



Is this love?

Domestic abuse educational resource

Introduction

We have created this domestic abuse awareness pack to be used by year 10 or year 11 in secondary schools in Devon. The main focus of this study pack is to look at abuse within teenage relationships and help young people start to think about their own experiences, behaviours and what they want for the future.

Abuse is surprisingly common in teenage relationships. A recent Home Office study revealed one in three girls interviewed said they'd been sexually assaulted by a boyfriend. In the same survey, 25 per cent of girls and 18 per cent of boys said they'd been hit or physically attacked by a partner. This introductory lesson ties in with the Home Office Campaign to challenge abuse and violence within teenage relationships and the Government's plans to include violence against women and girls in the curriculum from 2011. The pack was created by adva – (against domestic violence and abuse) www.adva.org.uk and young people in Devon who were part of The LINX programme devised by The Hampton Trust www.hamptontrust.org.uk

The aim is to introduce young people to what is acceptable within a relationship and what is not acceptable by discussing what love is – and what love isn't. It is hoped that this awareness raising exercise will go some way towards preventing our next generation of potential perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse. Abuse starts within teenage relationships which means it is important to address certain attitudes before patterns of violence can occur. Many of the behavioural problems that schools encounter can stem from young people's experiences of violence and abuse and therefore schools are in a strong position to help promote healthy, non-violent relationships.

Please read through the pack as it gives you advice about how to deal with the possibility that this topic will have an effect on young people. At the beginning of the lesson please advise students who they can contact within the school for advice and support. This may be, for example, the school nurse, Connexions or a teacher they trust. We would recommend that a contacts list is handed out at the end of the lesson.



What is included?

The pack is devised for a PSHE lesson or assembly for Year 10 or 11

It includes:

- **Is this love?** is a short animated film available on www.adva.org.uk created by young people in Devon and animator Emily Cooper. The film is four minutes long and serves as a visually engaging introduction to the lesson which should stimulate discussion.
- A help sheet for teachers to direct discussion including statistics around teenage relationships and Domestic Abuse.
- A sheet for students with discussion points from the film.
- A lesson plan with activities (1 hour long lesson). The lesson is an introductory lesson to start getting young people talking and thinking about some of the issues raised.

Additional resources:

- A Powerpoint for use in PSHE or assembly for Years 10 and 11 is available to download on www.adva.org.uk You can also book domestic violence awareness training for teachers through the website.
- You can find details of the LINX programme which is free and runs in Schools in Devon on www.hamptontrust.org.uk, click **LINX Programme**, and then click on **Devon**.
- Women's Aid Expect Respect Education Toolkit (including advice and lesson plans) www.thehideout.org.uk/over10/adults/resources/educationaltoolkit/default.aspa
- Useful Contacts Sheet



Why raise these issues?

Research shows that children and young people want to talk about these issues and have a need to do so. Domestic abuse does not come out of a vacuum and we know that we have to be proactive in stopping the cycle of abuse as young people enter into their own relationships. Not talking to young people about these issues does not protect them.

Schools have a number of legal responsibilities (ECM agenda, The Education Act 2002, The Children Act 2004) which means that they are positioned to help young people tackle beliefs and think about their behaviour as they progress into adult life. Helping children and young people to understand what is a healthy relationship is an important part of them making a successful transition into adulthood and is an effective way of undertaking preventative work around domestic abuse and making sure that young people are aware of how to keep themselves safe.

Research shows that young people have a wide acceptance of abuse. Findings from a recent survey of 14–21 year old males carried out by the **zero tolerance** charitable trust were as follows:

- 1 in 8 young men thought it would be OK to hit a nagging woman
- 1 in 10 young men thought hitting a disrespectful women was justified
- 19% of young women and 34% of young men did not think that being forced to have sex constituted rape
- One in five teenage girls have been hit by a boyfriend

These statistics are against a backdrop of the shocking statistic that two women are killed each week in the UK by their partners or former partners. We also know of the negative impact on children that are brought up witnessing or experiencing domestic violence and how it can impact across the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda.



The wider context

Definition of domestic abuse

Domestic Abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between partners (16 years and over) who are or have been in an intimate relationship or between adult family members (18 years and over), regardless of gender and sexuality. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, whether directly related, in-laws, common-law or step family.

90% of all reported cases of abuse are where women are the victims. 75% of those cases resulted in physical injury or mental health consequences for the women involved. Domestic abuse is repetitive and life threatening. It does not have to be inherently 'violent' but perpetrators may use a whole range of abusive behaviours. Domestic violence is very common with at least 1 in 4 women experiencing domestic abuse in their lifetime. It is also under reported (Home Office 2002). Despite this the police still receive one call every minute in the UK in regards to domestic violence.

Women's Aid has produced a list of common factors that indicate a relationship is abusive:

- **Destructive criticism and verbal abuse:**
shouting/ mocking/ accusing/ name-calling/ verbally threatening behaviour.
- **Pressure tactics:**
sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnecting the telephone, taking the car away, threatening suicide, taking the children away, reporting you to welfare agencies unless you comply with his demands regarding bringing up the children; lying to your friends and family about you; telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.
- **Disrespect:**
persistently putting you down in front of other people; not listening or responding when you talk; interrupting your telephone calls; taking money from your purse without asking; refusing to help with childcare or housework.



- **Breaking trust:**
lying to you, withholding information from you, being jealous, having other relationships; breaking promises and shared agreements.
- **Isolation:**
monitoring or blocking your telephone calls, telling you where you can and cannot go, preventing you from seeing friends and relatives.
- **Harassment:**
following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you, embarrassing you in public.
- **Threats:**
making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting you down, destroying your possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm you and the children.
- **Sexual violence:**
using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts, having sex with you when you don't want to have sex, any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation.
- **Physical violence:**
punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling.
- **Denial:**
saying the abuse doesn't happen, saying you caused the abusive behaviour, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

We know that domestic abuse is a major indicator of risk for children and young people and research from the Department of Health indicates at least 750,000 children a year witness domestic abuse. It is worth noting that 90% of children and young people are in the same or next room while the violence is occurring.



Effects on young people

and what you might see in school

Young people living with a backdrop of domestic abuse tend not to be able to participate in school life fully or achieve academically. We also know that children and young people who are brought up in a traumatic environment often have hampered emotional development which prevents them from being able to identify their own feelings and inhibits their capacity to have empathy for others.

In school, you might see young people who you know or suspect are witnessing/ experiencing domestic violence.

Some of the signs to look out for are:

- Unexplained absences or lateness (might be staying home to protect their mother or hide their injuries or be prevented from coming to school)
- Not handing in or completing homework
- Constantly being tired or on edge
- Changes in their behaviour and personality that can happen quickly and dramatically
- Difficulty in developing positive peer relations and maybe quiet and withdrawn
- Displaying disruptive behaviour, acting out violent thoughts and showing little empathy for others
- Children who are no trouble at all. Often we will not know that abuse is happening. Raising awareness is vital so that young people can be protected

What we know is that as young people embark on their own relationships they can often experience abuse, and their lack of experience can make them more susceptible to gender stereotypes. This is likely to be the reason for 1 in 3 young men and 1 in 5 young women agreeing with the statement that 'some women deserve to be hit'.



Dealing with disclosure

Advice for teachers

adva offers a series of training programmes for teachers around Domestic Violence. Please visit www.adva.org.uk for details and booking form.

Your own school will have its Child Protection Policy that you should follow if a child discloses abuse. However a good model to follow is the 3 step approach:

1. Receive 2. Reassure 3. Respond

In other words, listen to what the young person is saying and do not ask for the detail. You will need to let them know, as soon as possible, that you will have to tell someone else if they tell you something that is causing concern, usually the school's Child Protection Officer. Do not agree to keep any secrets and do not ask leading questions as this might undermine any further actions to be taken. Do not be judgemental, stay calm and reassure them they have done the right thing in telling you.

Make sure you speak to your Child Protection Officer who will take you through the written recording of the information that was given to you.



Lesson plan

Learning outcomes

This lesson is meant as an introduction to the area of abuse in relationships and to get young people thinking about what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in a relationship. There are additional pieces of work that can be done and these are contained within the section 'Extension work and Cross Curricular ideas'.

At the end of the lesson, young people will:

be able to understand the definition of domestic abuse and its impact on society and children's wellbeing;
be able to identify what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour in a relationship;
have been able to discuss and identify examples of what is abuse within a relationship;
have identified the key factors that make a healthy relationship.

Resources

All the resources can be found to download at www.adva.org.uk or master copies in the pack.

Animated film 'Is this love?' is available to download at www.adva.org.uk

Help sheet for teachers including discussion points from film, statistics and definition of Domestic Abuse

Abuse Continuum Sheet

Alien Exercise Sheet and example of Alien report

Flip chart paper

Marker pens

Blue tack



Setting the scene – 5 minutes

Explain to your class that in this lesson they will be looking at what constitutes a healthy relationship and what is acceptable in a relationship and what is not. Most young people have seen the adverts on abuse in teenage relationships (you can download from www.youtube.com/user/ukhomeoffice released in 2009 or access via www.adva.org.uk). It is worth asking them if they remember the adverts. Explain the ground rules and that this subject needs to be dealt with in a sensible and mature manner. As you may well have young people who are or have experienced domestic violence or abuse within relationships it is important to create an atmosphere where they feel safe amongst their peers. You have a sheet to help you in relation to the film and a discussion sheet for the students about the film. Explain that domestic abuse can start occurring in teenage relationships and the purpose of today's lesson is to make sure they understand what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in a relationship.

Activity 1

Animated film and discussion

10 minutes

Purpose

A visually engaging introduction to prompt a discussion around the question 'Is this love?' Try and draw young people's attention to the statistics and facts around abuse in teenage relationships as they discuss the issues raised from the film.

Resources

'Is this love?' animated film (download at www.adva.org.uk)

Help sheet

What to do

- Before watching the film, explain that it was made by young people in Devon and explores their feelings about their own relationship experiences and some of the abuse they have suffered.
- Watch the film.
- Ask for their opinions on the questions asked at the end of the film.
- Direct them to the fact sheet which also includes statistics around teenage relationships. Pick a few to discuss further.



Activity 2

Domestic abuse continuum activity

15 minutes

Purpose

To get young people to start thinking and questioning what is abusive behaviour and what isn't. The point of this activity is to stimulate discussion and to recognise there are different types of abuse and it helps them indirectly to reflect on their own experiences/behaviour. There are no 'right answers' to this activity. You are there to positively challenge what they respond with. There are some examples to help you below. This exercise will help students indirectly reflect on their own experiences/behaviour.

Resources

Domestic Abuse Continuum Sheet (see page 15)

What to do

There are different ways of delivering this:

- Split the class into pairs. Give each pair the 'Domestic Abuse Continuum Sheet'. Ask them to go through and discuss together whether those statements are abusive or not. Ask that they mark on the sheet whether 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable' by each statement and get the class to feedback their thoughts to you.
- You can put up a piece of paper with 'abusive' at one end of the classroom and 'not abusive' at the other and ask the class to walk to the sign they agree with or in between the signs if they think it is somewhere in between.
- Alternatively, you could draw a line on the board with 'acceptable' / 'unacceptable' at opposite ends and ask them to feedback as a class.

Processing

What should happen is that young people will see most of these as not abusive, some even caring and supportive (when they are not) e.g. "he puts notes through my front door just to say he is making sure I am safe". Girls will often see this as caring when it is potentially quite controlling behaviour. "He texts me 100 times a day". Often young people may see this as being cared for and loving.



Activity 3

Alien activity

20 minutes

Purpose

Being able to evaluate and explore what they think makes a healthy relationship and to highlight self awareness in relationships.

Resources

Flip Chart paper for groups of 4
Marker pen
Alien Activity Sheet

What to do

The class has to describe to an alien, who has no understanding of our culture, what are the key features of a good relationship. Ask them to nominate a list-maker for each group. In order to help the groups, get them to split the sheet into physical attributes, personality traits, how they would treat/you would treat each other.

With teenagers, you will get a lot of laughter around the physical attributes. Let them go with it as long as not too offensive as it will help you point out the different expectations of genders and will ease them into the activity.

Processing

All groups, when they feedback, will actually spend longer on what the person should be like in terms of personality and how they treat them. If a group is struggling, get them to look at the flyer 'what would you say a healthy relationship is..?' as this will help them. Get them to feedback their ideas and hand in their flip chart paper. You can choose to write up their ideas or, from the information you have, write a report from the alien in response to what the class came up with (see example of alien report to humans).



Activity 4

Reflection and signposting to advice

5 minutes

Purpose

Who can help me? Where can I go for help?

Resources

Flyer (containing helpful contacts for young people)

What to do

Get each young person to write down or think of three positive things they bring to a relationship.

Hand out flyer on what a good relationship is, and where they can get advice and support if they are in an abusive situation.



Plenary

The film that you watched was made with the help of some young women who took part in the LINX programme in Devon. Its aim is to get you thinking about what love is and what love isn't. You may be in a relationship, or you may be looking forward to being in a relationship sometime in the future, so it's important to think about how you treat others and how you would want to be treated.

1. After watching the film, discuss as a class the following:

How does that kind of relationship affect someone?

Can boys and men be victims of abusive relationships too?

Who would you call or turn to for help?

2. Look at the statistics below

In a survey by Zero Tolerance of men aged between 14 and 21:

1 in 4 thought that hitting a woman was OK if she had slept with someone else

1 in 8 young men thought it would be OK to hit a nagging woman

1 in 10 thought that hitting a disrespectful woman could be justified

19% of young women and 34% of young men did not think that being forced to have sex is rape

What do you think is meant by 'a nagging woman' or a 'disrespectful woman'?

Do these figures surprise you?

Why are young people confused about what constitutes rape?

Make yourself available at the end of the lesson so that your young people can speak to you if they need to.



Domestic abuse Continuum Line

He makes fun of me in front of our friends; sometimes it is so cruel I end up in tears.

Sometimes my girl / boy friend lets me see my friends.

He always goes with me when I go out because he wants to look after me and make sure I am safe.

My ex has mates who watch me and tell on where I go and who I see.

My boy / girl friend sends me at least 100 texts a day to check where I am and who I am with.

Sometimes I am laughed at or ignored if I voice my opinion on religion, sport or Iraq.

Sometimes I am given flowers or taken out for a meal to say sorry after he has been really nasty to me.

He nags at me for eating too much and calls me a fat cow.

My cat disappeared. He said he had fed it to his mate's dog. He laughed and wouldn't tell me if he was joking or not.

Usually my boy / girl friend is loving and caring, but when in a bad mood, he lashes out, shouts and breaks things that belong to me.

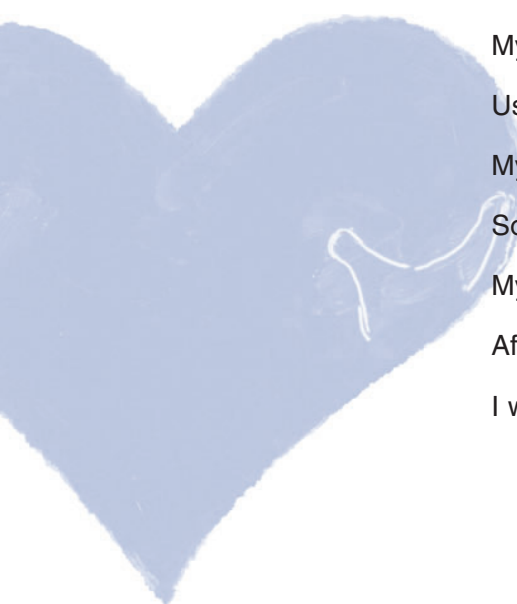
My ex walks up and down my street most nights. He puts notes through the door saying he is just around to make sure that I am safe.

Sometimes he lets me choose the clothes that I want to wear.

My ex phones me several times each day, leaving messages that he/she will hurt themselves if I don't go back to him/her.

After he/she has been really mean to me, he always says sorry and that it is my fault because he loves me so much.

I was hurt really badly after my boy / girl friend found out that I had been out with someone else.



Example of Alien exercise

Report from male humans to alien life force about what a healthy relationship means to them

As you know nothing about relationships between male and female humans, we have written this report to help you understand what we think is important.

At first we spent some time on what physical attributes we liked, with lots of preferences for hair colour, breast size, being attractive and 'fit'. By the end though we all agreed that what a person was like and how they treated us was more important than what they looked like.

We said we would like a girlfriend to have a fun, outgoing personality and to be 'loving' (although we had different ideas about what that means). We thought it was important that she had a sense of humour, but couldn't decide whether that meant she always laughed at our jokes or not. We agreed that there had to be trust in a relationship and talked about abuse in teenage relationships and how trust is a two way thing. We said we wanted someone to still retain their own individuality and enjoy seeing and going out with their friends. This led to us talking about giving each other the space, to be their own person. We also wanted a girlfriend who liked you for who you are, not what you bring.

Some of the male humans felt that they liked a girlfriend to be romantic and a few thought that meant having sex with them, while others didn't. Some said they like to have a girlfriend who was 'dumb' as this was 'cute'. We agreed that a relationship should be equal but some of the views expressed showed that we didn't really think that male humans and female humans were equal.

Report from alien to male humans

On planet ZOG, female aliens are only distinguished by having an extra finger so the alien was a bit confused about all the physical preferences that the male humans had! While the alien admits to having a slight preference for female aliens who are darker green, he was overwhelmed by the demands for 'big boobs, small boobs, long blonde hair' and was completely flabbergasted by what 'fit' means as he thought it referred to being able to run a long way!

The alien understands now that in a healthy relationship you listen to each other, respect that you can have different views and give each other space to be yourself. He likes the idea that human relationships can be loving and supportive and that male humans want to be liked for who they are, not what they have or have to give.

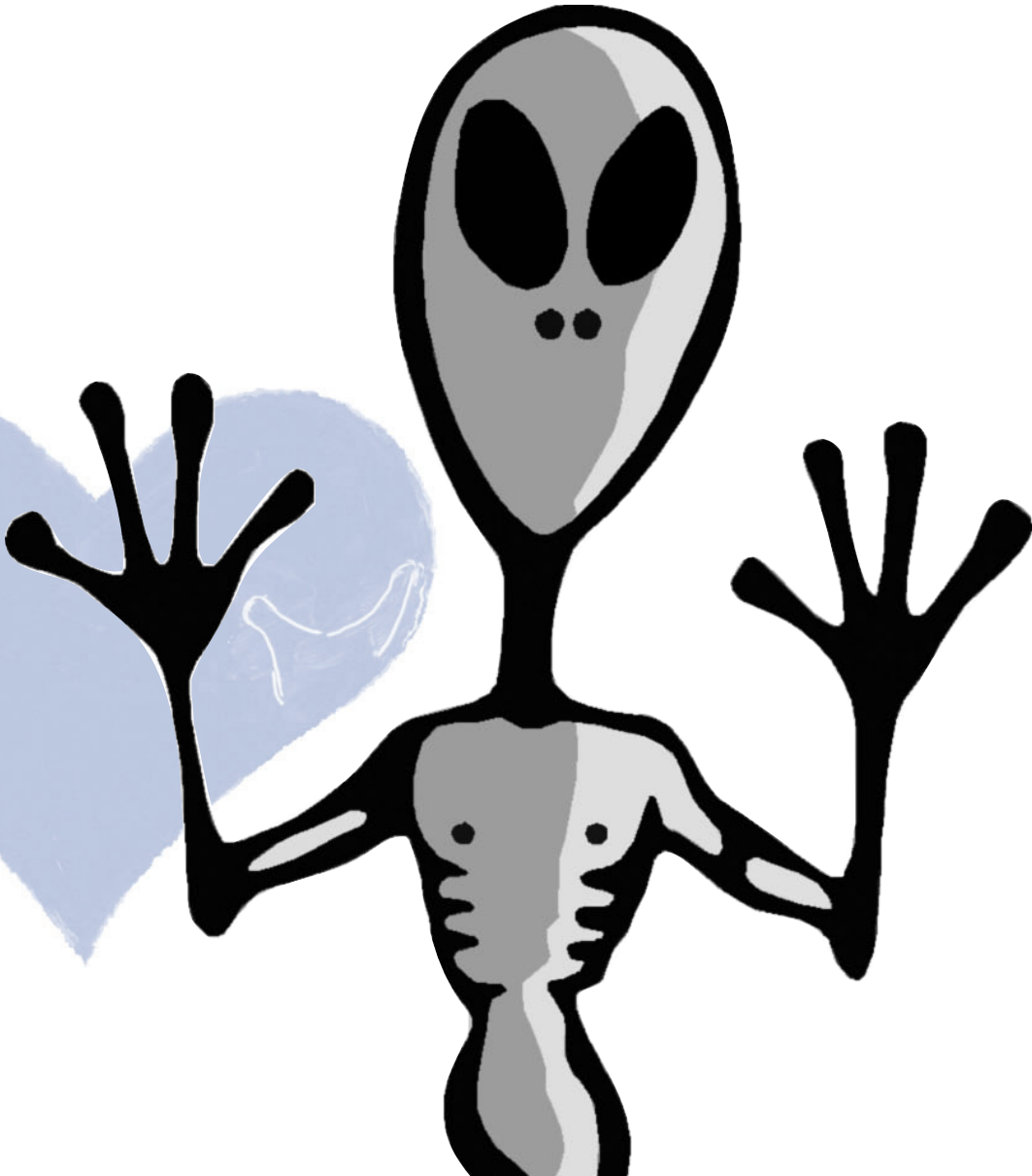
The alien says that he doesn't understand what is 'cute' about being 'dumb'. He wonders whether having a 'dumb' girlfriend is more about the male human having a sense of control and power. He feels that some male humans might feel insecure about their relationships with women so that they have to feel tough. The alien is also confused about what is meant by 'loving' and wonders whether some male humans feel uncomfortable showing their emotions to others.

In conclusion, he doesn't understand this 'sex thing' but from what he has gathered in other reports from male and female humans, he thinks it all sounds very unhygienic! He wonders how male humans have sex if they then view female humans who have had sex themselves as being 'dirty'. This seems very illogical to the alien!

Aliens prefer a nice cup of lava tea.

Alien worksheet

An alien has just landed on our planet and it knows nothing of our culture. Your job is to explain to the alien what makes a good and healthy relationship. You can also tell the alien what you have to offer in a relationship.



Contacts Page

Websites:

The Hideout (for children and young people)
www.thehideout.org.uk

Childline
www.childline.org.uk

Adva Devon (against domestic violence and abuse)
www.adva.org.uk

Domestic Violence and Abuse Service (South Devon)
www.domesticviolenceandabuseservice.org.uk

Stop Abuse for Everyone
www.safe-services.org.uk

National Women's Aid
www.womensaid.org.uk

Interactive Game
www.respect4us.org.uk

Rape Crisis
www.rapecrisis.org.uk

The Survivors Trust
www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Stop it Now!
www.stopitnow.org.uk

RUThinking
www.ruthinking.co.uk

Telephone helplines:

Childline (24/7) **0800 1111**
Connexions **0800 9755 111**
NSPCC (24/7) **0808 800 5000**
National Women's Aid **0808 2000 247**
Devon Sexual Abuse Line **0808 800 0188**

Devon Areas:

East Devon, Exeter and Mid Devon:
Stop Abuse For Everyone
For 24 hour confidential support and information call
01392 667144 or our free local helpline **0800 328 3070**

North Devon (including Torrridge):
North Devon Women's Aid **01271 370079**

South Devon (inc. South Hams, Teignbridge, West Devon):
Domestic Violence & Abuse Service South Devon
Helpline: **01626365087** (10am–5pm Monday to Friday
& 7pm–9pm Wednesday evenings)

Teen abuse surveys

Survey of Great Britain March 2005, 2000 13–19 year olds:

One in five teenage girls have been hit by a boyfriend.

43% think it is acceptable for a boyfriend to get aggressive.

Over 40% of all girls said they would "consider giving a boy a second chance" if he hit them.

6% have been forced to have sex by a boyfriend.

Girls only

31% of girls hit regularly by their boyfriends have seen their parents hit each other.

20% have been hit by their parents. A clear link between girls experiencing domestic abuse in the home and then getting abused by boyfriends.

Two thirds of those who said it was OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend think cheating on a boy gives him the right to get aggressive with his girlfriend.

In a survey carried out by "Zero Tolerance" of 14–21 year old young men:

One in four thought that hitting a woman was OK if she had slept with someone else.

One in eight young men thought it would be OK to hit a nagging woman.

One in ten thought that hitting a disrespectful woman could be justified.

There was confusion amongst young people about the meaning of rape, violence, and consent.

19% of young women and 34% of young men did not think being forced to have sex is rape.

Other reasons that 'make it acceptable' include:

"If she's flirting with someone else" or "if she's been screaming at him".

5% say it's acceptable if she's "dressed outrageously".



What is a healthy relationship?

Respect

Being able to make decisions

Caring

Friendship

Be able to voice your own feelings

Trust

Living without fear

These things are easy to say but what do they actually mean? Often we can recognise that this is how we should behave and be treated in a relationship but find it difficult to find examples. Sometimes people think respect might mean 'that my girlfriend or boyfriend does what I say' but is that really respect? What do we actually mean by being caring? Is caring having to be affectionate even if you don't feel like it? Is caring following someone's every move so that you know where they are so that they are 'safe' or is that about control?



Love isn't

Hitting, pulling, pushing, pulling or threatening

Scaring someone

Fear

Name calling or insults

Throwing things around or towards someone

Feeling intimidated

Jealousy

Often when we are being treated badly, we don't realise that it is out of the norm and is unacceptable. Sometimes people have grown up with being treated in an abusive way so they think that is what a relationship includes. It is important to recognise that we all do some of these things maybe at some point in our life and that doesn't make us an abusive person. It is when these things are done systematically over and over again to one person. It doesn't have to be in a relationship between two young people but can be in how you treat your parents, friends etc.



What is the impact on children and young people?

Some children and young people witness or experience violence within the home. This is called domestic violence or abuse. It can often be between the adults in the home but can include the children and young people and will always have an impact on their development. It can be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking), sexual (e.g. rape), emotional (e.g. constant put downs), financial (not allowed access to money), psychological (e.g. destroying a person's belongings). The effect on children and young people who witness violence within the home can be devastating. They can develop insomnia (not being able to sleep), can develop mental illness, low self esteem, lack of achievement within education, behavioural problems and feelings of isolation.

“She’s upstairs playing on the Wii”

Often in households where there is Domestic Violence, the people involved will say that the children and young people didn't see or hear anything as 'they were in bed or in their rooms'. What we know for a fact is that in domestic violence situations nearly 90% of the children and young people are in the room where it is happening or in the room next door.

Children and young people who have experienced domestic violence are...

Six times more likely to commit suicide.

24 times more likely to commit sexual assault.

60 times more likely to be involved in anti social behaviour.

1000 times more likely to become perpetrators of domestic abuse. ([Strack 2007](#))

This does not mean that children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse will go on to be abusive but it is sobering to think of how much witnessing domestic violence can impact on a young person's life if they do not receive support if they need it. Often those who get involved in youth crime have come from a violent backdrop at home.



What can I do?

Here are some ideas for what you can do if you need support or if you are concerned about someone else and need some advice on what to do.

Talk to someone – this could be a teacher, youth worker, school nurse or phone Childline on **08001111**

Visit **www.thehideout.org.uk** if you are experiencing violence within the home.

Think about what is appropriate in a relationship. It is not appropriate to be hit, punched, constantly criticised, not allowed to express your feelings or see your friends.

Stop the cycle – think about your future children. What sort of a relationship would you like them to see between you and your partner?

