

# Recognising the Difference between **Domestic Abuse** and **Parental Conflict**

Cambridgeshire  
and Peterborough

**Family  
Hubs**



You may find yourself supporting a family and wondering whether the behaviours you are seeing indicate domestic abuse or parental conflict. The two are very different (although can look similar), and it is important that professionals working with families are able to identify which is happening, and how to respond with the appropriate advice and support.



## Questions to consider if you are worried about potential domestic abuse to one of your service users

There are different kinds of domestic abuse, but it's always about having power and control over the other person. If your service user answers yes to any of the below, they could be experiencing abuse from a partner or co-parent.



Use the below checklists to help decide whether the situation is domestic abuse or parental conflict so the correct support can be accessed:

### Psychological

- Service user is frightened of the individual
- Prevented from going about their everyday activities
- Received threats to hurt or kill them, their family or pets
- Had belongings destroyed
- Emails, text messages or letters accessed without their consent
- Harassed or followed
- Frightened by shouting and swearing

### Physical

- Been hit, slapped or punched
- Been kicked or bitten
- Pushed or shoved
- Been frightened by partner intentionally driving dangerously

### Emotional

- Belittled, put down, or being told they are always wrong
- Been blamed for arguments or for the abuse
- Prevented from going to work or college
- Expected to meet unreasonable demands for attention
- Accused of flirting or having affairs
- Isolated from family and friends

### Financial

- Access to money or assets limited or controlled
- Prevented from working

### Sexual

- Been touched in a way they don't want to be touched
- Unwanted sexual demands upon them or felt they couldn't say no to sex
- Called hurtful names like 'slag'
- Photos of intimate moments taken without their consent



**IF ANY ABOVE BOXES ARE TICKED, YOUR SERVICE USER MAY BE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE.**

Consider whether your service user has been open to a domestic abuse service within the last 24 months, or whether there has been a previous incident where police have been called.

Domestic violence can happen against anyone — regardless of age, background, gender identity, sex, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity, and anybody can be an abuser.

## Where to find **support for domestic abuse**

Please contact Domestic Abuse Support Service (DASS) if your service user lives in Cambridgeshire or Peterborough and you would like advice or support.

**Telephone: 0300 373 1073 (freephone) • Email: [DASSreferrals@impakt.org.uk](mailto:DASSreferrals@impakt.org.uk)**

**IDVA Service and/or MARAC Referral Form:**  
[www.cambsdasv.org.uk/web/make\\_a\\_referral/593292](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/web/make_a_referral/593292)



**IF BOXES ARE ONLY TICKED FROM THE BELOW SECTION, IT IS MORE LIKELY THE SITUATION IS PARENTAL CONFLICT.**

### What does parental conflict look like?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trying to win                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No resolution at the end of an argument                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making personal comments          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shouting, swearing, bickering                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not listening to the other person | <input type="checkbox"/> Undermining each other                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silent treatment                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Child/ren wishing their parents were friends with each other |

## Where to find **support for parental conflict**

Reducing parental conflict interventions provided by OnePlusOne are designed to help parents reflect on conflict in their relationship with current or ex-partners, as well as the impact on their children. [www.oneplusone.org.uk/practitioners/](http://www.oneplusone.org.uk/practitioners/)

If you would like more information on supporting a family where there is conflict present, contact the below:

**Telephone: 07554 151514 • Email: [rpcllead@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:rpcllead@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)**

Date completed: (DD/MM/YYYY)

System reference number:

Completed by:

