

## Charter 9.2 Tackling Domestic Abuse

<b>Improvement Project Title</b>			
Tackling Domestic Abuse			
<b>Executive Sponsor</b>			
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<b>Project Leads</b>			
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<b>Aim statement</b> (as defined in LOIP)			
<p>Using a whole population approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021</li> <li>• reduce number of children who are witness * to domestic abuse by Sept. 2022</li> <li>• decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026.</li> </ul> <p>(This being the ultimate expected result, though expectation is that initially there will be an increase in reporting, if not in actual incidents. Numbers will be monitored throughout the duration of the project)</p> <p><i>* though it is recognised that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it</i></p>			
<b>Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b>			
<b>Stretch Outcome</b>	<b>Key Drivers</b>	<b>Improvement Project Aim</b>	<b>Key Improvement Measures</b>
<b>9. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction each year by 2026</b>	9.4 Changing attitudes about domestic abuse in all its forms	Using a whole population approach: j) Increase awareness of domestic abuse by 2021; ii) reduce number of children who are witness to domestic abuse by 2022; iii) decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026 iii)	Number of awareness-raising events tackling domestic abuse across Aberdeen City (Baseline data: 17/18 – 12) % secondary schools with mentors in violence prevention scheme in place (Baseline data: 0) Number of reported domestic abuse incidents (Baseline data: 16/17 – 2,513 17/18 – 2,757)

Stretch Outcome	Key Drivers	Improvement Project Aim	Key Improvement Measures
<b>3. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026</b>	3.2 Keeping young children safe.	Reduce number of children who are witness to domestic abuse by 2022.	Number of health visitor routine inquiry's that indicate domestic abuse in the home Number of domestic abuse reports with children regarded as present

## Why this is important

### Wider Context

Domestic abuse significantly impacts people’s daily lives and it exists in all sections of our communities. Domestic abuse can exist in all types of relationships between partners and ex partners, irrespective of gender, race, religion, or type of background. Though, as a form of gender-based violence, domestic abuse is mainly perpetrated by men against women. (Around four out of every five incidents of domestic abuse in 2017-18 had a female victim and a male accused. This proportion has remained very stable since 2011-12.)

The Police and Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service agreed definition of Domestic Abuse is -

“any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse, which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse can be committed in the home or elsewhere including online.”

All too often when people think of domestic abuse, they think of physical violence, but it is usually much more than that. It covers the entire spectrum of behaviour by perpetrators – including isolated incidents, as well as a course /pattern of conduct with both violent and non-violent abusive behaviour. Sometimes this will involve elements and tactics of coercive control, which can involve a range of behaviours designed to control and harm a victim.

Domestic abuse is not something that just happens once – it usually gets worse over time. Domestic abuse impacts on many areas of victims’ lives, from stress & trauma to restrictions on their economic independence.

A common question is “Why doesn’t the victim just leave?” In addition to the psychological, emotional, financial, or physical threats, leaving can be highly dangerous. There is a huge rise in the likelihood of violence after separation. In 2017, 55% of the women killed by their ex-partner/spouse were done so within the first month of separation and 87% in the first year (Femicide Census, 2018)

The below table shows the number of Incidents of Domestic Abuse recorded by Police nationally and in Aberdeen:

	Scotland	Aberdeen
2013-14	58439	2487
2014-15	59882	3088
2015-16	58104	2570
2016-17	58810	2522
2017-18	59209	2763
2018-19	60110	2483
2019-20	62160	2530

Nationally in 2018-19, the rate per 10,000 population was 112, for Aberdeen it was 110. 652 domestic abuse incidents were recorded in Aberdeen during the first quarter of 2019-20 (Apr to Jun), against 611 during the same period in 2018-19.

These statistics do not reveal the incidence of all domestic abuse committed since not all incidents are reported to the police. In conjunction with the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), the statistics help to assess the extent and impact of domestic abuse in Scotland. There are various reasons for such under reporting i.e., victims experience fear and shame as common effects of domestic abuse or it may also be caused by an accused physically preventing a victim reporting the domestic abuse. This will represent as a continued challenge, as victims come to an acceptance of this behaviour as 'normal' and part of the relationship. The coronavirus pandemic has created further challenges for survivors living with domestic abuse.

New (COVID-related) stresses arising from early learning and childcare, school and business closures, family confinement and isolation alongside physical and psychological health impacts, have potential to be a trigger for abuse and we recognise that high stress home environments will increase the likelihood of domestic abuse. This has been occurring at a time when victims and perpetrators have been forced to spend increased time together and when all have been less visible to a range of professionals or to extended family members and friends who would normally have engaged with them and at a time when services have been under acute pressure.

[Equally Safe](#) is Scotland's Strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. Aberdeen's Violence Against Women Partnership brings partners together in the city to take forward the priorities identified in the national strategy. This project identifies three specific areas/workstreams which align with the national strategy and the VAWP Strategy and Action Plan, focusing on specific local issues:

- 1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19;
- 2. Reduce the number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept. 2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it) – to focus on increasing awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and improving the response; and
- 3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

All three of the areas for improvement highlighted above are closely linked but will be progressed via the testing of change ideas relevant to the specific themes and will be taken forward by separate project teams. ACC's Development Officer Domestic Abuse, Alcohol and Drugs will sit on all three project teams to ensure coordination.

The remainder of this section of the charter focuses more specifically on the three areas for improvement highlighted above.

**1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19

Young people impacted directly by domestic abuse by a partner or ex-partner continue to be the 'hidden' victims of domestic abuse, with only 1% of those aged under 18-year old accessing support services. This is despite young people (16-19-year olds) experiencing the highest rate of domestic abuse of any age group (Safe Young Lives, 2017). Furthermore, abuse can begin even earlier than age 16 for large numbers of young people. A survey of 13 to 17-year olds found that 25% of girls and 18% of boys reported having faced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner.

Research conducted by SafeLives reveals that young people, including those under the age of 16, can face all types of domestic abuse and the probability of experiencing high severity abuse is no different to adults. In fact, the data indicates the levels of high severity abuse may be highest within the youngest age group.

Young people experience a complex transition from childhood to adulthood, which affects their behaviour and decision making. It may influence the way that they respond to abuse as well as how they engage with services. Moreover, they may be unequipped to deal with the practical problems such as moving home or finances. As a result, young people who experience domestic abuse do so at an especially vulnerable point in their lives (Safe Young Lives, 2017).

The abuse that young people experience may look different to the abuse that adults experience. Young people commonly experience abuse through new technologies and social media, which can be used as a monitoring or harassment tool by the perpetrator. A study by NSPCC found that the role of mobile phones and internet social networking sites was a key feature of nearly all young people's relationships and that new technologies may facilitate, and possibly exacerbate, the problem of partner control in the lives of young people.

SafeLives data shows that young people are more likely than adult victims of abuse to be in a relationship with the perpetrator at the point at which they seek out support. Research by Women's Aid found that a third of teenage girls have been in an abusive relationship. In addition, when the remaining two-thirds were asked further questions, it emerged that 64% of them had, in fact, experienced abusive behaviour – they just didn't realise it was abuse. Further research studies highlight that they may not see themselves as a 'victim' and attempt to normalise the perpetrators behaviour due to a lack of understanding of healthy relationships/coercive control. The need for awareness raising of coercive control among teenagers who are in emotionally abusive relationships should

be recognised. Young people need to be educated and informed on the common themes of coercive relationships which include (but are not limited to) excessive jealousy, repeated criticism, and sexual coercion. Further need for awareness and education around healthy relationships is highlighted in the research project Boys to Men. The study found that 49% of boys and 33% of girls aged 13 – 14 believed that hitting a partner would be 'okay' in at least one of twelve scenarios they were presented with. Evidence provided to the Women and Equalities Committee inquiry on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools highlighted a 'normalisation' of sexual harassment and abuse among young people. The report concludes 'Research with 13–18-year olds suggests that young people trivialise and justify violence against women and girls, view some forms of sexual harassment as normal and even inevitable and excuse rape.' This is particularly impactful as research suggests that when young people experiencing abuse do seek advice and support, this is typically from their peers (Safe Young Lives, 2017).

### **Situation in Aberdeen**

Young people who experience domestic abuse are more than twice as likely to self-harm compared to older victims (Safe Young Lives, 2017). This became apparent at a local level in 2016 when an 18-year-old student at The University of Aberdeen took her life as a result of an abusive relationship. This led to a campaign in 2017 to highlight the prevalence of domestic abuse among young people, again emphasising that 16-19-year olds are the most affected by domestic abuse. The project will work in collaboration with North East Scotland College (NESCOL) to continue to raise awareness of domestic abuse among students aged 16-19 and will look to increase their knowledge and understanding of coercive control through the development of a training unit as part of the Curriculum. Currently NESCOL provide some basic information around gender-based violence, consent and are looking at providing training from Rape Crisis. There is little in the way of awareness around coercive control and healthy relationships and it is hoped that this project can fill the gaps around these areas.

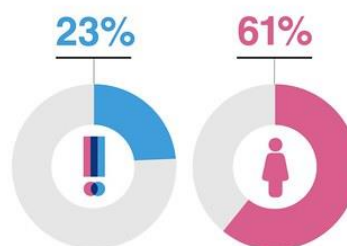
SafeLives, as part of the national Whole Lives Scotland project, will be exploring service access for young people who have experienced domestic abuse, to begin in October 2020 with initial research findings available around March 2021. It is anticipated that this project will work closely with SafeLives throughout their research and that local data around young people and domestic abuse will evolve from the work they will carry out. It is hoped that the project can use the recommendations/findings of Whole Lives Scotland to raise awareness further amongst young people and enhance service access.

## Spotlight #3 Young People and Domestic Abuse

Source: SafeLives Children's Insights 2015-17, young people aged 13-17



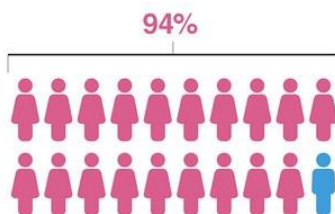
Almost a quarter (23%) of young people exposed to domestic violence are also demonstrating harmful behaviour themselves, and **in 61% of cases the abuse is directed towards their mother.**



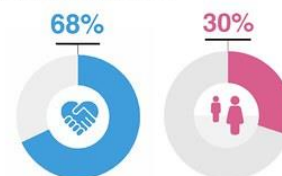
**Just under half of young people** exposed to domestic violence are being directly **harmed by the family member**



**94%** of young people experiencing abuse within their intimate relationships are **female**



Young victims of domestic abuse are **more likely to experience abuse from an intimate partner** (68%) than an ex-intimate partner (30%)



### i) Culture Change

Domestic abuse is a challenging issue to tackle because of stigma, public perception and particularly as so much of it goes unreported. The average duration of abuse before effective support is sought is 4 years, (Whole Lives 2019). The focus of this project, based on the evidence and through engagement with young people in Secondary school and college, will be trying to change cultural understanding and thinking. We know that attitudes are formed in early years, and education settings play a critical role in the shaping of these attitudes.

### ii) Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP)

MVP is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. It is Scotland's largest anti-violence schools programme, operating in more than 20 local authorities.

In Aberdeen -

- There are 11 secondary schools
- 4 secondary schools have already implemented the MVP Programme
- A further 3 secondary schools have agreed to implement the MVP Programme in 2020 (*delayed due to COVID*)
- With the remaining 4 secondary schools to implement the MVP Programme in 2021 (*likely to be delayed due to COVID*)

During 2019/20, 3 of the 4 Secondary Schools with MVP in place reported a total of 77 pupils trained in delivering MVP to fellow pupils with 592 pupils having received MVP input.

School	No pupils MVP trained 2019/2020	No pupils receiving MVP input 2019/20
Aberdeen Grammar School	45	180

Bridge of Don Academy	7	232
Hazlehead Academy	No data received yet	No data received yet
St Machar Academy	25	180

The Mentors in Violence progress report for 2018-2019 highlights that Aberdeen City is currently sitting at 'amber' in terms of progress to sustainability. This indicates that Aberdeen have in place:

- Initial school training mentors and working towards or delivering the programme
- Steering group has a long-term plan in place to include:
  - Staged plans to train remaining authority schools
  - Training and support to build and sustain capacity in all schools
  - Identification and training of trainers
- Agreed evaluations are being completed

Ultimately the aim is for Aberdeen to be sitting at green in terms of MVP sustainability. This will involve having:

- Local identified mentor support staff are trained as trainers
- Training team is in place
- Staged plan to train remaining schools and build capacity is actioned
- CPD/support system is in place
- Agreed data is collected and reported
- Steering group meets as agreed
- Coordinator attends National MVP co-ordinators meeting
- Quality assurance system is in place

This project aims to test ideas that raise awareness of the MVP programme, as well as domestic abuse, within the 4 secondary schools that currently do not have the MVP programme, to encourage them to sign up. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the project will raise awareness of domestic abuse within schools that currently have the MVP programme with the aim of increasing the number of pupils who sign up to be peer mentors. It is expected that further MVP training will be delivered virtually considering the coronavirus pandemic.

#### **Focus of this element of the project**

In summary the project will seek to raise awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control via:

- Targeted awareness raising with young people using appropriate media
- MVP programme in Aberdeen secondary schools
- Awareness raising within NESCOL Aberdeen campus

It is anticipated that this element of the project will be completed by December 2021. The length of the project takes into consideration school/college holiday periods and examinations. It is intended that the project will be upscaled to further education settings (universities) and community hubs once change ideas have been tested.

## **2. Reduce number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept.**

**2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it) – to focus on increasing awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and improving the response

Children who live with domestic abuse are, themselves, experiencing abuse. Domestic abuse is a key signifier of wider adversity in a child's life – for instance, problematic substance use and mental health problems are often caused or exacerbated by domestic abuse (Humphreys, C. (2002) 'Domestic violence and child protection: exploring the role of perpetrator risk assessments', *Child and Family Social Work*, 12) and domestic abuse is the most common context for child abuse, (Walby S. & Allen J. (2004) *Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey*, Home Office Research Study 276, London: Home Office).

Research indicates that in 90% of cases children are present in the same room or nearby during an attack on their mother.

The impact of living in a household where there is a regime of intimidation, control and violence differs by children's developmental age. However, whatever their age, it has an impact on their mental, emotional and psychological health and their social and educational development. It also affects their likelihood of experiencing or becoming a perpetrator of domestic violence and abuse as an adult, as well as exposing them directly to physical harm. Stanley 2011; Holt et al. 2008. 2014 NICE Guidance Section 3.17 (page 28) Living with domestic abuse can impact on children in relation to all the SHANARRI (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtures, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included) indicators, with responses varying enormously depending on the individual child.

Children develop complex strategies of survival in order to deal with the stress and adversity they are experiencing. They are not passive victims of domestic abuse but develop their own coping mechanisms. Factors which contribute to a child's resilience include the strength and stability of support through their networks of family and friends, from sources in their wider community and from their non-abusive parent/carer.

Many children living with domestic abuse learn from an early age that it must be kept secret. The pressure of secrecy makes disclosure difficult for children, who may go to great lengths to hide the reality of what is happening. Some children may be being sexually or physically abused by the same abuser and the presence of domestic abuse contributes to silencing them about their own or their sibling's abuse.

Children frequently come to the attention of practitioners when the severity and length of exposure to abuse has compromised the non-abusing parent's/carer's current capacity to nurture and care for them. The best way to keep both children and non-abusing parent/carer safe is to focus on early identification, assessment and intervention. Managers and practitioners need to be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and routinely make appropriate enquiries. It is however important for practitioners to recognise that for some children (and women) domestic abuse has become so "normalised" that they can neither recognise the abuse nor its impact.



## Situation in Aberdeen

### i) Identification of harm

The ability of services and agencies to identify children and young people affected by domestic abuse is key. Our approaches to protecting vulnerable children will be integrated and focused on early identification, and immediate and effective intervention to remove and reduce the risk of significant harm. In terms of domestic abuse, in Aberdeen the approach is underpinned by the '[Domestic Abuse and Child Protection - MULTI AGENCY GUIDANCE FOR PRACTITIONERS](#)' ("the Guidance" - developed by the Child Protection Committee & Violence Against Women Partnership in 2019). The Guidance encompasses the principles of the [Safe and Together](#) model, an internationally recognised collection of tools and interventions designed to help professionals working with children to be informed on domestic abuse and its affects:

- Every effort should be made to keep child Safe and Together with non-abusing parent;
- Partnering with non-abusing parent as default position; and
- Intervening with perpetrator to reduce risk and harm to child.

In Aberdeen between April and October 2020, 10.7% of referrals have been received to children's Social Work where Domestic Violence was the presenting issue.

The source of referrals to Children & Families Social Work gives an indication of agencies which are primarily identifying concerns. Police play a key role, being responsible for around 50% of all referrals into children's social work, through the submission of Vulnerable Persons Data reports. Not surprisingly, Education professionals are the second highest source of referral at 11% in 2019, a statistic that fell to 7% during 2020. Referrals from other social work professionals accounted for 400 referrals from April to Sept 2019, this number consistent with the referrals during the same period of 2020, reflective of the fact that during lockdown, social work staff continued to undertake their roles. Referrals from family members followed by those made by health professionals were the next most common source of referral followed by SCRA, other community settings and housing. Self-referral, unsurprisingly, remains a small proportion of referrals to children's social work service.

**Part of the focus of this project will be on increasing awareness with services and agencies who work with children and families – Children & Families Social Work, RAFT (outwith Joint Child Protection Team) Education and Health (Maternity, Pre-Birth Team, Family Nurse Team) about how children are affected by domestic abuse, how to identify this, and how then to respond appropriately.**

Routine Enquiry by Health Visitors (relates to specific LOIP Measure)

'Routine enquiry' of domestic abuse was introduced in the NHS in Scotland in 2008. This detailed the actions required from NHS Boards to improve NHS Scotland's response to gender-based violence (GBV). Routine enquiry involves asking all women at assessment about abuse regardless of whether there are any indicators or suspicions of abuse. It was established in maternity, sexual health, health visiting, substance misuse and mental health settings. This was due to the disproportionate number of women accessing these services who have experience of abuse. It has been embedded in the [Universal Health](#)

[Visiting Pathway \(external site\)](#) and its continued rollout is a key component of the [Equally Safe Delivery Plan \(external site\)](#).

Health Visitors review and visit families with babies to review the baby/ child and family circumstances, at 6-8 weeks and 27-30 months of age. The potential to extract data relating specifically to routine enquiry by Health Visitors (LOIP measure relating to this project) is being looked at.

**Further engagement will take place with Health Visitors regarding potential areas for improvement (they are currently heavily involved in the implementation of the Flue Jab Programme).**

#### Individuals and family members raising concerns

Those affected coming forward to seek help where there are children involved is also key to ensuring that they are safe and supported. Domestic abuse came up as a recurring theme through the workgroups set up to devise the site map for a new website for the charity DrinkLink. Victims of domestic abuse and those concerned about someone they love who they suspect to be a victim, told the charity that their biggest barriers to reporting domestic abuse were:

- a) The finality - once it is reported there is no going back; and
- b) Fear that things will get out of control - Police and social work will get involved, kids will be taken into care, they will be homeless or have to live in a safe house.

**Another focus of this project will be to raise awareness with people affected, of the need to seek help in situations where children are involved/impacted by domestic abuse, alongside information about what that help might look like (including the role of agencies), to provide reassurance that seeking help is the right thing to do.**

#### ii) Response to harm once identified

If a child is alleged to have witnessed or been present in a household where domestic violence has occurred, and police are involved, Police will share this information with partner agencies, here the named person in health or education and children's social work service under embedded GIRFEC procedures. However, not all instances are reported to police – some prefer to seek help direct from specialist services.

A number of services and agencies play a specific role in responding to and supporting children affected by domestic abuse (issues identified for improvement are highlighted in **bold**):

- MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and related Advocacy support – confidential meetings involving relevant partners, coordinated by Police Scotland. Allows agencies to share information in order to look at the victim, perpetrator and family circumstances and prepare an action plan to mitigate risk. Currently 4 MARACs per month, c75% involve children. **16% of referrals from partner agencies, remainder from Police – SafeLives recommends 25-40% of referrals should come from other partners/agencies**

- Children & Families Social Work – Child Protection referral, if child is deemed to have suffered significant harm (average 36 per month registered due to ‘Domestic Violence Concerns’ during 2019-2020; total number of children on the CPR in Aberdeen where domestic abuse is an identified risk factor was 44 (31% of children on the register) as at July 2020)
- Referral to SCRA on grounds “close connection with a person who has carried out domestic abuse” where need for a Compulsory Supervision Order (41 referred in 2019-20 – likely additional referrals but recorded on other grounds)
- Wider Social Work referrals – (Between April and Sept 2019, there were 562 referrals into children’s social work with a referral reason of domestic violence, which amounts to 11% of all referrals into service. This compares to 479 during the same period of 2020, which similarly amounts to 11% of all referrals. This reduced number is in line with the reduction in referrals over the lockdown period. This is of particular note given that Police Scotland have updated that the lockdown period saw an increase in referrals relating to domestic abuse hence the reduced referrals here in part is likely to relate to the closure of schools and the restriction of contact these children have had, outwith their homes.) – **scope for improved awareness of wider CSW staff**
- RAFT – referrals from Children’s Social Work to work with children impacted by domestic abuse in the household – low numbers of referrals where DA is identified concern (it may become apparent that DA is an issue in relation to other referrals) – **scope to increase referrals**
- Specialist agencies/services:
  - Grampian Women’s Aid Children’s Worker (small numbers of referrals) – **scope to increase referrals;**
  - JSWS Caledonian Children’s Worker – where the man involved is on the ‘Caledonian Programme’ as part of a Community Payback Order.

### **Focus of this element of the project**

Summary of focus of project – plus (geographical) focus of initial testing where relevant:

- targeted awareness raising with services (Children and Adults Social Work, Education and Health) of the issues relating to children affected by domestic abuse, and sources of support;
- test comms with wider public (focus of testing to identified, based on data) to increase understanding about the response by services to DA where children are involved; and
- make improvements to the response where children are impacted by DA
  - raise awareness of MARAC process with Social Workers, Education and Health to increase no of MARAC referrals
  - raise awareness with CSW re the availability of RAFT service to support children impacted

NB It is likely that the focus on awareness-raising may lead to an increase in the reporting of children harmed by DA in the shorter term.

**3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

Early intervention is a challenge for a number of reasons. Perpetrators and victims have to be able to recognise that there is an issue, know where to seek support and be willing/able to engage with support.

### **Situation in Aberdeen**

In Aberdeen there is no voluntary perpetrator service, however the RAFT service is able to accept referrals where domestic abuse is an identified concern and social work thresholds are met. There are national helplines that can support individuals worried that they may be perpetrating domestic abuse. One of the challenges in gaining early intervention in the city is the absence of voluntary perpetrator services. The Safe and Together model has been adopted by 11 local authorities across Scotland and the impact of this model could be explored as part of this charter. 'Caring dads' is a model that has previously been utilised in the city, however, isn't in place currently due to resourcing issues. Caring dads worked with men who had undertaken the Caledonian programme and where their children were open to children and families' social work, therefore only those who met a certain threshold were eligible to take part therefore excluding some who may have benefited from this programme.

The RAFT service at Barnardos has a wide range of reasons for referrals, one of which is domestic abuse, however they receive very few referrals in this category. One area that this charter will look at is increasing and measuring the impact of increased referrals in this area. RAFT is a commissioned service that can only accept referrals from 3 sources – Children and Families Social Work, Youth Justice Management Unit and Diversion from Prosecution. Therefore, focus for the project will be on referrals from the Children's Reception Team as this is the earliest intervention point, and wider Children's Social Work. Joint discussions between RAFT and the Reception Team regarding the most appropriate pathway will be tested. By using the RAFT service we are able to test this change on a small scale and obtain data to measure change. There are no other services in Aberdeen out with social work that will be able to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse. Increased referrals for domestic abuse to RAFT will allow for small scale analysis on intervention reducing the rate of reported incidents and then widening of the aim can be explored.

There is a wealth of expert knowledge in the workforce that could be utilised in new ways. Within Justice Social Work the Caledonian teamwork with perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse. This expert knowledge and experience could be utilised by other areas and therefore a single point of contact within the Caledonian would allow workers from other services to have a clear path to access this knowledge.

Support is available to perpetrators from the national Respect [helpline](#). For this to be impactful we need to get the details of this out to households. The Fire Service undertake home safety visits with a large number of households each year. On these visits they leave information about various services which could include information about the perpetrator helpline. There are regular training sessions delivered in the city by the child protection team and those who attend these sessions could be given information about the national helpline at these sessions or in follow up information.

### Focus of this element of the project

- increasing referrals to RAFT where there is a domestic abuse concern, from Children & Families Social Work Reception Team, and wider teams;
- Testing a single point of contact in JSWS as a source of advice in relation to early intervention concerns for other professionals;
- Sharing information about the Respect helpline which provides support to perpetrators.

Links to further reading –

[Violence Against Women - Primary Prevention Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships](#)

[Whole Lives- Improving the response to Domestic Abuse in Scotland](#)

[Safe Young Lives: Young People and domestic abuse](#)

[From Boys to Men Project: Phase One Key Findings](#)

[Mentors in Violence Prevention: Progress Report 2018-2019](#)

[Domestic Abuse and Child Protection - MULTI AGENCY GUIDANCE FOR PRACTITIONERS \(ACC CPC & VAWP 2019\)](#)

**Measures** (split according to the three separate areas for improvement)

#### Outcome measures

**1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19

- Number of young people aged 14-19 demonstrating awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control by reporting an increase in awareness and/or seeking further information
- Number of awareness raising events tackling domestic abuse within schools and colleges (*LOIP measure*)
- Number of secondary schools with MVP (Mentors in Violence Prevention) programme (*LOIP measure*)

**2. Reduce number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept. 2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it) – to focus on increasing awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and improving the response

- No of children who are witness to DA (*LOIP Measure*)
  - as reported to Police
  - as reported to 3rd sector
- Number of children harmed who access specialist support services (GWA and RAFT)
- Number of routine health visitor enquiries that indicate domestic abuse in the home (*LOIP Measure – possibility of collation being investigated*)
- Number (%?) of children on Child Protection Register on domestic abuse grounds
- Number of referrals to SCRA related to DA
- Number of children reporting improved outcomes

**3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

- Number of domestic abuse incidents report to Police and third sector partners (*LOIP Measure*)
- Number of referrals where domestic abuse is primary or secondary reason for referral to the RAFT service from i) Ch & Families Reception Team and ii) wider Ch & Families SW teams

#### **Process measures**

**1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19

- Number of pupils attending an awareness raising/training event in Aberdeen secondary schools
- Number of pupils attending an awareness raising/training event in Aberdeen secondary schools reporting an increase in awareness and/or seeking further information
- Number of pupils attending an awareness raising event signing up to be MVP mentors
- Number of views/likes/shares/positive comments on Social Media
- Number of students within NESCOL that complete the domestic abuse awareness unit
- Measure to be developed around SafeLives change idea

**2. Reduce number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept. 2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it) – to focus on increasing awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and improving the response

- Number of universal services promoting information about impact of DA and support services for children
- Number of universal services with a Domestic Abuse Champion
- Number of referrals to RAFT from CSW linked to DA
- Number of referrals by health, education and social work staff to specialist support services
- Number attending awareness-raising for wider services
- Number of organisations/services working with children including, as part of their induction for new staff, the need to undertake CPC multi agency awareness raising
- Number of referrals to MARAC from CSW, Education and Health
- Number of children engaging with services (GWA, RAFT, Caledonian Children's Service) indicating improved understanding of domestic abuse, and how it affects themselves and others
- Number of community outlets displaying awareness-raising material

**3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

- Number who engage with the support from RAFT
- Outcomes for those who engage with the RAFT service – RAFT will create a grading matrix for outcomes specifically for domestic abuse cases to enable clear analysis of impact
- Number of joint discussions with SW Reception Team to agree referral pathway
- Number of calls to Single point of contact at Caledonian Criminal Justice Social work
- Number of leaflets re the Respect helpline distributed by SFRS (tbc by Alex Purdie)
- Number of people undertaking Child Protection domestic abuse training who receive information about the Respect helpline

#### **Balancing measures**

- Increased referrals – organisations being overwhelmed
- *Referrals to SCRA*

**Change ideas** (split according to the three separate areas for improvement)

**1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19

Targeted awareness raising with young people:

- Communications Campaign to test different ways of effectively reaching Young People, aimed at raising general awareness and understanding of what domestic abuse is, specifically coercive control, what it looks like and the lasting damage it causes
- Further awareness raising ideas to be developed from the recommendations that will be produced from the SafeLives spotlight case study on young people's experiences of domestic abuse

MVP programme in Aberdeen secondary schools:

- Awareness raising events around healthy relationships and coercive control (specifically the use of technology) within schools who have MVP programme in place, aimed at increasing the number of pupils who volunteer to be peer mentors
- Awareness raising events around healthy relationships, coercive control (specifically the use of technology), and the benefits of MVP programme within the 4 remaining secondary schools in Aberdeen City which leads to them signing up to MVP programme

Awareness raising at NESCOL Aberdeen campus:

- Awareness raising of healthy relationships and coercive control (specifically the use of technology) within NESCOL Aberdeen campus through specific communications campaign
- Curriculum training unit around domestic abuse that students can access and complete that links to supporting and reporting abuse

## **2. Reduce number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept.**

**2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it) – to focus on increasing awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and improving the response

### i) Identifying Harm

a) awareness-raising with services and agencies about how children and young people are affected by domestic abuse, how to identify this, and how then to respond appropriately

- Resource about impact of domestic abuse on children, how to identify and then how to respond for use by universal services (including Police, Health, Education) - Use of [Keeping Mum](#) film (looks at how it can be for children and young people living with domestic abuse)
- Promote current multi agency awareness-raising training re impact of domestic abuse on children, how to identify this and how then to respond – via VAWP, add link to VAWP website, & targeted approach with Health & Education tbc
- As part of their induction for new staff, services working with children identify the need to undertake the CPC multi agency awareness raising training re DA
- ‘Domestic Abuse Champions’ identified and promoted in wider organisations/ services
- Establish Aberdeen DA Champions channel on Teams, for sharing resources/ good practice, networking etc

b) awareness-raising with the wider community about seeking help where children are impacted, alongside info about what this help might look like (eg role of organisations and services), to provide reassurance that this is the right thing to do

- Test specific comms, eg pictorial ‘pathway’/ showing what the response may look like/ options for support – target (geographical) area to be identified – including via local services and virtual/ social media, etc

### ii) Responding to Harm:

- Improvement/s relating to MARAC eg referrals from CSW, Education and Health – specific referral form (Further ideas to be developed)
- Summary Info sheet for Social Workers – key points from [Domestic abuse and child welfare: a practice guide for social workers](#) (SASW) - plus availability of support for children impacted by domestic abuse from RAFT (commissioned service), GWA Children’s Service
- Communication of Summary Info Sheet to those who have attended CPC/DA training
- Awareness-raising with wider services (including Health, Schools) regarding Grampian Women’s Aid Children’s Service (also Caledonian Children’s Worker), via dissemination of flyer containing summary info

**3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

- Increase awareness of RAFT service for domestic abuse – early intervention with YP - to children and families social work teams, initially the CRT then to area teams.



- Joint discussions with SW Reception Team to discuss cases and agree appropriate referral pathway
- Single point of contact in the Caledonian team at Justice Social Work to offer consultancy to any worker where domestic abuse is a feature of the case.
- Increase awareness of the national Respect Perpetrator helpline by providing information to households via leaflets delivered as part of home safety checks by the fire service
- Leaflet including info re national Respect Perpetrator helpline for public
- Increase awareness of the national Respect Perpetrator helpline by providing information to all who attend domestic abuse and child protection training.

**Potential risks and/or barriers to success & actions to address these**

- Capacity issues within secondary schools (teachers available to train pupils in MVP)
- Funding costs for training (provision and backfill) and promotional material
- Capacity issues within organisations (particularly 'one man bands')
- Data - the only officially reported data re incidents is that recorded by Police Scotland. Third sector organisations will individually have their own data, of which there may be some overlap.
- It has not been possible as yet to engage fully with Health Visitors to inform this project, due to their current involvement in the implementation of the Flue Job Programme.

**Project Team 1. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by Dec. 2021** – to focus on increasing awareness of healthy relationships and coercive control among young people aged 14-19

Lucy McNicol (ACC Development Officer) (Lead)  
 Catriona Walker (ACC MVP Link) – data input only  
 Naomi Leon (Teacher at St Machar Academy)  
 Jen Douglas (Safe Lives)  
 Sarah Pederson (Professor of Communication and Media, Gender Equality Champion RGU)  
 Zuzana Banicova (Student Access and Inclusion Manager, NESCOL)  
 Pupils from an MVP secondary school (St Machar Academy)  
 Students from NESCOL (to be identified)

**Project Team 2. Reduce number of children who are witness \* to domestic abuse by Sept. 2022** (\*recognising that children experience domestic abuse, even if they do not witness it)

Isabel McDonnell, Lead Service Manager, ACC (Lead)  
 Lucy McNicol, ACC Development Officer  
 Lisa Lawrie, Health Visitor Lead, NHS – to identify a rep  
 Emma Cowieson Children's Reception Team, ACC  
 Michael Murray, ACC Housing  
 Julia Milne, Barnardos (RAFT)  
 TBC Education Rep  
 Fiona Tough, Caledonian Children's Worker  
 GWA Children's Service rep  
 TBC PPU, Police Scotland

**Project Team 3. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026** – to focus on increasing the number of people at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse engaging with earlier intervention.

Julia Milne – Barnardos (Lead)  
 Jackie Edgar – CJSW  
 Lucy McNicol – ACC Development Officer  
 Children’s Reception Team – TBC  
 Alex Purdie, SFRS

**Outline Project Plan**

<b>Project Stage</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Getting Started</b> (Project Score 1-3)	(All 3 elements) Draft charter developed	Completed
	Project teams identified	October 2020
	Project teams meet	November 2020
	Gather and analyse baseline data	November 2020
<b>Designing and Testing Changes</b> (Project Score 4-7)	1 <sup>st</sup> element: - Develop a plan for ‘test of change’ ideas to be delivered in MVP schools and NESCOL	April 2021
	- Develop a plan for remaining schools to sign up to be MVP schools	May 2021
	2 <sup>nd</sup> element: - plan and implement initial testing: resource for universal services; ways of disseminating resource for universal services; ideas for awareness-raising re MA training; introduction of DA Champions and Teams Channel	May 2021
	- plan and complete further testing	Dec 2021
	3 <sup>rd</sup> element: - plan and implement initial testing: determine frequency of discussions required with CRT; SPOC in JSWS	Mar 2021
	- plan and complete further testing	May 2021

<p><b>Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement</b> (Project Score 7-10)</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> element: - Mainstreaming and embedding of processes. - Data gathering &amp; processing to be continued</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> element: - Mainstreaming and embedding of processes. - Data gathering &amp; processing to be continued</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> element: - Mainstreaming and embedding of processes. - Data gathering &amp; processing to be continued</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>October 2021</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>July 2022</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p>
<p><b>Spreading Changes</b> (Project Score 9-10)</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> element: Extend learning and processes to other education settings/community hubs, adapting to specific demographics</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> element: Extend learning and processes to other geographical areas within Aberdeen</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> element: Limited potential for spread</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>September 2022</p>