

Young People and Domestic Abuse / Peer on Peer Abuse Traffic Light Tool

Section 47 investigations should be initiated for all under 16s if red factors present – either victim or young person causing harm (and over 16s where necessary). Whole family assessment should follow where possible and all over 16s should be DASH risk assessed. Remember to consider the ages of the young people involved re. legal age of sexual consent. Please refer to the Young People and Domestic Abuse pathway which can be found at <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/resources/children-young-people/>

Risk Issue	Green – no action needed	Amber: monitor and consider referral to Safeguarding hub	Red: refer to Safeguarding Hub
General relationship dynamics	Girlfriend/boyfriend of same / opposite sex and similar age / level of maturity and understanding	Age gap / difference in ability / level of maturity and understanding	Significant age gap / difference in ability / level of maturity and understanding. Previous experience of community/neighbourhood violence / abuse
	Characteristic teenage exploratory behaviour	Uncharacteristic and risk related behaviour e.g. see Brook tool	Power and control used in relationship (and accepted)
Jealous and controlling behaviour	Joint decision making	Unequal power balance	Forced to comply
	Freedom of choice	Pressure to undertake activities / behaviour that young person feels uncomfortable with or feels unable to refuse	Coercion or forced to undertake activities / behaviour that young person feels uncomfortable with
	Having more intense friendship or relationship with a peer / spending time alone with boyfriend/ girlfriend	Possessiveness, loss of autonomy	Controlling jealous behaviour – young person prevented from making own decisions
Isolation	Becoming more independent / moving away from parental influence	Becoming withdrawn from friends / family	Isolated from friends / family / sudden unexplained change in peer group. Young person going missing / running away NB in some peer-on-peer cases, the abusive relationship is within the peer group and so isolation is less of a feature
Separation		Attempts to separate	Attempts to separate / recent separation
Language and threats	Appropriate language / normal banter and healthy disagreements.	Aggressive / disrespectful language to young person or about young person to peers	Direct threats and intimidation to young person or about young person to others
Physical abuse		Pushing and shoving	Escalating aggressive behaviour e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, / aggressive pushing and shoving, Strangulation, choking, smothering, restricting breathing Use of weapons
Financial abuse	Young person in control of their own money	Giving or taking unexplained money from boyfriend / girlfriend / peer	Stealing or controlling money. Receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex; drugs or alcohol - NB this is CSE
Peer group	Spending time with friends of similar age	Associating with friends of a similar age but peer group is known to be violent or aggressive	Associating with friends of a similar age but in a problematic peer group and taking role of

		or problematic in other ways	leader, or being forced to engage.
Risk Issue	Green – no action needed	Amber: monitor and consider referral to Safeguarding Hub	Red: refer to Safeguarding Hub
Sexual activity	Consensual activity ranging from kissing hugging to age appropriate oral/ penetrative sex	Verbal, physical or cyber /virtual sexual bullying (Ex) Partner sharing or threats to share images online or by text – sexting NB legal age of consent	Non-consensual sexual contact/activity And / or not age appropriate / under legal age of consent
Pregnancy or baby			Pregnant or has child under 1 (where DA is ongoing including harassment, conflict over pregnancy or child contact)
E-safety	Use of internet / media as part of relationship	Lack of parental controls re. internet / social media use	Sharing threatening /violent / abusive/explicit content online and / or interest in accessing 'violent' websites or explicit images online NB this could also indicate SHB or CSE
Mental Health and Substance Abuse	Emotionally stable	Low mood as a result of relationship or that makes young person more vulnerable to anxiety / depression. Substance misuse	Self-harming / suicidal / erosion of self-esteem. Substance misuse
Sexuality	Able to express preferences around sexuality	Pressure to not express preferences around sexuality / disrespectful around young person's sexuality	Using sexuality as a tool of coercion – threats to 'out' them
Sexually Harmful Behaviour	Remember to think about Sexually Harmful Behaviour and use the Sexually Harmful Behaviour Traffic Light Tools if necessary: https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org.uk/welcome/Schools-other-education-settings/Issue-Led-Guidance/Sexualised-behaviour.html		
Family history		Witnessed familial DA This may impact on young person's attitude to domestic abuse - as victim or perpetrator. There are additional risks for young men who go missing from home as a result of DA, blame their mother for DA or are encouraged to abuse mother by their father etc. If DA in past , young person may have adjusted / come to terms with impact if they had support to address it	Witnessed familial DA This may impact on young person's attitude to domestic abuse - as victim or perpetrator. There are additional risks for young men who go missing from home as a result of DA, blame their mother for DA or are encouraged to abuse mother by their father etc. If DA current situation, is Young Person protective of parent or colluding with abuser?
Risk of Forced Marriage / 'Honour' based violence		Family history indicates that forced marriage is a possibility or family would be likely to take some kind of action against young person if family 'honour' is perceived to have been brought into disrepute	Risk of forced marriage or 'honour' based violence
Previous relationships or abusive behaviour		Previous history of concerning relationship /s	Previous history of abusive behaviour (including to parents /siblings / other young people), or previous history of being abused by partner or parents
Animals		Mistreatment of pets	Abuse of pets

