Domestic Violence and Abuse

With the additional experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people

Discussion based session – 50 mins

Acknowledge we don’t know anyone else’s experience and this discussion may be difficult for some so it’s fine to take time out and there is support available if anyone wants it.

Healthy relationships – that’s another session, but unhealthy relationships can be hard to recognise

**What is domestic abuse?**

It’s based on control, coercion and violence or threat of violence.

**What are typical behaviours or behaviour changes of teenagers?**

Secrecy, withdrawal, moodiness…

**When do these behaviours become concerning?**

* Spending less time with family and friends
* Excessive texting/ calls/ emails/ spending time with their GF/BF/partner
* Giving up things that used to be important to them
* Grades slipping or missing school
* Reluctance to go places they used to go to/ wear things they used to
* Worry about upsetting their GF/BF/partner
* Apologising or making excuses for their GF/BF/partner’s behaviour
* Has injuries they can’t explain
* Becomes nervous/ frightened

**Unhealthy relationships – what do they look like? What types of behaviour are harmful? How would you recognise it? What is domestic violence or abuse?**

Physical Sexual Psychological Verbal Financial Coercion

Control Violence Forced Marriage Honour Based Abuse

**How might this be experienced by LGBT+ people? What are the additional factors?**

* More than 2 million people in the UK experience domestic abuse each year
* 27% of women and 13% of men report having experienced domestic abuse
* About 25% of LGBT+ people experience violent or threatening relationships with partners or ex partners, although it is under reported. This percentage does not include domestic abuse from a family member, so the true figure is much higher
* 49% of gay and bisexual men have experienced domestic abuse from a family member
* 80% of trans people have experienced abuse in a relationship
* 25% of homeless young people are LGBT+
* 77% believe coming out to their parents was the main factor for their homelessness
* Being homeless exposes LGBT+ young people to additional risks of abuse and exploitation

**There will be similar patterns, but some experiences are specific to LGBT+ people incl.**

* Interfamily violence after coming out
* Threat of outing them to family/ friends/ peers
* Increased isolation
* Undermining a person’s sexual or gender identity
* Limiting access to spaces relevant to someone’s sexual or gender identity
* Internalised homo/bi/transphobia may lead LGBT+ people to believe they deserve the abuse
* They may believe that no one will help them because of their sexual or gender identity
* Assumptions around heteronormative beliefs, abusive partners may convince their partner that no one will believe the abuse is real
* Abusive partner may manipulate their partner to believe that aggression and abuse is part of a normal same-sex relationship
* Abusive partner my refuse to use the correct pronouns for their trans partner
* Abusive partner may use name calling that ridicules and body shames their trans partner

Dating Violence & Family Violence

**What could you ask to understand whether someone is experiencing an unhealthy relationship?**

* Don’t make assumptions; ask neutral open questions and use gender neutral language

**Role Play**

Ask, does anyone/ your boyfriend/ girlfriend/ partner/ brother/ sister/ mother/ father/ classmate…

* Talk and try to work things out if there are problems
* Give you space to spend time with friends/ family
* Support and respect you

If they say yes, it is likely that it is a healthy relationship

If they say no, you might want to ask more questions

Listen carefully to what they’re saying, take them seriously, let them know it’s the right thing to do to tell someone

Ask, does anyone/ your boyfriend/ girlfriend/ partner/ brother/ sister/ mother/ father/ classmate…

* Try to stop you from seeing or talking to family/ friends
* Put you down, call you names or criticize you
* Threaten or scare you
* Hit, slap, push or kick you
* Pressure or force you to do something sexual when you don’t want to
* Humiliate you when you’re alone or in front of others
* Control where you go, what you wear or what you do
* Threaten to hurt your pet/ family/ friends
* Emotionally blackmail you and threaten to harm themselves if you leave
* Blame you for their behaviour
* Damage your belongings
* Monitor your communication with others
* Use your race, physical ability against you

If they say yes to any of these, you might want to share your concern for them and encourage them to get support

Let’s start with the basics: violence is never acceptable and violence never solves problems

* If you have truly care for someone, you don’t try to hurt or control them

**Think about how they may be feeling and how they may respond**

* Feeling: frightened, angry, emotional, anxious, suspicious, shame
* Respond: cry, shout, lash out, run away, stay silent

**What is the potential impact or risk from having experienced domestic abuse or violence?**

* Low self-esteem
* Depression
* Anxiety
* Internalise blame
* Using alcohol, drugs or sex to feel better
* Self-harm
* Suicide
* Attention seeking
* Anti-social behaviour
* Bullying or aggression

It isn’t your responsibility to help them deal with what they’re experiencing, but you can let them know that you will support them to get support

**Think about how you would they feel if someone made a disclosure/ shared their experiences with you?**

* What support might you need?

**What to do if you think one of your friends or peers may be a victim of abuse**

* Remember you are a resource for them
* There are resources to support both of you
* Remind them that abuse is never appropriate and never their fault

Confidentiality, Safeguarding & LGBT+ Young People

**What is confidentiality?**

**Can you tell someone that whatever they tell you is completely confidential/ just between you?**

No! If you have concerns you have to share them, with the person and with someone responsible

Everyone has a right to privacy; including keeping their sexual or gender identity private. Always ask who is or isn’t aware of this.

If you have a concern around your friend/ peers relationship(s), you can raise this without breaching confidentiality around their identity.

What constitutes a safeguarding risk is if they share:

* They are experiencing abuse at home
* They are at risk of homelessness
* They are in a relationship with someone considerably older
* They are chatting with adults online
* They are sexting/ sharing intimate images with adults

Support

ELOP <http://www.elop.org/>

Safer London <https://saferlondon.org.uk/>

Ashiana <http://www.ashiana.org.uk/>

<http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

Galop National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

Phone: 0800 999 5428

Email: help@galop.org.uk

<https://lgbtdap.org.uk/are-you-hurting-the-one-you-love/>

LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership

Help for those hurting the ones they love

Phone: 0808 802 4040

Email: info@respectphoneline.org.uk

Website: <http://respectphoneline.org.uk/>

<https://stonewallhousing.org/>

LGBT Housing Support

Phone: 020 7359 5767

<https://www.akt.org.uk/>

Support for homeless LGBT+ young people