

1 What is it?

Coercive control is a term used to describe a pattern of behaviour which seeks to take away the victims sense of liberty or freedom. This controlling behaviour is designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour.

2 What is it?

Coercive control is a form of domestic abuse. Many perpetrators never use physical violence. Some may use what is best described as minor assaultive violence such as pushing, grabbing and/or getting "up in a victim's face". Others may threaten physical violence. Some may follow through on these threats, but only when they are losing control over the victim.

3 What is it?

Often coercive control starts through grooming to win the trust of their victim. This will then lead to a pattern of behavior including:
Isolating a person from their friends and family; depriving them of their basic needs; monitoring their time; repeatedly putting them down such as telling them they are worthless; controlling the finances; threats to hurt or kill

7 What should we do?

Be open to any disclosure made. Be sensitive, gather information and make any appropriate referrals. Think about the impact on the child. For more information go to:
www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-domestic-abuse/

4 Why it matters

One study found that 95 out of 100 domestic abuse survivors reported experiencing coercive control. (Kelly et al, 2014)
Analysis of Merseyside Police domestic abuse data found that 95% of coercive control victims were women and 74% of perpetrators were men. 76% of coercive control cases happen within an intimate partner context.

6 What is the impact?

Coercive control reduces a victim's power to make decisions, which limits the ability to exercise independence, making it difficult to break away from the abuser. It can lead to: Increased levels of suicide, self-harm, and substance misuse; deterioration of mental health; risks to children in the family including emotional and physical abuse.

5 The law

The offence of coercive control came into force on 29th December 2015 and applies to behaviour that has happened since that date. It enables charges to be brought in domestic abuse cases where there is evidence of repeated controlling or coercive behavior and carries a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment and a fine.

