduced FGM protection orders, a civil order to protect potential victims.

These types of abuse can indicate that someone is at **increased risk of serious harm or death**. You may only have **one chance** to talk to them and support them to seek help.

Domestic abuse and children

Children can often be present or in another room when domestic abuse takes place within family households. Witnessing domestic abuse in this way is extremely harmful to children and should always be reported to the Bridge.

Sometimes older children can be abusive towards their family members. The Home Office has produced [guidance on adolescent to parent violence and abuse](#).

If you are **worried about a child or young person** call The Bridge - 0161 603 4500 (Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm) or the Emergency Duty Team on 0161 794 8888 outside of these hours.

How can I support adults who are affected?

If there is an immediate risk, please contact police / emergency services via **999**. If they are unable to speak they can dial 999 and press 55 ([Make yourself heard](#)) to let the operator know that they need help. Alternatively you can contact [Greater Manchester Police](#) - 101

[Salford Independent Domestic Abuse Support Service](#) – 0161 793 3232

[National Domestic Violence Helpline \(Refuge\)](#) – 0808 2000 247

Greater Manchester Victim Support – 0300 303 0162

Housing Advice - housing.advicecentre@salford.gov.uk

[Victim Support](#) – 0845 3030 900

[Saint Mary's Sexual Assault Centre](#) Crisis Line - 0161 276 6515

[Jewish Women's Aid](#) - 0808 801 0500

[Galop The LGBT+ Anti-violence charity](#) – 0800 999 5428

[Karma Nirvana](#) Honour Network Helpline 0800 5999 247

[Men's Advice Line](#) – 0808 801 0327

If the adult has **additional care and support needs**, you should also refer them to **Adult Social Care – 0161 631 4777** (Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm) or the Emergency Duty Team 0161 794 8888 outside of these hours.

Other useful contacts / information:

[SIDASS – Guidance for Survivors](#)

[Salford Council – Domestic Abuse Advice for survivors, friends and family and professionals](#)

[NSPCC](#) helpline providing advice for professionals who are worried about children – 0808 800 5000

[Childline](#) free confidential advice and support for under children and young people under 18 - 0800 1111

[End the Fear / Sitting right with you](#)

[Respect Phonenumber](#) (for perpetrators) – 0808 802 4040

[Talk Listen Change \(TLC\)](#) – enquiries@talklistenchange.org.uk

Additional Information

Visit: <https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/> (Children)

Or <https://safeguardingadults.salford.gov.uk/> (Adults)

Email: SSCP@salford.gov.uk (Children) or SSAB@salford.gov.uk (Adults)

ⁱ [The facts - Refuge Charity - Domestic Violence Help](#)