



BLSupdate.com

- Domestic Abuse -

www.BLSupdate.com

Learning outcomes:

- What domestic abuse is
- Types of domestic abuse
- The signs of domestic abuse
- Who gets affected by domestic abuse
- The effects of witnessing domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is a widespread and highly disturbing issue that affects individuals across cultural, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children. It is estimated by the department of health that up to 750,000 children a year witness domestic abuse.

What is Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse, commonly referred to as intimate partner violence, occurs when one person seeks to dominate, abuse or harm another in an intimate relationship. This form of abuse extends beyond physical violence to include a variety of behaviours aimed at controlling and controlling the victim. Abuse may be driven by active power, the desire to control, and deeply ingrained social norms.

Various forms of domestic abuse

Financial abuse: This type of abuse involves controlling the victim's financial resources and decisions. Perpetrators can restrict a victim's access to money, monitor their spending, or even force them to give up control of their finances. Financial dependence on financial abuse can trap victims in an abusive relationship.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse includes actions that target the victim's self-esteem, emotional well-being, and mental health. Perpetrators use tactics such as manipulation, isolation, humiliation and verbal threats to undermine the victim's sense of self-worth and autonomy.

Sexual and Domestic Abuse: Sexual abuse in a domestic relationship involves coercion or coercion of the victim into unwanted sexual acts. There is a breach of consent and boundaries that can leave victims hurt and emotionally scarred.

Psychological abuse: The purpose of psychological abuse is to destabilise the mental and emotional state of the victim. Perpetrators use gaslighting, constant criticism, and intimidation to keep their victims in doubt about their perceptions and facts.

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is perhaps the most well-known form of domestic abuse, and contains physically harmful behaviour such as hitting, punching, kicking, or even severe violence. Physical abuse can cause immediate injury and he has had long-term health issues.

Recognising the signs of domestic abuse

Identifying domestic abuse can be difficult, as perpetrators often use a variety of tactics to hide their actions. Some common symptoms are:

- The patient often experiences fear, anxiety, or depression.
- A criminal who isolates himself from friends and family.
- Dramatic changes in attitude, appearance, or personality.
- Unexplained injuries or health issues.
- Controlling or owning the behaviour of a partner.
- Unique communication and communication systems.

The effects on children

Domestic abuse has far-reaching consequences for the children who witness or encounter it. Children who are abused in the home can suffer:

- Emotional trauma: Witnessing domestic violence and abuse can cause emotional distress, anxiety and feelings of helplessness in children
- Behaviour problems: Children who are abused at home are at increased risk for behaviour problems such as aggression, withdrawal, or acting out
- Long-term psychological effects: Childhood grief can have lasting psychological effects, affecting self-esteem, relationships and mental health in adulthood

- **Cycle of violence:** Children who grow up in abusive homes may internalise these behaviours as normal, perpetuating a cycle of abuse in their relationships

Supporting child victims and responding to disclosures

When a child exhibits abuse in the home, it is important to respond in a sensitive and supportive manner. Here are some things you need to do:

1. **Keep calm:** It is important to remain calm and cautious when a child speaks out about the abuse. Maintain a compassionate, non-judgmental attitude.
2. **Trust and validate your child:** Show your child that you trust him or her and that his or her feelings and experiences are real. Reassure them that they are not to blame for the abuse.
3. **Actively listen:** Give your child your full attention. Allow them to express themselves and talk about themselves at their own pace. Avoid forcing them or forcing them to share more than they are comfortable with.
4. **Ensure safety:** If the child is in immediate danger, contact the appropriate authorities, such as Child Protective Services or law enforcement.
5. **Reporting:** Follow the mandatory reporting process in your state if you are legally obligated to report abuse or believe a child is in danger.
6. **Record:** Document what the child has shown, including dates, times and any specific information provided. This information can be helpful for legal cases or interventions.
7. **Offer support:** Let the child know that you care about his or her well-being and are there to help. Connect them to resources like counselling, therapy, and support groups.
8. **Involve professionals:** In cases of suspected abuse, it is important to engage professionals with expertise in child protection and welfare. A thorough assessment can be made to determine the appropriate course of action.

Clare Law: Empowering Protection

Officially known as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), the Clare Act is a legal process that allows individuals to ask their partners about their partner's history of domestic violence or violent crime. The law is designed to provide potential victims have information to help them make informed decisions about their safety and well-being in their relationships. It was named after Claire Wood, who was tragically murdered by her ex-boyfriend in 2009. Her death highlighted the importance of providing individuals with relevant information about their partner's history in cases of suspected domestic abuse violated the Clare Act

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) began as a pilot project in the United Kingdom in 2012 and was subsequently rolled out nationally. In England and Wales, the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (England and Wales Act) became a statutory scheme under 2014, which came into force on 8 March 2014

The law specifically addresses individuals who are concerned about their spouse's conduct and possible history of domestic violence or violent crimes. It also applies to individuals being concerned about the safety of another in a relationship. Under Clare Law, individuals can request information from police about a past partner if they think they may be at risk of domestic abuse.

DVDS works under two basic modes of display:

Right to ask: This allows individuals to contact their local police and actively ask about their partner's history. Police will then check to see if there is a history of related offences.

Right to Know: When police discover information that indicates a person is at risk of domestic violence or abuse, they have discretion to disclose this information to a potential victim. This proactive approach allows police to take action to protect individuals who may be at risk.