

Training Feedback and Information

Focus of Training:

'Impact of domestic violence and abuse on children aged 11-18 years'.

Aims and objectives:

- Examine the messages teenagers get about relationships (from whom, where, and what the messages are)
- Impact and the effects of abuse on teenagers (physically, mentally, socially, sexually, financially and mentally)
- Social media, technology and abuse
- Barriers to speaking out and seeking support
- Importance of multi-agency working / Liverpool safeguarding process

Session:

Task 1: Identify where teenagers learn information about relationships: (who, where, what)

Who: parents, siblings, professionals, teachers, reality stars, politicians, religious leaders, friends, colleagues, partner, celebrities.

Where: community, adverts, magazines, television programmes, social media platforms, internet, porn, culture, books, computer games, radio, YouTube, blogs, school, sporting events.

What: the need for a relationship, stereotypes, dramatized, lack of representation of different relationships, unrealistic expectations, radicalisation, boundaries, what a 'normal' relationship is, problem solving, conflict resolution, family relationships, 'rules' of dating, what 'fun' looks like, helplines, law – what is acceptable and what is not.

Discussion:

- Teenagers are bombarded with a range of messages from different sources/influences on a daily basis.
- It is important for staff working with children to understand where each individual learner gets their information from so that you can understand their influences and adapt how you work with them to support them.
- Teenagers are too young to deal with the mixture of messages they are receiving.

Relationships:

The definition of the word 'relationship' is 'connection'. To have a healthy relationship, couples must have *many* healthy connections that cross over.

Connections couples have will include:	Different types of abuse:
Physical connection	Physical abuse
Sexual connection	Sexual abuse
Psychological connection	Psychological abuse
Financial connection	Financial abuse
Spiritual connection	Spiritual abuse

Nobody is perfect and due to human nature, most couple's relationships will go back and forth between healthy (safe) and unhealthy (unsafe). There are times when we don't explain

ourselves very well or at all, we hide or genuinely don't know how we are really feeling and so our response or reaction can be disproportionate. Most couples have a decent level of communication and by saying sorry or explaining yourself when you are ready; the relationship becomes healthy (safe) again.

How can you tell if a relationship is abusive?

Domestic abuse is about power and control. If one person holds all the power, makes all of the decisions and has control, and if the other person starts to adapt their behaviour for fear of consequences, punishment or arguments, then it is a controlling and abusive relationship.

Task 2: In groups describe what a healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationship can look like:

Connection	Healthy (Safe)	Unhealthy (Unsafe)	Abusive (Dangerous)
Physical	loving	unloving	unpredictable
	equal	unequal	volatile
	fair	unfair	controlling
	caring	uncaring	decisions made by one person to suit them
	happy	unhappy	permission needed
	secure	insecure	cannot laugh at self
	trusting	distrustful	dysfunctional
	honest	dishonest	chaotic
	fun	sad	no laughter / no fun
Psychological Emotional / Verbal / Mental	good communication	poor communication	long periods of sulking / silence / moods
	respectful	you and your opinions are made fun of	unrealistic and unachievable expectations and demands
	opinions are listened to and valued	you are not listened to	no respect
	stable	disrespectful	punitive
	flexible	moody and sulky	retribution
	joint decision making	uncompromising	
	genuine	told what is happening	
Sexual	intimate	cold	manipulation
	affectionate	disconnected	excessive jealousy
	laugh together	not much laughter / fun	no trust
	can laugh at self	fragile	accusatory
	strong	doubt	threatening
	warm	jealousy	intimidating
	balanced	insecurity	power
Financial	commitment	frustration	blackmail
	monogamy	denial	addiction
	consistency	resentment	emptiness
	acceptance	lies	misery
	empathy	confusion	
	romance	Non-committal	
Spiritual	fulfilment	loneliness	SCARED OF CONSEQUENCES HAVE TO THINK ABOUT OR ADAPT BEHAVIOUR
	supportive	co-dependency	
	compromise	embarrassment	
	tolerance	tense	
	progression		
	relaxed		

How can teenagers be affected by domestic abuse?

1. Victim of parental domestic abuse
2. Victim in their own relationship
3. May be perpetrating it

Stage 1 of domestic abuse: Grooming

- Teenagers have gone through a grooming process. Gifts are offered and they are controlling the victim. To begin with, it looks caring, supportive, loving and attentive.
- There has to be a degree of control because perpetrators do not use the same behaviour with everyone and they do not do it straight away.

Reasons why grooming behaviours and methods used by abusers work:

1. Establishers controlling behaviours
2. Creates dependency (emotional, financial etc.)
3. Makes victim feel 100% responsible for the abusers happiness, mental health and wellbeing
4. Erodes victims confidence and self-esteem
5. Sets up the conditions for victim to take the blame for all the perpetrators behaviour

Grooming works by mixing positive behaviours with elements of abuse. At the beginning, all behaviours are positive; they appear loving, protective, loyal, fun, caring, thoughtful and supportive. Slowly, abusive elements are included in small amounts, just enough to cause surprise to the victim, but not enough to cause alarm bells to a high level. Over time, the inappropriate, becomes to feel normal behaviour. Confidence of the victim decreases and dependency increases.

Stage 2: Cycle of coercion – Process of domestic abuse

Isolation – *this increases dependency on perpetrator increases anxiety in victims and ensures they have no reality checks which distort their thinking about themselves and others. Cuts victims off from any support:*

- Checking up on them constantly and monitor their every move
- Not allowing any access to money, transport or telephone
- Being locked in the house
- Withholding affection / sulking / long silences
- Prevent them from seeing their family and friends or making them so uncomfortable when they visit, they stop
- Demanding to know every action / conversation they have
- Not allowing them to attend College / Training
- Accompanying them everywhere
- Encouraging development of phobias / depression
- Withholding any assistance needed to go out / communicate
- Demanding to know all their passwords or checking their social media

Enforcing demands / rules – *perpetrators make victims feel unable to do anything 'right, the demands are related to all facets of life and the victim is set up to fail eroding their self-esteem and confidence increasing dependency on the perpetrator:*

- Expecting partner to behave in a certain way
- Making them account for every penny of expenditure
- Forcing them to clean items that are already clean
- Expecting them to service their every need (emotionally, physically, sexually)

- Expecting instant responses
- Unrealistic demands on time – timing them when they go out
- Setting them up to fail by changing the goal posts constantly

Degradation / humiliation – *creating feelings of shame and guilt eroding their confidence and self-esteem, making it unlikely that the victim will tell anyone. Victims are deeply embarrassed and are told repeatedly by the perpetrator that everything that happens to them is their fault:*

- Humiliating them in front of others
- Sexual violence / pornography
- Using racial abuse
- Telling them they're too young to know anything
- Telling them they are 'stupid, useless, unattractive, fat/thin, no-one would want them'
- Spitting at them
- Constant bullying
- Making them dress inappropriately or in clothes they are not comfortable in
- Never using their name and always calling them something they hate
- Using social media to spread lies about them
- Using social media to share intimate photographs / videos of them

Threats – *are effective in gaining and maintaining control, if the victim believes the perpetrator is capable and will carry out the threat, it is a powerful way to ensure compliance from the victim:*

- To harm them or their friends / families / pets
- Sexually assault and rape
- To find them if they leave
- Destroy their property
- To leave them
- To self-harm or kill themselves if they leave
- To make sure they are 'blamed' for everything

Displays of total power – *carrying out the threat and using a range of methods as a reminder of who holds the power and has control in the relationship:*

- Physical beating
- Rape/sexual violence
- Abusing them in front of others (family/friends/children)
- Using social media to spread lies about them or intimate information
- Making them service their needs instantly
- Boasting about the abuse with friends
- Locking them in / out of the house
- Destroying possessions
- Controlling / spending all their money
- Taking the children away
- Use of child contact to further abuse, intimidate or harass
- Finding them when they leave

Occasional indulgences – *'nice/pampering' acts to counteract the abuse and keep the victim hooked and invested in the relationship*

- Apologising after being violent/abusive
- Allowing them to make a decision / have choices
- Buying gifts/meals/holidays
- Allowing them to see their family/friends

- Being affectionate and loving
- Resuming sexual contact if it had been stopped
- Showing kindness
- Making promises of change / improvements

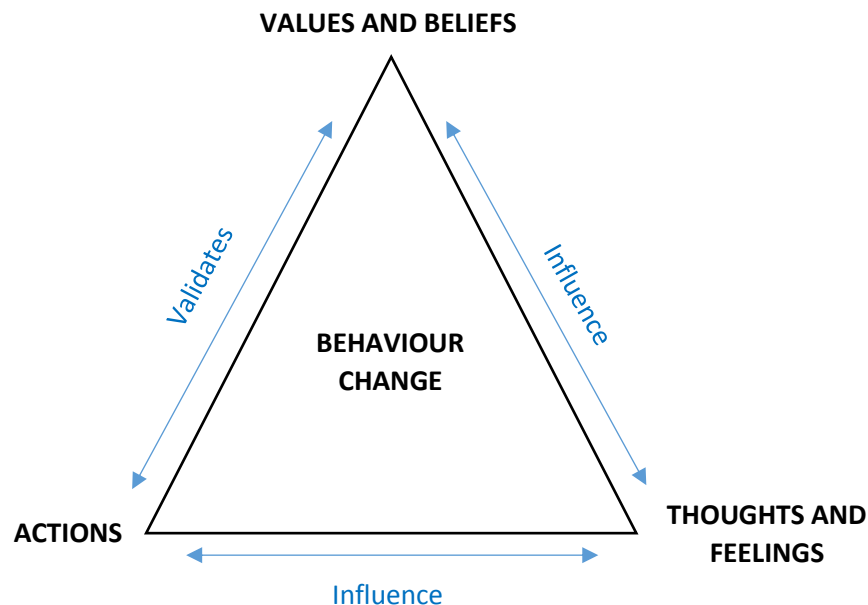
Exhaustion – *keeping victims exhausted physically / emotionally affects cognition and functioning making them easier to control*

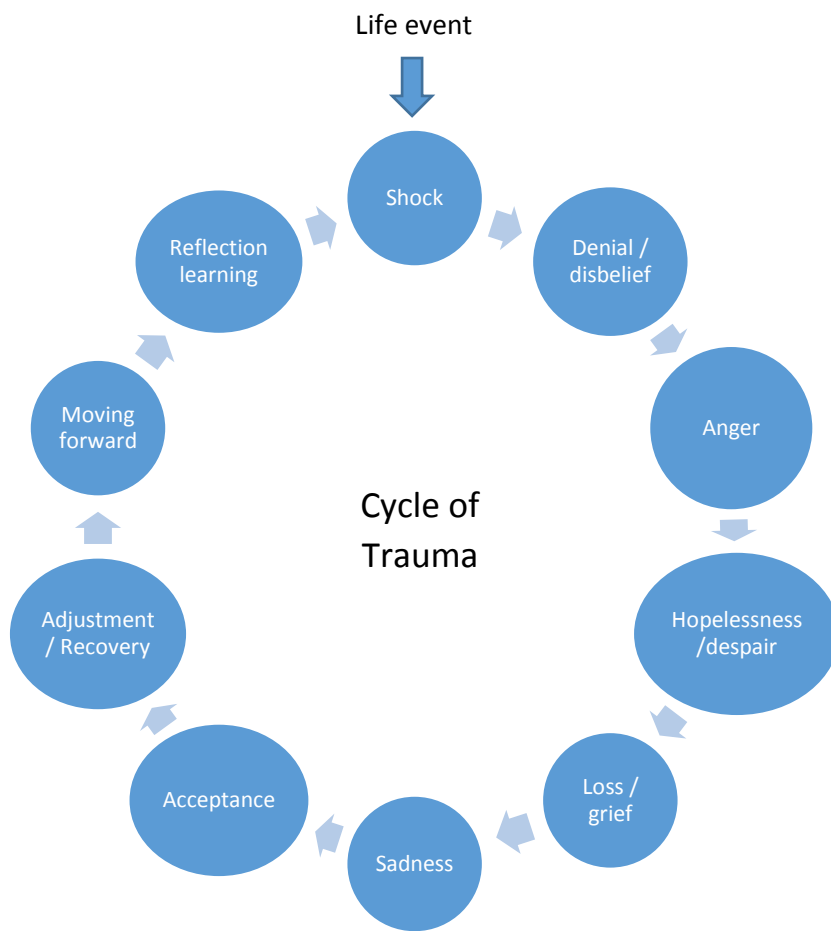
- Controlling when they can and can't sleep
- Demanding sex when they are tired, ill or injured
- Controlling what they eat and drink with no access to food
- Withholding medication / encouraging over-use of medication
- Making threats – living in constant fear of abuse / violence
- Changing the 'rules' constantly

Distorted perspectives – *perpetrators narrative to justify / excuse their behaviour and blame the victim*

- 'This is what all relationships are like'
- 'This is what girlfriends normally do'
- 'Every other female has let me down' (mothers/sisters/girlfriends)
- 'It's because I love you'
- 'I can't live without you'
- 'I can't bear the thought of you with someone else'
- 'You make me behave this way'
- 'You wind me up'
- Blaming drugs, alcohol or mental health

Behaviour change: psycho dynamic triangle





Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

SEE THEMSELVES AS VICTIMS

Perpetrators of abuse think they are the 'injured party' and it is, in fact, them that is the true and real victim in every situation

BELIEVE EVERYONE IS AGAINST THEM

They live in a conspiracy world and they are right in the centre of their own conspiracy; everyone is and has always been against them (parents, colleagues, siblings, bosses, person they walk past in the street, it goes on!)

EVERYTHING IS SOMEONE ELSE'S FAULT

Nothing that has happened in their life is their fault, especially anything bad; they could have done better at school but the 'teachers were rubbish', can't hold down a job because the bosses are always 'idiots', they are where they are today due to every other person's actions and behaviours.

THEY NEVER TAKE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THEIR OWN ACTIONS

Due to all of the above, nothing they do is their fault so why should they or would they take any responsibility for their actions?

MANIPULATION

They will use whatever it takes to get what they want. This may be emotional blackmail / guilt, physical intimidation / threats, very loving to gain 'good will points' so you believe you owe them something, or they may use their own health to gain sympathy or favours.

HAVE AN INFLATED SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT

Perpetrators of abuse believe they deserve to be treated in a certain way and to be shown respect at all times by their partners (and often everyone else too). They will have a double standard and measure for how they should be treated and how they treat you / others.

HAVE LITTLE OR NO VICTIM EMPATHY

They cannot or will not accept their victim's feelings or acknowledge any harm / hurt their behaviour is causing. They minimise and trivialise the other person's feelings and opinions.

PUT THEIR NEEDS ABOVE ANYONE ELSE

All their needs, be that: physical; emotional; sexual; financial, are far more important than anyone else's, including their children.