

Domestic Abuse Children's Centre Reference Pack 2013



Foreword

The impact of domestic abuse on a child or young person is immeasurable; hearing any account of domestic violence from a child or young person can be heartbreaking. Children are very much the silent victims of domestic abuse. They may witness it or be subject to it but often their voices are not heard. These experiences can affect their emotional, psychological, physical and sexual development and the abuse can have long-lasting consequences for them in childhood and in later life.

Partner agencies across North Yorkshire and the City of York are committed to improving the safety and outcomes for all adults and children who are victims or survivors of domestic abuse. We recognise our shared responsibility to reduce the impact of domestic abuse through the delivery of co-ordinated services which are sufficiently flexible to meet individual needs and encourage empowerment and self-determination.

This document clearly informs Children's Centres of their role in the prevention of domestic abuse and provides practical information on accessing local support, training and assistance from statutory and voluntary services.

Partner agencies across North Yorkshire and the City of York have worked together to produce this guidance for all Children's Centres. It has been produced in addition to and in association with the North Yorkshire & York Domestic Abuse Strategy 2009-2013 which provides a framework around which both statutory and voluntary agencies will continue to work together to reduce the incidence and impact of domestic abuse on North Yorkshire's children and families.



Pete Dwyer

Corporate Director for
Children and Young
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Tony Hall

Executive Member for
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"Domestic Abuse does not only affect adults. The impact on children who witness abuse in the home can be huge. Children's Centres play an important role by providing help, advice and support to parents and carers, signposting victims to support agencies which can give further assistance to reduce the risk of abuse to them and their children".

Harrogate & Craven Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator

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1. Domestic Abuse Definition

From 31st March 2013, the Government have changed the definition of domestic violence to include 16 -17 year olds and altered the wording to recognise coercive control as a form of abuse. A further change is the title of the definition to 'domestic violence and abuse'.

Extending the definition will increase awareness that young people in this age-group experience domestic violence and abuse. It will hopefully encourage more of them to come forward and access the support they need. The new definition 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, 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.

This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so-called honour based violence, forced or early marriage and female genital mutilation.

All forms of domestic abuse involve perpetrators seeking to exert power and control over their partners or family member and often incorporate a range or variety of abusive behaviours.

The North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Initiative recognises that domestic abuse:

- Is predominantly *but not exclusively* the abuse of women by their male partner or ex-partner
- Causes significant harm to children in the household
- Also occurs between other family members
- Requires specific procedures and practices if it is to be tackled effectively

Whilst women are predominantly the victims of domestic abuse, it is important to note that domestic abuse can also be perpetrated against men (although there is less data available on the prevalence of this). Abuse can occur in any personal or family relationship including straight, gay and transgender relationships, with a number of published studies suggesting that domestic abuse occurs at a similar rate in both mixed and same sex relationships.

Instances of domestic abuse are more common than many people realise, particularly as abusers and victims are often skilled at hiding the abuse that takes place behind closed doors. In 2011/12 there were 7,286 instances of domestic abuse reported in North Yorkshire and York. National research shows that domestic abuse can affect one in four women at some point in their lives, and affects one in ten women annually. On average, two women a week are killed nationally by a violent partner or ex-partner.

2. What Children and Young People Have Told Us and the Impact this Has

"I didn't realise the damage I was doing to my children by putting up with the level of abuse I was experiencing"

Parent & victim of domestic abuse in York/North Yorkshire

The following quote is taken from the 'Domestic Abuse: the Effects on Children' DVD produced by North Yorkshire Probation, North Yorkshire Children & Young People's Services and the NSPCC and came from a child within North Yorkshire who has been affected by domestic abuse:

"I hate it when I am in bed and I can hear my Mum and Dad shouting at each other but it is worse when everything goes quiet and I don't know what's happened".

Child, exposed to domestic abuse in York/North Yorkshire, age 6

Domestic abuse can have a devastating impact on children and young people, affecting their health, well being and development, as well as their educational achievement. In 2011/12, across North Yorkshire and York 1,216 (17%) of incidents reported to the police had children present or in the household.

The North Yorkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Abuse identifies the risks to children living with domestic abuse as follows:

- Direct physical or sexual abuse of the child. Research suggests that this may occur in up to 60% of cases; also that the severity of the violence against the mother is predictive of the severity of abuse to the children
- The child being abused as part of the abuse against the victim
- Being used as pawns or spies by the abusive partner in attempts to control the victim
- Being forced to participate in the abuse and degradation by the abuse partner

"Mums been in hospital a few times but she still loves my Dad so we all stay here – and wait"

Child, exposed to domestic abuse in York/North Yorkshire, aged 5

Children and young people may also experience direct emotional abuse or physical injury from witnessing or hearing the abuse including:

- Hearing abusive verbal exchange between adults in the household (research shows in 80% of cases children are in the same or next room)
- Hearing or seeing the abusive partner verbally abuse, humiliate and threaten or carry out violence
- Hearing the victim's screams and pleas for help
- Observing bruises and injuries sustained by the victim
- Observing the abusive partner being removed and taken into police custody
- Witnessing the victim being taken to hospital by ambulance
- Attempting to intervene in a violent assault

A consultation exercise in York and North Yorkshire in 2011 revealed that, according to the case files of children and young people exposed to domestic abuse:

- 86% had heard the violence
- 64% had seen violence such as the perpetrator physically hurting the victim
- 43% had been physically pushed or pulled by the perpetrator
- 29% had experienced direct emotional abuse

These types of exposure can have a range of negative consequences such as:

- Child being unable or unwilling to invite friends to the family home
- Difficulties making and maintaining friendships
- Difficulties at school (including behavioural difficulties and/or decline in academic achievement)
- Family break-up
- Frequent disruptions to social life and schooling from moving with their parent or carer fleeing violence
- Homelessness
- Inability of the victim to work resulting in family being drawn into a cycle of poverty
- Hospitalisation of the victim and/or their permanent disability or death

Whilst the impact of domestic abuse on children may be similar to the effects of any other abuse or trauma, the outcome for the child will depend on many different factors. Evidence suggests that children as individuals respond differently to witnessing domestic abuse. For example, they could exhibit one or more of the following:

- not reaching developmental milestones
- low self-esteem
- increased levels of anxiety, depression, anger and fear
- aggressive and violent behaviours, including bullying or anti-social behaviour
- lack of conflict resolution skills
- lack of empathy for others and poor peer relationships
- risky behaviour (including teenage or early pregnancy / alcohol and substance misuse)
- self blame
- hopelessness
- shame and anxiety
- post traumatic stress disorder- symptoms such as hyper-vigilance, nightmares and intrusive thoughts – images of violence, insomnia, enuresis
- over protectiveness of the victim and/or siblings

Consultation with children and young people affected by domestic abuse in York and North Yorkshire found that they felt angry, worried and sad. This resulted for some children and young people in:

- displaying physically aggressive behaviour
- low self esteem
- feeling depressed
- difficulties making friends
- self-harm
- risky behaviours such as smoking or shoplifting
- imitation of some of the violent and aggressive behaviour of the perpetrator

Domestic abuse has many forms and its effects need to be considered on a case by case basis. It is important to remember that whilst some children or young people may appear resilient to the trauma of exposure to domestic abuse these children will also need to be provided with a service. Victims and children can experience physical and psychological ill health, isolation and a feeling that they can't escape from the abusive relationship.

It is important to note that children experiencing domestic abuse do not necessarily go on to become abusers or victims themselves.

For more information on the impact of domestic abuse on children, unborn children and parents/victims please see the North Yorkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Abuse.

3. The Role of Children's Centres

All services for children, young people and families need to take a proactive, collaborative approach to identifying and responding appropriately to domestic abuse. Children, families and young people experiencing domestic abuse are likely to need well targeted support from a range of different agencies. For example, victims and children may need safe places to stay. In addition, children and young people may need adults to ensure their needs are identified and subsequently met whilst their welfare is promoted and safeguarded. Everyone working with families should be alert to the relationship between domestic abuse and the abuse/neglect of children¹ and be equipped to offer support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse as a result of their own relationships or as a family member.

The effects and impact of domestic abuse may 'spill over' from the home to community settings and may include:

- Physically aggressive behaviour or 'lashing out'
- Bullying others or being bullied
- Difficulties making friends
- Appearing distracted, tired and/or unable to concentrate
- Poor personal hygiene or physical appearance

Children's Centres have a crucial role to play in helping children to develop respectful relationships of their own and manage their emotions, as well as supporting parents and carers in their own relationships. Whilst it affects people of all ages, young people aged 16-24 are at the highest risk of directly experiencing domestic abuse. Young women aged 16-19 are at particular risk of experiencing sexual violence, including being pressured into having sex. The 'Together we can End Violence Against Women & Girls' Government strategy document - released in 2009 - outlines the key role of a wide range of public services and staff – including Parent Support Advisers - in supporting victims of violence and the early identification of abuse .

The NYCC and IDAS Domestic Abuse: Consultation with Children and Young People and Adult Victims 2010-2011 identified that 50% of adult victims surveyed had visited a Children's Centre

¹ National Service Framework for children, young people and maternity services, 2004

Key Recommendations for Children's Centres

The NYCC and IDAS Domestic Abuse: Consultation with Children and Young People and Adult Victims 2010-2011 identified that 50% of participants said that if there was more information on domestic abuse available at Children's Centres (e.g. leaflets) they would feel happy going there to access this.

29% said they would feel able to disclose to Children's Centre staff. A fifth of respondents did actually make an initial disclosure in this environment.

Children's Centres play a vital role in supporting children affected by domestic abuse via early intervention, prevention and protection.

In order to provide a supportive and protective environment for children and families who are suffering from domestic abuse, Children's Centres will:

- Provide basic domestic abuse training for **all** staff which includes how to identify the signs and symptoms, understanding the significant risk factors and understanding the impact of domestic abuse as well as how to effectively and proactively deal with disclosures (IDAS provide a free online training course available at <http://www.idas.org.uk/training/index.asp>)
- Provide intermediate / advanced domestic abuse training for staff who work directly with children, adults and young families in accordance with the North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Training Strategy
- Ensure that at least one member of staff in every Children's Centre is familiar with the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment (MARAC) process and the associated CAADA DASH Risk Identification Checklist , the Safeguarding Children Risk Assessment Matrix and is confident in handling disclosures
- Provide effective support to victims and their families or signpost to relevant services
- Ensure that their Centre is working in partnership with their local multi-agency Domestic Abuse forum
- Ensure that relevant helpline stickers, leaflets, posters etc with national and local service information and contact details are displayed in appropriate places and changed regularly in line with the local and national campaigns e.g. the Olympics, World Cup and Christmas
- Provide a welcoming and safe environment where victims feel able to disclose domestic abuse, including appropriate private spaces to offer support
- Actively promote to parents and carers the dangers, both physical and emotional, of allowing their children to live with Domestic Abuse (see Appendix 1)
- Have Domestic Abuse and its prevention embedded in Children's Centre Development Plans and actions annually discussed and monitored via local Steering Groups
- Be prepared to support both perpetrator and victim programmes with the intention of enabling both to be more effective parents
- Where appropriate, work in partnership with local services, including refuges, and be able to demonstrate the outcomes secured for children and families by doing so
- Share information with others in line with agreed protocols in order to keep children safe
- Actively encourage and respond to disclosure, provide guidance and refer to services when appropriate

4. How Children's Centre Staff Should Respond to Disclosures

"In my last school I talked to my class teacher, she was good to talk to"

Child exposed to domestic abuse in York/North Yorkshire, aged 9

Dealing with Disclosures

For guidance on dealing with disclosures from children and young people, refer to the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Abuse. Staff should also be aware that adult victims may disclose abuse in the Children's Centre environment (see the practice guidance for further information). Information on signposting victims to other agencies can be found in section 7.

Safeguarding Children and Domestic Abuse

If you or someone you know is suffering from Domestic Abuse, confidential information is available from the following helpline:

National 24 Domestic Violence Hour Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Worried about a child?

If you are worried about any child and have reasonable cause to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, neglect or abuse please contact Children's Social Care or the Police. Calls are charged at a local rate.

North Yorkshire Children's Social Care: 0845 034 9410

Email: cru.customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team (for evenings, weekends and bank holidays): 0845 034 9417

Police: In an emergency always dial 999, non emergency 101

Domestic abuse is a child protection issue as Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act (2002 amended 2005) extended the legal definition of significant harm to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others.

Professionals who receive a disclosure from a child, young person or adult victim will need to carry out further assessment to ascertain the level of risk and appropriate response. Please refer to the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Abuse for further guidance. This guidance confirms the level for a Children's Social Care referral as one serious or several lesser incidents of domestic violence where there is a child in the household.

Children's Centre staff are advised that for those children whose situation does not require intervention from Children's Social Care, but for whom domestic abuse is a persistent feature of their lives, services will still be required.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Children, young people and families experience a range of needs at different times in their lives. The CAF is a way of working out what extra support a child may need and how best to provide this. The CAF form will record what is going well for the family, what extra support may be needed and which professionals are best placed to work together with the family to find the best way forward. The CAF therefore supports good

communication between agencies, enabling them to work together more effectively to meet the needs of children, young people and families.

The CAF is designed to be used when:

- a professional is worried about how well a child or young person is progressing (e.g. concerns about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing)
- a child or young person, or their parent/carer, raises a concern with a professional
- a child's or young person's needs are unclear, or are too broad to be addressed by an individual service

The CAF is an entirely voluntary process and you must obtain informed consent from the child/young person and/or their parent/carer before being able to undertake a Common Assessment.

If you do have any domestic abuse concerns or are aware that the family have a history of abuse consent for the Common Assessment Process need only be sought from the non-abusing parent and their children. Further guidance on information sharing is available later in this section.

In North Yorkshire, an electronic form of the CAF is being introduced called an eCAF. This is fully integrated with Children's Social Care systems and will allow assessment to be easily transferred from one system to another.

You may carry out the assessment and decide you can deal with the problems on your own i.e. a single agency common assessment; this will be recorded on eCAF. For more complicated cases you should contact your local Early Intervention Manager who will discuss with you about a team of specialists who regularly meet with the family. This is known as a Team Around the Child (TAC). The Early Intervention Manager may use a local group of professionals to decide what is best for the child at a Multi-Agency Screening Support (MASS) meeting. However, should you have immediate concern for the safety and welfare of a child you should make an immediate referral through to Children's Social Care.

Safeguarding guidance stresses that practitioners should be particularly concerned regarding children whose parents or carers are experiencing difficulties in meeting their needs as a result of domestic violence, substance misuse, mental illness and/or learning disability².

For further guidance on Common Assessment and integrated working please see the North Yorkshire Vulnerability Checklist and section 5 of the Child Protection Procedure on the North Yorkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) website. This guidance is designed to help identify how needs might be met across services. For further guidance or to discuss when the use of a Common Assessment might be appropriate please contact your local Integrated Service Manager (see section 7).

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

Children's Centres may seek or be asked to contribute to a MARAC assessment. Further information and advice can be sought from the Integrated Services Manager or the Early Intervention Manager (see section 7).

Multi Agency Working is key to tackling the complex issues associated with domestic abuse and in particular those cases which are perceived as 'high risk'. The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Protocol for North Yorkshire and York describes a common understanding of 'High Risk' among participants: 'where the alleged perpetrator can cause harm, may do so and the impact would be serious for the victim and/or wider family members'.

MARAC meetings combine up to date risk assessment information with assessment of the victim's needs and link this to the most appropriate services for all those directly involved in domestic abuse, including children, wider family members and the perpetrator. The MARAC will give you a fuller picture of what is going on at home for the children and family members and a voice for your concerns.

The purpose of MARAC is to:

² P138, Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2010

- Identify high risk victims of domestic abuse, and offer support and guidance to reduce the threat of further harm and repeat incidents of domestic abuse
- Facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing between multi agency partners, to enable appropriate interventions to be taken to safeguard high risk victims and their families
- Provide a multi agency safety plan
- Identify whether the perpetrator poses a risk to other individuals or to the wider community
- Attempt to identify any child contact or child protection concerns within the family environment (although a MARAC referral is **not** a Child Protection Referral)

The victim and perpetrator do not attend; an agreed agency representative will bring the information on behalf of the victim.

The criteria for referral to MARAC are:

- Visible High Risk: the number of 'ticks' on the CAADA DASH Risk Assessment checklist. If you have ticked 14 or more 'yes' boxes the case would normally meet the MARAC referral criteria
- Professional judgement: this judgement would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet the other criteria
- Potential Escalation: the number of police callouts in 12 months (3 or more police callouts in a 12 month period)

Child Protection procedures and MARAC arrangements remain independent of each other whilst allowing for timely and coordinated assessment of risk and decision making. This means that a MARAC is **not** a referral to Children's Social Care.

If you identify a case that you consider high risk you should first discuss it with your manager. Your point of contact for MARAC meetings is your Early Intervention Manager (EIM), who will receive the initial invitations, confirm who will attend and offer information and support (see section 7). Consent is not required for a MARAC referral, although it is considered best practice to gain consent where it is safe to do so.

Practitioners experienced in domestic abuse risk assessments can help with the completion of the MARAC risk assessment and referral forms. Otherwise please contact your Local Domestic Abuse Coordinator.

For information on MARAC training for Children's Centre staff please see section 6.

Safety Planning

A Safety Plan is a semi-structured way to think about steps that can be taken to reduce risk before, during and after any violent or abusive incidents. Safety planning for victims of domestic abuse is key to all interventions to safeguard children. Children's Centres must support the development or the review of a Safety Plan by an appropriately trained practitioner.

Practitioners trained on safety planning can include the designated safeguarding lead, Parent Support Advisors and Domestic Abuse Champions (if appointed). If you are unsure of who should be completing a Safety Plan, contact a local support service (see Section 7).

Information Sharing and Domestic Abuse

The following Acts govern information sharing:

- a) Data Protection Act
- b) Common Law Duty of Confidence
- c) Human Rights Act
- d) Crime and Disorder Act
- e) Children's Act

The 'General Framework for Information Sharing in North Yorkshire and York' (2009) is the governance framework for sharing information within North Yorkshire (see section 8). This framework also provides

guidance on how to share information appropriately with other agencies. Where practitioners have to make decisions about sharing information on a case-by-case basis that are not clearly covered by statute, the decision to share or not share information must always be based on professional judgement. To support professionals who have to make case-by-case decisions about sharing personal information, the government has produced 'Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers' (see section 8).

You must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or adult when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is a concern that the child/young person/adult may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, their safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration. Please see Local Safeguarding Procedures for additional information and guidance.

It is critical that where you have reasonable cause to believe that a child, family member or adult may be suffering or be at risk of suffering significant harm, you should always consider referring your concerns to children's social care or the police, in line with Local Safeguarding procedures. Where safe, appropriate and reasonable you should seek consent from the child and/or parent to share information. However, where you have a concern about a person, you should not regard refusal of consent as necessarily precluding the sharing of confidential information. This may be particularly relevant to cases relating to domestic abuse.

Where you do not have consent to share confidential information, you may lawfully share it if this can be justified in the public interest. Circumstances in which sharing confidential information without consent will normally be justified in the public interest include:

- when there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm
- when there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that an adult is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, serious harm
- to prevent significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult, including through the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime

It is not possible to give guidance to cover every circumstance in which the sharing of confidential information without consent will be justified. You must make a judgement on the facts of the individual case. Where there is a clear risk of significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult, the public interest test will almost certainly be satisfied. As such, in domestic abuse cases where there is an issue of child safety, neither the consent of the child nor the parent (not even the non-abusing parent) is required in order to disclose information. Where it is safe, appropriate and reasonable to do so individuals and/or their parent(s) should be informed that information will be or has been shared. However, there may be occasions when informing children or family members might increase the risk to a child.

Timeliness is also a key consideration in emergency situations. It may not be appropriate to seek consent for information sharing if delays could incur as a result. You should take action to protect an individual considered to be in immediate danger such as threat to personal safety, risk of physical abuse or risk of death; this may mean that you have to act without first gaining consent.

You should always consider how much information needs to be shared to achieve the objective and the most appropriate way in which to do so given the urgency of the situation. For example, only information that is relevant and necessary should be shared, not simply all the information you hold on a child, young person or family. Security of information sharing must still be considered but should be proportionate to the sensitivity of the information and the circumstances.

Decisions to disclose information must be necessary and proportionate, taking into account:

- The prevention or detection of crime, including safeguarding someone's life and/or child protection; and/or
- The interest of the public; and/or
- The right to life free from inhuman and degrading treatment and torture; and/or
- Allowing confidential counselling, advice and support to take place

Professionals should never assume that somebody else will take care of domestic abuse issues. This may be the child's, victim's or abusing partner's first or only disclosure or contact with services in circumstances which allow for safeguarding action.

Professionals must ensure that their attempts to identify domestic abuse and their response to recognition or disclosure of domestic abuse do not trigger an escalation of violence. In particular, professionals should keep in mind that the issue of domestic abuse should only ever be raised with a child or parent when they are safely on their own and in a private place; and separation does not ensure safety. It often at least temporarily increases the risk to the children or parent.

5. Honour Based Violence

Honour based violence (HBV) is defined as

'a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community'

HBV is where a person is being punished by the family or community for actually or allegedly undermining what they believe to be the correct code of behaviour. By not conforming it may be perceived that the person may have brought shame or dishonour to the family. It is a complex issue since it is deeply embedded in interpersonal relations, family, community and culture and it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from the family and/or community. It embraces a variety of crimes of violence including assault, imprisonment, murder and forced marriage.

The concept of honour is closely linked to control; when a man's control of his family is threatened, punishment is given to the girl or woman seen to be responsible for this dishonour. This perpetuates the subordination and gender inequality of women. HBV must be understood as a form of domestic violence and child abuse.

- Women are predominantly (but not exclusively) the victims of HBV
- 15% of cases are from male victims
- The majority of victims of forced marriage are females aged 13 to 30, the youngest reported is aged 9
- Approximately 1,000 British Asian Girls are forced into marriage each year
- Home Office figures suggest there are around 12 'honour' killings each year, but the total is likely to be far higher
- The Government's Forced Marriage Unit deals with 5,000 enquiries and 300 cases of forced marriage each year. 30% of these concerns under 18s

HBV, where it affects children and young people, is a child protection issue, and social services have a duty to make enquiries into allegations of abuse or neglect against a child under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. It is an abuse of human rights. Children and young people who suffer HBV are at risk of Significant Harm through physical, sexual, psychological, emotional harm and neglect. In some cases they are also at risk of being killed.

Forced marriage is different from arranged marriage. Arranged marriages have worked well in society for many years. Families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. In contrast, a Forced Marriage is where one or more partners do not (or in the case of some vulnerable adults, *cannot*) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced Marriage is an abuse of Human Rights and cannot be justified on any grounds. It can amount to sexual and emotional abuse, including abduction abroad that places children at significant risk of further abuse.

Research by UNICEF shows that the more education a girl receives, the less likely she is to be married as a child. Improving access to education and eliminating gender gaps in education are therefore important strategies for ending the practice of child marriage. Often the primary opportunity to prevent a forced marriage will be through professionals recognising the warning signs.

Legal options are also available such as The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 which provides provision for Family Courts to make a 'Forced Marriage Protection Order' to prevent a forced marriage or offer protective measures when a forced marriage has already taken place. The following can apply for an order:

- A victim
- Anyone can apply for an order on behalf of a victim, as long as they obtain the court's permission to make an application
- A relevant third party, who can make an application on behalf of a victim but does not need to seek leave of court such as local authorities via legal department in close liaison with the relevant frontline practitioners

Where a child or young person discloses fear of honour based violence professionals in all agencies should:

- Take the disclosure seriously and act on it
- Refer to Children's Social Care & the Police promptly

Under no circumstances:

- Let the family or social network know about it
- Speak to the child in front of family members
- Approach the family or community leaders or attempt mediation
- Use members of the community to interpret
- Accidentally give out information which might jeopardise the child or young person's safety
- Caution is required about how information is recorded and shielded within the organisation

Further information for education professionals on how to tackle forced marriage and other forms of abuse can be found on the [Department for Education](#) website in the document *Dealing with Cases of Forced Marriage and Guidance for Education Professionals*. This guidance also explains how to introduce these topics into the school curriculum and how to make school a safe environment for disclosure.

If you feel concerned about a potential forced marriage you should contact the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) (see section 8). The FMU Deals with forced marriage casework, developing Government policy and co-ordinating outreach projects. They can offer confidential information and assistance to potential victims, victims already in a forced marriage and concerned professionals.

North Yorkshire's Community Cohesion Team (see section 8) can also offer advice and support to Children's Centres on preventing and understanding this form of abuse. They can offer insight into minority communities and cultures to support both practitioners and services to improve their understanding of victims and perpetrators of abuse.

There is also a National online training package (www.fmelearning.co.uk) available from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to support professionals dealing with forced marriage in the course of their work.

6. Staff Training

It is widely recognised that everyone working with children and young people should have a basic understanding of the definition and the effects of domestic abuse as well as their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people. Across the county face to face and online training is available for staff to ensure they are informed to the appropriate level on the signs and effects of domestic abuse. As a minimum the following online training packages should be completed by *all* staff.

Online Training Available:

<http://www.idas.org.uk/training/index.asp>

This training package is aimed at all individuals in organisations and voluntary groups who work with adults and children or young people, to give a basic awareness of issues surrounding domestic abuse. Depending on your role, this may be the only level of training you need, although some people will need further training

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/course-signup.html>

This training package is aimed at individuals in organisations and voluntary groups who work with children and young people, families or adults who may be parents and/or carers, to give a basic awareness of child protection issues. Depending on your role, this may be the only level of training you need, although some people will need further training

Details of other training courses can be found on the safeguarding children website at www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

All staff and volunteers whose work may bring them into regular contact with children and young people, adults and families need additional training. The North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Training Strategy provides a strategic overview of the underlying principles supporting training, the role of partner agencies, the training available and where it should be targeted.

For information on the following courses please contact your Local Domestic Abuse Coordinator or go to <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/domestic-abuse.html>:

- Domestic Abuse Basic Awareness Courses
- Domestic Abuse Intermediate Courses
- MARAC Workshops
- Safety Planning Training
- Domestic Abuse Champion Scheme

Your Domestic Abuse Coordinator can provide further information on other courses and the services available following disclosure.

7. Local Services & Support

Due to its complex nature, many agencies have a role to play in promoting the safety of children affected by domestic abuse. Children, young people and their families experiencing domestic abuse need well targeted support from a range of different agencies. Intervention should consist of a planned package of support incorporating risk assessment, domestic violence support delivered by trained staff, advocacy and safety planning in conjunction with child protection.

Signposting to Specialist Domestic Abuse Services for Victims

| Name | Area Covered | Contact Details |
|---|--|--|
| Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) | York, Harrogate, Craven, Hambleton and Richmondshire Selby | Local Helpline 03000 110 110 www.idas.org.uk 01757 290040 National Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (24 hours) |
| Domestic Abuse Services (DAS) | Scarborough and Ryedale | 01723 365609 |
| Hambleton & Richmondshire Refuge | Hambleton & Richmondshire | Tel: 01609 767900 |
| Victim Support | Countywide | Helpline 0845 30 30 900 Local 0845 071 0871 or 01904 476257 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9am – 9pm Mondays to Fridays • 9am – 7pm weekends • 9am – 5pm bank holidays www.victimsupport.org.uk |
| Handypersons Scheme (offering assistance to improve safety and security in vulnerable households) | Available in all Districts | Contact your local Domestic Violence Coordinator |

Signposting to Children and Young People Services

| Name | Service | Area Covered | Contact Details |
|--|------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) | Children's Advocate | York | 03000 110 110 |
| | Young Persons Advocate | Hambleton & Richmondshire Selby, Craven, Harrogate | |
| Domestic Abuse Services (DAS) | | Scarborough and Ryedale | 01723 365609 |

Domestic Abuse Coordinators

| Name | Area | Contact |
|----------------|-------------------------|---|
| Jo Beilby | York/Selby | Tel: 01904 555852 Email: Joanne.Beilby@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk |
| Angela Hartley | Scarborough/Ryedale | Tel: 01723 383629 Email: Angela.Hartley@scarborough.gov.uk |
| Rebecca Cobby | Hambleton/Richmondshire | Tel: 01609 767271 Email: Rebecca.Cobby@Richmondshire.gcsx.gov.uk |
| Simon Aston | Harrogate/Craven | Tel: 01423 556986 Email: Simon.Aston@harrogate.gov.uk |

Integrated Service Managers

| Name | Area | Contact |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Alan Pitt | Selby Ryedale | 01609 535047 |
| Maggie Mitchell | Harrogate/Craven | 01609 5334029 |
| Barbara Merrygold | Coast | 01609 798331 |
| Julie Hatfield | Hambleton and Richmondshire | 01609 533433 |

Area Operation Managers (Education Social Work service)

Your point of contact for MARAC meetings:

| Name | Area | Contact |
|---------------|--|--|
| Pat Scully | Craven / Selby / Harrogate | 01609 536823 Pat.Scully@northyorks.gov.uk |
| Julie Parrish | Scarborough / Ryedale / Hambleton / Richmondshire | 01609 798013 Julie.Parrish@northyorks.gov.uk |

Refuges

Refuges are for women and their children who are escaping from domestic abuse. They offer a safe place to stay whilst providing residents and their children with a high level of support, helping them to decide what the next step is and re-build their self confidence. Children in refuges are often allocated an Educational Social Worker to help them through their transition of being in a refuge and changing schools. If it is not safe to stay in a refuge in York and North Yorkshire then they can also help women and children to find a refuge in another area. When someone leaves a refuge they either return home or are re-housed. If you would like a virtual tour of a refuge then this is available on the IDAS website (www.idas.org.uk).

Increasingly, it is the perpetrator who is removed from the family home rather than victims and their children. The North Yorkshire Making Safe scheme offers perpetrators temporary accommodation and a package of support to address their abusive behaviour, whilst also avoiding the upheaval and disruption for victims and children of having to leave their home and local support networks. For more information on the Making Safe scheme contact your local Domestic Abuse Coordinator.

Parenting Programmes

Children and young people affected by domestic abuse are often reliant on the one parent or family member as the only source of good parenting, as the abusive partner will often have a significantly diminished ability to parent well. This is particularly so because domestic abuse very often co-exists with high levels of punishment, the misuse of power and a failure to demonstrate appropriate self-control by the abusive partner. Children's Centre staff can play a crucial role in delivering support such as evidence-based parenting programmes to support those affected by domestic abuse.

For further information on other local Integrated Services such as Extended Schools please see the North Yorkshire Family Information website (www.nyfamilies.info), designed as a source of information for both families and practitioners working with children and young people. Alternatively contact the Families Information Service advisers on 0845 6011630..

Police contacts

When reporting, contact 101 for non-emergencies and 999 in an emergency.

Protecting Vulnerable Persons Unit (PVP Unit)

For information contact:

- York: 01904 669358
- Selby: 01904 669634
- Scarborough and Ryedale: 01723 509329
- Harrogate and Craven: 01423 539033
- Hambleton and Richmondshire: 01609 789472

Joint Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office Unit (for suspected cases of forced marriage):

- Telephone: 020 7008 0151 / Out of hours: 020 7008 1500.
- Email: fmf@fco.gov.uk
- Website: <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>
-

Community Cohesion Team

To contact your local Community Cohesion Worker please email: social.inclusion@northyorks.gov.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre

CEOP is the UK nation agency who deal with the sexual exploitation of children in the UK and abroad
Website: www.ceop.police.uk

8. Useful Documents

Useful documents and resources

- Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Abuse <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/domestic-abuse.html>
- North Yorkshire & York MARAC Procedure <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/section-12-procedures.html#marac>
- Vulnerability Checklist <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=7858>
- CAADA Risk Identification Checklist http://www.caada.org.uk/marac/RIC_with_guidance.pdf
- Information on the Common Assessment Framework in North Yorkshire <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=7860>
- Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100419081706/http://homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/vaw-g-strategy-2009/index.html>
- Expect Respect Education Toolkit <http://www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/adults/resources/educationaltoolkit/default.aspx>
- The General Framework for Information Sharing in North Yorkshire and York (2009) <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2700&p=0>
- Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers <http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/00807-2008BKT-EN-March09.pdf>
- Dealing with Cases of Forced Marriage. Guidance for Education Professionals http://www.forcedmarriage.net/media/images/FMU-FM-Guidance-EducationProfessionals_70.pdf

Useful websites

- North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk
- Families Information Service www.nyfamilies.info
- Independent Domestic Abuse Services (holds information about York and North Yorkshire) www.idas.org.uk
- The Hideout: www.thehideout.org.uk
- Refuge <http://refuge.org.uk/>
- Men's Advice Line www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Broken Rainbow (for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims) www.broken-rainbow.org.uk
- Women's Aid (National) www.womensaid.org.uk
- For a copy of York & North Yorkshire's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2009 to 2013 www.nysp.org.uk

Appendix 1

The Potential Impact of Domestic Abuse on:

Babies and Toddlers

KEY ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IN INFANTS

Take in information from the world around them through five senses



POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Loud noises, vivid visual images associated with violence can be distressing

Form secure attachments



Parents may not consistently respond to babies needs, negatively affecting the parent-child bond

Become more active explorers of their world through play



Fear and instability may inhibit exploration and play; imitation in play may be related to witnessed aggression

Learn about social interaction and relationships from what they hear and observe in their families



Learn about aggression in observed interactions

Points to keep in mind

- Babies are highly vulnerable to maltreatment including shaken baby injuries
- Women with babies require and deserve extra support with basic needs
- If a mother is struggling, help with parenting at this early point can get things on the right track early in a child's life

Pre-School Children

KEY ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Learn how to express angry feelings and other emotions in appropriate ways

→

Experiences and observations most salient in forming meaning in their world

→

Outcome is more salient than the process

→

Think in egocentric ways

→

Form ideas about gender roles based on social messages

→

Increase physical independence (e.g. dressing self)

→

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Learn unhealthy ways to express anger and other emotions

Confused by conflicting messages (e.g. what I see vs. what I am told)

May be distressed by perceived unfairness, father's arrest and/or trip to shelter

May attribute violence to something they did

Learn gender roles associated with violence and victimization

Instability may inhibit independence; may see regressive behaviours

School Age Children

KEY ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Increased emotional awareness for self and others

→

Increased complexity in thinking about right and wrong: emphasis on fairness and intent

→

Academic and social success at school builds self confidence

→

Increased influence from outside family (e.g. peers, school) and competition assumes new importance within peer group

→

Increased same sex identification

→

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

More aware of own reactions to violence; more aware of impact on others (e.g. mother's safety)

Possibly more susceptible to rationalizations hear to justify violence (e.g. alcohol as cause, victim deserves it) or may challenge rationalizations not viewed as fair or right; may assess "was the fight fair"; can see discrepancies between actions and words and may consider intent; justifications involving children may lead to self blame

Learning may be compromised (e.g. distracted); may miss positive statements or selectively attend to negatives or evoke negative feedback

Possibly more influenced by messages that confirm attitudes and behaviours associated with partner abuse; may use hostile aggression to compete; increased risk for bullying and/or being bullied

May learn gender roles associated with partner abuse (e.g. male perpetrators, female victims)

Teenagers

KEY ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Increased sense of self and autonomy from family | → | Accelerated responsibility and autonomy, positioning youth in care-taking roles and/or premature independence; family skills for respectful communication and negotiation may be poorly developed, so transition to adolescence may be more difficult and result in such challenges as parent-child conflict, early home leaving, school drop out |
| Physical changes brought on by puberty | → | May try to stop violence; may use increased size to impose will with physical intimidation or aggression |
| Increased peer group influence and desire for acceptance | → | Possibly more embarrassed by family resulting in shame, secrecy, insecurity; might use high risk behaviours to impress peers (e.g. theft, drugs); may increase time away from the home; may engage in defensive (e.g. drug) and offensive (e.g. aggression towards abuser) strategies to avoid or cope with violence and its stigma |
| Self worth more strongly linked to view of physical attractiveness | → | View of self may be distorted by abuser's degradation of mother and/or child maltreatment; may experience eating disorder and use image management activities (e.g. body piercing, tattoos) |
| Dating raises issues of sexuality, intimacy, relationship skills | → | May have difficulty establishing healthy relationships; may fear being abused or being abusive in intimate relationships, especially when conflict arises; may avoid intimacy or prematurely seek intimacy and child bearing to escape and create own support system |
| Increased capacity for abstract reasoning and broader world view | → | "all or nothing" interpretations of experiences may be learned and compete with greater capacity to see "shades of grey" (e.g. everyone is a victim or a perpetrator); this style of processing information may be intensified by experiences of child maltreatment; may be predisposed towards attitudes and values associated with violence and/or victimization |
| Increased influence by media | → | Possibly more influenced by negative media messages re: violent behaviour, gender role stereotypes |

If you, or someone you know is suffering from Domestic Abuse, confidential information is available from the following helpline:

National 24 Domestic Violence Hour Helpline: **0808 2000 247**

Worried about a child?

If you are worried about any child and have reasonable cause to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, neglect or abuse please contact Children's Social Care or the Police. Calls are charged at a local rate.

North Yorkshire Children's Social Care: **0845 034 9410**

Email: **cru.customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk**

Emergency Duty Team (for evenings, weekends and bank holidays): **0845 034 9417**

Police: **0845 60 60 247**

Contact us

North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

Our Customer Service Centre is open Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm (closed weekends and bank holidays). Tel: **0845 8727374** email: **customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk**

Or visit our website at: **www.northyorks.gov.uk**

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

Tel: 01609 532917 **Email: communications@northyorks.gov.uk**

