



Home Office

# Information for Local Areas on the change to the Definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse

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Produced in partnership with



# 1. Introduction

**This document aims to help local areas consider how the extension to the definition of domestic violence and abuse may impact on their services and identify potential gaps and opportunities for working with 16-17 year olds.**

In September 2012, it was announced that the Government definition of domestic violence would be widened to include those aged 16-17 and wording changed to reflect coercive control. The decision follows a Government consultation which saw respondents call overwhelmingly for this change. We will also be changing the title of the definition to 'domestic violence and abuse'. This will be implemented from 31st March.

The Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

'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<sup>1</sup> regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

'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.'

The Government 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.

It has been widely understood for some time that coercive control is a core part of domestic violence. As such the extension does not represent a fundamental change in the definition. However it does highlight the importance of recognising coercive control as a complex pattern of overlapping and repeated abuse perpetrated within a context of power and control.

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<sup>1</sup> Family members are: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister & grandparents; directly-related, in-laws or step-family.

Without the inclusion of coercive control in the definition of domestic violence and abuse, there may be occasions where domestic violence and abuse could be regarded as an isolated incident. As a result, it may be unclear to victims what counts as domestic violence and abuse – for example, it may be thought to include physical violence only. We know that the first incident reported to the police or other agencies is rarely the first incident to occur; often people have been subject to violence and abuse on multiple occasions before they seek help.

## 2. Teenage Relationship Abuse (TRA)

### 2.1 Prevalence

Teenagers experience high levels of relationship abuse. The 2011/12 Crime Survey for England and Wales found that young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely to suffer partner abuse in the last year than any other age range<sup>2</sup>.

Domestic violence and abuse is still a 'hidden' issue in our society; and it is even more so for teenagers. This is exacerbated by the fact that adolescents can be more accepting of, and dismissive about, this form of behaviour than adults.

In 2009<sup>3</sup>, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) conducted research in a small selection of schools with young people aged 13-17 in mainstream education which examined their experiences of physical, emotional and sexual forms of violence in their partner relationships.

The research found that:

- 25% of girls and 18% of boys experienced some form of physical abuse at least once in their lifetime;
- 75% of girls and 50% of boys reported experiencing some sort of emotional abuse<sup>4</sup> at least once in their lifetime; and
- 31% of girls and 16% of boys reported experiencing some form of sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.

'My boyfriend was exactly like this, he was really nice the first couple of months, but when sex came into the picture, I told him I wasn't ready ... he started saying I was frigid to everyone as well as every time we saw each other, he'd hit me more for the stupidest reason.'

Quote from ThisIsAbuse message board

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2 The 2011/12 Crime Survey for England and Wales asked 11,000 people in England and Wales aged 16 to 59 questions on intimate violence via a self-completion module. Estimates from this survey showed that women between the ages of 16 and 19 were more likely to have been the victim of domestic abuse in the last year compared with other age groups. Table 4.08 available at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/focus-on-violent-crime/stb-focus-on--violent-crime-and-sexual-offences-2011-12.html>

3 Barter et al, 2009

4 In this study, 'emotional abuse' covers a wide range of experiences, including 'being made fun of'.

The charity, Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) collected information on 183 victims of domestic abuse (aged under 18) who were supported by specialist domestic violence services during a two year period (July 2010 – June 2012)<sup>5</sup>. Seventy-six per cent of these victims reported having experienced physical abuse such as broken bones, internal injury, slapping and pushing, whilst 22% reported experiencing sexual abuse such as rape, unwanted touching, or sexual insults. Just under a third of the victims (27%) had attended Accident & Emergency as a result of the abuse. Two-thirds of these victims were assessed as being in a high risk relationship, and many had additional health-related and economic vulnerabilities, for example 27% had previously self-harmed, 20% were pregnant and 18% had financial problems. Research has repeatedly shown that experiencing financial problems may act as a barrier to leaving an abusive relationship.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.2 Barriers to disclosure

There is a stigma surrounding the issue of teenage relationship abuse. A NSPCC report suggests young people may feel they are not taken seriously by adults, and that adults can trivialise abuse or minimise the effects of emotional abuse due to the lack of visible harm.

Consequently, professional practice may not be responding to, or reflecting, young people's own concerns, fears and wishes regarding the impact of peer violence<sup>7</sup>. The NSPCC report also suggests that young people are more likely to disclose relationship abuse issues to a friend than to a parent or professional<sup>8</sup>.

AVA have developed a leaflet called 'How to help your mates' which can be given to young people to help inform them should their friends confide in them.

[www.avaproject.org.uk/media/54339/mates%20ava%20final.pdf](http://www.avaproject.org.uk/media/54339/mates%20ava%20final.pdf)

Although some features of TRA are similar to adult domestic violence, the forms and experience of this issue, as well as the challenges in seeking and providing services, make many of the issues faced by teenagers unique<sup>9</sup>. There are also certain barriers relating to young people's ability to access services. Simply because of their age many young people are unable to access the same levels of support as over 18s.

Many young people will be experiencing multiple risk factors. However, as with abuse in adult relationships, teenage relationship abuse occurs across diverse groups and cultures. TRA can occur in various forms, including verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, and financial, and the experience may have both immediate and long-term effects on young people. It is sometimes the case that there are unclear parameters between victim and perpetrator in TRA which adds to the complexity of cases.

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5 <http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/CAADA-Insights-Factsheet-Teenage-Domestic-Abuse-FINAL.pdf>

6 [http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/A\\_Place\\_of\\_greater\\_safety.pdf](http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/A_Place_of_greater_safety.pdf)

7 Barter et al., 2009, p8.

8 Barter et al., 2009

9 Sharpen, J (2012)

### Things to consider:

- Compile a directory of services that work with under 18s
- Form a youth panel of peer educators (membership should include victims of domestic violence) who can work with young people, audit local services and ensure youth participation is an integral part of any service planning and delivery
- Consult with young people, parents and service providers to see if current services are meeting the needs of young people
- Do an audit of local services to ensure there are safe spaces in which to work with young victims
- Support local schools to undertake prevention work to include advice on where young people can access help and support
- Use the Home Office teen relationship abuse website as a resource when working with young people who are or could be in abusive relationships: <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

## 2.3 Technology – as a context for abuse and a tool for change

Figures from the Virtual Violence II survey of 4,605 UK secondary school children aged 11-16 years old suggest that 6% had received a message or image on the subject of sex which made them feel uncomfortable or upset<sup>10</sup>.

Communicating online is a normal way of life for many young people and the UK's internet access is amongst the highest in Europe with teenagers' usage higher than that of adults.

It is becoming more evident that there are numerous ways that technology can be used to abuse young people. These include:

- Gifts of expensive smart phones which can be used in exchange for gang membership, sexual favours and abuse
- Cyber bullying
- Online grooming
- Digital stalking
- Naming of rape victims online
- Social location services whereby perpetrators can keep track of where victims are
- Use of Blackberry messenger to target vulnerable young people
- Sexting – the “exchange of sexual messages or images” and “creating, sharing and forwarding sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images” through mobile phones and the internet<sup>11</sup>.

However it is also important to recognise that technology and the internet also offer unique ways of accessing and providing support and information. The Home Office Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign ([thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk](http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk)) is an example of using the media and internet to provide information directly to young people. Many areas are considering developing online support systems as a way of supplementing frontline services. Some research suggests this may be preferred by young people<sup>12</sup>.

### Things to consider:

- Consider how to use social media as a way of engaging, reaching and working with vulnerable young people

10 Cross et al. (2012)

11 NSPCC (2012) Children, Young people and Sexting

12 Sharpen, J (2012) The Online Space as a Forum for Discussion and Disclosure about Teenage Relationship Abuse

## 3. How to respond to cases

It is important to be aware that cases involving under 18 year olds may include, features of domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation and street gang related sexual and other violence.

It is crucial that Children's Services and domestic violence services develop protocols for joined-up working and that appropriate referral pathways are identified.

### 3.1 Safeguarding

The statutory guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' sets out what professionals and organisations need to do to safeguard children.

[www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00305-2010](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00305-2010)

DfE is expecting to publish shortly a revised copy of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) play an important role in challenging safeguarding practice and assessing the effectiveness of safeguarding services in their area.

Each local authority is required to set up an LSCB to bring key agencies such as police, probation, youth justice, health, education and social care together to make sure local safeguarding of children is effective. In addition to coordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what is done by each agency to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, LSCBs also have a number of key things they must do which are set out in legislation.

These include agreeing local safeguarding policies and procedures for how the different agencies work together, contributing to local plans, communicating to local organisations and the community, ensuring safeguarding training is provided, and monitoring what the LSCB members do and how effective local safeguarding is.

### 3.2 Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual exploitation are found in all parts of the country and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups.

As a supplement to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', the document 'Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation' 2009 provides information about the different forms of sexual exploitation, helping local agencies develop prevention strategies. It also helps to identify those at risk of sexual exploitation and how take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of particular children and young people.

[www.education.gov.uk/a0072233/safeguarding-children-from-sexual-exploitation](http://www.education.gov.uk/a0072233/safeguarding-children-from-sexual-exploitation)

In November 2011, the Government published the national Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation action plan. The plan sets out a co-ordinated programme of action for a wide range of national and local organisations to raise awareness; protect young people who are at risk; prosecute, convict and imprison those who exploit children; and help victims and families get their lives back on track.

On 3 July 2012, the Government published a new accessible step-by-step guide for frontline practitioners on what to do if they suspect a child is being sexually exploited. The action plan and step-by-step guide can be found here: [www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation](http://www.education.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation)

### 3.3 Risk Assessment with Young People

There are specific factors to consider when working with young people who are victims of relationship abuse:

- Is the young person involved with a gang?
- Peers – are they associating with risky peer groups or older peers?
- Are they using substances?
- Do they have mental health issues, self-harm or suicidal tendencies?
- Are they disengaged from education?
- Are they a looked after child?
- Are they in a same sex relationship?
- Do they have poor coping skills or engage in risk taking behaviours?
- Do they have an obsessive use of violent games or pornography?
- Are they isolated from people and services that could support them?
- Do they identify what they have experienced as abuse?

Young people may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a young person could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments, such as the use of the common assessment framework (CAF), should identify what help the young person requires to prevent such needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

'I have been in an abusive relationship for over 3 years. By abusive, I mean that he scares me, he swears at me, he uses words I've never even thought about before. He makes me feel tiny. He hurts me physically, emotionally and psychologically. I'm hurt. What hurts the most is trying to confront him. Because I am, and always will be, wrong. No matter how good or kind I try to be, I always fail. I'm alone.'

Quote from ThisIsAbuse message board

#### Things to consider:

- Develop local Violence Against Women and Girl (VAWG) strategies with specific reference to young people and be clear who is taking the lead for this work
- Encourage close and effective joint working between Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and services that safeguard children
- Think how you will prioritise support if there are multiple issues in the young person's life i.e. relationship abuse, gang involvement
- Explore how can you encourage joined up working and appropriate information sharing



## 4. Services

### 4.1 Advocates

Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) are trained specialists who work with women who are victims of domestic and sexual violence. In some areas there are specific children and young persons' IDVA and ISVA services, which provide specialised support to children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse. However, not every area will have one.

The Home Office is providing £1.2m over three years (April 2012 - March 2015) for 13 Young People's Advocates working in areas most affected by gangs. They provide direct and dedicated support to young people who have been victims, or are at risk of, sexual and domestic violence and/or sexual exploitation. They also have an understanding of the specific risks that gang violence has on a young person, working with and across local agencies to ensure that a robust risk management plan is in place. This funding has been awarded to eight organisations from the voluntary and charity sector, as well as the public sector with experience of working with young people, sexual violence and gangs.

If specialist domestic violence services are going to work with under 18s they need to receive the right training to ensure they are able to utilise their skills with this age group, whose needs, experiences and support networks may be different to adult victims.

AVA and Women & Girls Network were funded by the Home Office to develop a five-day Open College Network accredited training course targeted at practitioners working with gang-affected young women experiencing sexual and domestic violence

[www.avaproject.org.uk/our-projects/stella-project/stella-project-young-women's-initiative/working-with-gang-affected-young-people-experiencing-sexual-and-domestic-violence.aspx](http://www.avaproject.org.uk/our-projects/stella-project/stella-project-young-women's-initiative/working-with-gang-affected-young-people-experiencing-sexual-and-domestic-violence.aspx)

Some areas have also developed specialist IDVA services for children even younger than 16 years of age. An example of good practice in this area is Blackpool which provides a range of domestic violence services to those aged under 18, some of which are commissioned by the local authority.

## 4.2 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

The MARAC is a multi-agency meeting that focuses on the safety of high-risk domestic violence victims. There are around 250 MARACs in operation across England and Wales. Existing research indicates that MARACs have the potential to improve adult victims' safety and reduce re-victimisation<sup>13</sup>. The guidance for referrals to MARAC states that in cases involving 16-17 year olds professional judgement will be required to decide whether the MARAC or safeguarding route is more appropriate.

### Things to consider:

- Provide dedicated support to teenage victims. Ensure that the young people's services include the knowledge and expertise to address not only the different way of working that may be needed when working with young people, and the additional barriers they face, but also other key issues such as gangs, sexual exploitation and 'honour'-based violence
- Dedicated staff working with vulnerable young people should be given on-going support and training to better understand how young people are using social media and the risks that it poses
- Develop a care pathway for referring teenagers to LSCB, MARAC and the young people's service so all multi-agency professionals can confidently support these young victims
- Ensure the care pathway has clearly identified points of safeguarding referral or input and that the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards are working effectively with the MARAC
- Encourage youth workers and other key professionals to be part of local domestic violence forums
- Training for services working with young people as their needs, experiences and support networks maybe different to adult victims

## 4.3 Accommodation

Local authorities should presume that any lone, homeless 16 or 17 year old, whether they are a victim of violence and abuse or not, should be provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 unless the child is not, in the local authority's judgment (based on an initial screening assessment), a child "in need". In nearly all cases the impact of a child being homeless, and their parents being unable to provide them with suitable accommodation or care, would result in such significant challenges to the child's welfare that the child will be a child "in need". Where the criteria for section 20 have been met Children's Services do **not** have discretion to choose to use section 17 powers instead to provide accommodation. The effect of providing accommodation under section 20 is of course that the child becomes "looked after" within the meaning of section 22 of the Act.

A small minority of young people may be considered sufficiently able to cope on their own so that they are not a child "in need" and may be assisted under the homelessness legislation. A 16 or 17 year who is eligible and homeless through no fault of their own will be considered to be in priority need and therefore owed the main homelessness duty. Whilst waiting to secure suitable, settled accommodation the local housing authority may place the homeless person in temporary accommodation. If they are a victim of domestic violence and abuse the local authority may consider that the most appropriate form of temporary accommodation may be a refuge.

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13 Steel et al, 2011

## Refuge Provision

Currently, refuges tend to provide accommodation and support to victims aged 18 or over and this can act as a barrier for those who are trying to leave their current home in order to escape violence and abuse. Authorities who commission services from domestic violence providers should consider the needs of this group and make appropriate provision available.

Vulnerable people were a priority in the last Spending Review. Government secured £6.5 billion investment for Housing Related Support services over the four years of the review. Housing Related Support services are non-statutory services commissioned by local authorities to help vulnerable people to live more independently. This money is unringfenced and can be used to support any age group including 16 and 17 year olds.

If a place in a refuge cannot be found then the local housing authority will secure other temporary accommodation. Guidance says clearly that, for this agegroup, bed and breakfast<sup>14</sup> accommodation is not suitable. Statutory guidance and the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities is clear on how victims of abuse should be supported<sup>15</sup>.

Many local authorities will commission youth specific supported accommodation. Organisations such as St Basils, Depaul UK and Centrepoint have extensive experience supporting homeless young people, a number of whom will be victims of abuse.

## Housing Benefit

The small minority of young people considered very able and who choose not to be supported under the care system will usually be supported via the homelessness legislation. Government has encouraged local housing authorities and Children's Services to work together to support young people<sup>16</sup> and develop protocols so that they receive the support they need.

16/17 year olds will usually be eligible for housing benefit as long as they are liable for the rent. People under the age of 35 will be paid the Shared Accommodation Rate, which pays for the cost of a single room in shared accommodation.

### Things to consider:

- The development of protocols between the local housing authority and children's services. Making sure there is no 'wrong door' when a victim of abuse reaches out to the local authority for help.

14 <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Provision%20of%20accommodation.pdf> Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation

15 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-councils-july-2006> Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities

16 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7857/jointworkinghomelessness.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7857/jointworkinghomelessness.pdf) Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children and young people

## 4.4 Immigration

In relation to immigration, the UK Border Agency will not give permission to enter or remain in the UK to a person who is applying as a spouse/partner if they or their settled partner will be aged under 18 on the date when they would arrive in the UK or the date when permission to enter or remain would be given.

There are provisions within the Immigration Rules (paragraph 289A and Appendix FM Section DV-ILR), for victims of domestic violence who have entered as the spouse/partner of a settled person to apply for settled status (indefinite leave to remain) if they are a victim of domestic violence.

From 1 April 2012, DWP have been working with the Home Office and UK Border Agency to ensure migrant spouse victims of domestic violence who have been granted leave to remain outside the immigration rules under the 'destitute domestic violence concession' are able to access eligible income-related benefits.

More information can be found here:

[www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/while-in-uk/domesticviolence/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/while-in-uk/domesticviolence/)

## 5. Young People Using Violence and Abuse in Close Relationships

The new definition will not just have an impact on younger victims of domestic violence, but also on those using abuse in relationships who are under 18.

In cases where the defendant is under 18, the case will usually be heard in a youth court. The Youth Justice System is discrete from the adult justice system and has a statutory aim of preventing offending by children and young people and an obligation under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to consider the interests of youth. Youth justice services are delivered locally by youth offending teams (YOTs). YOTs are multi-agency teams managed by the local authority with statutory partners such as the police, probation, children's services, education and health.

Youth out-of-court disposals, referral orders, community sentences and custodial sentences are specifically designed for youth offenders. There are no specific options designed for cases involving domestic violence, but this can be an aggravating feature that may determine the appropriate response to an offence. YOTs can also take this into account when determining the best way of intervening to prevent further offending. The youth justice system is focused on intervention and rehabilitation, with YOTs able to commission programmes to meet individual needs. This lends itself to tailoring of the sentence to fit the individual and their offending.<sup>17</sup>

Local areas will need to decide if these cases should remain in youth courts or be dealt with at a Specialist Domestic Violence Court which provides a specialised way of dealing with domestic violence cases in magistrates' courts.

Remember that there may be safeguarding factors to consider when working with young perpetrators of violence as they may be subject to abuse themselves.

The Youth Justice Board have developed a list of tools and resources for working with young people who use abuse in relationships. This includes abuse towards intimate partners, siblings and parents. They also have a library of effective practice with examples from national projects working with young offenders.

[www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/reducing-re-offending/domestic-abuse](http://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/reducing-re-offending/domestic-abuse)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/definition-domestic-violence/response-impact-assessment?view=Binary>

Respect has developed a toolkit for use with young people using violence in relationships.

[www.respect.uk.net/pages/young-peoples-services.html](http://www.respect.uk.net/pages/young-peoples-services.html)

The Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) has also developed a programme for working with these young people. YUVA work directly with young people who have used abusive behaviours in their close relationships and want to change and their Safety Service supports family members, partners and ex-partners' partners who have experienced young people's abuse.

<http://www.dvip.org/professionals-young-people.htm>

### **Things to consider:**

- Develop a local plan for how you will respond to young perpetrators of abuse
- Training for key professionals in recognising and responding to youth violence

## 6. Child to Parent Violence

'I've had knives at my throat off him...he said to me 'you better move now cos I'll use it', so I said 'do me a favour and do it because I can't take it anymore, you're destroying me' (mother in a focus group)<sup>18</sup>.'

Anecdotally, police, youth justice workers, social workers and other specialist support services report child to parent abuse as a significant problem and part of their case load.

Like other forms of domestic violence, it is very likely to be under-reported and there are very few services working specifically on this issue. The lack of recognition of this issue means that many families may not recognise that they need support and there is a need for more guidance for practitioners that does not just include a criminal justice response. Many of these families may be facing multiple issues such as substance use, mental health issues and domestic violence. This highlights the need for all services to be routinely screening for domestic violence.

In recent research<sup>19</sup> by Adfam and AVA (2012), feedback from focus groups with parents who had experienced Child to Parent Violence (CPV) suggests barriers to accessing services for these families were: stigma and shame; lack of awareness of existing support (notably family support groups); parents not seeing themselves as legitimate recipients of support; lack of knowledge on drugs, alcohol and their effects; an 'it'll never happen to us' mind-set; and a lack of consensus on the best course of action within couples.

Respect has a programme working with 11-14 year olds on Child to Parent Violence and delivered by Youth Offending Services, Domestic Violence Services and within Family Centres in the North East and North West.

Further information can found here:

[www.respect.uk.net/pages/young-peoples-s-respect-young-peoples-programme-rypp-791.html](http://www.respect.uk.net/pages/young-peoples-s-respect-young-peoples-programme-rypp-791.html)

### Things to consider:

- Support local services such as family support groups to be able to support families experiencing this form of abuse
- Training for domestic violence services in working with these families

<sup>18</sup> Quote from a mother in a focus group - part of the Adfam and AVA research (2012) (see link below)

<sup>19</sup> Adfam and AVA (2012) Between a rock and a hard place: How parents deal with children who use substances and perpetrate abuse  
[http://www.avaproject.org.uk/our-resources/reports--publications/between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place-\(2012\).aspx](http://www.avaproject.org.uk/our-resources/reports--publications/between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place-(2012).aspx)

# 7. Harmful Traditional Practices

## 7.1 Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a hidden practice, where due to its nature the full scale of the issue is unknown. It can happen to both men and women, although most cases involve young women and girls aged between 16 and 25<sup>19</sup>.

More information can be found here:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/35530/forced-marriage-guidelines09.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35530/forced-marriage-guidelines09.pdf)

and:

[www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/forced-marriage](http://www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/forced-marriage)

## 7.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Carrying out FGM is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. It is also an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out FGM abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

More information can be found here:

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/FGM](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/FGM)

and:

[www.forwarduk.org.uk/key-issues/fgm](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/key-issues/fgm)

### Things to consider:

- Training for staff to understand issues relating to harmful traditional practices.

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<sup>19</sup> Statistics provided by the Forced Marriage Unit



## 8. Useful Resources and Links

### **A guide for Wales is currently being developed and will be published in due course**

The Home Office Teenage Relationship Abuse Campaign includes information and resources for schools.

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/teenage-relationship-abuse/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/teenage-relationship-abuse/)

**This is Abuse site.** Includes films, support information, young people's message board and FAQs.

<http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>

### **AVA**

A national second tier organisation providing training and consultancy on teenage relationship abuse as well as all other forms of violence against women and girls.

[www.avaproject.org.uk](http://www.avaproject.org.uk)

### **Barnardos**

Barnardo's is the largest provider of child sexual exploitation support services in the UK. Staffed by qualified professionals, these services provide a safe and confidential environment where young people can go for help, advice and support. Specialist training is also provided to professionals so they know what signs to look out for.

[www.barnardos.org.uk/](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/)  
0208 550 8822

### **Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA)**

CAADA is a national charity supporting a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse. It provides practical help to support professionals and organisations working with domestic abuse victims, with the aim of protecting the highest risk victims and their children – those at risk of murder or serious harm.

[www.caada.org.uk/](http://www.caada.org.uk/)  
0117 317 8750

## **Forced Marriage Unit**

The Government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is dedicated both to preventing British nationals being forced into marriage overseas and to assisting anyone in the UK faced with the prospect of being forced into a marriage. If you are worried that you might be forced into a marriage or are worried about someone else who may be you should contact FMU on:

[www.gov.uk/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage)  
020 7008 0151

## **Foundation for Women's Health Research & Development (FORWARD)**

FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is an African Diaspora women led UK-registered campaign and support charity dedicated to advancing and safeguarding the sexual and reproductive health and rights of African girls and women. FORWARD work in the UK, Europe and Africa to help change practices and policies that affect access, dignity and wellbeing. They tackle female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage and related rights of girls and young women.

[www.forwarduk.org.uk](http://www.forwarduk.org.uk)  
020 8960 4000

## **The Hideout**

The Hideout is a dedicated website for young people up to the age of 21 where they can find information about relationship abuse and where to get help.

[www.thehideout.org.uk](http://www.thehideout.org.uk)  
0117 317 8750

## **IKWRO**

IKWRO helps Middle Eastern women and girls (Iranian, Kurdish, Arab, Afghan and Turkish) who are living in the UK and provide confidential advice on issues including domestic violence, "honour" based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, separation and divorce, child custody, housing and benefits. They speak Farsi, Arabic, Kurdish, Dari, Turkish and English.

[ikwro.org.uk/need-help-now/](http://ikwro.org.uk/need-help-now/)  
0207 920 6460

## **The Men's Advice Line**

A confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner or ex-partner (or from other family members).

[www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)  
[info@mensadviceline.org.uk](mailto:info@mensadviceline.org.uk)  
0808 801 0327

## **National Working Group (NWG)**

The NWG is a charitable organisation formed as a UK network of over 1000 practitioners working in the field of sexual exploitation and trafficking within the UK.

<http://nationalworkinggroup.org/>  
01332 585371

## **NSPCC**

NSPCCs vision is to end cruelty to children in the UK. They campaign to change the law, provide ChildLine and the NSPCC helpline service, offer advice for adults, and much more.

[www.nspcc.org.uk/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)  
Childline 0800 1111  
NSPCC Helpline Service 0808 800 5000

## **Rape Crisis**

Rape Crisis Centres offer a range of services for women and girls who have been raped or experienced another form of sexual violence.

[www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)  
0808 802 9999

## **Refuge**

Refuge is the national charity which provides a wide range of specialist domestic violence services to women and children experiencing domestic violence.

[www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)  
0808 2000 247

## **Respect**

Respect phone line is a confidential helpline offering advice, information and support to help you stop being violent and abusive to your partner.

[www.respectphoneline.org.uk](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk)  
[info@respectphoneline.org.uk](mailto:info@respectphoneline.org.uk)  
0808 802 4040

## **Southall Black Sisters**

Southall Black Sisters provides information, advice, advocacy, practical help, counselling and support to Asian, African-Caribbean and other minority women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence (including forced marriage, dowry abuse and honour crimes) in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu (language line is used for interpretation of other languages).

[www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/](http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/)  
0208 571 0800

## **The Survivors Trust**

The Survivors Trust (TST) is a national umbrella agency for over 130 specialist rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse support organisations throughout the UK and Ireland.

[www.thesurvivorstrust.org/](http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/)

## **Women's Aid**

Women's Aid is the key national domestic violence charity that co-ordinates and supports an England-wide network of over 340 local domestic and sexual violence organisations running over 900 refuge, advocacy and outreach services.

[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

0800 2000 247

**This document has been produced with AVA with particular thanks to Jo Sharpen.**

