



Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Newsletter
A monthly newsletter brought to you by the
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership

April 2020

In these unprecedented and somewhat scary times, we have decided to continue with our monthly newsletter to keep people up to date about availability of domestic abuse and sexual violence support. We will also be sharing news from our partners.

The key message is that local and national support services are still available – see page 2 for more details on this.

There is a wealth of information available for the public so we have tried to summarise as much as possible. We are also sharing key updates on our social media accounts so do give us a follow at the links below.

If you would like us to include anything in the May edition, especially if you have some good news, then please contact Amanda.Warburton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

I hope everyone is keeping safe.

Julia Cullum
Partnership Manager



April DASV Champions - CANCELLED

Due to the current situation with Corona virus which has led to some venues closing and many agencies advising staff not to attend meetings, we have decided to cancel the April DASV Champions sessions.

We plan to move the topic to the July sessions instead and will advise if July sessions are still happening nearer the time.

DA and SV local support still available

The **IDVAs** are working remotely and doing telephone meetings with clients and are still accepting referrals, including MARAC referrals

For information on how to refer please visit

https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/referral_forms/296136

Professionals can email the Duty IDVA for advice idva.referrals@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Outreach support is still being offered, again this is by telephone

Cambridge City/East Cambs/South Cambs – Cambridge Women's Aid 01223 361214
www.cambridgewa.org.uk

Fenland/Hunts/Peterborough – Refuge 07787 255821

The Victim and Witness Hub continue to pick up all standard risk domestic abuse where consent for support has been given. The team are also working with Women's Aid Peterborough to offer support to medium risk domestic abuse victims.

The **ISVA** Service is also still working with clients by 'phone

<https://www.caprcp.org.uk/isva-service/>

The Elms SARC is still open for victims of sexual violence <https://www.theelmsarc.org/>

Or call 01480 425003

All the national helplines are also still available and many have online chat facilities – please see our website for details of these https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/support_directory/95236

Some good news!

We have had some fabulous news from the Home Office that they are going to continue funding for another year to carry on most of the projects within the CADA (Children affected by Domestic Abuse) project.

The funding will cover:

- Children's workers in the refuges
- Children & Young People ISVA
- Young People's IDVAs
- Embrace counselling
- Bobby Scheme to secure homes of victims
- Specialist Victim Care Coordinator in the Victim and Witness Hub

Support for victims of crime is still available

All victims of crime can still access support from the **Cambridgeshire Victim and Witness Hub** – it is open 8-5pm Monday to Friday and 10-2pm on Saturdays. The majority of staff are working remotely with a skeleton staff in the office answering the 0800 781 6818 freephone number or email: victimandwitnesshub@cambs.pnn.police.uk

Staff are also providing victims and witnesses with the outcomes of remand court hearings.

Specialist Support is also available for **young victims of crime** (who have access to online/phone-based counselling through Embrace) and **migrant victims of exploitation** and for victims experiencing **mental health issues** via the Victim and Witness Hub. Anyone interested in exploring whether restorative justice could help them can also speak to the co-ordinator via the phone but face to face meeting will be held when the crisis is over.

The Bobby Scheme is temporarily closed as the service delivers face to face support. Staff in the Victim and Witness Hub now picking up all referrals to support elderly victims of burglary.

You can also get access to a number of local services, help and advice via the Victims Services website: <https://www.cambsvictimservices.co.uk/>

Update from Parental Conflict Programme

The providers of the Parenting Together Support Programme are continuing to offer therapeutic help by switching from face-to-face therapy to video based sessions until the current emergency is over. Tavistock Relations have contacted all the parents they are currently working with in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and 90% of them have agreed to carrying on sessions via Skype/Zoom/phone call. They have also offered parents the opportunity to have 2 x 30 minute sessions instead of the usual 1 hour and also been super-flexible to fit around timings as families likely to be all together in their homes and different dynamics going on right now.

As more practitioners are working from home and supporting families via video call/telephone, the online referral form will be the version to use from now on. There is obviously a great concern that conflict will heighten (and also where there may not even have been any before) and the DWP have agreed to relax the wet signature during these exceptional times. Therefore, online referrals can be submitted without the signed participation agreement. For more details on this and the difference in gaining consent, please follow [this link](#)

There is more information about this programme, and how Parental Conflict differs from domestic abuse, at https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/reducing_parental_conflict_programme/436818

Update from Innovate and Cultivate Fund

Due to the Coronavirus emergency, the 1 May Innovate & Cultivate Fund application round has been cancelled. Any grant applications submitted for this round will be deferred to the 1 August funding round.

Cambridgeshire County Council is supporting the new **Cambridgeshire Coronavirus Community Fund**. This fast-track emergency fund is offering grants to help local charities, community groups, local authorities and parish councils, to deal with issues affecting older and vulnerable people in our community as a result of the continuing threat of Covid-19. Grants between £1,000 and £5,000 are available for projects that aim to tackle the impact of financial hardship, potential for hunger, lack of shelter, health issues, loneliness, isolation, etc.

You can find more information about the fund, including eligibility and how to apply here:
<https://www.cambscf.org.uk/cambridgeshire-coronavirus-community-fund.html>

Please also spread the word about the appeal, more information here:
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/Coronaviruscommunityfund>

The County Council is also urging organisations that are offering community support with Covid-19 to register on the **Cambridgeshire Directory** so that people can find them. This website makes it really clear to people how to offer help and how to ask for help:
<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/covid-19-coordination-hub-your-community-needs-you>

If your charity / community group / organisation is offering support with Covid-19, please register on the directory and use the tag 'Covid-19'.

Mental Health support

There is a lot of information available about how people can maintain their mental health during the current lockdown situation. A few of the links are below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/our-services/resources/covid-19/health-and-wellbeing/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Safety Planning for those self isolating and social distancing

Advice from organisations:

- Gov UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-victim-and-witness-services>
- Womens Aid: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/>
- Refuge: <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-responds-to-covid-19/>
- Survivors: <https://www.survivorsuk.org/blog/coronavirus-service-notice/>
- Surviving Economic Abuse: <https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Economic-abuse-and-the-coronavirus-outbreak.pdf>
- Child Contact arrangements: <https://rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-information/family-law/coronavirus-and-child-contact-arrangements/>

There are concerns that domestic abuse could escalate during isolation so the advice below is aimed at all practitioners who have clients that may be experiencing domestic abuse. If you are unsure about something or need advice please email the IDVA Service idva.referrals@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Family, Friends and Neighbours

- Code words with family and friends are really important during these times. It may not be easy or safe for the client to call the police but if a pre-arranged safe word or phrase is in place such as "Did I leave my scarf at yours?" it will let that person know the client needs help.
- If they regularly stay in contact with family, ensure they check in by calling or texting daily. If they are aware of what is happening, alert them and let them know if you don't respond within a certain time frame to call the police
- Speak to neighbours if safe to do so and inform them of their situation - suggest that if they put something in the window then they require the Police to be called. (flowers in a vase, lamp, a book or curtains closed or open at a certain time) it's a visual thing for people to see in the window.
- Ask them to call or check in on a daily basis. I.e. talking through the garden or exchanging greetings through the window

Employers

For clients who are employed they could speak to their employer about ways of keeping in touch. They can ask their employer to call them regularly and tell the perpetrator that the workplace has a policy of checking with employees daily

Perpetrator behaviour:

- Ensure you can give accurate info around when/how and why we are required to self isolate and the lockdown situation (perps will lie to victims around the need to remain in the house and not to see or speak to people). So ensure they have links to good websites for correct information.
- Encourage victims to log perpetrators behaviour safely - on their phone or note book or even email it to a friend so it cannot be destroyed. (making out it's a shopping list or a to-do

list.) Write down any controlling behaviour, things she/he is being told, types of abuse, when, time etc.). This could also be done through the Bright Sky app, if you feel that would be a safe option.

- BrightSky App is a discreet app that looks like a weather app to help record pictures, videos or notes to evidence abuse

Leaving/safe contact with professionals

- Tell the perp they are going out to source loo roll or food and that in the current circumstances that may take longer than usual. Use that time to call a national or local support line safely.
- Identify a safe room in the house to flee to and keep a charged mobile on their person at all times if they can.
- If possible hide an old mobile phone in the garden (wrap in a sandwich bag in case it rains) - as long as the garden is accessible from the front. The client may be able to retrieve the phone. Ensure the mobile has emergency contact numbers on it. Alternatively write down (on a piece of paper, not a phone) the immediate safe numbers they may need.
- Plan an escape route.
- ALWAYS take their children with them if they plan to flee/escape. They might struggle to get them back otherwise.
- Ask a trusted person to keep some money for them and to keep a stock of absolute essentials that they might need for a few days such as nappies, formula etc. if they have a baby.

Checking on client's welfare

- Set code words or phrases with clients
- Ask for consent when making calls (or other contact with clients) that you can contact another trusted family member if you are concerned about their safety.
- If the client is pregnant she could make the excuse to contact her midwife and check in that way.
- Some health professionals may still be able to make home visits so see if they can check on client's safety.
- Try to undertake a welfare check, or ask another professional to, without mentioning DV at all
- Try to avoid arguments escalating while they are in the house together.

Stalking:

- General online/social media advice to remind clients and ask their friends/family not to post any personal information online to avoid abuser knowing where they are.
- <https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/tech-abuse-2/resources/> - if you click on pink icon bottom right of screen for tech help there are options to go step by step through various phone location settings, social media security etc
- <https://www.stalkingriskprofile.com/victim-support/cyberstalking>
- <https://www.getsafeonline.org/protecting-your-computer/>

Advice for Perpetrators

Respect are still operating their telephone helplines and offer support for those using abusive behaviour and professionals working with them.

<https://respectphoneline.org.uk/help-for-perpetrators/>

Respect Phoneline **0808 8024040** www.respectphoneline.org.uk

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When the world feels unsafe, don't make your home unsafe.

→ There is no excuse for abuse.

Free to call from landlines, mobile phones and BT payphones. The Respect Phoneline is operated by Respect. Charity number 1141636

Help Lines STANDARD

Covid-19 might cost you your normal routine, don't let your abusive behaviour cost you your relationship.

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Free to call from landlines, mobile phones and BT payphones. The Respect Phoneline is operated by Respect. Charity number 1141636

Help Lines STANDARD

Benefits advice

Essential information on Coronavirus has been issued on the [Understanding Universal Credit website](#). The page contains information about coronavirus and claiming benefits. It will be updated regularly with information on what to do if you are receiving benefits and are affected by coronavirus.

It has information on what to do if people are in work and not claiming benefits, with sections about sick pay eligibility and how to [apply for Universal Credit](#) and/or [New Style Employment and Support Allowance](#). It also has information for those already claiming UC who may need to self-isolate and re-arrange appointments with work coaches.

For more information about any aspect of UC, including how to make a claim, visit the [homepage](#).

COVID-19: Advice and resources for housing providers

The government's stay at home advice in response to the COVID-19 pandemic can create new challenges for people experiencing domestic abuse. Victim/survivors may be at home with their perpetrator and unable to escape from the abuse.

Housing providers are uniquely placed to access people in their homes; their response to domestic abuse is therefore even more important during these times.

The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) have produced guidance for housing providers on how you can offer safe responses to your tenants/service users where it's known they are living with domestic abuse or where new concerns arise.

<https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/resources/information-on-covid-19/>

Covid 19 support/resources for young people

UK Youth and National Youth Agency (NYA) have come together to launch a platform to provide guidance, tools and support for young people and youth workers to keep calm, stay connected and be safe during this time. You can access information and resources at <https://www.ukyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Covid-19-Young-people-final-1.pdf>

The Mix is a support service for young people. They help young people through challenges they're facing - from mental health to money, from homelessness to finding a job, from break-ups to drugs. They have created a number of resources for young people related to COVID-19 which you can find at <https://www.themix.org.uk/> They also have a free, confidential helpline 0808 808 4994.

Centre 33 have advised that they will offer support and information and aim to reduce any sense of isolation by being 'someone to talk to'. However they will have to deliver our services remotely during this time and adapt our individual services:

- High-need young people already accessing support from our 'Someone to Talk to' Service and existing Young Carers will be contacted directly by a project worker to explain changes and will then receive regular calls and communication
- They will be picking up answerphone messages, texts, social media contacts and emails during the week so young people can continue to contact Centre 33 for support and one of the staff members will get back to young people and provide support over the phone rather than face to face. They are also looking into the most appropriate platforms to use for video calling.
- Counselling to young people will be initially on the phone and moving to other secure platforms when possible.
- Any new referrals made to the Young Carers Service during this period will be offered a phone triage, and where appropriate full assessments will be postponed until home/school visits can. Critical to this will be the length of time we are having to respond to Covid 19 and level of demand.

The Kite Trust will continue providing 1-to-1 support to young people via email, telephone, and video calling and investigating other digital platforms. They will also be hosting groups for young people using video calls, and developing other forms of social connection and support over the coming weeks.

The Kite Trust are dedicated to looking out for our wider LGBTQ+ community by preventing the spread of this virus as much as we are able, and offering support to those in need. As schools close, we expect more LGBTQ+ young people to access our services to combat feelings of isolation, to find a space where their identities are affirmed and to continue to explore their sexuality and gender.

Young people who are already accessing services can contact their regular youth worker, and we are able to accept new referrals and enquiries via email at info@thekitetrust.org.uk . Please also get in touch if you are interested in remote volunteering opportunities and we can keep you informed as these develop.

The Hide Out is a website created by Women's Aid and offers support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse <https://thehideout.org.uk/>

Online safety at home for children:

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/support-tools/home-activity-worksheets?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=03cb8440df-TUK_ONLINE_SAFETY_AT_HOME_24_03_20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-03cb8440df-54116321