



Domestic Abuse:

Schools
information
pack



Introduction and summary

The purpose of this document is to aid schools to increase awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationships, as an introduction to domestic abuse. This involves spotting the signs, how to help others, and what support services are available locally. We have provided this initial larger pack with a lot of starter information, this will then be followed up termly with a newsletter.

The importance of this work is highlighted in the below results from the recently released Healthy Schools Survey:

- Most, but not all, secondary school pupils surveyed think that hitting or kicking (84%) and sharing undressed or sexual photos of you with someone else (86%) is always wrong in a boyfriend/girlfriend/partner relationship.
- Fewer than half thought that telling you what to wear, checking where you are all the time and being jealous is always wrong.

We have included information regarding the Healthy Schools Award (HSA), more details on the criteria for HSA will follow below.

We recognise that domestic abuse is a difficult topic to incorporate into a Whole School Approach (WSA), therefore, we have provided some suggestions of how to make this possible.

You will also find a variety of domestic abuse specific local and national support services available below, as well as the healthy relationship guidance from the Department for Education (DfE and the PSHE Association).

Definition:

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as:

“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.”

Since 2021, a child has become a victim in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse.

The link to the full definition of domestic abuse can be found here:

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

Thank you to the York schools and support services that were involved in the co-production of the support package for schools.

Types of abuse and examples

Physical

- Kicking
- Hitting
- Choking
- Spitting
- Scratching
- Not allowing basic needs like food or water
- Non-fatal strangulation

Sexual

- Unwanted kissing or touching
- Unwanted rough or violent sexual activity
- Rape or attempted rape
- Refusing use of condoms or access to birth control
- Pressure to perform sexual acts

Financial

- Giving allowance and closely monitoring purchases
- Denying access to own wages
- Forbidding work or limiting hours worked
- Stealing
- Taking out loans or credit cards in your name

Emotional

- Name calling
- Blaming you for things that aren't your fault
- Limiting access to support network
- Threatening to commit suicide
- Threatening to harm the victim, a pet or loved ones
- Threatening to have children removed

Psychological

- Gaslighting – manipulating victim into doubting their own sanity or reality.
- Mind games
- Telling victim that they have a mental health condition when they don't
- Making derogatory jokes about victim to others in front of them
- Name calling
- Questions victim endlessly





Signs that children are being affected by domestic abuse

Children who have lived with domestic abuse respond in different ways, but they will feel frightened and confused. Children often blame themselves for what has happened and can become withdrawn and anxious. They may also feel that they cannot tell anyone about what was happening whilst living through the abuse. Below are some of the signs that children may display if they have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse:

- Absence (this is often linked to protecting a parent at home)
- Excessive anger
- Bullying
- Constant or regular sickness, e.g. colds, headaches, mouth ulcers
- Trouble retaining information/ concentration problems
- Particularly unkempt
- Drug and/or alcohol use
- Eating disorders
- May behave much younger than they are
- Withdrawal from usual activities

- If you notice any of these signs, please follow your school’s safeguarding protocols and see below support services for further information.
- Please note; whilst these are things to look out for, there are not always visible signs of abuse and often asking children in general about their home life e.g. what they get up to on weekends can reveal abuse going on at home. Open-ended questions are really helpful in gaining a deeper insight into what is happening at home.

“Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person’s mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. This can continue after the adults’ relationship has come to an end, and post-separation abuse and coercive controlling behaviours can continue to remain a factor in the child’s life. The impact can last into adulthood.”

NSPCC, 2024

What to do if a pupil discloses domestic abuse?

1. Listen carefully to what they’re saying.
2. Let them know they’ve done the right thing by telling you and tell them it’s not their fault.
3. Explain what you’ll do next.
4. Follow school safeguarding guidelines and policies on what to do next.

If there are any suspicions of abuse, the best practice for schools is to involve specialist domestic abuse support services at the earliest convenience. Further information on support services will follow.



PSHE Association Guidelines:

The PSHE Association Guidance is based on the Department for Education's Guidelines. It breaks down requirements for schools into different key stages. Below outlines the requirements specifically for healthy relationship education:

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9 (11-14 years old)):

- About different types of relationships, including those within families, friendships etc and factors that can affect them.
- Indicators of positive, healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- To recognise that sexual attraction and sexuality are diverse.
- That marriage should not be forced on anyone.
- How the media portrays relationships and the potential impact of this on relationship expectations.
- That the portrayal of sex in the media can affect expectations of sex.
- How to safely and responsibly form, maintain and manage positive relationships.
- The qualities and behaviours they should expect and exhibit in a wide variety of positive relationships.
- To further develop and rehearse the skills of team working.
- To manage the strong feelings that relationships can cause.
- To develop conflict management skills and strategies to reconcile after disagreements.
- To manage the influence of drugs and alcohol on decision-making within relationships and social situations.
- How to manage the breakdown of a relationship.
- The effects of change, including loss, separation and divorce- strategies for managing these.
- The services available to support healthy relationships and manage unhealthy relationships and how to access.
- About the law relating to sexual consent.
- How to seek, give, not give and withdraw consent.
- To gauge readiness for sexual intimacy.
- That intimate relationships should be pleasurable.
- The characteristics of abusive behaviours, such as grooming, emotional abuse, violence.
- How to recognise the above.
- How to get support with the above.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 to 11 (14-16 years old)):

- The characteristics and benefits of strong and positive relationships, including mutual support and respect.
- The role of pleasure in intimate relationships.
- To respond appropriately to indicators of unhealthy relationships, including seeking help where necessary.
- The importance of stable, committed relationships, including the rights and protections provided within laws.
- The legal rights in the Equality Act 2010.
- Strategies to access reliable, accurate and appropriate advice and support with relationships, and to assist others to access this when needed.
- Strategies to manage the strong emotions associated with different stages of relationships.
- To safely and responsibly manage changes in personal relationships.
- Ways to manage grief about changing relationships and the impact of separation.
- The opportunities and potential risks of establishing and conducting relationships online.
- To recognise unwanted attention.
- Ways to access information and support for relationships, including those experiencing difficulties.
- Concept of consent in maturing relationships.
- About the impact of attitudes towards sexual assault and to challenge victim blaming.

For further information, please see the Department for Education's Guidance available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-secondary>



The Whole School Approach to healthy relationship education:

WSA Principle:	How to integrate:
<p>Senior Leadership Commitment</p>	<p>The leadership and management of the school provides visible leadership and champions the importance of a well taught and planned healthy relationship element of the PSHE curriculum for all pupils and this is visible on the school website.</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p>The school covers domestic abuse in their up-to-date policies that are regularly reviewed, these should reflect the provision that is provided within the school. The policies are consistent with all safeguarding requirements and have been developed in consultation with the whole school community.</p>
<p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The healthy relationship education delivery uses interactive learning that focuses on skills and attributes developed through the context of subject knowledge and the curriculum uses a positive approach which does not attempt to induce shock, fear or guilt. This is regularly reviewed in line with national requirements.</p>
<p>Ethos</p>	<p>There is a positive whole school culture, ethos and environment which promotes resilience, respect, fosters positive relationships and values diversity. The planned healthy relationship curriculum is fully inclusive of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 supported by an inclusive whole school culture.</p>



WSA Principle:**How to integrate:****Staff
(CPD, Health
and Welfare)**

The subject lead has access to regular CPD to support the effective delivery of healthy relationships within PSHE and they have opportunities to disseminate the learning to other members of staff.

All staff have received training on establishing and maintaining a safe teaching and learning environment in the classroom when delivering healthy relationship education.

All Staff feel confident and comfortable teaching healthy relationships with access to on-going CPD based on their identified needs.

Expert visitors are used to enhance the teaching, rather than a replacement for teaching by staff.

Parents

The school actively works in partnership with parents/ carers to inform them about the planned healthy relationship education.

The school publishes details of the healthy relationship education element of the PSHE curriculum on their school website in parity with other subject areas.

Families are aware of the schools focus on healthy relationships and can access information to support their own and their child's learning and understanding for the different topic areas.

**Extra
curricular/
pupil support**

The taught healthy relationships education links to, and compliments, the wider whole school activities to promote and support wellbeing.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning and to transfer what they have learnt into wider aspects of school life and from school to their lives in the wider community.

Opportunities are provided for pupils to make real decisions about their lives and school life so they can demonstrate their ability to take responsibility for their decisions.

Pupils are signposted to appropriate support both within school and supporting external agencies.

Healthy Schools Award

This is an award to enable schools to develop and embed a whole setting approach to support health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

The award enables schools to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold for recognition in the following areas: Active Lives, Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Healthy Food, PSHE / PSED and Staff Wellbeing. There is an action plan and supporting evidence required for each theme which can be accessed once registered with the programme.

The award is funded by York Public Health to enable all York schools, including academies, to take part for free.

Criteria:

Once schools have completed all criteria for one theme for Bronze, two themes plus Staff Wellbeing for Silver and four themes for Gold; evidence can be submitted towards achieving an award.

Action plans need to be completed and uploaded along with the additional evidence that is outlined in the action plan for each theme.

Bronze level = one theme

Silver level = two themes

Gold level = all four themes

Submission dates

There are various submission dates. Please see the below link for more information, including submission dates: [Healthy Schools Home > Healthy Schools North Yorkshire.](#)



White Ribbon

Join the White Ribbon Campaign for Safer Schools

We're excited to share that the City of York Council has partnered with [White Ribbon UK](#) to help end violence against women. We'd like to partner with local schools to help us create a safer, more supportive environments for everyone.

Our goal is to empower children and young people to challenge inequalities and change harmful norms, proving that anyone, at any age, can make a difference.

Why get involved?

- Build a welcoming and safe learning space.
- Inspire students to stand up against violence and discrimination.
- Empower your staff with top-notch training and resources.
- Rally the community to champion these vital values.

Schools can access valuable resources and learn more here: [White Ribbon Learning Resources](#).

Key Dates:

- White Ribbon Day (25th November)
- 16 Days of Activism (25th Nov - 10th Dec)
- International Women's Day (8th March)

Let's work together to make our schools safer and more respectful.



Local and national support services

Local

IDAS offers free, confidential support and advice and access to emergency accommodation for anyone who is subject to domestic abuse.

IDAS Children and Families service can help children to manage emotions following domestic abuse. They also empower non-abusive parents and carers to support children with the impact that domestic abuse might have on their relationships, emotions and behaviour. Commitment from the non-abusive parent is vital to ensure the effectiveness of the support.

IDAS support children aged 10+, alongside parental commitment. They do this either one-to-one or in group support. They offer parent support sessions and drop in groups from parents. They can also provide indirect support via the non-abusive parent for younger children. IDAS work alongside other agencies who are supporting the family.

They support children who are victims in their own right by witnessing domestic abuse, young people who are victims of domestic abuse in the context of a romantic relationships, and parents who have been subjected to domestic abuse and their children are victims.

About 75% of the women in IDAS refuges have children. IDAS have a small team of specially trained children's workers in refuge, working alongside adult support workers, who work directly with children to overcome the trauma of witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse. They provide a therapeutic space for children and young people to process their feelings and express their opinions in an age-appropriate way. This helps children and young people make sense of what has happened and allows them to build resilience so that they can deal with future adversity.

Child Adolescence to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) is an abuse of power whereby the child or young person attempts to use coercive control or violence to dominate others in the family. Our specialist workers help families to navigate services to find the right support for them.

IDAS work with the family in a flexible, semi-structured way to improve feelings of safety, manage emotions, reduce anxiety and promote positive communication and healthy boundaries. The support recognises and builds on families' strengths and supportive networks to help increase resilience and help families recover following domestic abuse.

IDAS' helplines are available 7 days a week, the secure online referral form goes straight to the referral teams and a live chat is available daily. IDAS can provide support over the phone or face-to-face at home or in a discreet location.

Phone: 03000 110 110

Helpline: <https://idas.org.uk/get-help-now>

Email: info@idas.org.uk

Social media: @idasfor100

+Choices (Positive Choices) is a service provided by Foundation for perpetrators of domestic abuse, providing an opportunity to recognise, acknowledge and change abuse behaviour.

The Positive Choices programme is available for anyone, regardless of gender or sexual orientation aged 16 years and over who is a perpetrator of domestic abuse, including repeat offenders and adolescents violent toward parents, who wish to voluntarily address their abusive behaviour.

The Positive Choices domestic abuse perpetrator programme is delivered as part of a whole system wherein partners, ex-partners and/or other family members are also offered access to our Integrated Support Service (ISS). A dedicated Victim Liaison Officer (VLO) will be the first point of contact whilst the perpetrator is engaging with the programme. They will work in partnership with the Independent Domestic Abuse Service (IDAS) and other agencies to provide a robust and integrated system of support for the partners and/or ex-partners of the clients that engage with the programme, with the key focus to increase their safety and wellbeing, as well as the safety of any children involved.

Positive Choices is a Respect Accredited service and is a recommended provision of Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme (DAPP) support for perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse.

Phone: 01904 557491

Email: FoundationDAPP@foundationuk.org

Website: www.foundationuk.org/

Social media: @ChoicesDAPP

Contact form: www.foundationuk.org

Kyra are a registered charity in York that exists to help local women make positive change in their lives. They offer a range of courses, therapies, life skills and events for women, from their relaxed, comfortable, city centre location. Kyra welcome anyone who identifies as a woman and is over the age of 18.

Kyra's door will always be open until every woman in the area feels safe, supported and able to be the person they were always meant to be. Membership of Kyra is free of charge.

If you need more information, **call** Kyra on 01904 632332, **email** contact@kyra.org.uk or fill in the contact form on their website.

Survive is committed to helping any adult who has experienced sexual violence who approaches them for help to rebuild their life. This may include trying to facilitate support to other agencies, if we feel they are more appropriate.

Survive's specially trained support workers offer non-judgmental emotional and practical support. They support adult survivors of sexual violence and loved ones including parents, partners, carers, friends and other family members. Survive pledge to listen to you with empathy and compassion and can also provide information and advice around sexual violence and trauma. If continued support is needed, Survive will explain the process of accessing their services or signpost to other local or national services and resources. Survive's helpline is open Monday – Thursday (excluding public holidays) from 10am to 12pm on freephone 0808 145 1887.

Please visit <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/safeguarding-information/domestic-abuse> for further information about domestic abuse and services available in the York area.

National:

National domestic abuse helpline: 0808 2000 247

Women's aid live chat: [Live Chat](#) | [Women's Aid Live Chat](#)
(womensaid.org.uk)

Rape Crisis: 0808 500 2222. Visit the website to start a free online chat