

1 BACKGROUND

Child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA) is the most hidden and stigmatised form of family violence. It is also much misunderstood by agencies and professionals. CAPVA is also vastly under reported due to the stigma felt by parents living with an abusive child. Parents and carers often feel guilt and shame when their child is abusive and violent towards them.

2 WHAT IS CHILD AND ADOLESCENT TO PARENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

Child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA) is a form of family abuse where children and adolescents use a range of harmful behaviours towards parents or caregivers to get their own way, hurt or punish, communicate distress and/or control their environment. It can have serious short- and long-term implications in relation to parent and child/adolescent physical and emotional wellbeing, as well as having a detrimental impact on family relationships. CAPVA is also highly gendered, with mothers much more likely to be victims, and sons more likely to come to the attention of services. However, both sons and daughters abuse both mothers and fathers. Identification of a child involved in CAPVA should warrant a referral to children's social care as a safeguarding precaution.

3. WHY IT MATTERS

The impact is extremely severe, debilitating, isolating and often parents and carers do not know how to start to tackle it. Emotional and physical abuse are both part of the picture. Parents often feel ashamed of the situation which can also prevent them from reporting they often see it as *their* failure to control the child. The dynamic can also impact on parents' and young people's space, movement and personal agency and on their relationships with one another. For young people, their education and life chances can also be affected. In the most severe cases, parents and their children may even be separated, with young people taken into local authority, or even institutional, care.

4. THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

CAPVA is becoming more widely recognised in the UK and internationally as a 'growing social problem'. Studies drawing on crime and service data are useful in understanding the prevalence of more severe violence and abuse towards parents, although typically underestimate the size of the problem, representing only those cases where parents have sought help for the issue. Violence and abuse towards parents does not end at age 18, with adults also responsible for fatal and non-fatal violence towards parents. Early research exploring the relationships between various forms of interpersonal violence suggest that CAPVA could be a 'stepping stone' between experiences of interparental violence and later violence towards intimate partners.

5. WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

CAPVA does not comfortably 'sit' within any of the main service areas, where the focus is more typically on the protection of children from parents, or responding to young people's violence outside of the home. Approaches to addressing CAPVA are highly varied, dependent upon the availability and visibility of specialist programmes and the framing of parents, young people and the issue itself by agencies and practitioners. Where there is evidence or concerns regarding CAPVA please refer as always in first instance to the MASH team.

6. NATIONAL SUPPORT

Respect lists CAPVA support providers in a specialist directory for parents and practitioners. Holes in the Wall – A blog focusing on CAPVA created by social worker and CAPVA expert, Helen Bonnick. The blog is aimed at parents, professionals and academics. CAPA First Response – An organisation focusing on CAPVA, providing information and support for parents and professionals. Family Lives – An organisation providing information and support around CAPVA. PEGS (Parental Education Growth Support) PEGS is a social enterprise set up to support parents, carers and guardians who are experiencing Child to Parent Abuse (including those with adult offspring).

7. FURTHER INFORMATION AND READING

Sandwell Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse Information guide and Flowchart