

# Priority One Domestic Abuse

“What is working well to reduce or remove the risks of domestic abuse and to improve outcomes for children and families (in context of communities and County Durham)?”

## 1 Overview

This 7-point briefing has been developed following the DSCP completing work under Priority One, Domestic Abuse, of the 2023-2026 DSCP Priority Plan. This briefing aims to support you to understand, identify and respond to children and their families where it is suspected or known that Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) is present in the home [CAPVA Handbook](#)

This briefing explores the work completed within the Improvement Delivery Group (IDG), looking at what children, their families and practitioners identify as working well and what they want us to learn from their involvement in the program.

**Definition:** CAPVA is a form of family abuse where children/adolescents use a range of harmful behaviours towards parents/care givers this can include but is not limited to, physical violence, verbal abuse, behaviours that are emotionally and/or psychologically abusive, and those which damage properties and/or hurt parents financially.

**Why:** Durham launched their CAPVA offer in February 2022. The IDG recognised there had been 101 referrals received between February 2022- April 2023 therefore we could identify a group of young people and their families who had been supported in the program.

**Scope:** When looking at this priority and Key Line of Enquiry we could identify from data that 26% of the cases that had been referred in relation to CAPVA had a history of Domestic Abuse incidents. Therefore, we agreed that this would allow us to look both at the general CAPVA programme and the impact of the Respect Young People’s Programme (RYPP) on these children who had historically been victims of Domestic Abuse themselves.

## 2 Training

Since February 2022, 252 practitioners across County Durham have attended the CAPVA awareness training. 4 Partner agencies within the DSCP have been trained to deliver the Respect Young People Program (RYPP):

- Early Help – 93 practitioners
- Youth Justice Service – 26 practitioners
- Supporting Solutions – 9 practitioners
- Harbour – 14 practitioners (Data 2022)

Contact [Laura Duncan](mailto:laura.duncan@durham.gov.uk) for training needs and enquiries (laura.duncan@durham.gov.uk)

## 3 Referrals

Since the launch of CAPVA, 101 referrals were made (February 22-April 2023). Referrals have predominantly been received from the North (42) of Durham with almost double the number of referrals than the East (24).

Both One Point and Education had the majority of referrals from the North/East. Parent and Police were predominantly referrers from the South of Durham.

To report a concern or seek support around CAPVA contact First Contact (03000 26 79 79) or [Report a concern about a child - Durham County Council](#)

## 4 Practitioners Voice

**Strengths:** “I have just been in a Team Around Family (TAF) for MR and the feedback from the impact of the RYPP is absolutely brilliant. Mum, Dad, Vicky Murray (One Point) and Sarah Fallows (Police) have all made comments about the ‘significant improvement’ that she has made since the RYPP. Vicky even said that the home environment feels completely different when she visits compared to when she was allocated the case.”

**Learning:** “I didn’t understand the threshold for the RYPP.”  
[Clarify, Verify and Reflect](#)

## 5 Parents Voices

**Strengths:** “It offered me a greater understanding of the reason for the child’s behaviour. Greater understanding about consistency”

“The help was for the child which was the best thing”.  
“Prior to the RYPP my son struggled to understand what a healthy relationship is, he now recognises good and bad relationships”.

**Learning:** “It is important that professionals understand that a child’s background impacts them. My son once read a note the teacher had written stating he was “aggressive”, this label stuck with him, and he used this to explain his behaviour. I have learned it is important to not judge children on one thing. Understand that children need support to manage their emotions, respond appropriately to these children, listen, and understand their story”.

[CAPVA video](#)

## 6 Children’s Voices

**Strengths:**

“I wasn’t a fan at first because I didn’t like talking, but I found I liked Sharon and so I opened up to her”.

“She talked about how it made me feel and helped me to look at how mam felt. It wasn’t one sided, it gave us both a voice.”

“My family worker understood, we talked about sharing experiences, talked about school it helped. I’ve been to Harbour before, I don’t like telephone appointments, this was better.”

**Learning:**

One Point previously helped us, we did rewards and consequences work, the case was then closed but the problems then started again. Mam asked for help. We were then offered RYPP, this helped.

[Language that cares-guide](#)

## What can you do?

- Be aware of your own language, challenge each other when you overhear labels being placed on children. Language can directly contribute to how children are seen.
- Access training and resources to improve your knowledge and skills about CAPVA.
- Understand the importance of early intervention and prevention and be aware of key indicators of CAPVA.
- Use supervision to reflect and challenge assumptions and bias. Use critical thinking skills to inform professional challenge.

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