

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2021

DOMESTIC ABUSE:

What is it?

The government introduced a new national definition of Domestic Abuse in March 2013 which is:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, 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'

LOCAL STATISTICS:

- It is estimated that, 24,690 women and 18,468 children will experience Domestic Abuse each year.
- In Hull the police respond, on average, between 750 and 800 incidents of Domestic Abuse every month.
- Between April 2016 and March 2017 the police attended 9,112 calls for assistance in relation to domestic abuse.
- 84.8% of victims are female

KEY ISSUES:

- Mothers can be sexual abusers
- There is sometimes a lack of continuity in engagement with Local Authorities /agencies
- Lack of knowledge, confidence and skills when dealing with complex sexual abuse
- Lack of information sharing/management of procedures
- Children's voices are going unheard.

FURTHER READING:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/case-reviews/recently-published-case-reviews>

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THE ONE MINUTE GUIDE TO RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY TO DISCLOSURES FROM AND ABOUT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

What is a disclosure?

A disclosure is the action of making new or secret information known or a fact, especially a secret that is made known. (Oxford Dictionaries)

The point of disclosure is an opportunity to provide immediate support, comfort and protection by connecting children, young people and adults with professional services that can keep them safe, provide support, conduct an investigation where necessary and facilitate their recovery, whatever their age.

Disclosures can be made verbally and non-verbally.

Examples of a disclosure (not limited to):

- By making a verbal statement directly or ambiguously
- Change in behaviour or acting out something which raises concern.



Your response to a child's, young person's or adult's disclosure:

- You need to remain calm, be supportive emotionally and practically. Take seriously the child, young person or adult making the disclosure and take some action in response.
- You should not ask lots of questions of the person making the disclosure; most information can be gathered with a minimum of questions and a maximum of listening.
- All that is needed, is a brief account, including: where it took place, when it took place, who was involved, who was present. Clearly record the child, young person or adults disclosure in their own words.
- This is all that is required to enable decisions to be made further on in the process. However, if they wish to give you more than this information, they should not be stopped from doing so.

What next?

If you do not take action when a child, young person or adult discloses abuse, it may place them at serious risk of ongoing harm and abuse and prevent them receiving the help they need. Therefore it is important to: listen to and support the child, young person or adult, reassure them that they have done the right thing, not make promises you can't keep, let the child, young person or adult know what you will do next and, follow your organisation's procedures and Hull Safeguarding Board guidelines and procedures.



As a practitioner, you must know your agencies procedures and Hull Safeguarding Children Board Practice Guidance which can be accessed via: www.hullsafeguardingchildren.co.uk

Further support and information can be accessed by attending the 'Responding Effectively to Disclosures from Children, Young People and Adults', half day training course.

For specific advice from a social care professional when you are concerned about a child or young person, please contact 01482 448879.