



5 Minute Briefing: Child to Parent/Carer Abuse (CPCA)

1. Context

Child to Parent/Carer Abuse (CPCA) is a hidden and stigmatised form of family abuse and is therefore often under-reported. It's often misunderstood across multi-agency services. There is no current legal definition of CPCA, and it is not included as a sub-type of domestic abuse. It is mentioned within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 draft statutory guidance. A child between the ages of 16-18 years old will fall under the current definition of Domestic Abuse.

Whilst statistics show this form of abuse predominately impacts on female carers, CPCA can happen in any family and can impact on any individual family member. Evidence reflects that young men inflict more physical abuse, however this form of abuse can be caused by both young men and women. Therefore, this is a whole family issue.

It can be categorised as any behaviour used by a child in a family to control, dominate, threaten or coerce a parent/carers. It involves persistent behaviour that results in the family having to adapt and accommodate this abusive behaviour. CPCA will often require a child and adult safeguarding response. This form of abuse often results in social exclusion, stigma, shame and physical and emotional ill-health.

2. Signs & Symptoms

CPCA involves a pattern of abusive behaviours which can include physical abuse towards a parent/carers and other abusive behaviours such as emotional abuse, damage to property, financial/economical abuse. Abusive behaviours can include but are not limited to, humiliation, threats, stealing, heightened sexualised behaviours. There are similarities and differences between CPCA and DA within an intimate relationship:

Is it DA?

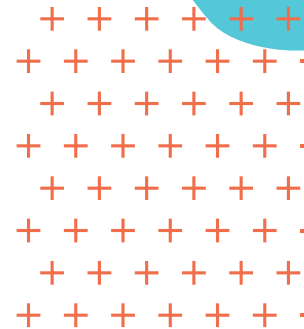
Similarities

- Wide range of abusive, controlling & violent behaviour
- Occurs within a private/family space
- Impacts parenting confidence & ability
- Isolation from other family members
- Reported more often by women/mothers than men/fathers
- Under-reported
- Shame, stigma & self-blame

Differences

- Parents/Carers unlikely to want to sever their relationship(s) with child
- Parents/Carers retain ethical and legal responsibility
- Parents/Carers can be more powerful (e.g. access to resources)
- Holding a child accountable as a perpetrator/offender
- Lack of policy & practice direction

This form of abuse impacts on the whole family and requires a safeguarding response.



3. Risk Factors

There are a number of risk factors associated with this form of abuse. There may be several complex issues and a broad range of behaviours that result in this form of abuse: see TLAT screening tool & practitioners safety planning checklists.

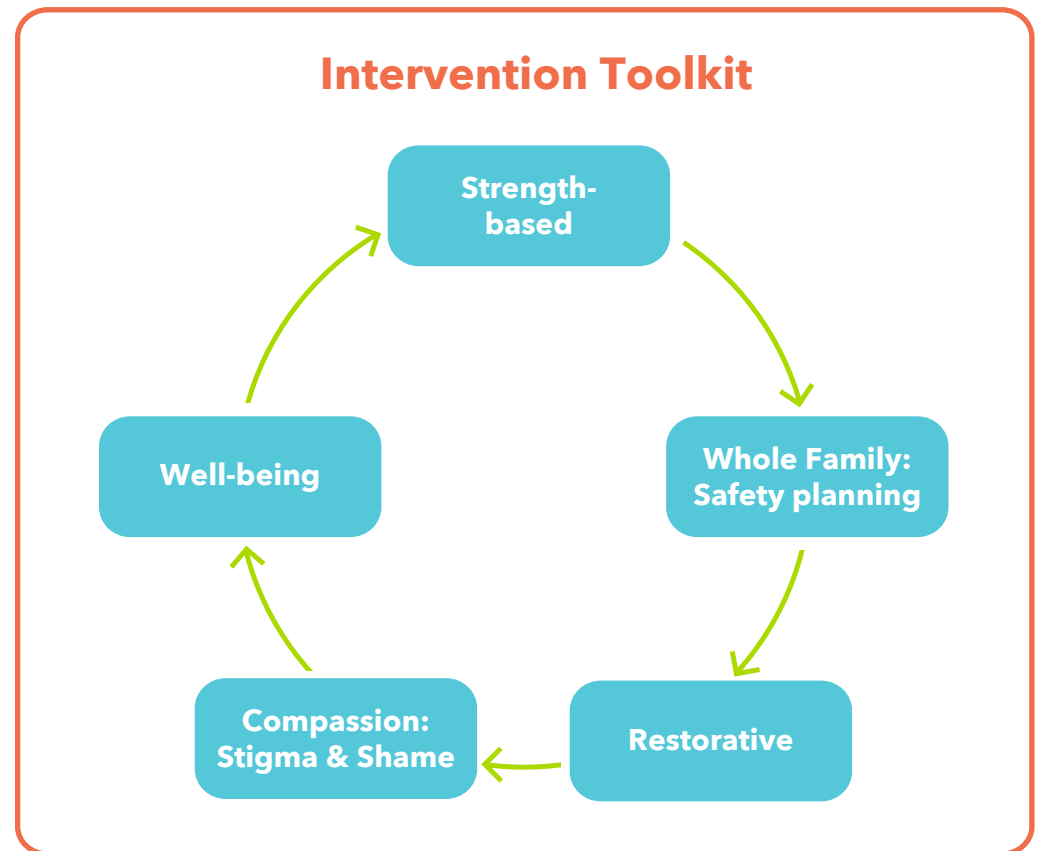
4. CPCA Toolkit

CPCA requires a multi-agency response to ensure effective multi-agency interventions. The key messages to promote are:

- That this is not a parenting issue: this is abuse
- The key role of practitioner is to provide a space where everyone has a voice
- That this is a space that everyone listens without judgement
- Promote a safeguarding response

The focus of the Toolkit is on promoting a safe, whole family and restorative approach as summarised (*right*).

To find out more, complete the Child to Parent/Carer eLearning - [click here](#).



5. CPCA Multi-Agency Pathway

