

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Guidance for Councillors

The issue of domestic abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment remains prevalent in our communities. Current data shows that one in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.

This guidance is designed to provide helpful information on how to recognise, respond and refer to specialist domestic abuse services.

Domestic Abuse can happen to people of any gender or sexual orientation. It affects people of all ages, backgrounds and religions. Children are victims of Domestic Abuse where they see, hear or experience Domestic Abuse in a familial relationship.

Domestic abuse is defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if -

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
(b) the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse.
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- (d) economic abuse
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Personally Connected is defined as:

(a) they are, or have been, married to each other

(b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other

(c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)

(d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)

(e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other

(f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child

(g) they are relatives.

Domestic abuse does not always take the form of physical violence. Coercive control and emotional abuse, forced marriage, honour-based abuse, adult child to parent abuse, elder abuse, stalking and harassment and economic abuse are all types of domestic abuse. Non-physical abuse is not any less dangerous – in fact, research shows that men who use coercive control are more likely to kill their partner and extend their control to conceal her murder as a suicide or accident. Cambridgeshire County Council believes that nobody should live in fear of violence or abuse.

For more information on Domestic Abuse please visit the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence website:

[Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Home](#)

To download a Friends & Family information leaflet please visit:

[Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Information for Friends and Family](#)

If you would prefer to receive a hard copy, please email: dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Supporting Someone Subjected to Domestic Abuse

Top Tips

- Always speak to the person on their own and do not use family members as interpreters. If talking by telephone or online, check that the person is on their own and that the perpetrator is not overhearing the conversation.
- Conversations could start by asking someone: Are you okay? Are you worried about your's or your children's safety?
- Always believe what the person tells you.
- Do not share what you have been told with the abuser – this can increase the risk of serious harm to the victim.
- If they say they don't want help or refuse to talk to you, don't give up. Reassure them you are there when they are ready and approach the subject again in the future. They are the experts in their life.
- Reassure them that it's not their fault – they may feel embarrassed or guilty or the abuser may have convinced them that the abuse is their own fault.
- Ask the person what they would like you to do – would they like you to support reporting to police or talking to their GP? It may be that they initially don't want to do anything.
- It's not unusual for survivors of abuse to be reluctant to involve the police. The situation may be complex. Survivors can get support without involving the police.
- How you respond can influence a person's safety and their willingness to accept help. Offer to seek advice from a specialist domestic abuse service or signpost the person directly if they would prefer to contact the service themselves.

Third party concerns about Domestic Abuse

If a member of the public raises a concern about someone else experiencing domestic abuse, please contact dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk for advice. If you feel someone may be at immediate risk of significant harm, please call 999.

Local Support

Domestic Abuse Support Services (DASS)
03003731073 / www.impakt.org.uk/dass

Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership
[Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership – CAPRCP](#)

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership
[Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Home](#)
Email: dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

National Support

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line

08088010327 / [Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men | Men's Advice Line UK](#)

Galop (LGBTQ support)

08009995428 / [Galop - the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity](#)

Hourglass (support for older people)

080880808141 / www.wearehourglass.org

Karma Nirvana (Honour crimes & forced marriage)

08005999247 / [Karma Nirvana](#)

Respect – help for domestic abuse perpetrators

[Respect | Home](#)

What else can you do to help?

Take the White Ribbon promise to end violence against women & girls

[Make the White Ribbon Promise — White Ribbon UK](#)

Put up posters in your local area – these can be printed from the Cambs DASV website

[Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Posters for free download](#)

Become a DASV Champion

[Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - DASV Champions](#)

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If you are concerned about someone and would like advice, please email:

dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



**Cambridgeshire
& Peterborough**
Domestic Abuse & Sexual
Violence Partnership



Cambridgeshire
County Council