



Bath & North East Somerset

# domestic abuse awareness

## training standards

*domestic abuse n. any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.*

## introduction

**Domestic abuse**, in its many forms, is one of society's most devastating scourges, severely damaging the lives of millions of women, children and men in the UK every year. And yet it is too often hidden from view. Victims can be intimidated into silence by their abusers, fearful for themselves and maybe their children. They may be full of shame or self-blame, or living in communities that expect them to put up and shut up. They might expect not to be believed by people in authority or may not think that useful help is available. On the other hand, those in a position to help may also be fearful... afraid that they won't know how to respond to hints or evidence and ask the first delicate questions, that they won't know how to offer any help themselves, that referral services won't be there to take on a case, or just that exposing ugly but long-concealed truths will end up doing more harm than good.

With such barriers on both sides, it is essential that domestic abuse becomes "everyone's business" and that front line workers, in as wide a range of services as possible, have some basic ability to respond to cues and clues that the person they are speaking to is being abused in a relationship. They need to be able to engage in an open discussion, provide reassurance that the victim is being listened to and believed, and that practical and personal help is available. A worker may be able to provide some useful guidance themselves, signpost sources of information or refer to people with more specialist expertise. This is why training is so important: training in recognition, in communication and in the different types of support available, especially locally.

It is therefore my pleasure to introduce this set of training standards, produced on behalf of the Bath and North East Somerset Domestic Abuse Partnership. Much thought and effort has gone into producing them and they will underpin a new drive to help staff in our services protect those people from all sections of our community who are suffering from this ancient and modern affliction.

Any time spent being abused is too much – damage accumulates and the danger does not go away, and we know that many victims suffer for long years before getting help. I hope that this paper will be a contribution to reducing that damage and help us to help as many people as possible to free themselves as early as possible from violent, coercive unequal and destructive relationships.



**Dr Bruce Laurence**

Chair, Domestic Abuse Partnership



On average survivors make **five** approaches to services before they receive effective help<sup>1</sup>.

Let's get it **right first time**.

## the challenge

Survivors tell us they need individuals and services to listen, believe and respond in a non-judgmental way that allows them to exercise choice and be active in their own safety planning, in achieving protection from abuse and during recovery and rebuilding for themselves and their families.

**We are determined to respond.**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.safelives.org.uk/node/506>

# “everyone’s business”

## how to use the standards

The learning standards are designed to make it easy to ensure you are meeting the required levels of knowledge about domestic abuse in Bath & North East Somerset. You should feel confident taking action to ensure people you work with are safe.

The standards are arranged across four levels ranging from everyone who interacts with the public (in any way) to specialist services whose primary target are those who have experienced violence and abuse or who may be at risk of doing so. The standards set out what knowledge and skill is required of individuals at each level, and how this can be acquired.

**Each level assumes values, knowledge and skills at earlier levels are in embedded and understood.**



## completing training

It is a strategic objective of the Domestic Abuse Partnership for workers to respond effectively to concerns about domestic abuse. The Bath & North East Somerset LSCB has included in its Annual Assurance Framework that all relevant staff in partner agencies workforce need to complete DA awareness training (compliance requirement 80%).

You can find out more about what you need to know and record your progress by visiting [banes.safeguarding.network](https://banes.safeguarding.network). The site has information about each level with a short test to demonstrate your knowledge at Level 1.

You should begin by identifying the level of knowledge required of you and your team against the typical job roles. Each level has a page setting out what you should know, the skills you need and how this can be achieved.

Different agencies will have their own ways to meet these requirements. The learning standards offer an opportunity to baseline any learning you have done against the standards agreed by the partnership.

## CPD & Appraisal

Competence should be reviewed as a standing item in staff appraisals with an individual learning and development plan and consideration given to any necessary support or development of training going forward. This will be captured in monitoring arrangements for partner agencies and contracts with commissioned services.

# Level 1 – Basic Awareness

All staff and volunteers who have contact with the public.

For example... receptionists, caterers, domestic staff, transport, maintenance staff, councillors, park staff, dentists, domestic care workers, housing officers, volunteers

## core competency:

You know what to look for and what to do. You respond with sensitivity and take safe and appropriate action if you have concerns.

## values

We see that domestic abuse is everyone's business, listen to people and take action to help. We do not blame victims and recognise the impact of domestic abuse and the difficulty people have in keeping safe.

However, we always place adults and children at risk of harm first when deciding what to do

## you should know...

- How to define domestic abuse, including domestic abuse outside intimate relationships
- The impact of domestic abuse, including on children and other members of the family
- Indicators of domestic abuse, harassment and stalking & barriers to disclosure
- An understanding that domestic abuse is not always visible, and may include coercive or controlling behaviour, or the threat of violence as a form of control
- The adult safeguarding and child protection steps that need to be taken when worried
- What to do if you feel your concerns are not being taken seriously by other agencies

## you should be able to...

- Respond sensitively and confidently if someone talks to you about domestic abuse
- Get people the help they need, including directing people to specialist services,
- Take action about adult safeguarding or child protection concerns

## criteria for assessment

- Demonstrates awareness and understanding of domestic abuse
- Can explain who to contact, where to access advice and how to refer

## pathways to competence...

Managers should use the criteria for assessment.

You can match training undertaken to the knowledge, skills & values above. We have produced some online learning which goes towards these requirements at [banes.safeguarding.network](https://banes.safeguarding.network)

# Level 2 – Awareness Plus

## Staff who have an advice or support role

Professionals who have direct (face to face) or indirect (over the phone) contact. This may include but is not limited to health workers, doctors, PCSO's, education workers, youth workers, voluntary sector support workers, housing officers, community leaders, dentists, opticians, etc

### core competency:

You correctly identify concerns, have awareness of your own biases, and are able to refer and signpost effectively.

### values

We recognise how our own beliefs, experience and attitudes might influence professional involvement and take action to avoid this

### you should know...

- How and when to seek consent to share information
- Your responsibilities and those of others
- The services in Bath & North East Somerset that support adults and children at risk of domestic abuse, including services to support those that have domestic abuse in their past
- How domestic abuse impacts on children and young people
- How substances can lower inhibitions, rather than cause people to be violent
- The risk indicators from the SafeLives DASH checklist to ask for an assessment
- How experience of male victims may differ from women's, and the issues in same sex, minority communities, where people have a disability and in intergenerational abuse
- The role and remit of the children's and adult safeguarding boards

### you should be able to...

- Ask effective questions about domestic abuse with sensitivity and empathy
- Act as a helpful advocate for children, young people or adults at risk
- Make a referral for services, and document your involvement within agency guidelines
- Know when to escalate concerns for more support or intervention

### criteria for assessment

- Routinely enquires about domestic abuse in an effective way
- Demonstrates ability to complete a referral for services and to access Early Help
- Demonstrates ability to recognise and describe an event of violence and abuse to the most appropriate professional or local team

### pathways to competence...

Managers should use the criteria for assessment.

Champions have been trained in each agency to deliver Awareness Plus training. You can access a list of trainers at [banes.safeguarding.network](https://banes.safeguarding.network)

## Level 3 – Risk Assessment & Intervention

### Staff working with known domestic abuse

Work with known domestic abuse, but also where this may not be the sole concern. This may include social workers, police, lead professionals, domestic abuse staff such as refuge workers, mental health staff (adult and CAMHS), safeguarding teams, adult learning disability staff, substance misuse staff, youth offending team staff, sexual health staff, school nurses, health visitors, children's nurses, midwives, paediatricians, those , safeguarding leads

#### core competency:

You can work with families in relation to domestic abuse, undertake a risk assessment, form judgements in line with your professional discipline and present your concerns in case conferences, strategy meetings and similar

#### values

We ensure the perspectives of each family member remain central while effectively discharging our professional duties



## you should know...

- The inter-agency safeguarding frameworks and risk assessment processes, including the use of the [SafeLives DASH Risk Checklist](#)
- Have an in-depth understanding of how trauma & intersectional issues can impact on the experience of abuse, capacity to accept help and how services must adapt their approach
- How coercion can impact on decisions made, and the impact on issues such as consent
- Have core knowledge (appropriate to role) of court and criminal justice systems
- Understand the impact of a family's cultural and religious background when assessing risk and managing concerns
- Aware of up to date research surrounding violence and abuse relevant to role

## you should be able to...

- Identify the long term effects of abuse
- Complete a [SafeLives DASH Risk Checklist](#) with a vulnerable adult and support them with the necessary action identified, including early help support where relevant. Young people's practitioners should complete the [Safelives DASH for young people](#).
- Identify when a child is at risk from domestic abuse between adults using the [threshold for assessment](#) tool
- Contribute to decisions on when to act to protect a child, young person or adult at risk including participation in the MARAC process as necessary
- Work within a multidisciplinary team, coordinating a plan and services for people at risk (e.g. effectively accessing Blue Light project training) and give feedback to colleagues
- present safeguarding concerns verbally and in writing as required by role
- communicate effectively with children, young people & adults so they participate in decisions affecting them as appropriate to their age and ability

## criteria for assessment

- Looks for patterns and indicators of domestic abuse
- Uses the [SafeLives DASH Risk Indicator Checklist](#) and children's [threshold for assessment](#) tool.
- Can describe the roles and responsibilities of services for victims, perpetrators and children experiencing domestic abuse in Bath & North East Somerset
- Demonstrates critical insight of personal limitations and an ability to participate in peer review

## pathways to competence...

Managers should use the criteria for assessment.

You can find organisations we know deliver Risk Assessment & Intervention training at

[banes.safeguarding.network](https://banes.safeguarding.network)

# Level 4 – Specialist

## Staff mainly working with domestic abuse

Practitioners whose main role is to address key issues and provide support for those experiencing, could be at high risk of or who have historical experience of domestic violence. This could involve but not limited to IDVA's, Police liaisons, legal support, probation, men's behaviour change providers

### core competency:

You work effectively with families to prevent domestic abuse while providing support and advice to other professionals to identify abuse and where possible intervene early.

### values

We are confident in a position of working with domestic abuse without prejudice, while reinforcing the rights of victims and children experiencing abuse and provide support and challenge to other professionals and agencies to do the same.

### you should know...

- best practice in responding to domestic violence.
- advanced understanding of domestic violence legislation, information sharing, information governance, confidentiality and consent including guidance from professional bodies.
- advanced knowledge of relevant national and international issues, policies and implications for practice.
- about the professional and experts' role in the court process
- has knowledge of Honour Based Abuse including Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Substance Misuse & Domestic Abuse, Domestic abuse & law, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, Domestic abuse & vulnerable adults inc: elderly and disability, Domestic abuse and mental health, Domestic abuse and teenagers, Male victims (heterosexual) of domestic abuse, Gypsies & travellers and domestic abuse, Refugees and newly arrived immigrants



### **you should be able to...**

- Be able to work effectively with perpetrators and people at heightened risk of abuse
- give expert advice and support in your field of expertise, with ability to provide ongoing support to people experiencing domestic abuse.
- support colleagues in challenging views offered by other professionals, as appropriate
- advise other agencies on the management of domestic violence and abuse concerns.
- analyse and evaluate information and evidence to inform inter-agency decision-making across the organisation.
- lead service reviews.
- undertake training needs analysis, and to teach and educate health service professionals.
- review, evaluate and update local guidance and policy in light of research findings

### **criteria for assessment**

- understanding of appropriate and effective training strategies to meet the competency development needs of different staff groups
- effectively challenges and develops practice in the area
- is confident and generous with knowledge base

### **pathways to competence...**

Managers should use the criteria for assessment.

Practitioners at this level will seek relevant specialist training

## Find out more...

Becoming skilled at working with domestic abuse is an on-going learning journey. We have set out to put in place some of the steps to help you gain basic knowledge in working with victims, perpetrators and children experiencing domestic abuse but appreciate you will want to know more.

## Local resources

We've produced a guide to local services at <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/domesticviolence>

## Further reading

<http://safelives.org.uk/>

[SafeLives Dash risk checklist for the identification of high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence](#)

[Responding to domestic abuse – a resource for health professionals](#)

## Training & learning

Level 1 training can be accessed on an online learning package. We have trained champions across various agencies in Bath who can deliver training to Level 2 and Level 3. You can access a list of current champions and the elearning at <https://banes.safeguarding.network>

Agencies can also commission external training. Some organisations that deliver locally include:

- <http://www.voicescharity.org/> provide peer support and recovery programmes specifically for women who are experiencing or have experienced Domestic Abuse. They also offer survivor insights training
- [dialogueltd.co.uk/domesticabuse](http://dialogueltd.co.uk/domesticabuse) can provide external training to the relevant level

## Contribute

The Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) is the strategic arm of the Responsible Authorities Group and works to promote co-ordination education about healthy relationships, encourage disclosure and early help, protect victims of domestic abuse, provide support for survivors of domestic abuse and work with perpetrators to disrupt cycles of abusive behaviour.

To become more involved talk to your manager, contact the local specialist agencies and work to become a champion enabling change in Bath & North East Somerset.



The Learning Standards were written by [dialogue](#) in consultation with the Bath & North East Somerset Domestic Abuse Partnership in January 2018. [Contact us](#) for more information.