



Understanding the impacts of domestic abuse

Training session for Accord HQ

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About SafeLives



- We are SafeLives, the UK-wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse, for everyone and for good.



- We are independent, practical and evidence-led, with survivor voice at the heart of our thinking.



- We work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse.

We want what you want for your best friend:



- Action before someone is harmed or harms others



- Harmful behaviour identified and stopped
- Increased safety for everyone at risk



- The ability for people to live the life they want after harm has happened

Ending domestic abuse

What do we do?



Place people with lived experience at the heart of all we do and amplify their voices.



Test innovative projects and replicate effective approaches that make more people safe and well.

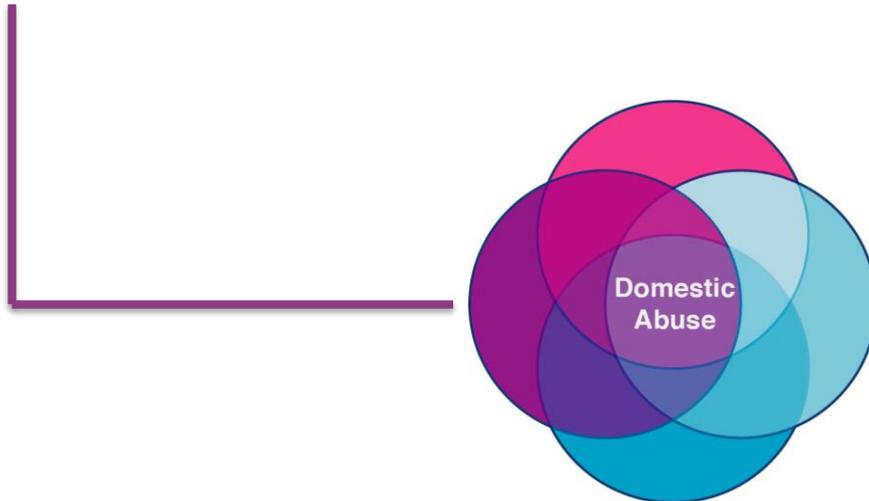
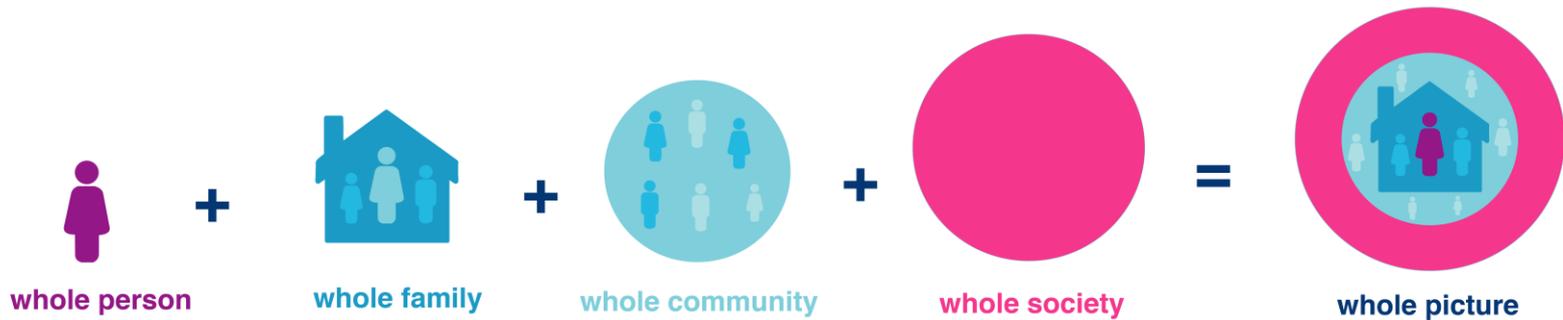


Combine data, research and frontline expertise to help services improve and to influence policy makers (locally and nationally).



Offer support, knowledge and tools to frontline workers and professionals.

The Whole Picture: Our strategy to end domestic abuse, for good



The whole person:
domestic abuse is never
all of someone's
experiences or situation.

Ending domestic abuse

What will we be covering in this session?

- Prevalence, definitions and dynamics of domestic abuse
- How an abusive relationship develops
- The impacts and effects of abuse
- Sources of help and support

Domestic abuse in the UK

Every year, **over 2 million adults aged 16-59 in the UK** suffer some form of domestic abuse.



85% of victims of domestic abuse seek help **five times** on average before they get effective support.



Only **one in five victims** of partner abuse calls the police



On average, **victims wait three years** before getting the support they need.

Two women a week are killed by a current or ex-partner in England and Wales.



Ending domestic abuse

Many people experiencing domestic abuse have multiple needs and many are 'hidden' from services.

32% of homeless women said domestic abuse **contributed to their homelessness.**

Almost a quarter (23%) of young people exposed to domestic abuse are also **demonstrating harmful behaviour** themselves, 61% against the mother.

Disabled women are **twice as likely** to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women.



On average, older victims experience abuse for **twice as long** before accessing help as those aged under 61.

Victims with mental health needs were more likely to have **problems with drug and alcohol use.**

LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are more than **twice as likely to have self-harmed** and are almost twice as likely to have **attempted suicide.**

Ending domestic abuse

Domestic abuse affects the whole family - children do not just 'witness' domestic abuse, they are victims in their own right

At the time they start school at least **one child in every classroom** will have been living with domestic abuse **since they were born.**

Contact visits were identified as an **opportunity for ongoing abuse** for 20% of children and young people supported by services.

Around 30% of children in households supported by an Idva **were not known to children's services.**

A third of children living with domestic abuse reported **mental health impacts.** Just under have anxiety, 28% have problems sleeping, and 23% have feelings of shame or responsibility for the abuse.

13% of children supported by domestic abuse services admit to **doing things they know are dangerous.** Almost 9% have exposure to **'harmful associates'**



In a fifth of cases (20%) **the child tried to intervene** to stop the abuse.

Ending domestic abuse

Home Office definition of domestic abuse

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. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

Psychological

Physical

Sexual

Financial

Emotional

Home Office definition of domestic abuse

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Ending domestic abuse

Coercive and controlling

Serious Crime Act 2015 (England & Wales)

To harm, punish, frighten

Deprive means of independence, resistance, escape

Acts to assault, threaten, humiliate, intimidate, subordinate, isolate, regulate, make dependent

Psychological

(Undermine security of logic/reasoning, confusing, anxiety inducing)

Mental

Threats
Controlling time/space
Intimidation
Irrational jealousy
Instilling fear
Defining your reality
Changing the rules
Withdrawing affection
...
Periods of return to romance, apologies

Emotional

(Undermine self-respect, feelings)

Belittling
Insulting
Humiliating
Shouting/swearing
Name calling
Mocking
Criticising
...
Your personality, appearance, work, parenting, homemaking, religion

Sexual abuse/coercion

Pressured to have sex
Pressured to take part in sexual acts
Refusal to use contraception
Deliberately passing sexual diseases
Causing pain/humiliation
Coercing sex for money, to go out

Economic/Financial

Restricting your access to money

Interfering with your ability to earn money

Having money/property stolen
Being defrauded
Being put under pressure in relation to money/property

Stalking & Harassment

Checking & monitoring communication/movements
Following
Spying

Constant, repeated contact when out socially and/or in work

Via person and/or technology

Charming... Encouraged to share secrets → **“GROOMING”** ← Intense romance... Access to your life

How does an abusive relationship develop?

Biderman's chart of coercion

Isolation: This can look like the start of any relationship.

“Honeymoon period” Lots of texts/calls/messages. Prioritising time together. Spending less time with friends/family. Sharing secrets from the past. Intimacy. Sexually adventurous behaviour. Making plans for the future. Moving in together. Joint finances. Starting a family.

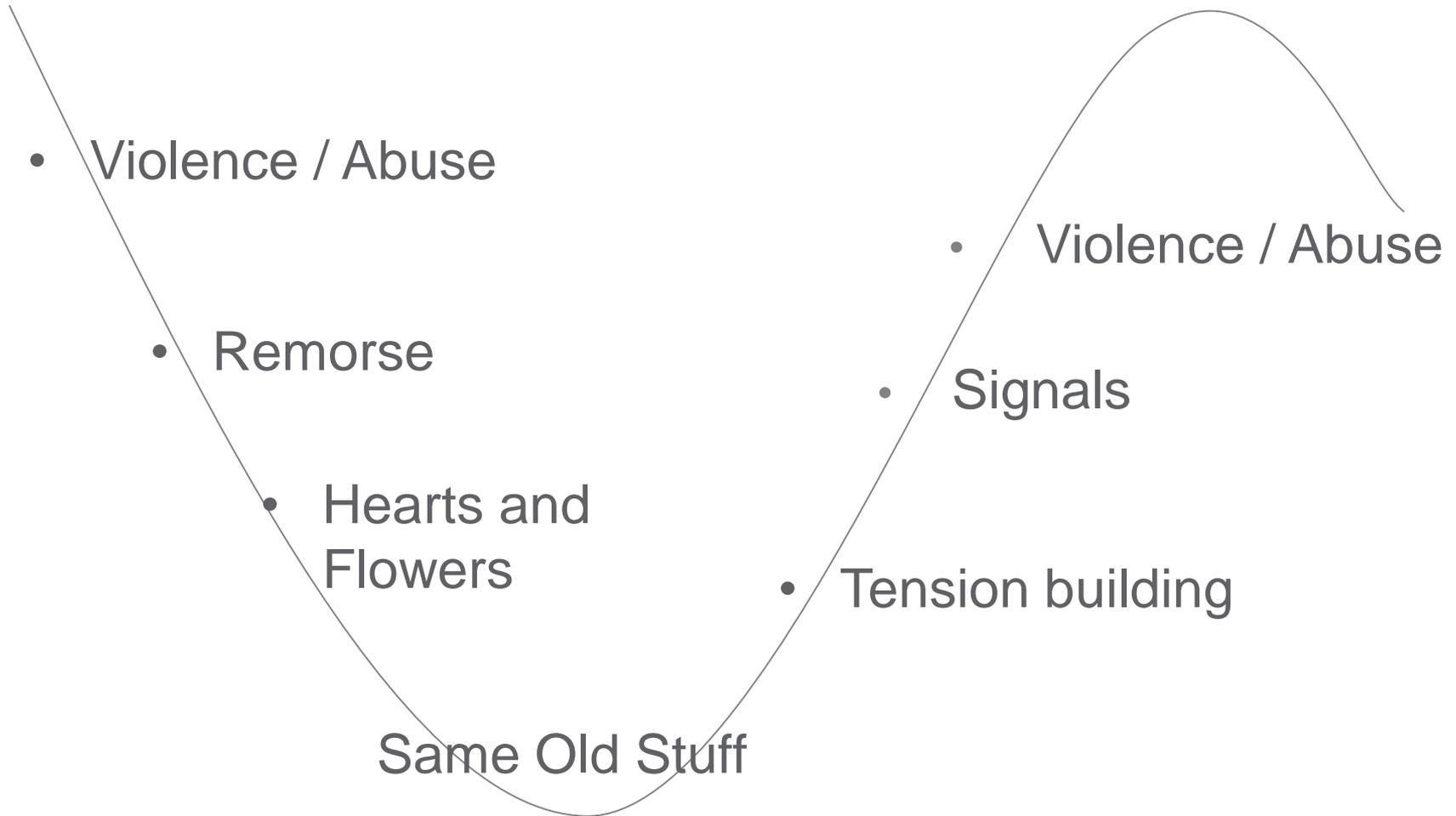
Degradation: Insults Criticising appearance Belittling sexual performance Public humiliation Withholding personal items Sexual abuse Forcing to commit criminal acts Controlling sleep – when and where Controlling or restricting food Using children – accusing of bad parenting. Having affairs.

Exhaustion:

Criticism/nagging/verbal abuse Arguments Walking on eggshells Moving goal posts Wearing them down Gendered expectations Using privilege Sleep deprivation Unreasonable demands Restricting access to support Physical/sexual violence

Threats: ‘You’ll lose the children’ Of death or physical harm to victim or others Of sexual violence to victim or others “I’ll leave you” Of suicide ‘Where will you go?’ ‘I’ll say you are mad’ “I’ll find you” “No-one else will want you” “You won’t cope” To disclose sexuality or gender identity To reveal secrets or past behaviour

Patterns of abuse...



Experts tell us:

The impact of living in an abusive household gender regime is that women (and children) adapt their behaviour to cope. Their thinking and actions are narrowed, as they attempt to live and be his version of who they should be. If interventions are not appropriate the web tightens. It becomes harder and harder to imagine life outside of this control, what it is to have freedom of thought and action. We call this limiting space for action

Professor Liz Kelly

Ending domestic abuse

'He tried to control which friends I spoke to, tried to build barriers between myself and my parents, hacked into my emails and tried to entrap me by impersonating former boyfriends, [he] would tell me I was stupid, was violent towards former boyfriends and was emotionally manipulative.'

'I was fearful of ending the relationship because he made me feel like I could not cope without him. He also threatened suicide if I left him'

'Emotional tension - the feeling of having to be careful not to upset or anger them'

'Long term controlling and isolation, undermining my self confidence, threats to out me, financial control, sexual manipulation, control and abuse'

How worried should you be?

Controlling behaviour

Separation

Breach of orders

Threats of harm

WEAPONS

Economic control

ONLINE MONITORING

LOTS OF TEXTS

Sexual abuse

Animal abuse

Pregnancy

Fear

Threats of suicide

Harassment

Cultural issues

History of violence

Child contact issues

Escalation

Financial issues

Poor mental health

Criminal history

Isolation

THREATS TO KILL

Multiple perpetrators

Stalking

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Substance misuse

Checking immediate risks and safety

- “Do you feel safe at home right now?”
- “What are you afraid might happen?”
- “Are you concerned for the safety of your children?”
- It is essential to have the person’s own view of their safety and the risks to them or anyone else.
- Risk is dynamic and can change at any time.

Sources of Support and Information:

Domestic abuse helplines:

England and Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247

Scotland Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline 0800 027 1234 (24h)

Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline NI 0808 802 1414

Rape Crisis England & Wales 0800 802 9999

Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline 08088 01 03 02

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327

Men's Advisory Project Northern Ireland 028 9024 1929

Galop LGBT+ Domestic Abuse helpline 0800 999 5428

Information & advice regarding honour based violence and forced marriage:

Karma Nirvana - <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/>

Women's Aid - <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Hemat Gryffe - www.hematgryffe.org.uk/

Home Office Forced Marriage Unit - 0207 0080151

Information for perpetrators of domestic abuse:

Respect phone line 0808 802 4040 www.respect.uk.net

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Support and safety apps

Hollie Guard - turns smartphone into an advanced personal safety device with a simple shake or tap, automatically sending location and video/audio evidence to nominated emergency contacts via email or SMS. Information is sent in real time; stored on secure servers and can be used as evidence.



Bright Sky - free to download mobile app providing support and information for anyone who may be in an abusive relationship with a directory of DA services available. It offers a secure journal tool that enables users to keep a record of domestic abuse incidents in the form of text, audio, video or images.



Ending domestic abuse

Barriers to accessing support

Home office advice during COVID-19

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and domestic abuse

Concerned about domestic abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak? Read the factsheet [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): support for victims of domestic abuse](#).

The household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.

Ending domestic abuse

Reaching In

It's hard to **reach out** for help from behind closed doors. We need someone outside to



- **#ReachIn** is a SafeLives social media campaign that launched in April and will run for as long as it's needed during lockdown and the period afterwards
- SafeLives have been sharing stories and messages from Pioneers, talking about times when someone 'reached in' and the difference it made
- Plus tips and guidance for people who are community volunteers or are concerned about someone they know

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Questions?



Ending domestic abuse

Keep in touch

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#ReachIn

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