



BARKING AND DAGENHAM

DOMESTIC ABUSE



**WE
BELIEVE
YOU**

**PRACTITIONERS' GUIDANCE
KEY FACTS**

SEPTEMBER 2022

AT A GLANCE

Domestic abuse can involve:

- **Physical** abuse
- **Emotional** abuse
- **Economic** abuse
- **Psychological** abuse
- **Sexual** abuse
- **Coercive** behaviour
- **Controlling** behaviour

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.

Both victim and perpetrator must be "**personally connected**" (this can mean they have been in an intimate relationship, or are related to each other) and they must be **over 16**.

A child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of domestic abuse, or where a victim survivor or perpetrator has parental responsibility for a child, the child **must be** regarded as a victim of domestic abuse in their **own right**.

What are the signs?

What is domestic abuse?

Signs in **adult** victims can include:

- Injuries that aren't explained, that are concealed or minimised
- Appearing passive and dominated by their partner
- Changing behaviour, for example, appearing anxious

Signs in **children** can include:

- Physical and mental health issues
- Behavioural problems
- Difficulties adjusting at school
- Feeling responsible for negative events
- Exhibiting abusive behaviours
- Becoming isolated and watchful

Signs in **adult perpetrators** can include:

- Controlling e.g. unwilling to allow a partner to be alone with professionals
- Jealousy and possessiveness
- Hypersensitivity, quick to blame others for problems or feelings

AT A GLANCE

Create the **right** environment for disclosure. Ensure information about domestic abuse is displayed prominently in any office.

Respond immediately to any disclosures made to you. **Let them know you believe them.** Get consent to refer to our Independent Domestic and Sexual Abuse Service.

Ask the suspected victim / survivor when they are on their **own**, and in a **private** place. Ensure any interpreters are independent and not family or friends.

If you have concerns, **always** try to find out more. Here are some ideas to start the conversation:

- Are you happy?
- How are things in your relationship?
- Is anybody hurting you? (Don't refer to 'partner' as it could be someone else.)
- Are you or your children scared?

Make sure you know what services are available and how to **refer** to them, and make sure your domestic abuse **training** is up to date.

What do I do when they disclose domestic abuse?

How do I ask the right questions?

If the situation is urgent or children are at immediate risk phone **999**.

Make sure the victim knows about specialist help. The Barking and Dagenham Independent Domestic and Sexual Abuse Service, run by Refuge, provides confidential, non-judgmental support and advocacy. Make a referral on **0300 456 0174** or email **bdadvocacy@refuge.org.uk**

Trained practitioners will need to complete risk assessments (DASH RIC or DARIM) to determine escalation routes. If high risk is identified, refer to the **MARAC**. Discuss with your MARAC representative for more support, or read the MARAC guidance.

Report concerns about a child's safety to:

- The MASH team 9am to 4:45 pm, Monday to Friday - **020 8227 3811**
- Out of hours MASH team - **020 8594 8356**
- The professional referral form **<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/form/child-protection-referral-form>**

Report concerns about vulnerable adults to:

- The adult intake team on **020 8227 2915** or **intaketeam@lbbd.gov.uk**
- The professional referral form **<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect>**

Follow your organisation's Safeguarding policies.

SOME TOP TIPS

Risks linked to the **victim** include:

- Isolation from friends or family
- Current or imminent separation
- Child disputes
- Pregnancy
- Disability
- Poor mental or physical health
- Substance misuse

Risks linked to the **perpetrator** include:

- History of physical or sexual assault
- Escalation, use of weapons or strangulation
- Previous child or animal abuse
- Possessiveness, jealousy or stalking
- Substance abuse
- Mental ill health

Complete a risk assessment, following your service's procedures

Never advise victims to leave their home or relationship

Use your professional judgement - if you sense there is something wrong, act on it

Use everyday language e.g. don't ask about strangulation, try choking

Note what has been said to you, including time, date and injuries

Believe the person, **act** on what they say and **don't** keep it to yourself. The victim and the family needs **you** to get them help. This may be the **first** and **only** chance to make them **safe**.



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