

1. How do boys and girls experience violence?

49% of those in a recent romantic relationship had experienced violent or controlling behaviours from their partner

31% had experienced physical or sexual violence

20% reported being forced/pressured into sexual activities

19% experienced physical violence

17% had explicit images or videos shared online without their consent

27% had seen or received threats of sexual assault online

[> YEF Report 2024](#)

2. Red flags

Emotional abuse – controlling behaviour (who they see, where they go, what to wear), or blaming the person for their reactions and responses.

Online abuse – bullying and threats to post personal or intimate photos or information.

Sexual abuse - Pressuring to have sex or to do things a person does not want to.

Physical abuse – any violence towards a person (or threats to hurt a person or someone close to them).

Power and control - monitoring phone messages/calls and social media accounts, preventing/discouraging seeing family and friends, or attending education or work.

3. The impact on young people: (applicable to victim and perpetrator)

- Changes in personality and emotional dysregulation – withdrawn, anxious, explosive tempers, fear, extreme jealousy and possessiveness.
- Changes in appearance – hair, clothing, makeup.
- Poorly developed social networks or a change in peer group perhaps leading to anti-social behaviours.
- Under performance in education/work-place.
- Missing from home episodes.
- Physical injuries, self-harm or frequently unwell.

4. Young persons views

Use of language – “toxic” instead of “abuse” was a term recognisable to young people.

Many young people describe barriers to seeking support as fear and embarrassment.

Young people keep these incidents within their peer group, talking to friends rather than parents, carers or other adults.

Healthy/Unhealthy Relationship education and awareness raising is needed (advice, space and time to reflect).

[> YEF Report 2024, page 26](#)

5. What can I do?

Your approach to conversations should be holistic, working with the whole person including family and professionals.

Practitioner/young person relationship is the foundation for support, especially where support networks are complex or limited for the young person.

Support should be in a safe and judgement-free environment.

Responses should be supportive to facilitate accountability, and include behaviour change work with perpetrators where necessary.

[> Be knowledgeable to DA Act Guidance \(paragraphs 22-27\)](#)

[> Gain understanding of what technology abuse is and share with young people to raise awareness](#)

6. The Law

The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) provides a statutory definition of Domestic Abuse “aged 16 or over” and a [Plan](#) to tackle it.

[> DA Protection Notice and Protection Orders are available.](#)

Local Authorities have a duty to provide accommodation-based support to victims/survivors.

[> Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

[> Statutory Guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

7. Further Information

[> University of Bristol Research](#)

[> NSPCC](#)

[> Childline](#)

[> LoveRespect \(available for 14-24 year old\)](#)

[> NIDAS](#)

[> Norfolk & Suffolk Victim Care](#)

[> Respect Not Fear](#)

[> Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[> Norfolk County Council education resources](#)