



Responding to Gender Based Violence

Guidance for People Working in Youth Settings



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Introduction

Gender based violence is violence directed towards someone on the basis of their gender.

“Violence against women’ and ‘gender based violence’ are often used interchangeably as most gender based violence is inflicted by men on women and girls. It is important to acknowledge that not all men commit acts of gender based violence and that they too can be victims.



This guidance is based, with permission and thanks, on ‘Guidelines for responding to Gender Based Violence in a Youth Setting (2017)’ written by Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership.

The aim of the guidance is to:

- Support staff when responding to disclosures of gender based violence or to concerns that this may be occurring;
- Highlight language and behaviours that encourage negative gender stereotypes as part of a culture that condones gender based violence, and how we can respond to this.



It is vital that society adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards all forms of gender based violence and abuse. Youth Workers are ideally placed to support and challenge young people on this. The participation of young people in youth work is voluntary and contact often happens in informal, relaxed and supportive settings where young people are equal partners in the learning process. This approach facilitates the formation of trusting relationships and enables young people to talk openly about concerns and issues. It is an environment where young people's gendered stereotypes and language can also be challenged in a non-threatening and supportive way.

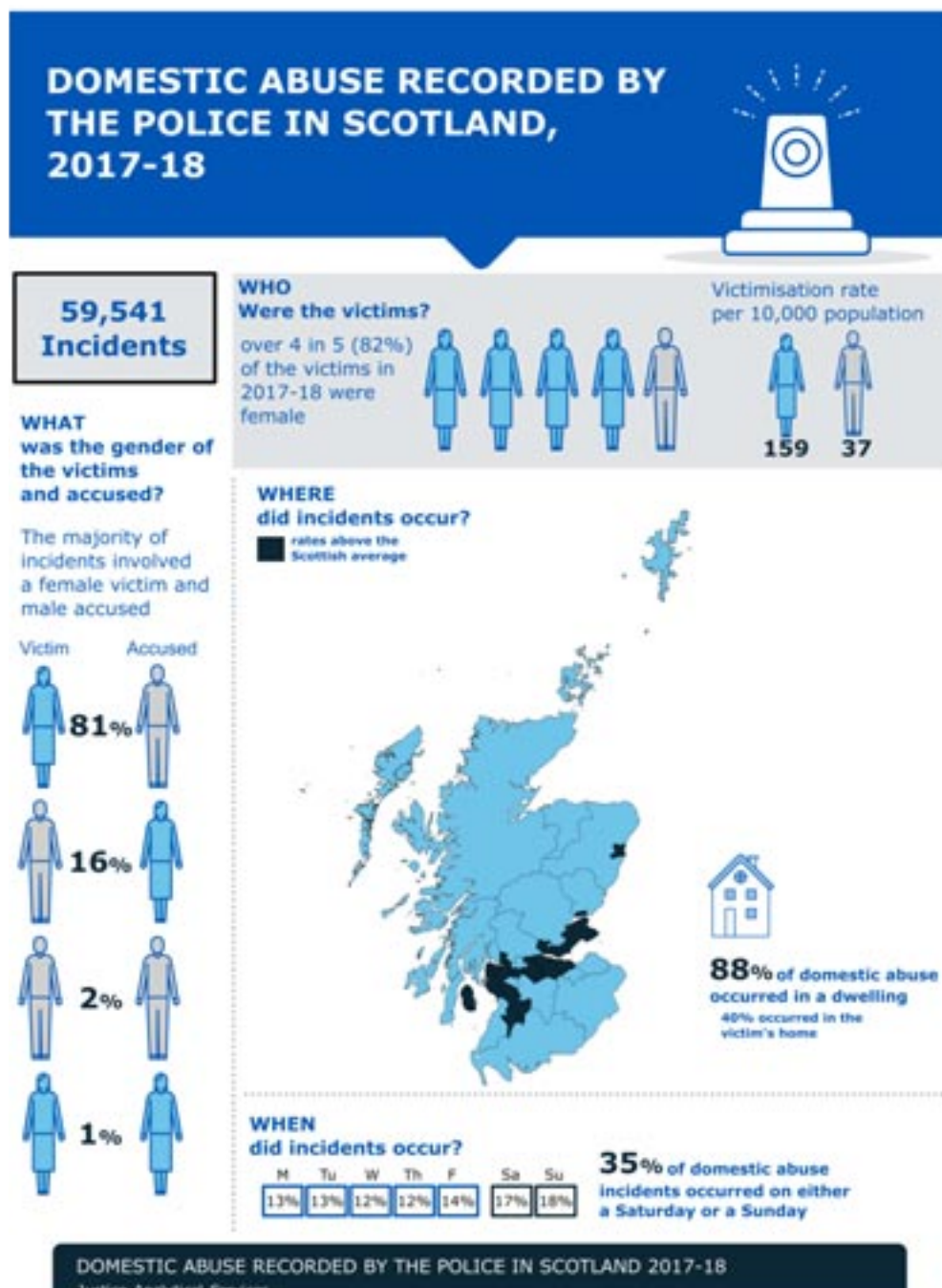
Within Scotland, the national approach for improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people is framed under Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). This framework ensures that children and young people are offered the right help, at the right time from the right people and sets out a vision for children and young people in Scotland. This vision is built around the idea that every child and young person in the country should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Angus's staged intervention process for GIRFEC is the Continuum of Need.

Key Facts & Figures

Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland

Levels of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland have remained relatively stable since 2011-12, with around 58,000 to 60,000 incidents a year.



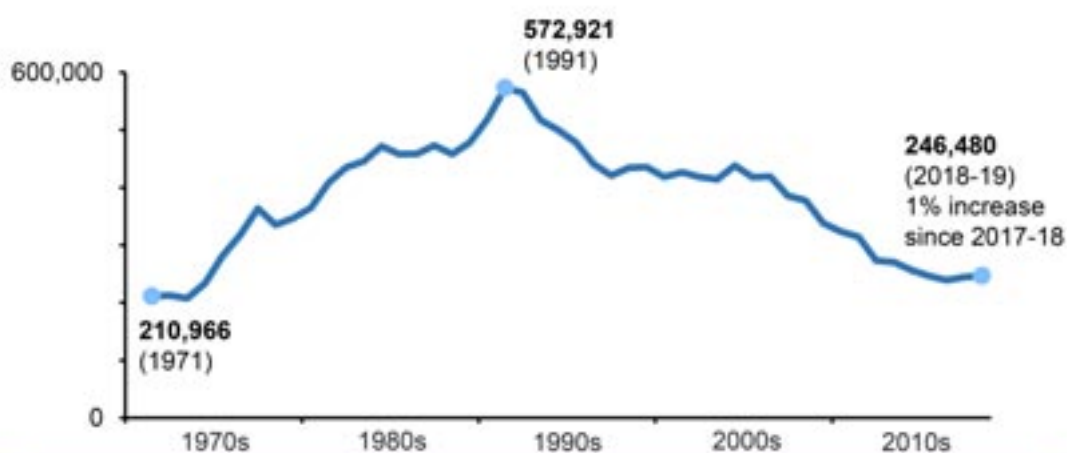
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2018/11/domestic-abuse-recorded-police-scotland-2017-18/documents/00543362-pdf/00543362-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00543362.pdf>

Sexual Crimes Recorded by the Police in Scotland, 2018-19

- 2,426 cases of rape and attempted rape reported to Police Scotland.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/15/>
- 5,123 cases of sexual assault reported to Police Scotland
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/15/>

Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2018-19

The number of crimes recorded by the police rose steadily from the 1970s to the early 1990s. Since then crime has generally fallen.

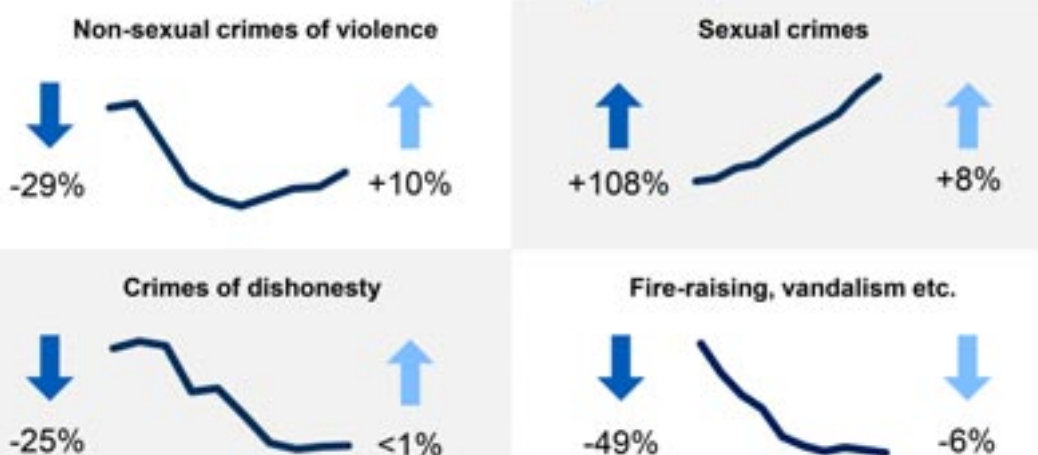


Change in Crimes

Since 2009-10, most types of crime have fallen, though Sexual crime has increased.



Change since: 2009-10 → 2017-18



- 8% increase in sexual crimes from 12,487 to 13,547. The recording of these crimes is at the highest level seen since 1971, the first year for which comparable groups are available.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/15/>
- While figures for many crimes in Scotland are reducing for sexual offences they continue to rise. Sexual crimes have been on a long-term upward trend since 1974, and have increased each consecutive year since 2008-09.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/15/>
- The actual figures are higher than these statistics suggest due to low reporting of these crimes. Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2014 - 2015 showed that only 16.8% of people who were victim-survivors of rape reported it to the police. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-justice-survey-2014-15-sexual-victimisation-stalking/pages/5/>

In Angus:

- Police attended 1162 incidents of a Domestic nature - an increase of 126 on the previous year (01/04/19 - 31/03/20)
- 80 females applied to Angus Council as homeless due to experiencing domestic abuse. 28 were under the age of 25, of those, 6 were aged 16-17 (2018 - 19)
- On average, a third of the children/young people on the child protection register are affected by Domestic Abuse

These figures show that gender based violence remains an ongoing and significant concern, both across Scotland and within Angus.



Steps for Responding to Gender Based Violence Within a Youth Setting

Step 1 - Starting a Conversation

Step 2 - Assessment & Safety Planning

Step 3 - Refer & Record

Step 4 - Looking After Yourself

Step 1 – Starting a Conversation

It is very important that anyone disclosing any form of abuse is well supported, both during the disclosure and afterwards. It is through supportive discussion that the youth worker is able to encourage the young person to open up and share their concerns so that they can receive help.

Providing a Supportive Environment

- Where possible, talk to the young person in a safe and private environment.
- Speak to them alone, unless the young person has asked for someone specifically to be with them.

Communicating with the young person

Disclosing domestic/sexual abuse is a big step and carries an element of risk for the young person. They will not be sure how the disclosure will be received or what the consequences may be. Conveying a genuine attitude that is calm, caring, non-judgmental, non-blaming and respectful will help the young person develop a sense of trust in the worker. It is important for the youth worker to:

- Be supportive and sensitive to the emotional distress or fear the young person may be experiencing.
- Listen actively to what the young person is saying. There is often a temptation to pre-empt what a person who is disclosing something is going to say: avoid this completely.

- Allow the young person time for their disclosure – no rushing.
- Try not ask too many questions. Only ask questions to clarify and they should be open ended e.g. ‘Tell me more about...’
- Acknowledge what the young person has told the youth worker, e.g. “That must have been really difficult/frightening...” or “You are right to feel the way you do, with support you will get through this”
- Affirm that the young person has made the right decision in talking about the abuse.
- Reinforce with the young person that the abuse/violence is not their fault; that there is no justification for abuse and responsibility lies with the perpetrator(s).
- Inform the young person she/he has the right to live a life free from abuse.
- Avoid using jargon or complicated terminology

Confidentiality

Establishing trust is essential to helping a young person. This must include being clear about confidentiality from the start. Young people may be concerned that information they share with you will be shared with others, resulting in embarrassment and unwanted interventions. In addition, young people have the right to confidentiality except in circumstances where someone may be in danger. Your role as a youth worker is not to investigate, it’s to listen, support, guide and refer as appropriate.



Step 2 - Assessment & Safety Planning

We cannot keep child protection concerns confidential - we are duty bound to share them. Act promptly and report your concerns immediately - follow your agency's Child Protection protocol.

The assessment that the youth worker undertakes with the young person should not be extensive or intrusive. The only details that the youth worker needs to be aware of are:

- That abuse is happening or has happened
- The potential level of risk posed to the young person (please see Factsheet 3); and
- The young person can be referred to an appropriate agency for specialist support.

The youth worker is not obliged to know the full details of the abuse – this should be worked through in an environment that is therapeutic and conducive to recovery from abuse (e.g. counselling / with a support service).

Safety Planning

A fundamental role for youth workers is to assess the safety of a young person. It is important that youth workers actively listen to young people when determining potential levels of risk.

For under 16s (18s if Looked After or still at school) safety planning will usually be undertaken by Police or Social Work services (initial safety planning will be necessary).

For an older young person, safety planning should take place in partnership with them, to minimise risk and maximise safety. The starting point for safety planning is finding out:

- What they would like to happen; exploring with them what they feel would help improve their safety
- How can staff or other agencies safely get in touch with the young person in the future
- That they have the ability to contact the police should they be in danger and are reassured it is ok to call 999 if they need to. Ask them to ensure they have their phone charged at all times and have access to numbers of friends/family/agencies who can help them.

Safety planning will be individual to the young person's circumstances. Remember to consider the individual characteristics of the young person (i.e. disabilities, sexuality, race, religion etc) when you are safety planning.

Help them to think about where they need a safety plan for - it should try to cover every part of the young person's life which is affected by the gender

based violence (at school/college, at home, when they are out and about, in the evening or at the weekend, when they are online)

After this has been identified, areas to focus on may include:

- **Supportive Networks;** identify who the young person can talk to about what has happened and if there is anyone they can tell who can help them put in place their safety plan (friends to be with them outside classes when in school, or to walk home with them, people they can arrange to check in with them and have a code word with to let them know if things aren't ok.
- **Keep a Record;** encourage the young person to keep a record of events (this can be in paper format or online) particularly if there is ongoing harassing/stalking behaviour. Let them know this could be helpful should they decide to report to the police. The FollowIt app is a simple and safe way to record incidents of stalking.



- **Safe Accommodation:** identify options with the young person, i.e. are they able to stay with a relative/friend if the abuse is happening at home? Where it is parental domestic abuse, and the young person is below 16, concerns should be reported to the police or local social work department. If alternative accommodation isn't an option and the young person is returning home explore what actions they can take should anything happen when they are at home (call police, remove themselves from the home, not intervening).

If the young person is female and over 16, Women's Aid accommodation (refuge) is something the young person may want to consider. If this is not an option then the local authority housing department may be able to help.

- **Technology:** can the person who is a risk to the young person track/trace them? Ensure the young person has explored how technology (phones, social media etc) can be used to target them and what measures they can take to reduce the risk of this e.g. blocking, ensuring location settings are turned off, not posting about what they are doing when they are still in the location.
- **Emotional Safety:** check that the young person has strategies in place to deal with the emotional impact in the short term.
- **Public Transport:** consider how the young person can safely get about and explore what they can do if they encounter any issues while they are out and about.
- **Referral:** to a service appropriate to the young person's needs. If the young person is under 16 and has disclosed domestic abuse, this would be social work. If over 16 it will depend on the situation. If the young person needs support for domestic abuse, whatever manifestation it takes (i.e. parents or own partner) the most appropriate agency to support would be Women's Aid. For rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, WRASAC would provide focused, person-centred assistance (see 'Services / Support' section for details). The young person's consent for referral will be required.
- **Disclosure Scheme:** aims to prevent domestic abuse by giving people the right to ask about the background of their partner. It also allows concerned members of the public, such as relatives and friends, the right to ask about someone's partner if they are concerned that person has been abusive in the past. The disclosure form can be found here:
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/disclosure/>

Step 3 - Refer and Record

If a young person under 16 (18 if Looked After or still at school) has disclosed abuse that puts them or anyone else in danger then the youth worker is required to report this to the police or the social work department. Consent is not required for sharing Child Protection concerns, however workers should ensure that the young person is aware of the referral and understands what might happen next. Please remember, **doing nothing is not an option**. If staff know about a child protection concern, they **must** refer to Social Work Services.

If the young person is over 16 then a referral to another agency will only be made with the young person's consent, unless the youth worker feels there is an immediate threat to the young person's life, in which instance they should call the Police on **999**.



The youth worker may need to contact specialist agencies that can support and advise the young person.

It is also advisable to share information with a senior member of staff at your organisation. The following is a guide to sharing information relating to a gender based violence disclosure with other parties.

Consultation with other youth workers/senior staff

Youth workers should consult with a senior worker, or other member of staff about the outcome of the assessment. This is especially relevant when the youth worker is required to either report abuse, or refer on to another agency. This is for support for the youth worker but also for advice where the youth worker may feel unsure about what to do. This support should be sought by telephone if a senior worker is not available in person.

Management involvement is important for youth workers in relation to guidance, advice and support.

Issues to be discussed include:

- What has been discussed with the young person
- Whether a referral should be made to an external agency
- Identify what the most appropriate service is
- Whether a referral should be made to the police or if they should be consulted
- Depending upon the age and status of the young person, whether or not child protection protocols within your service should be followed
- The specific safety and risk factors you have identified with the young person and how these should be addressed within your service

Be mindful if there are any other protected characteristics, for example, if the young person is from a BME community or has a disability. Please see factsheet 4 for further details.

Referral to Other Agencies

Police

When calling the police, referrals are best made to the departments within the division who specialise in specific crimes. For example, if you call the police with a child protection concern, you can ask for an officer who deals with child protection concerns. This will reduce time and access the most appropriate support for the young person. There are specialist units throughout Police Scotland that are specifically set up to reduce the levels of domestic abuse, and support victims in the most professional way possible. To access this service request to speak to the Domestic Abuse Liaison Officer. There are also Sexual Offences Liaison Officers (SOLOs) who are specially trained to investigate sexual crimes and provide support to victims.

Social Work

If you are reporting concerns to the locality Children and Families Team, you will speak to a duty worker. They will assess the situation with the details you

provide and make initial enquiries. Out with office hours, please contact the Social Work Out of Hours service – see 'Services' for details.

What to expect next

Following your referral to Social Work Services, all information received is treated seriously and will be acted upon. This might include:

- Requesting your written record of the disclosure
- Checking agency records and gathering information
- Speaking to the child and family and assessing the situation
- Making sure the child or young person is safe

The reporting agency should receive notification that the concern is being followed up.

Named Person Service

If (for young people who attend school) the information shared does not constitute a child protection referral however it raises a wellbeing concern, then the youth worker should consider sharing it with the Named Person. This should be discussed with the young person and consent sought from them prior to sharing. For Secondary pupils, the Named Person is usually the child's Pupil Care & Support Teacher. If the young person does not know who this is, call their school who will be able to help.

You can only action what you know of the young person's situation. Unless the young person wants to or can speak more, you should continue working with the young person knowing you have done all you can to support them. You are not an expert in domestic or sexual abuse, and no-one should expect you to end the abuse single-handedly. By making yourself aware of your responsibilities and the legal situation regarding reporting of abuse; and have appropriate referral agencies at your disposal in the form of these guidelines, then you are supporting the young person in the most appropriate way. Remember that the young person felt safe enough to disclose the abuse to you, and by continuing to be available to listen and provide emotional support you will be providing an essential service.

Documentation

Young Person's records

You should keep notes as they may be requested for evidence and will be essential if there is going to be an investigation by the police or social work. You are not required to produce complex, word for word accounts of what has been said to you by the young person. Please try to use the young person's own language/words in your recording as this can often help the investigation process.



It is important to keep records locked away in a confidential space for future reference. The following information should be taken into account when record keeping:

- Records are confidential, anonymised and kept in a secure place. For example, it is required that you put the young person's initials on forms, instead of full names. If you have young people with similar initials, use the second initial of their surname.
- External agencies with a legal/statutory duty to the young person (i.e. police, social work and courts) have the right to request these notes and they should be submitted on request.
- The young person also has the right to see his/her records.

The following details should be logged:

- Date and time of contact with the young person
- The date/time the notes were written - this can be later than the contact with the young person
- Name and signature of the youth worker taking the notes
- The details of the disclosure, or the concerns you have identified
- Details of enquiries made to external agencies on behalf of young person, or information you have given the young person about the support available, including names of the contacts at the appropriate agencies
- If known, the name in initials of the alleged perpetrator (this is information the police will require). However, at the initial stage of speaking to you the

young person may not want to name the perpetrator. If he/she is over 16, you must accept this decision and support them by listening and suggesting agencies that could help. However, if the young person is under 16 (or over 16 but under 18 and Looked After or still at school) concerns should be logged even where the perpetrator is unknown. It is not your duty to investigate, this is a statutory remit (i.e. social work/police).

- You should note other relevant details such as the young person's non-verbal communication; emotional state; observation of any visible marks on the body. It is important to remain objective and report on what you are seeing and hearing in a non-judgemental way. Opinions or judgments should not be made in notes; direct observations are all you are required to note. Please remember that everyone responds to trauma and abuse in different ways – there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way.
- If the young person discloses that there are other children at risk, then these concerns must also be shared and noted as described above.
- The name and contact details of agency workers you spoke to, police officer, duty social workers etc.
- If you have completed a safety plan with the young person, place a copy in the young person's file.

Step 4 - Looking After Yourself

Staff Self-Care and Safety

Responding to young people who are victims of domestic and/or sexual abuse can be stressful and traumatic for Youth Workers. It is important that you have the opportunity to debrief and discuss the situation with a line manager or senior worker. There can also be apprehension in getting involved in disclosures due to the action that is required (i.e. reporting to social work/police). Any threats from extended family/friends of the young person should be documented and reported to the appropriate authority if warranted.

Factsheet 1 – Definitions of Gender Based Violence

There are many definitions of abuse, and it can take many forms. Below are the main types of abuse that are recognised as being forms of Gender Based Violence.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten. Actions such as restraint, punching, beating, kicking, slapping, shaking, choking or biting all constitute physical abuse. Of course, this list is not exhaustive and there are many ways a person can be harmed physically. Often, weapons are used such as knives, bats, kitchen equipment etc.

Sexual Abuse (includes child sexual abuse)

'The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act (2011) creates statutory offences of rape, sexual assault by penetration, sexual assault, sexual coercion, coercing a person to be present during sexual activity, coercing a person to look at an image of sexual activity, communicating indecently, sexual exposure, voyeurism and administering a substance for a sexual purpose. It also defines consent and provides for "protective offences" and offences concerning sexual abuse of trust.'

Child Sexual Exploitation

"Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they're often given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They are moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups."

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/#what-is>

Mental/Emotional Abuse

Psychological or emotional abuse is the systematic use of threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, bullying, name calling, harassment, stalking or damage to property that result in anguish and fear. It can include threats to harm or kill the victim, threats with weapons, threats to abduct or harm



children and hurting or threatening to kill pets. It includes acts by partners or caregivers that result in serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional or mental health problems.

Coercive Control

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour which manifests over time which perpetrators of domestic abuse use to assert control over their victim.

Some common examples of coercive behaviour are:

- Isolation from friends and family
- Depriving you of basic needs, such as food
- Monitoring your time
- Monitoring you via online communication tools or spyware
- Taking control over aspects of everyday life, such as where you can go, who you can see, what you can wear and when you can sleep
- Depriving access to support services, such as medical services
- Repeatedly putting you down, such as saying you're worthless
- Humiliating, degrading or dehumanising you
- Controlling your finances
- Making threats or intimidating you

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/coercive-control/>

The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 was implemented by the Scottish Government on 1 April 2019. This legislation recognises coercive control as a behaviour of a criminal nature.

Isolation

Isolation happens when the victim finds it difficult to connect with friends and family. This could include a wide range of behaviours but might include having their movements and contacts monitored, prevented from making contact with family and friends, having restricted use of a telephone, prevented from getting or keeping a job.

Gaslighting

Gaslighting is a manipulative tactic in which a person, to gain power and control of another individual, plants seeds of uncertainty in another person's mind. The self-doubt and constant questioning slowly causes the individual to question their reality. The term relates to the 1944 film, *Gaslight*, which tells a story of a husband systematically brainwashing his wife to the point that she believes she is going insane.

Gaslighting can happen to anyone. Abusers carry out gaslighting behaviours slowly and deliberately so that the person it is happening to does not realise it. The abuser disproves concerns the victim may have to the point a person does not recognise the reality of what is happening.

<http://www.grampian-womens-aid.com/newsevents/gaslighting-10-signs/>

Economic Abuse/Financial Exploitation

Economic abuse is the control by one person over the finances of another, stealing from or defrauding a partner of money or assets, or exploiting the person for monetary gain or profit.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure of a caregiver to provide for the basic physical, developmental, social, medical and educational needs of a person. This type of abuse is more likely to be present when one person is dependent on another for care. Research carried out by Wise Women (<https://www.wisewomen.org.uk/>) highlighted the increased prevalence of neglect within relationships where the woman is disabled. Their survey highlights the following:

Physical neglect was a common theme with women commenting that personal care i.e. bathing, assistance to the toilet, eating etc. were regularly withdrawn. Not being allowed contact with other people, not being informed of health appointments, ignored and silent treatment were categorised as emotional neglect.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) includes sexual activities which objectify and harm others (usually women) such as prostitution, phone sex, stripping, internet sex/chat rooms, pole dancing, lap dancing, peep shows, pornography, trafficking, sex tourism and mail order brides. The Scottish Government includes prostitution, pornography and other forms of involvement in the 'sex industry' in its definition of violence against women. It considers that the exploitation of women through these forms of 'entertainment' legitimises negative attitudes towards women and is inextricably linked to gender inequality and sexual violence.

Harmful Traditional Practices

Harmful traditional practices are forms of violence which have been committed primarily against women and girls in certain communities and societies for so long that they are considered, or presented by perpetrators, as part of accepted cultural practice or traditional practice. The most common are:

- Forced or early marriage - can be defined as 'a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved' (duress can be either overt or covert).
- So-called 'honour' based violence - any type of physical or psychological violence committed in the name of 'honour' predominantly against women for perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have shamed their family or community.
- Female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM) - refers to procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

In discussions on gender based violence, it is common to hear the following terms:

Victim/Survivor: A person who is the target of the abuse and is subjected to excessive controlling behaviour or neglect within the context of an intimate relationship.

Indirect Victim: A person, usually a child, who is harmed and violated by violent or abusive behaviours directed towards another, usually a female parent. With this in mind, it's worth noting that children from homes with domestic abuse are now termed as victims, not witnesses, of domestic abuse.

Perpetrator: A person who inflicts the violence or abuse or causes the violence or abuse to be inflicted on the victim.

Intimate Partner: This can be a current partner, including marital or common-law partner, heterosexual, same-sex partners, boyfriend or girlfriend and former marital (divorced or separated) or common-law partners.

Child Abuse: The physical, sexual or psychological/emotional abuse or neglect of a child.

Factsheet 2 – Indicators of Gender Based Violence

Signs and Symptoms

A young person may present with:

- Injuries to the head, face, neck, chest, abdomen or other visible marks/injuries
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Patterns of repeated injury
- Bruising of various ageing, and multiple injuries such as bruises, burns and scars in different stages of healing
- Signs of hair pulled out
- Lethargy
- Eating disorders
- Illnesses including – headaches/migraines, dizziness, insomnia, chronic pain, gastrointestinal disorders.
- STI's and pregnancy
- Relationships with older people (CSE)
- Unexplained gifts (CSE)
- Unwanted holidays (Forced Marriage or FGM)

The presence of these symptoms do not in themselves prove that abuse is happening, however if young people display any of the above for a length of time and behave in a way that the youth worker feels is possibly symptomatic of abuse, whether it be physical, sexual or emotional, youth workers have a responsibility to ask the young person quietly and confidentially if they are OK. Signs and symptoms are often overlooked for fear of offending or misjudging a situation. It is better to attempt to open up the opportunity for the young person to access support for the possible abuse, than to never give the opportunity in the first place.



Mental and Emotional Indicators

There is evidence that suggests recurring abuse can lead to physical and emotional problems that on the face of things appear unrelated to gender based violence. However, if youth workers are aware of all of the indicators, including the physical symptoms, they are able to formulate a better assessment of what may or may not be affecting the young person. Mental and emotional indicators can include:

- Increased hyper-arousal (i.e. where the young person appears to be very anxious or on 'red alert') or the opposite, hypo-arousal / shutdown
- Intrusive thoughts, lack of concentration
- Sleeping difficulties and nightmares
- Disassociation (this is a psychological term for coming out of one's own thoughts/ disconnecting from painful feelings)
- Emotional distress such as anxiety, indecisiveness, confusion, hostility, panic attacks
- Depression
- Self-harming behaviours

- Suicidal thoughts and/or attempts
- Drug and alcohol abuse

The youth worker's assessment can only be based upon what they know about the young person, and this of course will vary for each service user. It is important not to ask too many questions as this can be very overwhelming for the young person; it is better to ascertain whether or not the young person is at immediate risk.

- If he/she is, then follow the referral guidance on page 14.
- If the young person is at a lower risk, but there are still concerns, then it is far more effective and supportive to allow the young person space and time to build up feelings of trust and safety which will ultimately allow him/her to access or be referred to the appropriate help.

Presentation and History

Other signs that might indicate abuse come from your knowledge and observations of the young person and their behaviour. The young person might:

- Be hesitant or evasive when describing injuries
- Minimise injuries/pain
- Display distress which is disproportionate to injuries, e.g. client shows extreme distress over minor injury
- Offer explanation which is inconsistent with injury. i.e. "I walked into a door"
- Make excuses for the violent behaviour
- Substantially delay seeking medical treatment
- Be reluctant to leave at the end of the session/activity
- Have financial worries/problems

Factsheet 3 – High Risk Indicators for Domestic Abuse

For essential information on Risk Assessment and referral to MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference - please access

<https://safelives.org.uk/node/517>

Young people's Dash risk checklist with guidance.

It is typically the case that domestic/sexual abuse increases in frequency and becomes more damaging and severe over time. Early detection and intervention can therefore lessen the risk of more severe harm or even death.

There are many indicators of domestic/sexual abuse. One indicator in isolation may not necessarily indicate abuse therefore each indicator needs to be considered in the context of the young person's personal circumstances and presenting issues.

High Risk Indicators

There is no absolute indicator to determine the risk of serious harm. The greater the number of high risk indicators, the greater the risk of serious harm. A referral to the domestic abuse police unit with or without the young person's consent should be made when there are concerns for the young person's immediate safety or the safety of others.

For example, where the young person:

- Has received life threatening injuries
- Has injuries that have increased in frequency and severity over time
- Has recently ended or is considering ending the relationship with the abusive partner and the abuse has escalated as a result
- Has had suicidal thoughts or feeling low
- Is pregnant or has a baby
- Is financially dependent on the perpetrator

Please note, separation and ending an abusive relationship places the young person at very high risk. This is often perceived by workers as an end to the abuse, but it is a period of time where the abuse can escalate.

Also, where the perpetrator:

- Has access to weapons, particularly firearms and other lethal weapons
- Has ever used a weapon or object to hurt the victim
- Has previously tried to harm the victim
- Has previously tried/or threatened to harm/kill the victim or someone else
- Has ever harmed the victim sexually
- Has harmed/killed pets or other animals
- Has previously threatened or attempted suicide
- Has, or is, stalking the victim
- Uses obsessive/jealous/controlling behaviour towards the victim
- Stops the victim from seeing friends/family or professionals
- Has previously had, or is in current breach of a protective order/interdict*
- Has financial difficulties



- Has ever had problems with drugs, alcohol or mental health
- Constantly texts/contacts/follows/stalks or harasses the victim
- Tries to control everything the victim does

*Interdict - court ban that bans them from carrying out certain specified actions i.e. coming within a certain distance of your home or place of work

If any of the above symptoms/signs are happening more often or getting worse, this indicates a higher level of risk.

Factsheet 4 - Sexual Bullying & Pressures on Young People in a Changing World

The NSPCC defines sexual bullying as:

“ Any bullying behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, that is based on a person’s sexuality or gender. It is when sexuality or gender is used as a weapon by boys or girls towards other boys or girls - although it is more commonly directed at girls. It can be carried out to a person’s face, behind their back or through the use of technology.

Young people may use overt, offensive and degrading sexualised language and behaviour towards each other. Any language that degrades people of either gender or any sexual orientation is unacceptable. It is important that there are clear expectations of conduct. The use of this kind of language and behaviour is part of a culture that condones gender based violence and it is therefore vital that we adopt a zero-tolerance approach.

If a worker witnesses degrading language being used in the youth setting, they should challenge this with the young people concerned. They should on no account indicate that they find it amusing or acceptable as this serves to normalise and condone a practise that confirms and reproduces the kinds of stereotypes and prejudices that underlie gender based violence. Even where the young person who is the target states that they 'don't mind', the worker should still take the opportunity to explore the use of, and attitudes towards, such language.

Dealing with unacceptable language and behaviour:

- On witnessing it, immediately state that such language/behaviour is unacceptable within the youth setting and ask the young people to stop using it
- Depending on the situation, decide whether to explore the issue with the young people concerned, either immediately or at a later, more appropriate time, and as a group or individually

What do we mean by consent?

The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 maintains the legal age of consent at 16 (or under the age of 18 and deemed vulnerable) and provides that any sexual activity between an adult and a child and young person constitutes a criminal offence. Consent in law is defined as 'free agreement' and there needs to be reasonable belief that consent exists. Just because someone consents to 'kissing' does not mean that they have consented to 'fondling' and so on. Consent can be withdrawn at any time. Consent cannot be given if a person is sleeping, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, has a learning difficulty, has a mental incapacity or if threats, implied or direct, have been used to achieve consent.

The law is also very clear about the sharing of personal intimate images. It is an offence to share a revealing image of someone without their permission. This means if young people share or threaten to share an image of a current or former girl/boyfriend without their permission, even if the person shared it with consent originally, they will have committed an offence which is punishable in law.

Digital Technology

Digital technology, including the range of social media platforms, has meant that young people are now connected to the world. This allows great access

to lots of helpful resources but new technology also means that pornography and other sexual images are readily available to everyone including young people. There is growing evidence that sexting is becoming increasingly normalised and is viewed as harmless by young people. It is important that we support young men and young women to become critical thinkers about what imagery is being shown to them and to challenge normalisation of sexualised behaviours.

What is sexual imagery?

Sexual imagery has a very wide definition and includes using sexual imagery to sell goods e.g. alcohol or perfume, right through to pornography. Daily exposure to sexual imagery has an impact on everyone, we become desensitised to the images. The drip, drip exposure of young people to sexual images distorts their thinking and there is growing evidence that the consumption of sexual images increases the likelihood of women and girls being viewed as sexual objects and the acceptance of dominant and aggressive attitudes as the norm.

Sexual coercion and abuse

Sexual coercion is when pressure, trickery or manipulation is used to achieve consent to sexual activity. Using coercion to achieve sexual intimacy is a crime. It is important to remember that abuse is at the very centre of sexual coercion. Sexual coercion relates to a wide range of behaviours and would usually involve the use of 'pressure' and emotional manipulation.



Impact on young people

When gender inequality combines with sexual imagery, language and bullying it creates a toxic environment for young people to learn and understand what a healthy respectful relationship is. This has a negative impact on both young women and young men. There is pressure on young men to 'want' sex as part of masculine behaviour and pressure on young women to make themselves available for sex, conversely young women are often 'slut shamed' if they are sexually active.

Youth Workers should take every opportunity to explore these issues in their youth work settings. This can be done in a range of ways:

- Informal conversations which encourage young people to explore and challenge their views.
- Planned programme activity using interactive sessions which provide an opportunity for young people to explore these issues.
- Peer mentor schemes – support and train young people on these issues such as Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP).

Factsheet 5 - Equality & Diversity

Cultural Background

The needs and support required for young people who are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities may differ according to their individual needs, cultural beliefs and backgrounds. There are a number of additional issues you should be aware of in these circumstances.

In some BME communities, there may be added pressure to remain in abusive situations and make no attempt to leave or access support for the following reasons:

- Fear of bringing shame and dishonour to the family (and possible consequences of this in terms of honour crimes)
- Fear of isolation and rejection from extended family if the young person challenges the abuse
- Fear of being deported depending on the status of the young person, e.g. if he/she is an asylum seeker

There are potentially communication/language barriers which can result in the abuse continuing for longer. Access to specialised services or translator services can overcome these barriers. Statutory organisations have access to translator services. If you are referring a young person for whom language is a barrier to disclosure, please advise the service of this requirement.

Some other issues within the gender based violence spectrum that may be

experienced by BME women include forced marriage (which is illegal in Scotland and must be distinguished from arranged marriage which is a system for introducing potential partners) and female genital mutilation, also an illegal practice.

It is important to remember that regardless of the traditional practices, values and beliefs in a community, gender based violence is always unacceptable. Worries about offending people's cultural or religious practices should not detract from the duty of care where abuse is suspected.

Cultural acceptance does not mean accepting the unacceptable.

Disability

Young people with disabilities, whether they are physical, learning or complex disabilities, are at much higher risk of domestic/sexual abuse. The issues are more complex for people with a disability as they may be more dependent on perpetrators of abuse for basic health or social needs which if ignored, result in neglect.

- In 2015 Public Health England published a report on disability and domestic violence. The report highlighted that people with a disability experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse. They also experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people
- In other situations, the young person may be subject to threats such as being sent to an institution or having services of care withdrawn.



- In addition, communication difficulties or lack of awareness that abuse has taken place can make reporting abuse less likely.
- People with learning disabilities are often considered to be unreliable witnesses and therefore cannot seek redress through legal processes. Disclosures are often not believed or not acted on, as was found in the Independent Longcare Enquiry.

The approach you use with young people with disabilities should be the same as for young people without a disability, but youth workers need to be aware of the additional issues that exist for young people with disabilities.

Sexuality and Gender Relationships

People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) can also experience abuse within relationships and are at risk of rape, sexual abuse and exploitation. Power and control are the common features in all abusive relationships. Emotional abuse experienced by LGBT people may include threatened or actual 'outing' (revealing the sexuality or gender identity) of the victim. This can result in the victim fearing or experiencing both the loss of significant relationships and further discrimination and abuse.

Services/Resources

Angus Children & Families Teams (Social Work)

Arbroath/Carnoustie/Monifieth Locality Team: **01241 465595/01241 465643**
Email: duty1arbcar@angus.gov.uk

Forfar/Kirrie Locality Team: **01307 491850**
Email: dutyforkir@angus.gov.uk

Montrose/Brechin Locality Team: **01674 907611**
Email: dutybremon@angus.gov.uk

Out of Hours Service (Social Work): **01382 307964**

Angus Women's Aid

Domestic Abuse Advocacy and support services for women, children and young people who have been affected by domestic abuse: **01241 439437**
Email: info@anguswomensaid.co.uk
Twitter @aware30 or Facebook Angus Women's Aid

Aware works with children and young people, both boys and girls, under the age of 18, living in the Angus area who have experienced or are still experiencing domestic abuse either at home or in their own relationship. We are a free and confidential service who will believe you, listen to you and respect your choices – we will not tell you what to do.

MIA Service provides a crisis intervention service to minimise future risk of harm.

Barnardo's Tayside Domestic Abuse Service

Works with women and children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. The service works in partnership with Police Scotland to provide information, empowerment and support to victims of domestic abuse and their children: **01382 640309 / 07714474112**

Website: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/barnardos-child-family-support-service-dundee-tdas>

Domestic Abuse Project

The LGBT Domestic Abuse Project aims to ensure that every LGBT person experiencing domestic abuse gets a good response, regardless of which service provider they access. We do this through training and awareness raising: **0141 552 7425/0131 555 3940**

Email: info@lgbtyouth.org.uk

Website: www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk

HEAR ME

Counselling for survivors of sexual abuse in Angus. Supporting men, women and children (age 8+): **01307 850741**

Email: info@hearmecounselling.com

Website: www.hearmecounselling.com

NHS Tayside - Health Services

Sexual Health & Relationships

Website: <https://www.sexualhealthtayside.org/sexual-health-relationships/>

cool2talk

A safe space for young people age 12 and over where young people can get their questions answered accurately and without judgement. We respond to all questions within 24 hours.

Website: <https://cool2talk.org/>

Faceup2it

A website designed by young people for young people about Child Sexual Exploitation.

Website: <http://faceup2it.org/>

Police Scotland

Call 999 in an emergency.

Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers ensure a close monitoring of reported incidents, liaise with other agencies and will provide a personal link to victims to explain police procedures and provide you with information regarding your legal rights and options.

Advice for Victims of Sexual Crimes

'Our priority is you. We want to know that you are safe and well and do not require immediate medical attention and are not in any immediate danger. You will always be treated with respect and dignity during any contact with the police.

The police investigation will initially involve obtaining the details of the attack and arranging for a forensic medical examination to be carried out by trained medical professionals.

A statement will need to be obtained however this can be done at a time and place to suit you and with a friend/family member or counsellor with you to provide support.

A Sexual Offences Liaison Officer will work with you and explain what the police investigation will entail.

Some immediate information that will be needed is: when did the attack happen; do you require medical assistance; where are you now; is the attacker still nearby and are you in danger; do you know the name of your attacker; where did the attack happen; do you still have the clothing worn at the time, if yes then keep this in a bag.

The earlier a report is made to the police increases the opportunity to obtain forensic evidence.'

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/advice-for-victims-of-crime/sexual-crimes/>

Sexual Assault Referral Network (SARN)

The SARN offers a self-referral service to people who have been raped or sexually assaulted but do not want to report it to the Police.

The dedicated phone line - 0300 365 2001 - allows people to directly contact a Rape Crisis Helpline worker who will offer initial support and contact to the Forensic and Custody Nurses in Tayside.

Shakti Women's Aid

Helps BME women, children and young people experiencing or who have experienced, domestic abuse from a partner, ex-partner, and/or other members of the household: 01382 207095

Email: info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk

Website: <http://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk/>

WRASAC

Support to women, including trans women, and young people of all genders (aged 8-18), who have experienced any form of sexual violence, abuse or exploitation in their lives. We listen to, believe and support survivors of any

race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religious and cultural background. We respect the courage and strength it takes to speak out about your experience of sexual violence, whether it has been a recent assault or it happened a long time ago.

DAYS is the young people's service at WRASAC. We offer confidential and professional, emotional and practical support to all young survivors – of all gender identities – aged from 11 to 18; who have experienced sexual violence at any time – recently or in the past. DAYS can be contacted on days@wrasac.org.uk **01382 201291**

Email: DAY5@wrasac.org.uk

Website: <https://www.wrasac.org.uk/>

Vice Versa

We promote the health, rights and dignity of women, including trans women, who are involved in exchanging sexual acts for some form of payment.

The Prevention Project

Free, fun and interactive workshops for young people aged 11-25 years around preventing sexual violence. Working from the Preventing Sexual Violence Resource Pack designed by Rape Crisis Scotland, the Sexual Violence Prevention Worker delivers the sessions in mainstream schools, off-site education, colleges and community groups.

Helplines

Victim Support Angus: **01241 878507**

National helpline: **0800 160 1985**

Breathing Space: **0800 8385 87**

Helpline open Monday to Thursday 6.00 pm until 2.00 am and 24 hours at weekends

Fgm Helpline: **0800 028 3550**

Helpline open 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year

In Care Survivors: **0800 121 6027**

Response: **0808 202 1162**

Out of hours service weekdays 5.00 pm to 9.00 am Weekend and Public Holidays

Scotland's Domestic Abuse And Forced Marriage Helpline:

Freephone **0800 027 1234**

Email: helpline@sdaafmh.org.uk

Web chat www.sdaafmh.org.uk

The helpline is there to support anyone with experience of domestic abuse or forced marriage as well as their family members, friends, colleagues and professionals who support them.

Rape Crisis Scotland: **08088 01 03 02**
Helpline open 6.00 pm until Midnight 365 days of the year

For Men

Respect

Men's Advice Line (Scotland) (domestic abuse): **0808 8010327**
Email: info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Survivors UK

Provides help for men who have been sexually abused or
raped: **0203 598 3898**

Helpline: **0808 800 5005**

Email: help@survivorsuk.org.