



# TOP TIPS

## For working with children and young people affected by Domestic Abuse

The FJYPB have devised some top tips for professionals working with children and young who have experience of and been affected domestic abuse.

1

- Make sure that the child knows that it is **not their fault** and they are **not responsible** for the protection of others.

2

- Focus on the child's experience, not just that of their parents.

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- Ask the child if they feel safe and if not, what will make them feel safe.

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- Children may not have seen a specific incident, but they may have heard it or have been exposed to the after effects. Remember this can be just as terrifying for a child.

5

- Recognise that many children and young people will be very worried and scared about the parent who is the victim of domestic violence and may want to protect them. This could mean putting themselves in harm's way.

6

- Realise that children may be able to recognise the warning signs before abuse happens and they may need advice as to how to assess support at this point rather than after an incident has taken place.

7

- Understand that some children may not recognise a parent's (perpetrator's) actions as abusive and they may want to protect them.

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- Just because a child does not permanently live in the situation does not mean that they are not exposed to domestic abuse or affected by it. Understand that the impact on the child may have a long-term affect.

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- Be aware that the way parents act in front of a professional is not always the same as how they are at home with the child.

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- Be aware that some children and young people may be embarrassed about what is happening or what has happened.

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- Understand that certain cultures may be less likely to speak out about domestic violence.

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- Let the child fully express their emotions, including what they think, feel and want to happen.

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- Explain to the child the different types of abuse and talk about what a healthy relationship should be like.

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- Encourage the child or young person to get support, make them aware of the services available to them and help them access the support. Each child needs to know whom they can contact if they feel scared.

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- Think about any other children and young people who are in a new relationship with the violent parent (e.g. step-children).

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- Young people could be experiencing abuse within their own personal relationships, not just in their family.

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- Do not assume that a child will fully understand what confidentially means, make sure they know what information is confidential and what you will need to share and with whom. Also consider what is the impact likely to be on the child as a result of you sharing the information.