



**The definition of child to parent abuse (CPA)
Home Office consultation, closed 07/02/2023
Submitted - 06/02/2024**

1) Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

On behalf of an organisation

2) Please provide the name of your organisation.

Wales Safer Communities Network

3) Which of the following categories best describes your organisation?

Other: The Wales Safer Communities Network was established in January 2021 following the recommendations of the Welsh Government's Working Together for Safer Communities Review. The Network aims to become the strategic voice for community safety in Wales, working collaboratively to champion and support community safety partnership working, and influence the shaping and development of national policy and local practice.

This is a response on behalf of the Wales Safer Communities Network which has membership from 22 Councils, 4 OPCC, 4 Police, 3 Fire and Rescue Services, Probation, Public Health Wales, Third Sector, Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government. Members of the Network may submit their own response with more specific local information and points relevant to them specifically.

4) Email

saferrcommunities@wlga.gov.uk

There are three components to the terminology, you will be asked to share your views on each of them.

The definition of CPA includes reference to two groups of people as set out below – the person displaying abusive behaviours and the person who that behaviour is directed towards. This section will ask you about the headline terminology which should be used to describe those two groups.

Group 1: Children aged under 16 years. This is the person who is displaying the behaviour.



Group 2: People with parental responsibility for a child under 16 years, caregivers (such as foster carers), or those with an informal caring relationship (such as a grandparent providing kinship care). This is the target of the child's behaviour. This would not include those in a paid childcare position, for example a child minder or nanny.

5) Should the definition describe Group 1 as:

- Children
- Children and adolescents
- Something else

Explain your reasons:

We feel that 'Children' should be used. This would align with current legislation that a child is a person under the age of 18. Whilst we are aware Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA) is also commonly used we feel using 'adolescents' may add an element of unnecessary ambiguity. Using Children should limit expectation from the definition that this abuse only refers to older children.

6) Should the definition describe Group 2 as:

- Parents
- Parents and caregivers
- Something else

We would suggest Group 2 is 'Parents or Guardians' as care giver may suggest teacher or be confused with paid care giver.

7) Should the definition reference:

- Abuse
- Violence and abuse
- Something else

Please explain your reasons:

The Network would suggest that 'Violence and abuse' were included in the description as parents and guardians may be subject to sexual, physical, mental violence and abuse or threats of and as such both should be captured.



8) Do you have any further comments you wish to share on the headline terminology?

Nothing further to add

A proposed description of this type of abuse is:

A pattern of behaviour where abusive behaviour can be physical, or sexual, threatening, controlling or coercive, psychological or emotional, or economic.

The list below gives some examples of these types of behaviours but is not exhaustive:

Form of abuse:	Examples of behaviour:
Physical or sexual:	Punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, hair pulling, throwing or pinning, biting, throwing or hitting with objects, strangling, use of weapons, scalding, heightened sexualised behaviours, sexual assault, rape
Threatening	Shouting and swearing to argue, challenge, or intimidate, demeaning or critical language
Controlling or coercive	Controlling or monitoring daily activities, monitoring finances, isolating from family and friends
Emotional or psychological	Calling derogatory names, withholding affection, threats of self-harm and use of risky or endangering behaviour, manipulation, threats, blackmail
Economic	Destruction of property, demanding or theft of property or goods, selling property, endangering employment or tenancies, incurring fines

9) It can be difficult to distinguish between boundary testing behaviours and harmful behaviour constituting abuse. It is important that the agreed description of CPA helps to make this distinction.

9a) Research suggests that a pattern of behaviour can be an important differentiation. However, the definition of domestic abuse in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states that ‘it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct’.

Do you think the definition of CPA should include the stipulation for a ‘pattern of behaviour’ or align with the statutory definition of domestic abuse?

- The description should include the stipulation for a ‘pattern of behaviour’
- The description should align with the domestic Abuse Act and include both single incidents and a course of conduct
- The description should not specify either but accompanying guidance should draw the nuances



Please explain your reasons:

The Network suggests where possible alignment with the Domestic Abuse Act is most sensible to allow for consistency in service delivery and support for victims and perpetrators.

9b) Research suggests that parents or caregivers feeling that they need to adapt their own behaviour to accommodate the behaviour of a child can be an important marker of boundary testing behaviour becoming abusive.

Do you think this definition should include parents adapting their behaviour as a marker of abusive behaviour?

- Yes, the description should include parents or caregivers adapting their own behaviour to accommodate a child's behaviour
- No, the description should not include parents or caregivers adapting their own behaviour to accommodate a child's behaviour
- The description should not explicitly refer to this issue but it should be discussed in the accompanying guidance

Please explain your reasons:

The Network suggests that including parents adapting their behaviours should be covered in the guidance. We suggest that inclusion in the description may be too broad. For example, for children with severe physical needs or additional learning needs parents will inevitably require an element of adaptive behaviours. However, where a parent or guardian adapts their behaviour to avoid repercussions of violence or abuse, and they feel they have no other option then it should be considered as abuse and rightly covered within the guidance. Yet to include it in the description may be detrimental for our more vulnerable children who need support rather than blame.

10) The categories of abuse included in the proposed definition above (physical or sexual, threatening, controlling or coercive, psychological or emotional, or economic) are aligned to those in the statutory definition of domestic abuse.



10a) Are there other categories specific to this type of abuse which should be included in the definition?

- **Yes**
- No

If yes, please specify:

Whilst the Network are aware that the list of behaviours is not exhaustive, we recognise that children and immigration/ visa status has been used to manipulate victims, as such, we would suggest consideration is given to extending:

- Emotional or psychological - To include 'threats or action to restrict access to children'
 - Economic - To include 'action to impact on immigration or visa status to remain in the UK.'
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10b) Do you feel that any of the above categories (physical or sexual, threatening, controlling or coercive, psychological or emotional, or economic) should be removed from a definition of CPA?

- Yes
- **No**

If yes, please specify:

n/a

11) Do you have any further comments you wish to share on the description?

Nothing further to add
