

COVID-19: Responding to Domestic and Sexual Abuse (DSA)

Safety Planning Advice Sheet

Staff can use this on the phone to make a plan with service users, carers or colleagues. Flag to the safeguarding Hub and manager to escalate anyone you are giving this advice to and offer access to an IDSVA to create a more extensive safety plan.

C&I (SAFEGUARDING HUB)
0203 317 7171

CAMDEN (SAFETY NET)
0207 974 2526

ISLINGTON (SOLACE)
0203 795 5070

DSA & MENTAL HEALTH
People who have contact with with mental health services are much more likely to have had experienced and be at further risk of domestic and sexual abuse.

DSA & COVID-19
'Lockdown' has proven a high risk time for those experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. It limits access to resources and escape. Lockdown has already resulted in increased serious harm and suicide.

ASK!
Remember to ask all service users about their safety and risk from others

Safety Planning

Safe Room

- Think about where is a safe room for you to go in the house if you need. Avoid the kitchen or anywhere there is access to knives or dangerous objects.
- Is there a room with a lock on to give you time to call for help?
- Are there windows you can get out of and/or call for help?

Phone Access

- Make sure you have charge on your phone.
- Can a charger be kept in your 'safe room'?
- Can you buy a small Nokia that you only use to call for help?

Code Word

- Is it helpful to have a code word that you share with a trusted friend and/or your children, if this is age appropriate, so you can safely communicate the need to summon help?

Bag

- Can you prepare a bag (spare clothes/passport/birth certificate/NI number) and hide this somewhere safe at home or with a friend should you need to escape in a hurry?

Money

- Do you have some money put aside if you need to escape in a hurry?

Police

- Are the police aware this is a house where domestic abuse may occur?
- Are you willing to give permission to others to call the police?

Refuge

- Would you consider a refuge at any point?
- Is there anyone else you can stay with temporarily?

Timeout

- Are you allowed out and can you attend appointments if we make one for you?
- If you are the one that is doing shopping during Covid-19 perhaps this the time to reach to others and seek support

Children

- Ensure they know what to say when they call for help.
- Do they know where to go if there is increased danger?
- Please let the school and social services know that you may need help due to home situation

Anything else I haven't asked? Can I refer you to a DV service?

NOT SAFE TO TALK?

Can you safely text?
Send local and/or national domestic abuse numbers to them and agree a safe way to do this (ie. text the number backwards).

Can you safely access the internet:
encourage them to google the Women's Aid Live Chat and speak to someone.

Immediate danger:
Ask if they would like you to ring 999 or if they are able to themselves.

Silent calls to police can be made by dialling 999 , then 55, if they can't talk.

SUPPORT DETAILS

National Domestic Violence Helpline:
0808 2000 247

Rape Crisis:
0808 802 9999

LGBT+Domestic Abuse Helpline
0800 999 5428
help@galop.org.uk

Men's Advice Line
0808 801 0327
info@mensadviceline.org.uk