

# **COVID-19: Update on Community Safety Trends/Risks and Support Service Offers**

- **Domestic Violence and Abuse:** Devon Domestic Abuse Support Service (Splitz) and Operation Encompass
- **Problem Drinking and Problem Drug Use:**
  - Devon Drug and Alcohol Service – Adults (Together)
  - Devon Drug and Alcohol Service – Children and Young People (Y-Smart)
- **Devon Youth Services** (SPACE and Young Devon)
- **Health Visiting and Public Health Nursing**
- **Victim Support Services** (Victim Support and Victim Care Unit)
- Update on **Exploitation**

# Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) Services

**Domestic Violence and Abuse Services** remain open for new referrals and continue to provide access to support for those who are experiencing domestic abuse through **telephone and online support** only.

## **PUBLIC CAMPAIGN:**

A few weeks ago a public campaign was launched for those experiencing domestic abuse. The first phase of the campaign focused on reassuring victims that they are not on their own and that help and support is available.

The campaign landing page can be accessed here:

<https://victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/Latest-campaigns/>

## **TRENDS:**

There has been an increase in the number of calls from:

- Perpetrators seeking support to change their behaviour.
- Parents who are experiencing abuse from their child.
- Professionals wanting advice and guidance on how best to support their clients experiencing DVA.

## **CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:**

### **Victims**

- MARACs are operating virtually and high risk victims (14 plus on DASH Risk Assessment) will be supported by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA).
- Victims who score between 6-13 on the DASH Risk Assessment should be referred to Splitz [referrals.devon@splitz.org.cjsm.net](mailto:referrals.devon@splitz.org.cjsm.net)
- Self referrals and victims who score 5 and below should be referred to **Victim Support (see slide 9)**

### **Perpetrators**

- People who perpetrate abusive behaviour can call the **Respect Phoneline Freephone [0808 8024040](tel:0808 8024040)** for advice and support to help them stop being violent and abusive. Frontline workers supporting perpetrators to change are also welcome to contact Respect for support and advice on the same helpline. The helpline is open 9am-5pm Monday-Friday.

### **Information and guidance for professionals**

- A range of toolkits are available to download from <https://www.splitz.org/resources/talk-toolkits.html>
- **All general enquiries can be emailed to [admin.devon@splitz.org](mailto:admin.devon@splitz.org) or a message can be left on 07436795195.** Splitz Support Service cannot guarantee an immediate response to the phone number and so callers will need to leave a clear message and wait for a response.
- **All specific enquiries for a named person must be emailed to [admin.devon@splitz.org](mailto:admin.devon@splitz.org) from a work email.** This gives us time and space to undertake the necessary security checks and respond in an appropriate manner.
- An hour telephone/video conferencing slot with an experienced DVA professional will be available soon for frontline professionals to discuss how they can best support children experiencing DVA or how to work with the perpetrator.

# Operation Encompass

 OPERATION  
ENCOMPASS



Operation Encompass remains in place to support children who have witnessed a domestic abuse incident:

- For children attending their usual school information will be shared as per the normal process.
- For children attending an alternative school, work will be done to establish which school the child is attending, with contact then being made.
- For children not attending school we will continue sharing information with the school as normal to assist the school in evaluating the child's vulnerability.

## RISKS:

During the lockdown children who witness domestic abuse in the household are increasingly vulnerable, particularly without the safety and support that school can provide.

## OUR CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

### Calls to schools:

- All calls are sent to school landlines in the first instance. If a Trained Adult is not available the call can be taken by any teacher who has received safeguarding training. Messages are now being left on school answerphones if the call is not answered. Due to these measures calls may be delivered later in the school day than usual.
- Where incidents are significant and direct contact with the school has been unsuccessful the DSL/Key Adults will be contacted to pass on this information.

### Teachers' Helpline: **07562 250 050** (standard mobile call rates apply)

- A Teacher's Helpline has been set up to support teachers, operating from 8:30 – 10:00 am, Monday to Friday, and is staffed by a Child and Educational Psychologist or Clinical Psychologist. It will run until the end of the summer term or when schools return to normality, whichever is first.
- Calls are confidential and are provided to enable teachers to seek advice and support following an Operation Encompass call. There is no charge for the advice provided.
- This Helpline has been funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

# Y-Smart Drug and Alcohol Service for under 18s



In response to the current situation, **Y-Smart drug and alcohol service for young people** remains open for new referrals and is continuing to support those already in the service. **If you are working with a young person who is in difficulty with drugs or alcohol, or is affected by family substance use and needs support please contact us on (01271) 388162 or (01392) 385637 or find more information on our website at [www.y-smart.org.uk](http://www.y-smart.org.uk)**

## OUR OFFICES:

- Are closed to the public currently, although are still being accessed by staff and appointments by arrangement. They are not currently manned during all office hours. Young people can be seen in their own communities by arrangement.
- **Our telephone lines are manned during office hours Monday to Friday on the above numbers.**

## RISKS:

- Traditional drug supplies are becoming less accessible. Some service users may source alternative substances, which may lead to behavioural changes.
- Costs of illicit drugs are increasing which will increase the risk of acquisitive crimes.
- Some of our more vulnerable young people may be at greater risk of exploitation and links with drug supply.
- Young people who are socially isolated, may be increasingly at risk of low mood and anxiety.

## OUR CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

### We continue to:

- Accept new referrals, with initial screening provided over the phone, and assessments completed virtually wherever possible. Face to face appointments are still available where necessary, provided families and staff are able to be appropriately safeguarded.
- Carry out visits to young people and their families in the community and in schools, by arrangement, where a 'virtual visit' is not deemed suitable or there are increased concerns.
- Prioritise our most vulnerable clients for increased contact during this time.
- Assist with statutory appointments for both Youth Offending Service and Childrens Social Work.
- Provide advice and information to schools supporting vulnerable students and assist with the Early Help daily triage to ensure young people and their families get help where and when they most need it.
- Analyse emerging themes/risks and work with partners to respond.

# Together Drug and Alcohol Service for over 18s

**Together Drug and Alcohol Service** remains open for new referrals and is continuing to support those who are already in the service. If you are working with someone who is in difficulty with drugs or alcohol and needs support please contact us on **0800 233 5444** or visit [www.edp.org.uk](http://www.edp.org.uk)

## OUR OFFICES:

- Our satellite sites are currently closed.
- Our main hubs in **Bideford (Longbridge House), Newton Abbot (Templar House) and Exeter (Magdalen Road)** remain open (manned by minimal staff) and are accessible only by appointment, with the drop-in service currently suspended. Should someone present to the service without an appointment we will screen them and provide support/advice as necessary.

## RISKS:

- During the pandemic traditional drug supplies have declined in accessibility. Public Health England report that this may lead service users to source alternative substances, which may result in behavioural changes.
- Costs of illicit drugs are increasing which may increase the risk of acquisitive crimes.

## OUR CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

### We continue to:

- Accept new referrals. We are completing all assessments by phone unless face to face is necessary.
- Provide structured interventions over the phone.
- We are no longer providing group work or our flourish cafes, but are looking at ways that we can set these up virtually.
- Deliver prescriptions to the most vulnerable. However where it is unsafe for staff members to do so we are having to reconsider this option. We expect these numbers will be very low and are committed to doing all we can to provide this support where needed.
- Work with partners to provide Naloxone and Needle Exchange packs.

### Updates:

- We are finalising our detox procedure and will share this with partners.
- We recognise that there may be an increase in prison leavers over the coming weeks, and are defining a pathway specifically for these to support those that are most vulnerable. Partners will be updated.
- Please contact us if you would like more Naloxone stock to hold for administering. We are also exploring how we can support you in dispensing Naloxone for those who you see fit to dispense to. Please contact us for training to assist with this.



# Youth Services: DYS Space



In response to the current situation, **DYS Space** has adapted its service offer and remains open for new referrals. Contact Space on: **01392 662112** during office hours.

## **RISKS:**

Restricted movement and social contact is putting young people at greater risk, including where home may not be a safe place. Increases in domestic violence, drug and alcohol consumption and loss of income create significant risks.

## **OUR CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:**

### **We continue to:**

- Provide one-to-one targeted youth work for young people referred for additional support through text/phone/video call.
- Provide Street Based Youth Engagement to support young people who are gathering in their communities, educate them about the risks of COVID-19 and identify young people who may not feel safe at home. Please contact [lisa.rutter@spacepsm.org](mailto:lisa.rutter@spacepsm.org) if you would like to report groups of young people gathering.

### **Updates**

- We have launched a new [Digital Youth Work offer](#) which provides:
  - **Virtual Youth Club** and **Video Group meetings** for youth centre members
  - **Share Your Story** for any young person struggling with the lockdown
  - **Speak to a Youth Worker** – young people who would like to speak to a youth worker can complete an online form to be contacted.
- We have also launched a [funding campaign](#) to provide equipment to help young people get online and connect with friends and trusted youth workers.
- Our community support team are helping to secure funding to offer fast-track grants to voluntary sector youth clubs at financial risk due to the pandemic. They are also offering weekly video conference calls to support the sector and deliver virtual youth work training.
- [Chances](#) (Dawlish) remains open and is also conducting telephone outreach work.

# Youth Services: Young Devon



Most of our Young Devon bases are closed but we can still be contacted for support or advice:

- **General enquiries:** [info@youngdevon.org](mailto:info@youngdevon.org)
- **Wellbeing support for young people:** contact our counsellors through [wellbeingenquiries@youngdevon.org](mailto:wellbeingenquiries@youngdevon.org). Anyone already being supported through our Wellbeing Service can contact us through [yes.exeter@youngdevon.org](mailto:yes.exeter@youngdevon.org) or **07935364652** (leave a message with your name and contact number)
- **Participation enquiries:** our team are working remotely and our Youth Council is meeting through video calls. To get involved email: [participation@youngdevon.org](mailto:participation@youngdevon.org).

# Health Visiting and School Nursing

The Health Visiting & School Nursing service is still **open as normal** between Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm, in order to continue to be responsive and to offer support to children, young people and their families at this time. Contact details are provided below.

## HOW TO CONTACT US:

Email or phone our Public Health Nursing Hubs, where a Health Visitor or School Nurse will respond:

- **Eastern** (East Devon, Cullompton, Tiverton)
  - Jerrard Wing, Honiton Hospital
  - Tel: **0333 234 1903**; Email: [rde-tr.EasternPHNhub@nhs.net](mailto:rde-tr.EasternPHNhub@nhs.net)
- **Exeter** (Exeter and Crediton)
  - Franklyn House, Exeter
  - Tel: **0333 234 1902**; Email: [rde-tr.ExeterPHNhub@nhs.net](mailto:rde-tr.ExeterPHNhub@nhs.net)
- **Northern** (North Devon, Torrington, Okehampton)
  - Taw View, Civic Centre, Barnstaple
  - Tel: **0333 234 1904**; Email: [rde-tr.NorthernPHNhub@nhs.net](mailto:rde-tr.NorthernPHNhub@nhs.net)
- **Southern** (Teignbridge, South Hams, Tavistock)
  - Lescaze Offices, Dartington
  - Tel: **0333 234 1901**; Email: [rde-tr.SouthernPHNhub@nhs.net](mailto:rde-tr.SouthernPHNhub@nhs.net)

People can also text us for health advice/information on **07520 631721** (not for appointment queries).

Young people can contact a school nurse for advice via text on **07520 631722**. This is a confidential service and can be accessed anonymously.

## OUR CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

We are continuing to deliver our service in a variety of ways:

- Via telephone calls
- Using video conferencing
- Community Face to Face appointments at local Children Centres
- Home visits

Where we are offering face to face contacts, our Health Visiting & School Nursing colleagues will ring you to ask some COVID-19 assessment questions in order to keep you and our colleagues safe.

We are also working with our partner agencies to identify vulnerable families and offer them combined support.



# Support for Victims of Crime

## RISKS:

The pandemic and social isolation and lockdown measures are significantly increasing the risk of people in vulnerable situations experiencing increased harm or violence, or becoming a victim of crime. People's home situation may be uncertain or unsafe, and they may be more isolated. They may be less able to keep themselves safe and access support services.

Cases are occurring where people are using the current situation to harm and exploit vulnerable individuals, including COVID-19 related scams and fraud – such as bogus charitable appeals and fraudsters posing as official organisations to request payments.



## CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

Victim Support have launched a new [24/7 live webchat service](#).

Alternatively people can contact [08 08 16 89 111](tel:08081689111).

This service provides support and advice if people have been, or are being, affected by crime or fear of crime.



## Victim Care Network

## CURRENT SERVICE OFFER:

The Victim Care Network provides advice and signposting to services that can support people affected by crime. The Network can be accessed through <https://www.victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/>

All services listed on their website are commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner and are currently available, although they might be running differently.

# Exploitation

## RISKS AND TRENDS:

The risks around people being exploited remain consistent, and are **now heightened**, especially in relation to **online exploitation** and **financial exploitation**. People are likely to be **isolated from support networks** with less opportunities for identifying signs of concern.

**Online exploitation** – people, including children, young people and adults, are spending increasing time online where they may be exposed to people looking to groom and exploit them through online chat, gaming and social media platforms. This exploitation can take a number of forms, including **sexual exploitation**, **financial exploitation** and **criminal exploitation**. It can also involve **radicalisation** if someone is groomed into adopting extremist viewpoints by people and content found online.

**Doorstep and online scams** relating to COVID 19 have **increased** and fraudsters are actively exploiting concerns about coronavirus. Vulnerable or elderly people who are more isolated are at increased risk of being exploited.

Whilst social isolation and lockdown measures have led to a significant reduction in some crime types, **serious and organised crime has not seen a reduction**, and indeed may be happening more through online platforms.

The modus operandi of **dangerous drug networks and county lines** is changing in response to lockdown measures. **Local people** will likely be used in operations to a greater degree. We are seeing increasing evidence that drug gangs are targeting **vulnerable adults** for exploitation and are using **private properties** for their activities.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

It's important that you continue to be proactive in identifying and reporting signs of concern, so that we can safeguard people vulnerable to exploitation and increase our local intelligence.

You can use Safer Devon Partnership's [Preventing Exploitation Toolkit](#) to keep informed about the factors increasing vulnerability to exploitation and the signs that it is taking place. The Toolkit was jointly developed with the [Devon Children and Families Partnership](#) and the [Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership](#).

**If you are concerned about someone's safety or welfare you can report safeguarding concerns through the [Toolkit](#).**

**If you have suspicions, intelligence or information you can report this to the police through their [Partner Agency Information Sharing Form](#).** This will help build our understanding of what is happening locally. **If you have concerns about someone's safety or welfare you should also submit a safeguarding concern.**