

Domestic Abuse Factsheet

What is domestic abuse (DA)?

DA 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 can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: Psychological, physical, sexual, financial or 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.

How do I recognise domestic abuse?

There are many signs for domestic abuse. Here are just some examples of what you might see when supporting adults and young people;

- Excuses for injuries
- Self-harming
- Personality changes, like low self-esteem in someone who was always confident
- Substance misuse
- Low mood and depression, high levels of anxiety
- Constantly checking in with their partner or fear of their ex-partner
- Never having money on hand
- Overly worried about pleasing their partner
- Partner always present at meetings or in the home when you visit
- Missing out on work, school, or cancelling meetings for no clear reason
- Wearing clothes that don't fit the season, like long sleeves in summer to cover bruises.

Young people may not be aware they are in an abusive relationship. Practitioners should explore what a healthy relationship is with the young person and then explore with them the elements of healthy v's unhealthy to help them understand.

What should I do if I suspect domestic abuse is present in a family?

- If safe speak to the person about your concerns.
- Be aware that they may not want to or be able to speak openly about their situation
- Discuss the concerns and assess the risk, discuss safety plan.
- Inform them about support what that looks like and how to access it.
- Explain about confidentiality and be clear about how you may have to share the information with other agencies, specifically if there are children in the home.
- If children are present and you have concerns, contact **MASH 01403 229900**
- If there are no children and you need advice contact **Worth on 0330 2228181**

What tools and resources are available to support me?

- **Worth Domestic Abuse Services** – offer advice and guidance - Self/agency referral - Central Domestic Abuse Hub- 0330 222 8181
- Email- domesticabuseservicescentral@westsussex.gov.uk
- **If you have safeguarding concerns -**
- Multi Agency Safeguarding HUB (MASH) 01403 229900
- For more information on domestic abuse click [here](#)
- Click [here](#) to find out more about the Multi Agency Risk Assessment conference (MARAC)
- Click [here](#) to find out more about the Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model.