

01 Background

Government Definition of Domestic Abuse (2013):

'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; Emotional.**

The definition also includes issues of concern relating to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as 'honour based violence', female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

Why it matters

Witnessing, hearing or being the primary targets of domestic violence negatively affects almost One Million Children every year.

- **One in 3 women** and **One in six men** at some point during their lives.
- An average of **3 women are killed** every week by a current, or former, partner.
- 80 women a year are killed
- An average of **30 men are killed** each year as a result of domestic violence.
- **54% of women and 15% of men** experience sexual abuse at some point in their life.
- The police in England and Wales receive a report of domestic violence **every minute.**
- **66,000 women** are estimated to have suffered genital mutilation in the UK.
- The voice of the child is paramount in tackling this hidden harm

07 Questions

- Do you routinely ask or consider domestic abuse?
- Are you clear about your responsibilities?
- Do you make sure you hear the voice of children?
- Do you provide children with the tools and language they need to enable their voice to be heard?

Information

Coercion and control is a crime (2015) when it causes someone:

- To fear that violence will be used against them on at least two occasions
- Serious alarm or distress which has a substantial effect on their usual day-to-day activities

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Domestic Abuse Guidance Identification and Referral when Working with Children and Families

Key focus points

Children are also victims of domestic abuse which can

- Impact on a child's development and emotional wellbeing.
- Pose a threat to an unborn child
- Lead to children being assaulted during episodes of abuse.
 - Cause children distress by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent or other family member.
 - It is imperative that children feel able to share their worries about domestic violence to someone they can trust.

"...children will often witness violence and there is an overlap between the abuse of women and abuse (physical and sexual) of children. The wide adverse effects of living with domestic violence for children must be recognised as a child protection issue. They link to poor educational achievement, social exclusion and to juvenile crime, substance misuse, mental health problems and homelessness from running away." (Home Office, 2004)

Recommendations

- Complete an initial risk assessment -- using the [DASH](#).
- Refer high risk cases to [MARAC](#)
- If victim/child is in immediate danger call 999
- Refer to the Bridge Partnership Tel: 0161 603 4500 (office hours) Tel: 0161 794 8888 (out of hours)
- Follow our [Domestic Abuse Policy](#), [Greater Manchester MARAC Policy](#) and [local supporting pathways](#).
- Advise the person suffering domestic abuse about [services available](#).
- If you are in regular contact with a child talking to them may be able to help them voice their worries and share their experiences
- When a child trusts you enough to tell you a worry they expect action.

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Further information:

- www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/da.htm
- www.endthefear.co.uk/
- www.sittingrightwithyou.co.uk/
- <https://twitter.com/EndtheFear>
- www.gmpcc.org.uk/tools-and-resources/domestic-violence/
- www.womensaid.org.uk/
- www.irisdomesticviolence.org.uk/

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