



Safer Seven

On: Domestic Abuse



1. What is Domestic Abuse?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines Domestic abuse as: *'Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:*

- *physical or sexual abuse;*
 - *violent or threatening behaviour;*
 - *controlling or coercive behaviour;*
 - *economic abuse*
 - *psychological, emotional or other abuse;*
- and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.'*

2. Who can be a victim of Domestic Abuse?

Anybody can experience abuse in their relationships and while research shows that victims are more likely to be women than men, this does not mean that men cannot be victims.

There are also some groups that have specific vulnerabilities or needs which may exacerbate the abuse. Whilst not an endless list, these may include older people, individuals with disabilities, those in the LGBTQ+ community, BAME groups and young people.

Domestic Abuse can also include forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

3. What are the signs and indicators?

- Physical signs of injury/illness
- Withdrawal, passivity, being compliant
- Changes in mood and personality
- Alcohol or other substance misuse
- Isolation from friends and family
- Frequent texts/calls from partner / having to answer contacts
- Depression / Self-harm/suicidal thoughts
- Eating or sleeping disorders

This is not an endless list

4. Children and Young People

Children are often hidden victims of domestic abuse; however, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises Children as victims in their own right:

'Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and is related to A or B.'

Children and Young people may also experience abuse within their own intimate relationships.

If you think a child is at risk call 0300 555 0050

5. Risk Assessment

- The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Identification Assessment is used to assess the risk of Domestic Abuse.
- High risk cases will be heard at MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) to safeguard the victim. Domestic abuse incidents attended by the Police, that involve children, are shared with the Childrens MASH daily.
- The MASH allocates a social worker or screen the case through the DART (Domestic Abuse Response Team) as appropriate.
- Where applicable, following screening, the child's school will be notified of the incident as part of 'Operation Encompass'

6. What support is available?

Dudley Single Point of Contact (SPOC): 01384 455411

The SPOC is a single point of contact for Dudley victims domestic and sexual violence and abuse, including Forced Marriage and 'Honor' Based Abuse.

The number gives those who need help a direct line to a range of support services offered by specialist providers including refuge accommodation or additional home security.

It is also open to victim's families and professionals and helps people get to the right service as easily as possible as and when support is needed.

7. Further information: For more information visit <https://www.dudleysafeandsound.org/domesticabuse>

For help and support call the borough's single point of contact 01384 455411 (24 / 7) or text or Whatsapp 07384 466181 (9am to 9pm weekdays).

In an emergency dial 999 - if it's too dangerous to speak press '55' when connected and the operator will know you need help. You can also use West Midlands Police online [LiveChat](#) service. You can chat to a call handler between 8am – midnight 7 days a week.

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