

CATCOTT PRIMARY



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# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

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'...where learning takes you to greater heights...'

Approved by:

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The Home Office defines domestic abuse as: “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”.

Domestic abuse typically involves:

- Controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour
- Violence
- Physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse of adults over 16 years old who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members.

**It can happen to anyone of any age, gender, ethnicity or sexuality.**

### **The impact of domestic abuse**

- How children can experience domestic abuse:
- Being physically harmed or threatened with harm
- Being injured while trying to intervene
- Witnessing or overhearing the abuse of others
- Witnessing an assault or the outcomes of it
- Being encouraged and coerced to take part in the abuse
- Being threatened to remain silent or learning that you are expected to stay silent
- Seeing ill treatment of pets
- Seeing damage in the home or to toys

### **Becoming Aware of Domestic Abuse**

It is important to always consider living with domestic abuse as a possible explanation for any unusual behaviour exhibited by a young person or child. The following circles list some typical warning signs; however, it is not an exhaustive list, and behaviours may be caused by other factors.

#### **Step 1: Identify**

- Injuries without explanation, concealed or minimised by client
- A partner who is unwilling to allow a parent to be alone with professionals
- A parent who appears passive and dominated by their partner
- Change in behaviour, for example appearing anxious

## Step 2: Ask

- If you have a concern, always try to find out more from the person themselves. Make sure the person you are concerned about is on their own. If you are talking through an interpreter, make sure they are independent of the family and the community.

### Ways to start the conversation:

- Are you happy?
- How are things in your relationship?
- Is anybody hurting you? Do not refer to 'partner' as it could be someone else
- Are you or your children scared or upset?

## Step 3: Act

- If the situation is urgent, visible injury is evident or children are at risk, phone 999 or Somerset Council's Children's Services (0300 123 2224)
- Always complete the [Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment \(DASH\)](#) even if the victim is not in immediate danger to help inform your decision and determine escalation routes. If the **DASH** scores 14 points or more this is considered high risk and should be referred for a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). If a lower score is reached, professional judgement may be applied by speaking directly to the Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service who will consider the referral. Discuss with your **MARAC** representative for more support. Ensure the victim knows about sources of help and support that are available.

### IMPORTANT:

If you have immediate concerns about the client's safety, please call the police on **999**.

If there is an immediate risk to children or vulnerable adults, initiate your agency's child protection or safeguarding adult procedures

## Standard risk (score 1 – 9)

Provide with the following suggestions:

- National Domestic Abuse 24 hour Helpline: **0808 2000 247**
- National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline: **0800 999 5428**

### **Medium risk (score 10 – 13)**

- With the client's consent, refer to Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service for Overcoming Abuse group programme. Please use secure email when sending the completed documents.
- Email: [youfirstsidas@theyoutrust.org.uk](mailto:youfirstsidas@theyoutrust.org.uk)
- Attach your completed referral form and **DASH**.

### **High risk (score 14+ or professional judgement)**

Send **DASH** to your agency's **MARAC** representative, who must:

- Complete a Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service referral for
- Send completed referral form and **DASH** together marked "**MARAC**" to: [youfirstsidas@theyoutrust.org.uk](mailto:youfirstsidas@theyoutrust.org.uk)