

## What is Domestic Abuse?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines Domestic abuse as: *'Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. 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*
- *psychological, emotional or other abuse;*
- *and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.'*

## What are the signs and indicators?

- Physical signs of injury/illness
- Withdrawal, passivity, being compliant
- Changes in mood and personality
- Alcohol or other substance misuse
- Isolation from friends and family
- Frequent texts/calls from partner / having to answer contacts
- Depression / Self-harm/suicidal thoughts
- Eating or sleeping disorders

**This is not an exhaustive list**

## Children and Young People

Children are often hidden victims of domestic abuse; however, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises Children as victims in their own right:

*'Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and is related to A or B.'*



## One Minute Guide

### Domestic Abuse

November 2024



## Who can be a victim of Domestic Abuse?

Anybody can experience abuse in their relationships and while research shows that victims are more likely to be women than men, this does not mean that men cannot be victims.

There are also some groups that have specific vulnerabilities or needs which may exacerbate the abuse. Whilst not an endless list, these may include older people, individuals with disabilities, those in the LGBTQ+ community, BAME groups and young people. Domestic Abuse can also include forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

## Who can be a perpetrator?

Just as there is no clear profile for a victim, the same is true for perpetrators. Although statistically it is more likely to be a male perpetrator, this is not to say that women cannot also be inflicting domestic violence or abuse on their partners.

If you suspect domestic abuse, please ensure you report this to the necessary authorities.

### What support is available?

Coventry's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is Safe to Talk. This is for victims of domestic abuse, including Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based Abuse.

The number gives those who need help a direct line to a range of support services offered by specialist providers including refuge accommodation or additional home security. It is also open to victim's families and professionals and helps people get to the right service as easily as possible as and when support is needed.

**Safe to Talk:** Call **0800 111 4998**, 8.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday or 10am - 1pm Saturday and Sunday. [www.safetotalk.org.uk](http://www.safetotalk.org.uk)

There is also a professional's website which brings together all information, training and resources available at: <https://coventrydaprofessionalsnetwork.org.uk>

### Further Support

#### Coventry Haven Women's Aid

Call **0800 111 4998** or visit <https://www.coventryhaven.co.uk/>

#### Panahghar Coventry (Support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity individuals)

Available 24/7 by calling **0800 055 6519** or visit

<https://www.safehouse.org.uk/>

Valley House (tailored services to victims of domestic abuse helping them feel safe by providing safe accommodation)

Call **0800 328 9084** or visit <https://valleyhouse.org.uk/domestic-abuse/>

#### Choose to Change (for those who want to change their behaviour)

Call **024 76 225863** or visit <https://relatecoventry.org/services/choose-2-change/>

LGBT (Support to LGBT people across the West Midlands)

Call **0121 643 0821** or visit <https://blgbt.org/>

**Coventry Domestic Abuse Professionals Network Portal:** [Partners](#) | [Coventry Domestic Abuse Professionals website](#)

### Risk Assessments

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Identification Assessment is used to assess the severity of the Domestic Abuse.

The purpose of the Dash risk checklist is to give a consistent and simple tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of domestic abuse in order to help them identify those who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meeting in order to manage their risk and safeguard the victim.

To access the DASH checklist

<https://safelives.org.uk/resources-for-professionals/dash-resources/>

Domestic abuse incidents attended by the Police, that involve children, are shared with the Childrens MASH daily.

The MASH screen the case and allocate a social worker where appropriate

Where applicable the Police also notify the child's school of the incident as part of 'Operation Encompass'

<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

### Key Contacts and Further Information

- [Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- [Coventry Safeguarding Adult Board](#)
- [Safe to Talk](#)
- [West Midlands Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse Helpline](#)
- [Victim Support](#)
- [National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge](#)
- [Respect Men's Advice Line](#)