



Domestic and Sexual Abuse Newsletter

January 2024

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Doncaster domestic and sexual abuse newsletter for 2024.

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.

New Year Resolutions

Have you made any new year resolutions yet? If not, how about one of these:

Attend domestic abuse training

City of Doncaster Council deliver an assortment of domestic abuse training sessions. Why not pick one to enhance your awareness of domestic abuse: [Domestic Abuse - Training - City of Doncaster Council](#)

Become a domestic abuse champion

Domestic abuse champions are people that are trained in domestic abuse and passionate about raising awareness of the issue and ensuring that their agency/service area has the latest knowledge, skills, resources and referral pathways in place to ensure victims get the right response when they need it. Domestic abuse champion network meetings are held quarterly and provide an opportunity to meet other champions, keep up to date and get involved in projects

and campaigns. If you are interested in being a DA champion please email Sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk

Become a domestic abuse pin badge wearer

If you have completed domestic abuse awareness training in the past three years,



understand the impact on and risks to victims and families, and know how to refer people for support then you could be a domestic abuse pin badge wearer. The badge indicates to people that they can talk to you and be confident that you will understand and will get them the help they need.

For your pin badge and the posters that promote the badge please contact Sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk

Help produce and implement the new Sexual Abuse Delivery Plan

To help prevent sexual harassment and abuse a new Doncaster sexual abuse delivery plan is being produced. If you would like to be involved in developing the plan, which has already been started with the support of a number of dedicated professionals from across partner agencies in Doncaster, please get in touch.

The aim is to launch the delivery plan in April 2024. If you would like to be consulted on the sexual abuse delivery plan, and are able to contribute towards actions that will make a real difference, please contact karen.shooter@doncaster.gov.uk

Rape and sexual assault victim national police experience survey

Victim-survivors of rape and sexual assault are invited to take part in an anonymous national online survey about their experience dealing with the police.

The survey is designed to help understand how the police process feels to victims of rape and sexual assault. Findings will be used to help police forces nationally to improve victim support and better understand people's experiences of reporting sexual violence.

It is open to those over the age of 18 who are the victim of rape or sexual assault where the case is being investigated by a police force in the UK. Investigations can be at any stage – following the initial report, ongoing, or finalised.

The anonymous survey is part of a national Home Office funded research and change programme known as Operation Soteria Bluestone. It aims to understand and tackle the challenges seen in rape and serious sexual offences investigations.

The survey will run until July 2024.

[Rape and sexual assault survey](#)

Safe at Home

Are you working with someone who is a victim of domestic abuse and who does not feel safe in their own home?

City of Doncaster Council has introduced a scheme which helps victims of domestic abuse remain safely in their homes by improving the security of the property.

St. Leger homes already operate a service for their tenants and the Doncaster Safe at Home scheme will complement their scheme providing support for people in all other tenures, including home owners.

The scheme is not means tested. The person must consent to working with a domestic abuse worker (to provide additional risk assessment and safety advice) and the person causing the harm must not still be living at the property or have a legal right to enter the property.

Interventions could include changing locks, fitting door chains and window alarms, blocking up letter boxes and fitting external letter boxes, and other measures to help people remain safely in their home.

For further information, and referral forms please contact Sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk or please make a referral to the Doncaster domestic abuse hub if the person does not currently have domestic abuse support [Refer someone for support - City of Doncaster Council](#)

Suicide and Intimate Partner violence

Research into suicide and domestic abuse by Agenda Alliance shows that there is a link between intimate partner violence and suicidality (suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts) and self-harm.

The report suggests that women are disproportionately impacted and at greater risk of IPV related suicidality stating that women who have experienced IPV are three times more likely than women who have not experienced IPV to have made a suicide attempt in the past year.

Women who have experienced sexual IPV are seven times more likely than those who had not experienced sexual IPV to have attempted suicide in the past year.

The report also stated that 'intersecting identities and experiences associated with systemic disadvantages, including poverty, disability, and ethnicity, exacerbate risks of both suicidality and IPV'.

When working with people who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse please think about the risks of self-harm and suicide and ensure that appropriate and timely support is put in place, and that you have ensured that there is a coordinated community response to supporting victims.

Suicide and IPV

Interactive tool to tackle domestic economic abuse launched

The UK government has launched a free interactive guide to help businesses spot and tackle domestic economic abuse.

The new tool, available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), aims to help call handlers at businesses and charities recognise abuse when speaking to customers and clients. Specialist charities such as [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) will be on standby to offer training to interested organisations.

Domestic abuse support for young people

Since 2013, 16- and 17-year-olds have been entitled to access adult domestic abuse support because of their inclusion in the cross-governmental definition of domestic abuse. Despite the high prevalence of abuse for this age group, the rate of referrals into support services and multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACS) is lower than the percentage they make up of the population. The promotion of the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub support service for young people aged 16+ remains a key priority for the council.

Hayley Peterson (Domestic Abuse Caseworker for Young People) along with Domestic Abuse Caseworker Kellie Morton visited Sir Thomas Wharton Academy in December and held a Q+A session about Domestic Abuse with Post 16 students. Students were asked prior to the visit to think about any questions that they felt they wanted to ask on the topic of Domestic Abuse, the questions were then put in a box anonymously to remove any barriers to asking on the day. These are the questions that the students came up with.

- Why do people stay in the relationship?
- Is Domestic Abuse just with partners?
- Is Domestic Abuse just physical?
- What is narcissistic?
- Is it still Domestic Abuse if it only happens once?
- Does Domestic Abuse happen in same sex relationships?

- If I reported an incident would the person get arrested?
- Is it abuse if you search through your partners phone?
- What if my mate is a victim and they don't realise they are?

What a fantastic set of questions which gives us a real insight into what young people want to know and helps us to identify where there might be any gaps.

Answers to their questions were given in the session along with advice as well as how to make a referral to the DA hub, what happens when a referral comes into the DA Hub and what support can be offered by a caseworker.

A huge thanks to Anita Ballie (Child protection and Safeguarding lead Manager) for reaching out and organising the session, and to all of the Post 16 students and staff at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy for being so welcoming 😊

If your setting is interested in working with the Domestic Abuse Hub, please contact dahub@doncaster.gov.uk

In the News

[Most victims of domestic homicide have contacted police or NHS, review shows](#)

A review of 302 domestic homicides recorded in a seven-year period has found that the majority of those killed had been “hiding in plain sight”, having made contact with the police, health services and other public agencies before their death.

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

Newsletter produced by Karen Shooter, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategic Lead, Doncaster Council.

If you would like to include an article in a future edition please email:

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