Wokingham

Domestic Abuse Information Booklet for Education Settings

Contents(to be updated when content finalised)

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## Introduction

This guide has been produced to increase awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, and to support education settings in responding to disclosures or suspicions.

Since the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children that have been exposed to domestic abuse are now recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, rather than just witnesses.

“This landmark Bill will help transform the response to domestic abuse, helping to prevent offending, protect victims and ensure they have the support they need.”

**Victoria Atkins**

Former Minister for Safeguarding

Domestic abuse is recognised by professionals to affect all sections of society:

1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men are affected by domestic abuse in their lifetime.

2.4 million 16 to 74-year-olds have experience one form of child abuse (emotional, physical, sexual or witnessing domestic abuse) before the age of 16.

An estimated 830,000 to over 1 million children live in homes with domestic abuse.

Wokingham receives over 2,600 calls to the police each year as a result of Domestic Abuse.

## Early Years settings, schools and colleges play a key role in preventing and detecting domestic abuse, and in supporting children and young people affected by domestic abuse, as:

* They may be the only support as many are not known to any other services.
* They can provide a safe environment where positive relationships with adults and peers are modelled.
* They are places where families may seek advice and support.
* They have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of the child including a legal obligation to promote the social, moral and other aspects of a pupil’s development.
* They can train staff to spot the signs of domestic abuse in children, parents and colleagues, to know what to do if they have a concern, and to know how to handle a disclosure.

Information obtained from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2021

Children’s Commissioner Vulnerability Report 2

Home Office, 2009

Children’s Commissioner Vulnerability Report

Home Office, Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance

## Domestic Abuse Definition

Domestic abuse is any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are ‘personally connected’ to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear, or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims of domestic abuse[[1]](#footnote-1).

Behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following: **physical or sexual** abuse; **violent or threatening** behaviour; **controlling or coercive** behaviour; **economic** abuse; or **psychological, emotional** or other abuse.  This includes incidences where the abusive party directs their behaviour at another person (e.g. a child).  **Economic** abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone’s ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

This incorporates harmful traditional practices for example but not limited to ‘**honour’ killings**, **forced marriage** and **female genital mutilation**.

For the full legal definition of domestic abuse, see [Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act.](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted)[[2]](#footnote-2).

The following are some examples of the different forms of abuse:

**Physical** abuse can include pushing, slapping, kicking, biting, punching, hitting, burning, choking, assaulting with weapons, murder

**Emotional and psychological** abuse can include name calling, threats, smashing things, humiliation, controlling who they see and what they do, treating them like a servant, acting jealously, blaming them for everything that goes wrong, using children to get at them

**Economic** abuse can include not letting them work or study, controlling all the family money, keeping them short of money, running up debt in their name, making all of the financial decisions

**Sexual abuse** can include sexual ‘put downs’, rejection, unwelcome demands, making them do sexual things they don’t want to do, hurting them sexually, pressure, coercion and rape

**Controlling and coercive behaviour** can take many forms but often includes monitoring of daily activities, withholding of information or medication and isolating someone by the use of implied or actual threats should the victim-survivor not comply. An individual can adapt their behaviour to comply with ‘unspoken’ rules or expectations; they can be concerned about the consequences of, and expectations to, reduce conflict. or the consequences of non-compliance.

Statutory Guidance and examples are available here: [Statutory Guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482528/Controlling_or_coercive_behaviour_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Effect of Domestic Abuse on Children / Young People**

Each child experiencing domestic abuse will have a unique experience, processing and responding to these experiences in different ways, both internally and externally. Impacts can lead to short and long term adverse physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing as well as affecting the ability of the child to achieve their potential.

Children and young people often feel angry, guilty, insecure, alone, frightened, powerless or confused. They may have ambivalent feelings towards the abuser and the non-abusing parent and may also feel that the abuse is their fault (incorrectly thinking that their behaviour or existence has somehow led to the abuse taking place).

**The importance of responding to domestic abuse in a trauma-informed manner cannot be under-estimated**.

Here are just some of the signs where domestic abuse may be an issue. The child or young person may:

* have **physical injuries**, including **bruising** and **broken bones**
* be **overly protective** of the non-abusing parent and / or siblings by physically intervening or withholding information
* become **anxious**, **depressed** or **suicidal**
* start experiencing **insomnia**, **nightmares** or **wetting the bed**
* be **easily startled** or have **flashbacks**
* complain of **physical symptoms** such as tummy aches or headaches
* show signs of **neglect**
* **seek attention** or behave as though they are much younger
* become **aggressive**, including towards their peers at school or bullying others
* have a **low sense of self worth**
* begin to **truant**, **smoke**, use **drugs** and / or **alcohol**
* begin to **self harm** by taking overdoses or cutting themselves
* develop an **eating disorder**
* be **secretive, silent** or show personality changes, such as being **withdrawn** or **introverted**
* have **development delays**
* have **poor social skills**
* start to show **anti-social** or **disturbed behaviour**
* have **difficulty in concentrating**
* **run away** from home
* appear **reluctant to form or develop friendships** with school mates

Other reasons may of course also be the cause for the above behaviours and signs being demonstrated.

**Kidscape Research**

Kidscape’s online survey through The Hideout website found that children can be profoundly affected by the domestic abuse they experience and witness. Key findings of the survey found that:

**Children and young people are almost always aware of the abuse – even if their parents try to keep it from them:**

"I was really scared when I first heard my Mum and Dad shouting. I was afraid to go downstairs… I tried to forget all about it and go to sleep, but I couldn't because of all the things in my head… when I woke up the next morning it was all back to normal again. I didn't know what to do…"  Silas, 11yrs

**They want someone they can talk to about their experiences, and whom they can trust:**

 "I’m feeling safe now because I have people around me and I’m talking to them now so if you get lonely … talk to someone you feel safe with". Ethan

**They want to be listened to, to be taken seriously, and to be believed:**

"My friend is being subjected to domestic violence...he has been trying to find help but he doesn't know where to go… He can’t talk to anyone, no-one believes him…I just wish that I could do something to stop it." Sara, 12 years

**Children and young people who have experienced domestic violence and other abuse are very supportive of each other:**

"I read your message, and I would like to say that it made me feel sad for you, but you are not alone. Loads of people are in the same situation… I hope that someone can help you!" Milly  
**Children and young people want their views to be considered, whenever decisions are made that will affect their lives:**

"… I just hope the court will listen to me and my mummy. I think we shouldn’t have to see him.  We can think for ourselves, I think the court should let us have our say…" Suzey 14 years

**They don’t always want to see the abusive parent - or not until they are ready to do so:**

"My dad used to hit me and my sisters … every week … he hurts my mum and us and I feel sad. I hate him and I don’t want to see him again". Jay

**Children and young people wanted clear information and an appropriate response from any agency they approached for help and support – but sometimes found that was not forthcoming:**

"I found by talking to the authorities the abuse worsened, my friends were not in a position to help, so I ended up carrying the burden alone.…" Marcus, 17 years

**They appreciated the help provided by refuge organisations and other specialist domestic violence services – though they also found it hard if they had to leave home:**

"… the hardest thing for me has been leaving my friends behind and knowing I have to make new ones where I live now. I also miss my belongings … it has been a different time in my life, but it is a lot better now and we are starting a new life, and it will all be worth it in the end." Sophia, 16 years

**Teenage Relationship (Dating) Abuse**

Independent studies show that 40% of teenagers are in abusive casual or long-term dating relationships[[4]](#footnote-4)1. Dating abuse is a pattern of over-controlling behaviour, and can include mental/emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. Some factors impacting on teenage romantic relationships are:

* They can be short lived, but are experienced as intensely as adult relationships
* Teenagers may be inexperienced in respectful relationships, or have difficulty differentiating between respectful or abusive / controlling relationships
* Pressure from their peer groups
* Abuse may be seen as acceptable, especially when the actions of the victim-survivor are seen to justify the abuse (for example if they were unfaithful or ‘disrespectful’)
* They may experience pressure from their peer groups or become isolated from their peers as a result of the relationship.

**Some warning signs that relationship abuse may be occurring:**

* Physical signs of injury / illness or depression
* Truancy, falling grades
* Changes in mood and personality
* Withdrawal, passivity, becoming unusually compliant
* Isolation from family and friends
* Frequent texts and calls from boy / girlfriend
* Inappropriate sexual behaviour / language
* Use of drugs or alcohol (where there was no prior use)
* Self-harming, eating disorders or problems sleeping
* Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
* Bullying / being bullied

**Dating relationships - additional considerations:**

Encourage discussions about healthy relationships and how to spot the signs that a relationship is becoming abusive or controlling

Create opportunities for young people to speak to a member of staff for support

### Reinforce that everyone has the right to be safe and feel respected in their relationships

Outline potential dangers of online communications and the need for extreme caution if face to face contact is suggested with someone they don’t know

### Promote available support for anyone worried about their relationship, including for those who recognise that their behaviour is negatively impacting on the other person

### Check each person has access to a trusted adult who they can speak to about any concerns or issues they are facing

### Remind them that if they feel in immediate danger, to call the police on 999

**Forced marriage**

Forced marriage is where one or both parties do not consent to the marriage, or consent is extracted under duress. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic violence and a serious abuse of human rights. Young people at risk of a forced marriage are usually experiencing emotional and / or physical abuse at home. Schools should consider forced marriage to be abuse and deal with this under their child protection procedures.

Since February 2023, it is illegal for 16- and 17-year-olds to get married or become civil partners in England and Wales, even with parental consent.

**The Forced Marriage Unit** are available for advice on **020 7008 0135**.

**Abuse by Children or Young People Directed at Parents / Carers**

Incidents of physical or verbal aggression are part of normal child development, however, a growing minority of families are finding that their child’s behaviour is beyond normal expectations, and that they are being subjected to extreme violence and aggression.

Parentline Plus have reported that over a two-year period, 27% of calls received by their helplines related to parental abuse with the abuse coming in forms of intimidation, aggression and physical violence.

Many parents are hesitant to speak out or seek help as they feel that the abuse may be seen as a reflection on their parenting or the child suffering or witnessing abuse themselves but often this is not the case and there is no obvious reason for why the abuse may be occurring. Even when parents speak out, they often find it difficult to accept help and support. You as education professionals can play a crucial role in helping them to access the support available. Support includes the **Thames Valley Safe! Building Respectful Relationships** programme, as well as PEGS ([www.pegsupport.co.uk](http://www.pegsupport.co.uk)) who offer peer-based support for parents / carers affected by these issues.

Signs of child to parent abuse:

* **Threats of** and / or **physical violence** including **hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, slapping, biting, hair pulling**, with or without **weapons or objects used as weapons**
* **Swearing** and **name calling**
* **Intimidation**
* A **constant refusal to do as they are asked** (eg. going to bed, asking friends to leave, attending school) to contribute to the household, or participate in normal family activities
* **Bullying** by **text or phone**
* **Stealing** money or property or misuse of parent’s credit cards / phones / computers
* Deliberately **damaging** **property**
* Threats of, or actual, **violence to pets or other children** in the household as a means of intimidation
* **Emotional blackmail**
* **Drug / alcohol abuse** in the home
* **Belittling parents** in front of friends / other family members / public

**Disclosures of Domestic Abuse by Children or Young People**

It is a big step for a child or young person to confide about what is happening at home, and your response is vital in providing reassurance, letting them know that they are believed, and that they can be helped and supported. It is important not to look shocked or disbelieving regardless of what you are being told, as this could lead the child to want to ‘protect’ you from what they are saying or shut down if they feel you don’t believe them.

**Listen to the child / young person**

##### Stay calm and take what they are saying seriously. Avoid using closed or leading questions; instead listen in a non-judgemental and supportive manner:

##### 

Are they currently being harmed?

Are they likely to be harmed in the future?

Is anyone else at risk of being harmed?  
Do they need medical attention?

What are their overall needs?

What is important to them?

Advise them you may need to inform others if you are concerned for their safety

Issues to consider

What are their immediate or most pressing worries, fears and concerns?

How do they hope the situation will be resolved

How do they hope you will be able to do to support them?

Are there other adults they trust who know about the situation or they feel they can talk to?

Have they been directly involved in the violence / abuse? (either by getting in the middle of an incident as it is occurring, or where the abuse is directly aimed at them?)

How safe / unsafe do they feel in different situations?

Are there any others they are worried about (such as siblings)

**Provide reassurance to the child / young person**

Assure them that you believe them, they are not alone and that there is support available

Let them know that domestic abuse is unacceptable and is taken seriously

Let them know that they are not responsible for another person’s actions and that it’s not their fault that this is happening (sometimes children incorrectly think that their behaviour or existence has led to the abuse occurring)

As a child/ young person they have a right to protection and support

Acknowledge how hard it must have been for them to tell you about what has happened and reassure them teachers, support staff and other agencies are here to help, not judge

Explain what will happen next

**Make a written factual record of the discussion** (be aware that a child’s file could be seen by their parent)

Record what you did next, who you shared the information with and why

Follow your school / nursery / youth group’s Child Protection procedures

**What is the Child or Young Person Likely to have Seen and Heard?**

* Heard abusive, humiliating, or threatening language
* Seen physical injuries and bruises
* Heard the screams and pleading for help and for the abuse to stop
* Seen a parent / carer removed and taken to the police station
* Seen a parent / carer being taken to hospital by ambulance
* Seen or endured physical injuries themselves or towards their siblings

They may also have:

* Been used as a ‘pawn’ or ‘spy’ to report back on the other person
* Been forced to participate in the incidents
* Experienced unexpected and / or frequent house moves

**Responding to a Notification of Domestic Abuse by an External Source Concerning a Child**

Sometimes the first time that a school, pre-school, nursery or college becomes aware of domestic abuse issues in the home of a child or young person is as a result of notification from an external source such as the police, Children’s Services, friend, relative or classmate.

In most cases, where notification is sent by a statutory service, the response is likely to be coordinated by the Designated Safeguarding Team, but other staff may also receive more ‘informal’ notifications or disclosures.

**Receipt or notification of a Child and Young Person by the Police or Children’s Social Care**

Following receipt of a notification of domestic abuse, please consider:

* As a result of the information in the CYP, does a discussion with the child / young person or their parent need to be held? If so, who is best placed to facilitate this, and what would your aims for the discussions be?
* How can the needs of the child / young person best be assessed?
* Which (if any) other members of staff need to be made aware of the information? (ensure only necessary people are involved).
* How should the information be recorded on the child’s file? Ensure information is factual and that sensitive information is ‘hidden’ from general access.
* What support can be offered to the child / young person, in terms of in-school as well as local and national services? Think through which service(s) are likely to be most helpful, involving the child / young person in decisions as to how they would like support delivered and what form this should take.
* Do you need to support safety planning? Consider safe routes to school, varying arrival / leaving times, ensuring staff are aware and can identify the abuser etc.
* When and how will you need to review / monitor the situation to ensure that if matters change, updated safety measures and support options can be considered?

**Operation Encompass**

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. A telephone call or notification to a school’s trained Designated Safeguarding Lead /Officer is made prior to the start of the next school day after an incident of police attended domestic abuse where there are children related to either of the adult parties involved. This sharing of information enables appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child, **and that all interactions, from when the child first arrives at the school gates, are of a positive nature.**

**The Operation Encompass website provides a wealth of guidance and resources for schools** [www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)

**A teacher helpline is also available for to seek guidance from a Clinical or Educational Psychologist on how to best support a student:**

Tel: **0202 513 9990** (8am – 1pm Monday to Friday)

**Domestic Abuse Disclosure by a Parent / Carer**

Education settings can be made aware of domestic abuse as a result of one of the parents / carers coming in to discuss what is happening. The following information aims to give some information on what other schools have found helpful:

**Initial Response:**

* Identify a quiet area where you can speak in private without being overheard
* Reassure them that they are right to speak to you about these issues and that you want to help support them and their children
* Explain confidentiality boundaries and that you will need to pass on the disclosure if there are concerns for their safety or that of the children in the family
* Listen without judgement, focusing on safety needs and making the person feel supported and valued. Every person will have their own unique circumstances and methods of managing their situation
* Let them know that you believe them and make it clear that they are not responsible for someone else’s abusive behaviour, no matter what they may have been told
* Let them know they are not alone, and many others are and have experienced domestic abuse
* Find out what support they feel they need and what they would like you to do
* Discuss the effects on the child, any impact they have noticed and if there are safety planning issues which you need to be aware of
* Be supportive with requests for variations in the child’s arrival and departure time from school, where there are concerns for safety

**Confidentiality:**

* If you do need to disclose the information to other agencies, explain what you will need to do and who the agencies receiving the information will be. Remember: confidentiality doesn’t mean keeping information to yourself if you think someone is at risk of harm
* Be alert to the risk that where a person has fled to another area to escape domestic abuse, an ex-partner may try and find them and the children through education settings.

**Record Keeping:**

* Make a written record of the information given and your response and advice provided – this should be factual and enable follow up if needed. As the information is likely to be sensitive and could increase the risks to the victim-survivor and children access to this information should be restricted to only staff who need to be aware of the information and not in records to which an alleged perpetrator could have access.

**Referrals / signposting:**

* Where there are concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, your child protection procedures should be followed, including making a referral to Children’s Social Care
* Be aware of local and national specialist advice and support services and signpost / refer as appropriate. These services can include domestic abuse services (practical and emotional support, access to domestic abuse refuge, safety planning, behavioural change programmes for those who recognise the impact of their abusive behaviour on others); police; solicitors (for assistance with seeking an injunction or restraining order); housing department (to understand housing options, including Home Refuge scheme if safe to remain in their own home following instillation of additional security features).

If only one contact number can be provided, this should ideally be Wokingham Domestic Abuse Support Service, delivered by Cranstoun on **0118 402 1921** for local based support.

**Why Might a Victim-Survivor Remain in an Abusive Relationship?**

Whilst the risk of staying may be very high, leaving the relationship doesn’t guarantee that the violence/ abuse will stop. In fact, the period during which a victim is planning to leave, or actually leaving is often the most dangerous time for them and the children. Some of the reasons victims of abuse have given for staying are:

* They are frightened of the abuser and what they might do if they leave
* They still care for / love their partner and just want the behaviour to change
* They feel ashamed about what has happened and believe it is their fault
* They are scared about the future in terms of money, housing, what will happen to the children and if they will have to hide forever
* They are worried about being isolated from their family or friends
* They have no confidence in their ability to manage on their own
* They believe it is better to stay for the sake of their children

Victim-survivors need to be supported in their decisions and will often make several attempts to leave before they leave permanently and safely.

#### Safety Planning

The following situations are some that have been encountered by schools and settings and it’s worth taking time to consider if your school or setting would be know how to respond to these:

* Parent advises that there is domestic abuse, and the other parent should not be allowed to collect the child(ren)
* Parent (alleged perpetrator) turns up at school to collect the child(ren)
* Child(ren) has been followed on way to school, or approached by alleged perpetrator
* The school / setting is asked to ‘take sides’ or judge who is the primary victim
* The police have advised the school that they need to come and collect a child(ren) and take them to a refuge

**Children Who May Be Present When a Domestic Incident Is Taking Place**

Research shows more than 300,000 children and young people are injured each year as a result of trying to stop arguments at home[[5]](#footnote-5)1. Whilst this reaction may be instinctive, particularly for older children, they should where possible be encouraged to try and get somewhere safe and call the police for assistance.

Specialist domestic abuse services help victim-survivors and children discuss potential safety risks, enabling them to create a bespoke safety plan. However, you may also need to support the adult and child(ren) with this process.

The key to safety planning is to help individuals think through what situations they may find themselves in and what would be the safest thing to do in each of these situations. Every individual and their circumstances are unique, but the following are some suggestions which have been found to be helpful:

* Think through when incidents normally happen (eg in the home / where in the home / when out of the home / online)
* In each of these settings, where is the nearest place of you can get to where you can be safe for a few minutes to call for help and how can you get there safely? (eg bathroom, especially if door can be bolted, shed or outdoor space, neighbour’s house). They may need to have several safe places to cover incidents taking place in various locations.
* Have they got access to a phone which they can keep with them or easily access in their safe space(s)? It can also be helpful to have some biscuits and a drink in the safe space if possible as it can be helpful to be able to do something ‘normal’ to cope whilst waiting for help.
* Do they know how to call 999 and that, although calls are free, they need to ensure the phone battery is charged?
* Does their body give them signs that the situation is becoming more volatile or that there is an increasing threat of an incident occurring? (eg racing heart; anxious feeling in stomach; start of a headache etc) – enables them to get ready to go into flight mode.
* Have they thought about practicing getting to their safe space(s) so that in an emergency their response becomes more automatic?
* Have they got someone they could confide in about what is happening who they could call if they needed to – potentially setting up an agreed code word system so the person will know what to do (eg phone the police, check on them after a certain amount of time etc)?
* Is there somewhere they could go if they feel tensions rising and they need to leave the house for a short time? This could potentially be to a friend, neighbour or relative’s house and could also include setting up code word systems; having a ‘reason’ which the perpetrator would accept for why they need to go out. A change of clothes or important documents could be kept at this location.

**Considerations linked to getting to and from school and other settings:**

* If the person is worried about being followed or an incident taking place on the school run, options could include:
* Varying their route to and from school?
* Arranging with the school to have a late / early drop off or collection time?
* If the school becomes aware of concerns over one parent having access to the child(ren):
* Is this backed by any legal orders in place?
* What concerns have been raised? Are they evidence based?
* Is there a plan in place for what to do if the parent turns up at school asking to take the child(ren)?

**Your child protection procedures should be followed in all the situations discussed.**

**Children Who Need to Move School as a Result of Domestic Abuse**

A family may need to move geographical area to escape violence and this may be to temporary or permanent accommodation. Changing schools can be difficult for the child or young person concerned, particularly because of the circumstances of the change. This may result in a delay in placing the child into a new school. Frequent moves and changes of address can lead to social isolation and loss of family and friends. There could also be associated financial issues such as the costs of travel to the school or new school uniforms.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that the child is not placed in danger by allowing the violent partner access to the child or information, which may help the perpetrator to locate the family. (This includes the need to be aware of people asking about the new family as they could have links to the perpetrator)

Please be aware that when a family leaves an abusive situation, this can be an extremely dangerous time for the victim and children. Do not under any circumstances disclose any information about the child or their address which may place the family in danger.

**IF YOU ARE ADVISED THAT A CHILD NEEDS TO BE REMOVED IMMEDIATELY FROM SCHOOL BY THE POLICE TO GO TO A REFUGE, DO NOT DISCLOSE THIS INFORMATION TO ANYONE OTHER THAN THOSE AS ADVISED BY THE POLICE.**

**Contacts and sources of support**

**Cranstoun Domestic Abuse Service: 0118 402 1921**

Provides support for victim-survivors of domestic abuse, children and young people and interventions for those who want to change their abusive behaviour.

Interpreter support is available if required.   
The helpline number above is also available for professionals who would like advice as to how to support families

Email: [dass@cranstoun.org.uk](mailto:dass@cranstoun.org.uk)

[www.cranstoun.org/dass](http://www.cranstoun.org/dass)

**Hourglass: 0808 808 8141 (please advise from the Wokingham area)**

Support for those aged 58+ affected by abuse (includes child to parent / carer abuse)

[www.wearehourglass.org](http://www.wearehourglass.org)

**Kaleidoscopic UK**

Local Wokingham based peer-based support for all those affected by domestic abuse. Group based programmes for adults and for children through the Children’s Freedom Programme

[www.kaleidoscopic.uk](http://www.kaleidoscopic.uk).

**Safe!: 0800 802 4040**

Thames Valley wide Young Victims Service provides support to children aged 5 – 18 who have been harmed by an experience of victimisation.

Their Building Respectful Families Service provides support to families experiencing Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse. [www.safeproject.org.uk](http://www.safeproject.org.uk)

**Support U: 0118 321 9111**

Advocacy and support for members of the LGBT+ community

[www.supportu.org.uk](http://www.supportu.org.uk)

A full list of services which offer support within the Wokingham area can be found at <http://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/domestic-abuse>

**National Helplines:**

**Domestic Abuse 24-hour helpline (female victims) 0800 2000 247**

This is a 24 hour a day, free national helpline run by Refuge which offers women and children access to emergency refuge accommodation, information and safety planning. They have access to a minicom and language-line facility.

**Male Advice Line: 0808 801 0327**

Information and advice for male victims of domestic violence. This non-judgmental helpline gives men a chance to talk about their experiences and offers emotional and practical support together with signposting to other agencies who may be able to help.

[www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)

**Mankind Initiative: 01823 334244**

Advice and help for male victims of domestic violence.

[www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

**NATIONAL LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 999 5428**

Support for members of the LGBT+ community

[www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)

**Childline: 0800 1111**

A confidential telephone counselling service for any child or young person with any problem, 24 hours a day.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Respect Phoneline: 0808 802 4040**

A national phoneline for domestic abuse perpetrators who want help to address their abusive and / or controlling behaviour. The phoneline welcomes calls from (ex) partners, friends and relatives who are concerned about a perpetrator and will also give information and advice to frontline workers who come into contact with perpetrators in their work.

[www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)

**Translated Information:**

Information about domestic abuse in a number of different languages can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-get-help-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak-translations>

1. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children under the age of 18 years who see, or hear, or experience the effects of the abuse, as a victim of domestic abuse if they are related or have a parental relationship to the adult victim or perpetrator of the abuse. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482528/Controlling_or_coercive_behaviour_-_statutory_guidance.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 1 Home Office Publication – Teenage Relationship Abuse, A Teacher’s Guide to Violence and Abuse in Teenage Relationships [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 1 NSPCC research January 2009 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)