



# Child to Parent/ Caregiver Violence and Abuse Research Study

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**Background:** Child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse (CAPVA) involves harmful behaviours by a child toward a parent or caregiver, impacting families across all communities. In 2022, the MVRP held a multi-agency event to raise CAPVA awareness, share prevention strategies, and assess the need for improved local responses. The event revealed gaps in understanding CAPVA's impact and service provision, leading MVRP to commission the Public Health Institute at Liverpool John Moores University to research CAPVA and enhance prevention and response efforts in Merseyside.

## Primary objectives of the study are to explore:

- The nature and extent of CAPVA.
- Factors that increase risks of exposure to CAPVA (and further harm), and protective factors
- The impacts of CAPVA on children, families, services, and the wider community.
- The range of practice models and interventions being implemented in Merseyside to prevent and respond to CAPVA, and the perceived and/or actual impacts of these approaches.

## Methodology

### Engagement with stakeholders'



Interviews with key partners (n~24); and an online practitioner survey (n~33).

### Engagement with parents



Interviews with parents/ caregivers (n~9) who have experienced CAPVA; and an online parent/ caregiver survey (n~18).

### Advisory group and stakeholder workshop



An advisory group was established, and stakeholder (Jan 23 n~26 & Dec 23 ~ n16) workshops held to support the study.

## Findings:

**Defining what is CAPVA:** No one definition used across Merseyside.

*"Probably a lack of confidence because some will still place it as domestic abuse and it's not domestic abuse some people will try and categorise it into something what they know" (Practitioner 1).*

**Types of abuse:** Nearly parent/caregivers and practitioners felt CAPVA was almost never just one type of abuse, in reality most parents/caregivers will have experienced multiple forms of abuse. The most prevalent forms of abuse included emotional abuse, destruction of property, restrictions, physical violence, and financial abuse.

Several parents said they did not *"feel safe in [their] own home"* (Parent 4) and felt a need to *"protect themselves"* (Parent 3). Some lived in *"constant fear of things escalating"* (Parent 4) especially as their children got older.

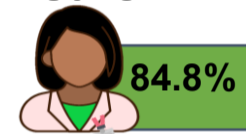
*"To be honest, that is my biggest, biggest fear of the lot. It absolutely terrifies me because he's getting bigger, he's getting stronger" (Parent 5).*

**Extent of abuse:**

**Those who agreed/ strongly agreed with the following:**



Parents/caregivers believed CAPVA is a significant problem in Merseyside.

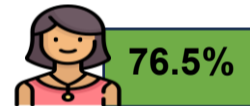


Practitioners believed CAPVA is a significant problem in Merseyside.



Practitioners felt the rate of CAPVA incidences they had encounter had increased in the past 12 months compared with the previous year.

**Demographics of those involved:**



Of victims were Mothers



Of those committing CAPVA were



Reported that the behaviour began when the child was 9 years old

## Impacts:



### Parent/caregiver:

*"It made me feel like a bad parent, that I couldn't provide for my child in the way that they needed – or that I was being used by a manipulative teen to try and get their own way and that made me feel very low that I didn't have the tools to cope and assert control over the situation" (Parent survey respondent).*



### Child/adolescent:

*"I think for a child to have that level of control within a relationship and home can feel really quite scary. I think it can inform future relationships as well and affect future relationships and interpersonal difficulties" (Practitioner 3)*



### Wider family and local communities:

*"I think it doesn't just impact the immediate family in the family home. It's the wider family and the community as well and obviously the behaviour in schools and everything." (Practitioner 17).*

## CAPVA specific interventions across Merseyside:

### Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP)



*"Over the course of the Programme, two-thirds of parents reported improvements in their child's overall mental health and conduct" (Practitioner 17).*

### Who's in charge?



*"It's a group programme and that's lovely because parents feel so isolated and it gives them the opportunity to feel connected to others and to hear that they're not the only one" (Practitioner 6).*

### Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP)



*"Once you can figure out the root cause, then it's connecting the parent because most children and young people are vilified in this position" (Practitioner 14).*

### Non-Violence resistance training



*"people who are going through exactly the same thing that we are ... finding out that there were other people that were going through it, it was a sort of release" (Parent 3).*

## Recommendations

### Full report here:



### System wide recommendations:

- Establish a Merseyside CAPVA multi-agency steering group
- Enhance CAPVA data collection and sharing within and across organisations.
- Training for practitioners
- Public awareness campaign



### Intervention recommendations:

- Support website including information on CAPVA and relevant support service as well as helpline that parents can call for advice.
- Increase police awareness of support services.
- More parent/caregivers support groups
- Engage schools in early prevention.
- Tailor interventions to ensure they are person/family centred, considering neurodiversity
- More research and evaluation

