PEGS

PARENTAL EDUCATION GROWTH SUPPORT

Child To Parent Abuse

Information for Parents

Parental Education Growth Support is a CIC registered in England and Wales.
Registered number: 12315481 Registered address: Unit 8 Hartley Business Centre,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 5ST

Founding Director

Dear parent/ carer/ guardian,

I want you to know that you are no longer alone.

I understand the hurt, the sadness, the frustration of not being heard, perhaps the shame, guilt or even betrayal that you may be feeling as you reach out for help. I know you may be spending each day trying to survive - not live but simply survive; how you constantly are searching for reasons, and the answers to make it stop; how you are trying to get through today without incident - but even this is a worry as you know the next one might be a level up from the one before; how you're planning for every possible scenario and lying awake at night worrying about what the next day might bring; how your work is affected and you're considering reducing your hours or even leaving your job.

I know you're scared: scared for your family and scared of the unknown. I know and hear the frustration as another service tells you the behaviour is "normal", down to a diagnosis, or that perhaps your situation isn't serious enough, you don't meet criteria for help or even that you live in the wrong postcode.

I know how you beg, plead and shout for help, yet no one is listening to you.

You see, I was once scared, alone and worried. I was failed by those who should have helped us and there were so many missed opportunities to keep my family safe and together. I was fed up with the constant lack of support and whilst I couldn't change my experience, I was determined to change other people's. That's why I created PEGS: to push for change and to hopefully give some light to those who are in the tunnel of darkness.

We hear you, we see you, you are NOT alone.

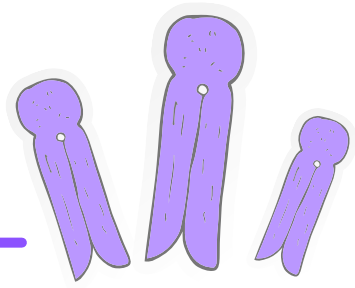
All my love,
Michelle.

What is child to parent abuse?

Child to parent abuse involves children displaying abusive and violent behaviours towards parents and family members. CPA is a serious issue and evidence suggests it is increasing. This abuse can be carried out by sons and daughters (at any age) against mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings and carers.

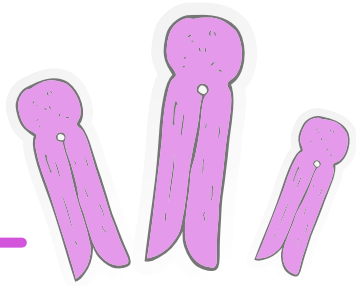
It is easy for parents or caregivers to feel guilty and ashamed when children are abusive and violent. However, recent research shows that child to adult violence is common - about 20% of teenagers are violent to their parents and about 10% seriously so.

There are multiple reasons why CPA occurs, including: peer groups, wider society, media, an absent or violent parent, mental health and/or traumatic and stressful situations. However, sometimes there is no clear reason for why CPA occurs. Child violence exists across all sections of society irrespective of gender, race, culture, nationality, religion, sexuality, disability, age, class, or educational level.



You are not alone

- 1 in 10 families will experience child to parent abuse.
- 89% of parents report their child's behaviour became abusive when the child was aged 12 or under. In total, 23.7% say the behaviour began when the child was aged 5 or under.
- 30% of parents have had to reduce their hours at work and 19% have had to leave employment altogether because of the CPA they are experiencing.
- 20% of parents have had to call the police more than five times because of their child's behaviour.
- 65% of adoptive families will experience child to parent abuse.
- Child violence is not just against parents, many children are also violent to their siblings.
- 28% of children displaying abusive behaviours to parents/carers/guardians have also hurt a pet or animal.



Types of violence

Child to parent abuse is different to typical child or teenage behaviour. It is when 'normal' behaviour tips over into abuse/ violence and you start to feel like you are walking on eggshells around your child.

Physical

88% of parents experience physical abuse. Physical violence is any action or behaviour that threatens a person's safety and well-being. It includes, but is not limited to, hitting, kicking, damaging and throwing things, and causing harm to siblings or pets.

Emotional

Emotional abuse includes humiliation, screaming, swearing, whispering campaigns, threatening to hurt or kill themselves or to run away to gain control over you, threats on social media and verbal intimidation. 94% of parents experience verbal abuse.

Financial

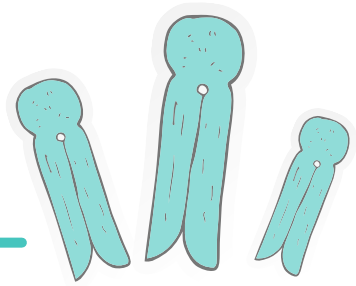
This type of abuse includes demanding money or things you cannot afford, stealing money or possessions from you, your family or friends and incurring debts that you are responsible for. 23% of parents have experienced financial control and 89% have experienced damage to property.

Sexual

Sexual abuse is sexual behaviour that is forced upon someone without their consent. 17% of parents experience these sexualised behaviours - often an act of violence that is committed deliberately to humilate and control the victim.

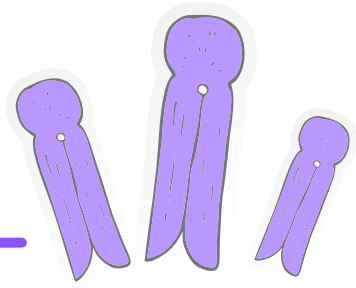
Coercion and Control

85% of parents experience this type of abuse. Coercive control is an act of assault, threat or humiliation often used to punish, harm or frighten their victim - leaving them feeling isolated and alone.



Things to remember about violent behaviour

- It won't go away by itself! There are occasions where it stops as the child grows up, but violent behaviour generally worsens over time.
- There are no simple answers when it comes to violent behaviour.
- You don't have to know why things are happening to change the situation. Even a small change may feel like an improvement.
- A change in the child's behaviour will not occur without assistance. With support from others, you can help to facilitate the change.
- All types of violence are inappropriate, with physical violence and property damage being a criminal offence.
- Violence may only occur in cycles or isolated incidents. Be aware that children may only apologise after the violence to give you a false sense of hope that things are improving. They usually need more help to change.
- The child is responsible for the violent behaviour. The violence is never an acceptable or healthy way for the child to overcome the difficulties in their life.



Things to remember about violent behaviour

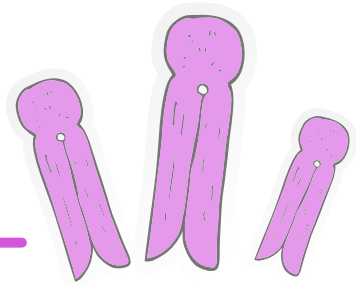
- You may not want to report violent behaviour to the police because you are concerned for your child's future and opportunities. You may feel you won't be believed, that you'll be blamed or that you'll lose the support of family and friends if you bring the child to the attention of the Police or other services. However, if yourself, your child or other members of the household are in danger, it is important that you call the police.

- Remember that it is better for you, your child and the rest of your family if the violence stops. If nothing else works, the help of the police may be the only way to stop the violence from continuing.

- The child may blame you for not meeting their demands and hold you responsible, but remember the person being violent is always responsible for their behaviour.

- You may have tried to talk to your child about their behaviour. Give yourself credit for all the things you have tried, even if nothing has worked.

- We all experience stress and anger, from time to time. However, the child may use these feelings to excuse violent behaviour. It is important to separate their feelings from their behaviour. Feelings are acceptable; violence is not!



How you may be feeling

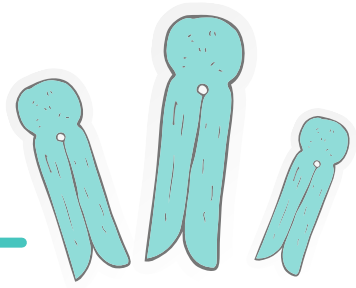
We understand that people experiencing child to parent abuse can feel a range of different emotions that can be difficult to deal with.

- 85% of parents feel isolated or alone.
- 74% of parents feel blamed.
- 67% of parents feel humiliated.
- 95% of parents feel helpless.
- 76% of parents feel guilty.
- 76% of parents feel scared.
- 90% of parents feel frustrated.

You may also be feeling a sense of loss with the child you used to know and enjoy. CPA can put an enormous amount of stress on family and partner relationships, especially if friends and family do not know how to assist you or the other parent takes the child's side.

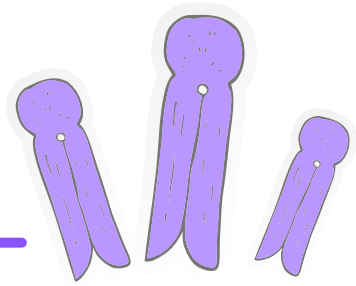
Concern for siblings, and worrying about damage to property, especially when you are not at home, are feelings common for many parents experiencing CPA.

CPA can cause work and/ or health related issues. You may have to take time off work or experience anxiety, making it difficult to sleep or concentrate on daily tasks.



What can you do if your child is being violent?

- Talk about what's happening with someone you trust, such as a friend, family member or counsellor.
- You can try to reach out to local services in your area for support. Useful services for mental health support include your local GP, MIND and the Samaritans (details at the back of this booklet).
- During an incident, try to remove yourself from the situation and, if safe to do so, leave the house.
- If you are in fear for your own or another's safety, call the police. Violence, threats of violence and assault are all crimes that can be reported.
- Develop a safety plan for you and your family should you need it. Teach any other children in the home what to do and where to go during an incident.
- Consider keeping a diary of incidents, this may prove useful when accessing support in the future.
- If you are able, talk to your employer about the difficulties at home, many employers are now more aware of situations involving CPA.



What PEGS can offer

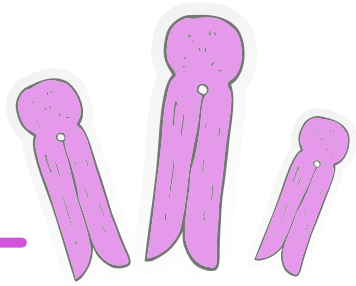
- At PEGS, we run regular programmes and workshops for parents. Details for these can be found on our social media (details on the last two pages at the back of this booklet) or via our admin email: admin@pegsupport.com

- EPIC is our nine-week programme that provides emotional and practical support for parents, carers and guardians who are living with a child who is displaying abusive, violent or out of control behaviours. Created by those with lived experiences, it involves working with professionals, looking at trauma responses and aims to empower parents. To find out more about this programme, you can contact our admin team or complete a self-referral form on our website.

- PEGS also offers drop-in support sessions with details on our Instagram and Facebook, or via our admin email.

- On our Facebook page we have a peer support group to give parents the opportunity to talk to other parents in similar situations to them; who may understand what it is like experiencing CPA. This is a separate closed page, that does not appear on our main Facebook page.

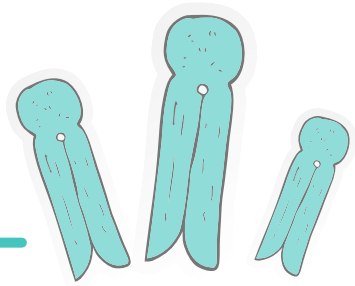
- Our staff are also able to provide advocacy for parents.



Writing a safety plan

In the event of a crisis, when you may have to leave home in a hurry, it can be useful to have a safety plan in place. Here are a few suggestions for preparing a safety plan.

- Think about where you could go and who could support you if an emergency arose.
- Always carry a list of emergency numbers, e.g. police, family members, support services.
- Ensure you have access to a phone.
- Try to keep some money aside so that you can use a taxi, train or bus, if needed.
- Keep a spare set of house and car keys in a safe place.
- Ensure other children can use a phone and know emergency numbers.
- Keep notes or a diary with dates and brief details about the violence. These may be needed in the future, if you take protective or legal action.
- It is important to inform yourself about your legal rights and rights of your child so that you are clear about the full range of options available to you, even if you choose not to take legal action.



Incident reporting

- We recommend keeping a diary of any incidents that happen. This could be useful in the future should you need to take protective or legal action.

- The records do not have to be complex and you can keep notes on your phone, but it would be helpful to record the date, time and type of incident. An example is shown below:

Week Commencing:

Monday

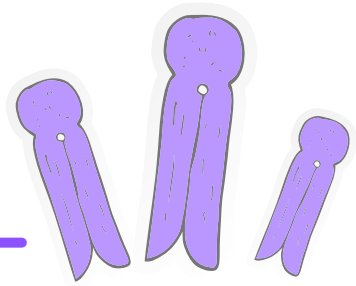
AM (before school)				AM (Late morning)				PM			
Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others
Triggers?				**Triggers?**				**Triggers?**			

PM (after school)				PM (Evening)				**Comments:**
Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	
Triggers?				**Triggers?**				

Tuesday

AM (before school)				AM (Late morning)				PM			
Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others
Triggers?				**Triggers?**				**Triggers?**			

PM (after school)				PM (Evening)				**Comments:**
Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	Verbal	Physical Objects	Physical Self	Physical Others	

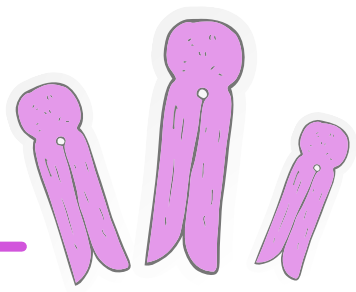


Things to remember when trying a new approach

- It may take some time for a new approach to actually work but don't worry, taking new approaches are always difficult to begin with. For a period of time your child may rebel against any new approach, so you may see things worsen before they improve.

- If the child does not believe you will follow through then your words will lose their impact, so try and follow through with the consequence you put in place, otherwise your child will not not take you seriously.

- Choose your battles. Ignore those issues you can live with and focus on the more difficult ones, overtime you can always come back to the smaller problems.



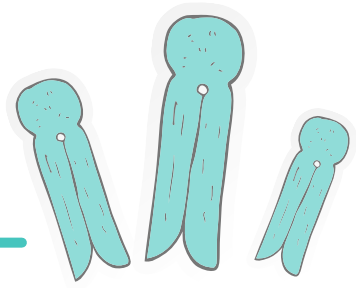
Testimonials from parents

"I am so pleased that my friend had sent me the e-mail with PEGS details, it has really been a life changer for me, and I have felt supported in my situation. It has been brilliant that this programme has been via video call, this has meant that I was able to access it easily without having to travel or find childcare etc. It also meant that if my son was not at school I was still able to join. . I think that PEGS are doing a brilliant job of raising awareness for a hidden issue. It is good to know that things are changing, and hopefully less people will find themselves in situations like ours." **-Parent A**

"Before finding PEGS I felt very alone and was constantly asking myself where I went so wrong at parenting. I'd been searching for some support for a while but even as a professional myself I couldn't find any programmes or services that truly reflected our situation. Finding PEGS has been a revelation. I would recommend the course to anyone who feels at a loss as to how to address volatile and aggressive behaviour from their child, even if you feel like you've tried everything already! I only wish I'd found PEGS sooner." **-Parent B**

"I felt more at ease talking to you than other professionals, you've listened. You were willing to listen and offer advice. The last 4 years have been a guessing game, you've said 'lets try this' without being critical, its more helpful. You're revalidating parents that are trying their best instead of a critical 'must do this'." **-Parent C**

"I was very low and desperate when I found PEGS , now not only do I feel more confident and happier, my son also appears happier and less angry and our relationship is improving again. At the start I wouldnt have thought that possible." **-Parent D**



Contact us & Useful services

PEGS- Parental Education Growth Support
You can contact us on our **website:** www.pegsupport.co.uk/contact
or fill in our **self referral form** at www.pegsuport.co.uk/self-referral-form

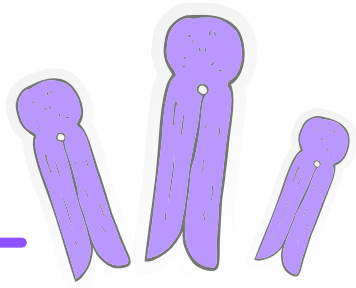
Email: hello@pegsupport.com **or** admin@pegsupport.com
Instagram: @pegs_support
Facebook: PEGS- Child to Parent Abuse Support
Twitter: @PEGS_support
Linked In: company/pegs-support

FCAMHS- Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Forensic CAMHS is a multidisciplinary service with a range of clinical expertise. They work closely with various agencies across the community and secure settings to ensure best practice for young people up to the age of 18 who present with complex needs and high-risk behaviours.

The services they offer include:

- Risk management advice
- Specialist assessment
- Complex cases formulation
- Training
- Clinical consultant
- Specialist interventions

Refuge
A national domestic abuse 24hr helpline
Call= 0808 2000 247



Other useful services

Samaritans
Call- 116123
Email- jo@samaritans.org (response time 24 hrs)
Freepost- SAMARITANS LETTERS (response time 7 days)

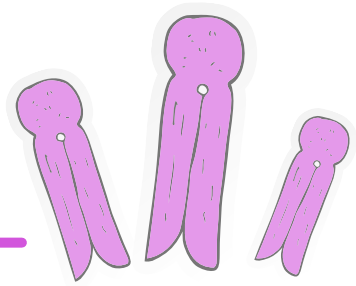
Shout
Text "shout" to 85258 for crisis support

Respect
Men's advice line
Call- 0808 801 0327

Mind
Mental health support and information
Call- 0300 123 3393
Website- https://www.mind.org.uk/

Young Minds
Mental health helpline for parents
Call- 0808 802 5544

Other useful services can be found on our website. Always call 999 in an emergency or if yourself or others are in immediate danger.



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