



Domestic and Sexual Abuse Newsletter

February 2024

Hello and welcome to the Doncaster domestic and sexual abuse newsletter.

This newsletter is designed to keep you up to date with local, regional and national information about domestic and sexual abuse.

Please share with colleagues and if this email has been forwarded to you and you want to subscribe please email sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk

You can also email Sophie if you would like to unsubscribe.

Sexual Abuse and Violence Awareness Week

5th – 11th February 2024

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week is the UK's national week to raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence and to provide an opportunity for any organisation or individual to engage in dialogue.

The Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week occurs on the first full week of February. For 2024 that will take place from 5th to 11th February.

It is vital that we all work together to break the silence about sexual abuse and sexual violence. There are specialist support services in Doncaster to support people and victims are encouraged to report the abuse to South Yorkshire Police.

Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service (DRASACS) accepts self-referrals from victims of sexual abuse and they provide a range of services for children and adults. Visit their website for further information: [DRASACS](#)

Victims of rape and sexual assault can also contact the South Yorkshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre. Hackenthorpe Lodge SARC offers a comprehensive service for adults and children in South Yorkshire, who have experienced sexual violence or sexual abuse. People can access Hackenthorpe Lodge via the Police and other professionals, as well as via the self-referral pathway (booking an appointment at the SARC, without the Police).

At the SARC, specialist support and guidance, a medical assessment/treatment, a forensic examination, and the opportunity of aftercare referrals for support services will be provided. Clients will be offered these services based on their individual needs, and can choose to use as much or as little of their service as they wish.

They will usually be able to offer you support, healthcare, and aftercare advice if:

- You are in South Yorkshire; and
- You have experienced sexual violence or sexual abuse.

They should also be able to offer you a forensic medical examination if the incident(s) has occurred in the past 7 days. [Hackenthorpe Lodge - Home](#)

There is also a national 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line - [24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line \(247sexualabusesupport.org.uk\)](#)

Please do all you can to raise awareness of sexual abuse and sexual violence and the support available.

[Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week](#)

[Domestic and Sexual Abuse Toolkit for Educational](#)

[Establishments](#)

[Doncaster Sexual Abuse Website](#)

Can you raise awareness of FGM?

Globally, it is estimated that at least 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone some form of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

- According to [United Nations](#) data, if current trends continue, 15 million additional girls between ages 15 and 19 be subjected to it by 2030.
- FGM is mostly carried out on young girls sometime between infancy and age 15.
- FGM causes severe bleeding and health issues including cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications in childbirth increased risk of newborn deaths.
- FGM is a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

FGM is happening in the UK and in Doncaster and South Yorkshire and your help is needed to help raise awareness of this crime on 6th February which is the [International Day for Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation](#).

Reporting of FGM is mandatory. For more information take a look at the [Doncaster Domestic Abuse Protocol](#).

[Training about FGM is available](#), free, to all Doncaster professionals. The next training date for FGM is 13th March 2024.

Please think about what you can do to raise awareness of FGM next month. Click on the links for further information.

[FGM School Lesson Plans – National FGM Centre](#)

[FGM training](#)

[FGM Resource Pack](#)

[WHO FGM Resources](#)

Brain injury and domestic abuse

A recent report by Brainkind called 'Too Many To Count' reveals that 1 in 2 people who have experienced domestic abuse in England and Wales may be living with a brain injury. This compares to the prevalence of traumatic brain injury in the general population of the UK which is approximately 1 in 8.

80%

of people who have experienced domestic abuse had had a serious blow to the head

75%

of people who have experienced domestic abuse had been held at least once in a way that prevented them from breathing

46%

of participants used the word strangulation to describe these experiences.

Too many to count report

Tech-facilitated domestic abuse webinars

The East Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit is delivering a number of webinars on technology facilitated domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, exclusively for practitioners who work with victims of domestic abuse.



The aims of the presentation are:



To understand the key legislation relating to technology-facilitated abuse.



To raise awareness among front line staff and practitioners on how abusers can misuse technology.



To offer actionable advice and guidance to help victims improve their cyber security.

For further info and booking enquiries please contact: nfib.protect@cityoflondon.police.uk

Links to the webinars:

- [19th February, 13:30-15:00](#)
- [21st February, 13:30-15:00](#)

- [23rd February, 13:30-15:00](#)
- [27th February, 13:30-15:00](#)
- [29th February, 13:30-15:00](#)

If you have any enquiries, please email EMSOUCyberProtect@leics.police.uk

In the News

[Inside Doncaster's 'determined' domestic abuse team as their 'resilience' shines through](#)

Between 3 November 2023 and 4 December 2023, South Yorkshire Police domestic abuse team secured 55 charges against 19 people for various DA-linked offences, including assault, harassment, rape, possession of an offensive weapon and sexual assault.

[Virginity testing: Police warning after GP asked to carry out procedure](#)

South Yorkshire Police have warned of the dangers of virginity testing after a GP reported they were asked to "prove" a teenager was still a virgin.

Both hymenoplasty and virginity testing are illegal in the UK.

[Women's Aid welcomes £2 million fund to help survivors of domestic abuse](#)

From 31st January 2024, survivors of domestic abuse who do not have the financial means to leave their abusers will be able to apply for a one-off payment of up to £500 via one of over 470 support services, for essential items such as groceries, nappies or support with new accommodation to help them and their children flee to safety.

(Note: it has not been made clear who is eligible (i.e. whether the fund is available for male victims) and how to apply. When details are made available there will be an article in the Doncaster domestic and sexual abuse newsletter.)

[More than 15,000 households fleeing domestic abuse across England denied access to safe housing](#)

More than 15,000 households fleeing domestic abuse across England were denied support at safe accommodation sites in 2022-23 due to lack of capacity or an inability to meet the household's needs, government data shows.

[Quarter 2 CPS data](#)

Quarter 2 Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) data showed an 11.5% increase in charges for adult rape flagged offences. The conviction rate decreased to 60.7% in Q2 23/24 from 62.6% in Q1 23/24.

The volume of domestic abuse referrals recorded increased by 3.4% from 17,398 in Q1 23/24 to 17,982 in Q2 23/24 and the domestic abuse conviction rate remained static at 76.0% this quarter, for the third quarter in a row.

[More to do to tackle rape misconceptions and lack of understanding of consent, CPS survey finds](#)

More still needs to be done to tackle common false beliefs about rape and understanding of consent, especially among young people, according to the largest survey of its kind in five years by the CPS.

The response of 18-24-year-olds in upholding views based on false assumptions and misconceptions was particularly striking:

- Only half recognised that it can still be rape if a victim doesn't resist or fight back (53% got this right)
- Less than half recognised victims may not immediately report to the police (43% got this right)
- Less than half recognised that being in a relationship or marriage does not mean consent to sex can be assumed (42% got this right, compared to 87% of people aged 65 and above)
- Less than half recognised that if a man has been drinking or taking drugs, he is still responsible if he rapes someone (46% got this right)

For more information about:

- [Sexual abuse - Doncaster Council](#)
- [DRASACS](#)
- [Services for victims and people who are abusive](#)
- [Domestic and sexual abuse training for practitioners](#)
- [The domestic abuse protocol](#)
- [Digital copies of leaflets and posters and how to order hard copies](#)
- [Details of Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)
- [Survivor stories](#)
- [The MARAC](#)
- [The Doncaster Domestic Abuse Strategy](#)

and much more, visit the Doncaster Domestic Abuse website:

www.doncaster.gov.uk/domesticabuse

You can also follow us on Twitter: @NoToDomAbuse

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