





Victim Blaming language




(adapted from Shelter's A Quick Guide to Domestic Abuse Informed language)

In Sheffield Children's Social Care, the Safe and Together Model is being rolled out (www.safeandtogetherinstitute.com) and the benefits of a 'partnering' approach to work with survivors of abuse are clear. Using 'domestic abuse informed' language in housing services results in increased and better engagement with survivors which will ultimately lead to a prevention of the 'revolving door' with more tenancies being sustained in the longer term by domestic abuse survivors.

Taking a 'partnering approach' includes thinking carefully about the way that we talk and write about domestic abuse in meetings, case note recording systems and reports etc. This quick guide is intended to be used supportively in services as a prompt for colleagues to support their increasing use of domestic abuse-informed language.

From this..		To more 'Domestic Abuse informed' language
<i>The victim keeps letting the perpetrator in the property</i>		The perpetrator continues to attend the property, despite the concerns around his patterns of abusive behaviour and the harm this is causing to the survivor (and the children)
<i>She has breached the restraining order/bail conditions by allowing the perpetrator in the property/telling the perpetrator the address</i>		<p>The perpetrator's abusive behaviour has continued. He has found the victim and has chosen to attend the property/chosen to breach the restraining order/chosen to breach the bail conditions.</p> <p>The perpetrator's coercively controlling behaviour has continued and he has coerced the survivor to disclose her whereabouts by.....</p>
<i>She always goes back to him...</i>		The perpetrator's behaviour has made the survivor feel as though she has no choice and isn't able to get away from him.

		<p>The perpetrator's pattern of abuse and violence towards the survivor has not stopped,</p>
<p><i>They [the victim] can't be that desperate if they won't accept the property</i></p>		<p>The offer of accommodation doesn't work with the existing safety plan. We need to look at how we can manage and reduce the risk that the perpetrator poses to her / her children and whilst they remain in their home / that property.</p>

<p><i>She won't accept the offer of emergency or temporary accommodation</i></p>		<p>The victim has experienced abuse and trauma and is at increased risk of being further abused due to their vulnerability, therefore the offer is not safe or suitable.</p> <p>The victim feels that the option of emergency accommodation offered to her puts her / her children at risk from abuse so we need to work with partners to put measures in place in an attempt to increase safety in the current property</p>
<p><i>They are both as bad as each other</i></p>		<p>The patterns of abuse are complex and it is possible there is some violent resistance, but the victim continues to be harmed by the perpetrator, for example..</p>
<p><i>It is hard to know what happened because they were [the victim] drunk / under the influence</i></p>		<p>The survivor uses substances to cope with the impact of the abuse.</p> <p>The perpetrator's abusive behaviour caused the survivor to start misusing alcohol/illicit substances</p> <p>The perpetrator's pattern of abusive behaviour has worsened the survivor's use of illicit substances.</p>

<i>They have previous rent arrears / debt / poor financial history</i>



<p>The perpetrator uses the survivor's substance misuse to discredit and control them and as an excuse for their own abusive behaviour.</p> <p>The perpetrator has prevented the survivor from accessing treatment and recovery</p> <p>The perpetrator has interfered in the survivor's attempts to stay sober/clean by...</p> <p>The perpetrator uses substances and abuse has taken place whilst they are under the influence.</p>
<p>The perpetrators patterns of financial and economic abuse means that the survivor has limited resources as a result of abuse, therefore is unable to...</p>