
Children and Young People in Lancashire 2013

JSNA Article: CYP & Domestic Abuse

Intelligence for Healthy Lancashire (JSNA)



Background

Domestic Violence

The protection of children in England progress report by Lord Laming (2009) clearly outlines that: “*Domestic Violence is a consistent feature of serious case reviews...demonstrating how seriously they put children at risk of significant harm*”

Children who live with domestic abuse are more likely to experience a wide variety of mental health, social and educational problems than other children (differences that cannot be explained by other factors such as socioeconomic status and other forms of childhood abuse):

- Domestic violence may intensify in pregnancy and is associated with premature labour, low birth weight, foetal trauma, delayed prenatal care and child behavioural problems¹;
- Children whose mothers experience domestic abuse in the child's first year of life have more difficult temperaments at age one;²
- Witnessing domestic abuse at any age of childhood is linked to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, aggression, antisocial behaviour, and academic difficulties throughout the course of childhood and adolescence;³
- It is also linked to depression, domestic abuse, child maltreatment and alcohol dependence in later adulthood;⁴
- The mental development of children exposed to domestic abuse during the first two years is particularly affected; they have IQ scores that are, on average, 7.25 points lower than those who were not exposed;⁵
- Approximately two-thirds (63%) of child witnesses show more emotional or behavioural problems than the average child;⁶

In Lancashire districts, there were 30,187 domestic abuse related calls to the police between April 2012 – March 2013, an increase of 2.3% in the same period the previous year, and of these,

- 15,743 children lived in households where the police were called to a domestic abuse incident, of which 12,131 children were referred to LCCs Care Connect team for Domestic Abuse related issues
- 2,868 children were in households where a MARAC⁷ took place.
- domestic abuse refuges accommodated 475 children in the same period, but were unable to accommodate 1013 children

In addition, national evidence shows

- Six per cent of young adults report witnessing in childhood one parent being kicked, choked or beaten up by the parent's partner or ex;⁸
- 12 per cent of children under 11 report witnessing domestic abuse;⁹

¹ Jasinski JL, 'Pregnancy and domestic violence: A review of the literature', *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 5, 2004, pp47–64; Flach C, Leese M, Heron J, Evans J, Feder G, Sharp D and Howard L, 'Antenatal domestic violence, maternal mental health and subsequent child behaviour: a cohort study', *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, published online 22 June 2011

² Burke JG, Lee, LC and O'Campo P, 'An exploration of maternal intimate partner violence experiences and infant general health and temperament', *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 12, 2008, pp172–79

³ Evans SE, Davis C, DeLillo D 'Exposure to domestic violence: A meta-analysis of child and adolescent outcomes' 2008

⁴ Roustit C, et al 'Exposure to interparental violence and psychosocial maladjustment in adult life' 2010

⁵ *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2012 – measured using short forms of standard IQ tests

⁶ *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*; Kitzmann KM, et al; 'Child witnesses to domestic violence: A meta-analytic review' 2003

⁷ MARAC – a multi agency risk assessment conference to discuss risk reduction approaches – top 10% of DA cases at significant risk of harm or death

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ *Ibid*

- 70 per cent of high-risk victims of domestic abuse have children;¹⁰
- 94 per cent of domestic abuse children witness is from a male to a female parent or stepparent (3.6 per cent is reciprocal and 2.5 per cent is from a woman to a man);¹¹
- A recent audit of 70 local authority child protection/children in need files where domestic violence was a feature found that in 41 % of cases the adult victim had been pregnant at the time of being abused;¹²
- domestic abuse is a factor in two thirds of cases where children have been killed or seriously injured¹³
- Nearly three quarters of children (75%) on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs¹⁴
- Every year, 23,500 children stay in refuges in England¹⁵
- Of 1000 women living in refuges, 70% of their children had also received physical violence from the abusive parent¹⁶
- Women that are being abused are 6 times more likely to have a child deemed at risk¹⁷
- Domestic violence was a feature of child protection cases with the worst outcomes¹⁸
- In the last 10 years, it is estimated that 50 children have been murdered during contact visits from a violent father¹⁹

Data

Recent research by NSPCC²⁰ states that children who have witnessed violence between their parents or other family members are:

- four times as likely to carry a weapon, such as a knife, or hurt someone badly than their peers;
- three times as likely to take drugs, steal, spray graffiti or bully others than their peers;
- twice as likely to get drunk or get into fights than their peers; and
- five times more likely to run away from home than their peers.

Over half (56%) of children from violent homes show three or more of these kinds of disruptive behaviours whilst at secondary school. The damaging impact is even seen in primary school children. Five to 10 year olds from violent or abusive homes are two to four times more likely to hit, slap or push other children; pick on others or break, damage or destroy someone else's belongings. Victims of domestic abuse in Lancashire-14 (Table 1) are most likely to be females aged between 18 and 31 years old. This has been a consistent pattern over the last 3 years.

¹⁰ Flach C, Leese M, Heron J, Evans J, Feder G, Sharp D and Howard L, 'Antenatal domestic violence, maternal mental health and subsequent child behaviour: a cohort study', *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology*, published online 22 June 2011

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Family Rights Group, *Working with risky fathers*, London: Family Rights Group, 2011

¹³ Home Office report: Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2008/09 Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2008/09

¹⁴ Department of Health, 2002

¹⁵ Women's Aid 2002

¹⁶ Bowker 1988

¹⁷ Stark and Flitcraft 1986

¹⁸ Farmer and Owen 1995

¹⁹ Women's Aid 2002

²⁰ NSPCC research illustrates the consequences of children witnessing domestic violence
<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed9821>

Table 1: Domestic Abuse by Victim Age Group, 2009/10 compared to 2011/12

Victim Age Group	2009/10 (%)	2011/12 (%)
0-10 years	0.6	0.8
11-17 years	2.2	2.4
18-24 years	27.4	26.5
25-31 years	21.3	22.2
32-38 years	17.8	15.7
39-45 years	15.3	15.2
46-52 years	8.6	9.2
53-59 years	3.5	4.0
60+ years	3.2	3.9

Source: Lancashire Constabulary

A number of studies have suggested that annually around 1 woman in 10 will experience domestic violence. This would suggest that, in Lancashire-12, nearly 48,000 women will experience domestic violence in any one year. This is likely to be a conservative estimate as domestic violence may not even be reported to surveys. Research has suggested that for half those experiencing domestic violence there are children aged under 16 in the household. If an average of 2 children per woman is assumed, then we may have around 48,000 children living with domestic violence in Lancashire-12 in any given year.

Table 2: Number of Domestic Incidents Involving Children reported to the Police

Year	Blackpool and Fylde	Lancaster and Wyre	Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire	Preston	Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	Lancashire -14
2009/2010	2,771	1,897	1,994	1,755	2,373	2,455	13,245
2010/2011	3,262	2,170	1,765	1,919	2,488	2,666	14,270
2011/2012	2,976	2,026	2,256	1,860	2,451	2,424	13,993
2012/2013	3,142	2,576	2,542	2,117	2,997	2,477	15,743

Source: Lancashire Constabulary

Table 3: Referrals of Children to LCC Contact and Referral Team (CART) for Domestic Violence

District	Apr 12	May 12	Jun 12	Jul 12	Aug 12	Sep 12	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	Mar 13	Total 12/13
Burnley	103	132	103	86	113	86	90	100	69	89	50	73	1,094
Hyndburn/Ribble Valley	91	154	104	127	132	3	245	141	108	146	124	47	1,422
Pendle	70	117	75	94	79	83	66	67	66	91	50	49	907
Rossendale	43	58	44	42	44	55	35	41	30	44	26	27	489
Preston	99	157	79	66	124	125	87	99	65	118	103	110	1,232
Chorley/South Ribble	189	225	228	212	219	155	187	204	124	272	165	173	2,353
West Lancs	95	136	109	124	102	51	90	82	99	103	105	62	1,158
Lancaster	98	170	116	139	143	138	130	107	110	208	111	101	1,571
Fylde/ Wyre	143	211	156	165	174	176	164	146	130	175	146	113	1,899
Lancashire-12	931	1,360	1,014	1,055	1,130	872	1,094	987	801	1,246	880	755	12,125

Source: Lancashire County Council Contact and Referral Team

The role of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing across agencies to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase the safety of victims. All cases assessed as high-risk are referred to the MARAC, such as serious harm or death cases.

Caseload equates to 10% of domestic abuse victims. In Lancashire-12 between July 2011 to June 2012 there were 1,387 MARAC cases (2,190 pan-Lancashire). Children are exposed to this abuse in the home and there were 1,906 CYP included in these MARAC cases. (2,905 pan-Lancashire)

Areas for concern

With the number of domestic incidents involving children reported to the police increasing by 16% since 2009/10, effective intervention should be taking place earlier to reduce the growing number of serious cases where domestic violence is a factor.