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Social Work & Domestic Abuse

Part of the
BASW Professional Practice Webinar Series



Welcome

Sarah McMillan, Professional Officer, Scottish Association of Social Work

Presenters:



- **Susie Dalton**, Children and Young People's Policy Officer, Scottish Women's Aid - *Impact of coercive control on children and young people*



- **Anna Mitchell**, UK Lead, Safe & Together Institute - *Supporting survivors and principles of the Safe & Together™ Model*

- **Rachael Barnes**, Social Worker, Safer Families Edinburgh - *Working with perpetrators*



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**Domestic abuse
and child welfare:**
a practice guide
for social workers

www.basw.co.uk/resources/domestic-abuse-and-child-welfare-practice-guide-social-workers-0

Johnson's Typologies

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Situational Couple Violence

- *Perpetrated in equal numbers by men and women*
- *Violence that is expressive*

Intimate Terrorism

- *Perpetrated overwhelmingly by men*
- *violence that is functional/instrumental*

Violent Resistance

- *Perpetrated overwhelmingly by women*

The impact of coercive control on children and young people

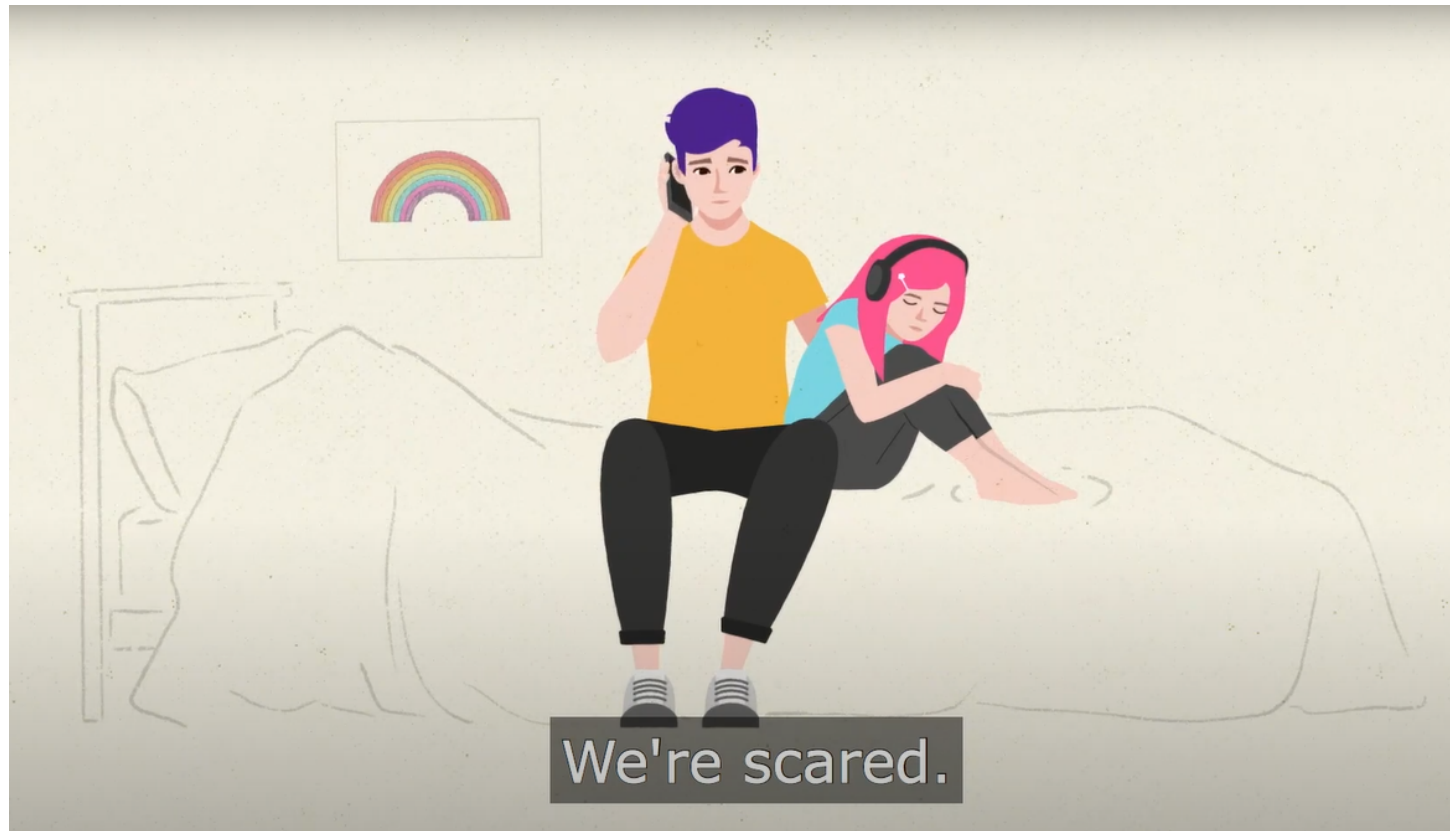
Susie Dalton

Children and Young People's Policy Officer, Scottish Women's Aid



 scottish
women's
aid

Animation: When home is not safe



How do children experience domestic abuse and coercive control?

Very similar experiences to women, but some specific to children and young people

Abuser may be directly – physically, emotionally, psychologically and/or sexually - abusive to the child

Experiencing control and/or violence to their mothers may have an abusive and detrimental impact on the children concerned



Coercive control and children

'Domestic Abuse is a parenting choice'

- » Control of time and resources
- » Deprivation of resources
- » Isolation from outside world
- » Limited opportunities to choose, to feel free, and to develop a sense of independence and competence (*Emma Katz, 2015*)

Domestic abuse can profoundly disrupt a child's environment, undermining their stability and damaging their physical, mental and emotional health.

(Child Protection Guidance 2014)



Roles Children May Assume

- » Caretaker
- » Pawn
- » Forced witness to violent acts
- » Message carrier
- » Secret keeper
- » Shame bearer
- » Scapegoat
- » Target – including in utero
- » Mother's confidante
- » Abuser's confidante
- » Abuser's ally
- » Perfect child
- » Referee



Experiencing, not just witnessing



Coercive control and covid-19

- » Increases in calls to Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline, and Childline – tip of iceberg
- » Domestic abuse not **caused** by coronavirus
- » ...but lockdown measures are giving perpetrators increased opportunities for harm and control

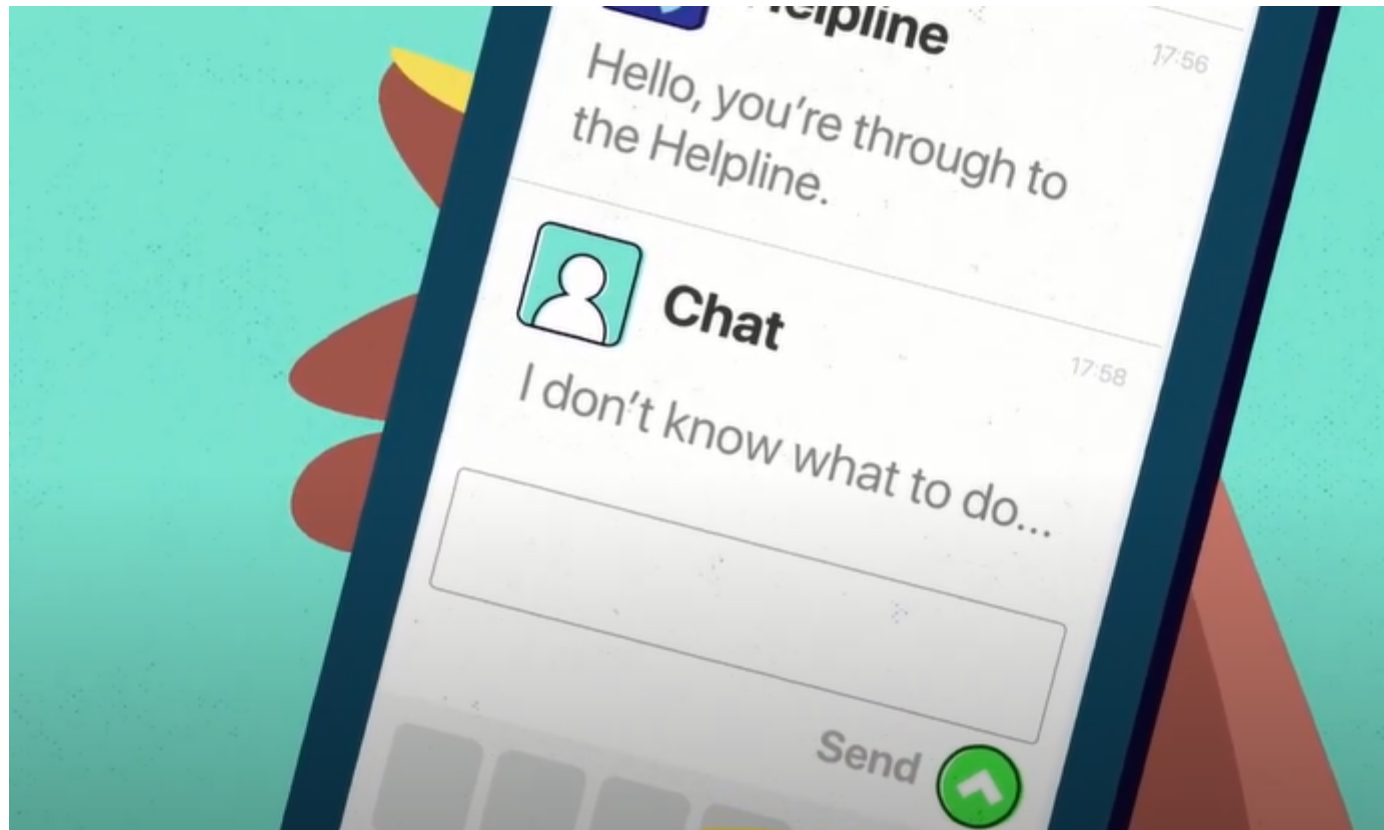


Areas for increased attention

- » Children and young people living with perpetrators
 - How do we know if risk has increased?
- » Child contact
 - How do we respond to abusers exploiting government guidance?
- » Young people experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships
 - What specific pressures are they under?



Animation: You are not alone



“When people don’t listen to me it feels like they think you aren’t a person, you’re not good enough. It’s even worse when that person is in power. It like I’m nothing. It affects my self-esteem. Makes me think that everything that has happened is my fault.” (Everyday Heroes)



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Anna Mitchell,
UK Lead, Safe & Together Institute

*Supporting survivors and principles of the Safe &
Together TM Model*

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Rachael Barnes

Social Worker, Safer Families Edinburgh

Working with perpetrators

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Questions



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Closing Remarks

**Sarah McMillan, Professional Officer,
Scottish Association of Social Workers**