

# Scottish Women's Aid

## Understanding the Dynamics of Domestic Abuse

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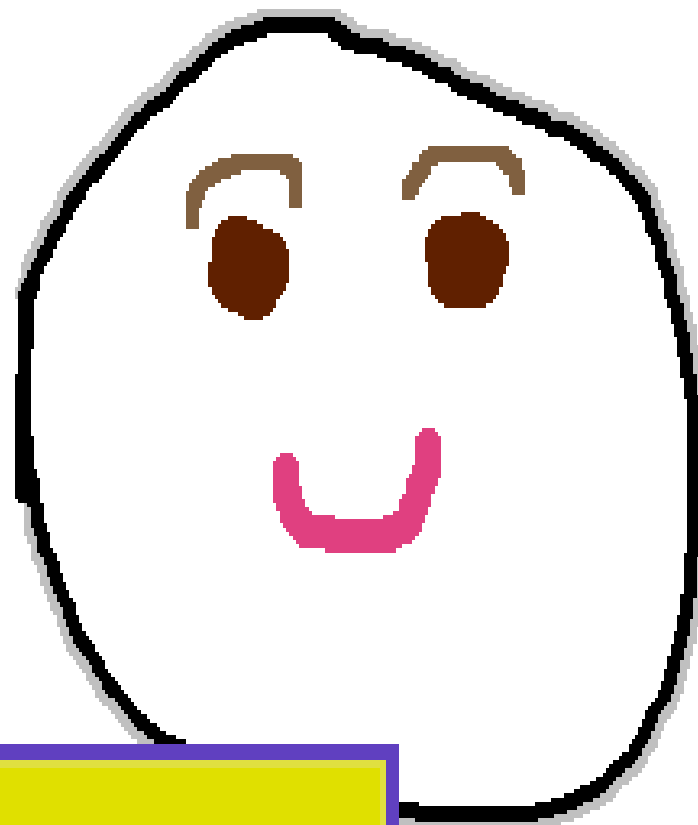
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THIS IS MY SAD FACE I CAN WARE  
AT HOME

THIS IS MY PRETEND FACE WHAT  
I HAVE ON AT THE SCHOOL



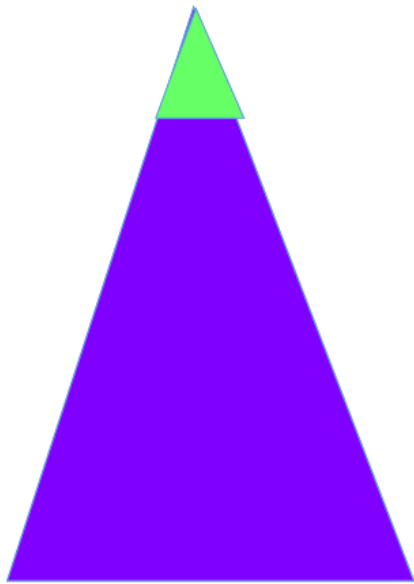
MY  
FACES



I AM GETING MY EARS PEERCD  
WHEN I AM 10

# Gender and Domestic Abuse

- » Experiences of DA of women, children and young people
- » A gendered analysis of domestic abuse and coercive control helps us understand why women may be more at risk, how abuse impacts differently on victims and survivors and how our detection and response may need to vary accordingly.



## Social attitudes and misconceptions

- » Caused by: poverty, alcohol, stress, old firm games, corona virus restrictions
- » Incident based
- » Physical violence focused
- » “Domestic” - happens only in the home
- » Children are ‘witnesses’, not ‘victims’ – we know children absolutely experience domestic abuse and are impacted by it
- » Mothers who “stay” are not providing safety
- » Stigmatisation of culture/religion in relevance to DA (it’s in their culture)



# 'Domestic Abuse is a Parenting Choice'

## -Emma Katz

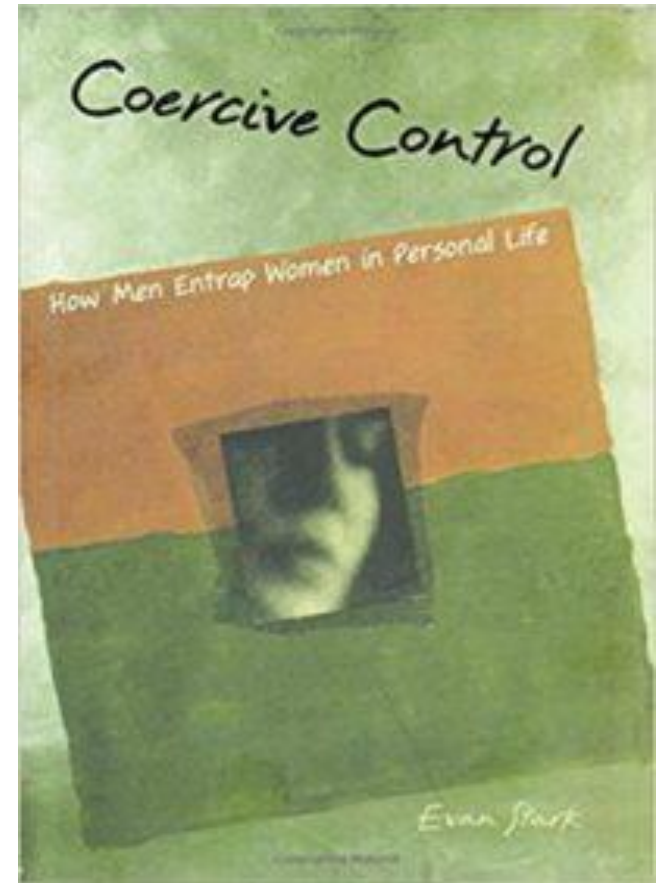
- » Significant case reviews in Scotland conducted between 2012 and 2015 showed almost two thirds (65%) of the children and young people involved had been living with domestic abuse



# Gender and Domestic Abuse: Coercive Control

- » “The micro-regulation of everyday behaviours associated with stereotypical female roles, such as how women dress, cook, clean, socialize, care for their children, or perform sexually.”
- » Coercive control is ‘invisible in plain sight’ precisely because it is based on gendered norms and assumptions.

*Evan Stark 2007.*



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# Coercive Control

- » Isolate from support network
- » Controls time and resources
- » Monitors activities and movements
- » Threats of harm to adult survivor, child survivor or pets
- » Damages possessions and home environment
- » Jealousy
- » Sexual coercion

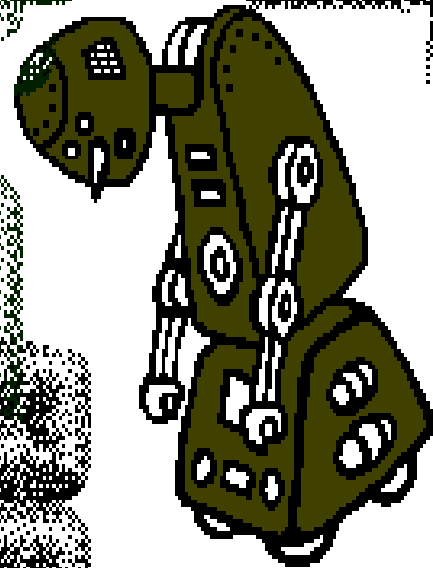
**Coercive Control is a crime! Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018**



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BY M AGE 10

**NO ESCAPE!**

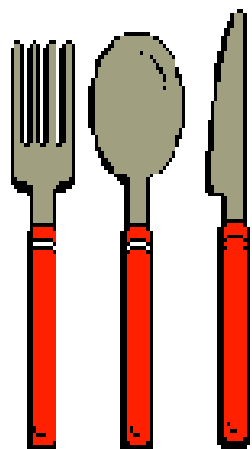


M  
AGE 10



# I THINK MEN ARE VIOLENT BECAUSE

BY DG



THEY ARE ANGRY

THE HOUSE WAS A BIT UN TIDY  
LIKE ONE TRAINER ON THE FLOOR

WHEN CHILDREN RUN ABOUT

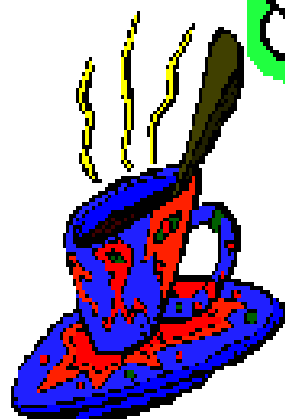


CHILDREN ARE AROUND

WOMAN GO OUT

THEY ARE JEALOUS

CHILDREN TURN THE TV



PEOPLE DIDN'T DO THINGS FOR  
THEM LIKE MAKE A CUP OF TEA OR  
MAKE DINNER

# Impact on Children/roles they may assume

- » Physical & emotional trauma indicators
- » Internalise shame & blame
- » Caretaker
- » Pawn
- » Forced witness to violent acts
- » Secret keeper
- » Scapegoat
- » Target – including in utero
- » Mother's confidante
- » Abuser's confidante
- » Abuser's ally
- » Perfect child
- » Referee



# Possible Effects of Power & Control Tactics on Mothering

- » She believes she is an inadequate parent
- » She loses the respect of some or all of children
- » She believes man's excuses for abuse and reinforces them with children
- » Changes her parenting style in response to abuser's parenting style
- » Her ability to manage is thwarted or overwhelmed
- » She may use survival strategies with negative effects
- » Her bond with children is compromised
- » She gets trapped in competition for children's loyalties



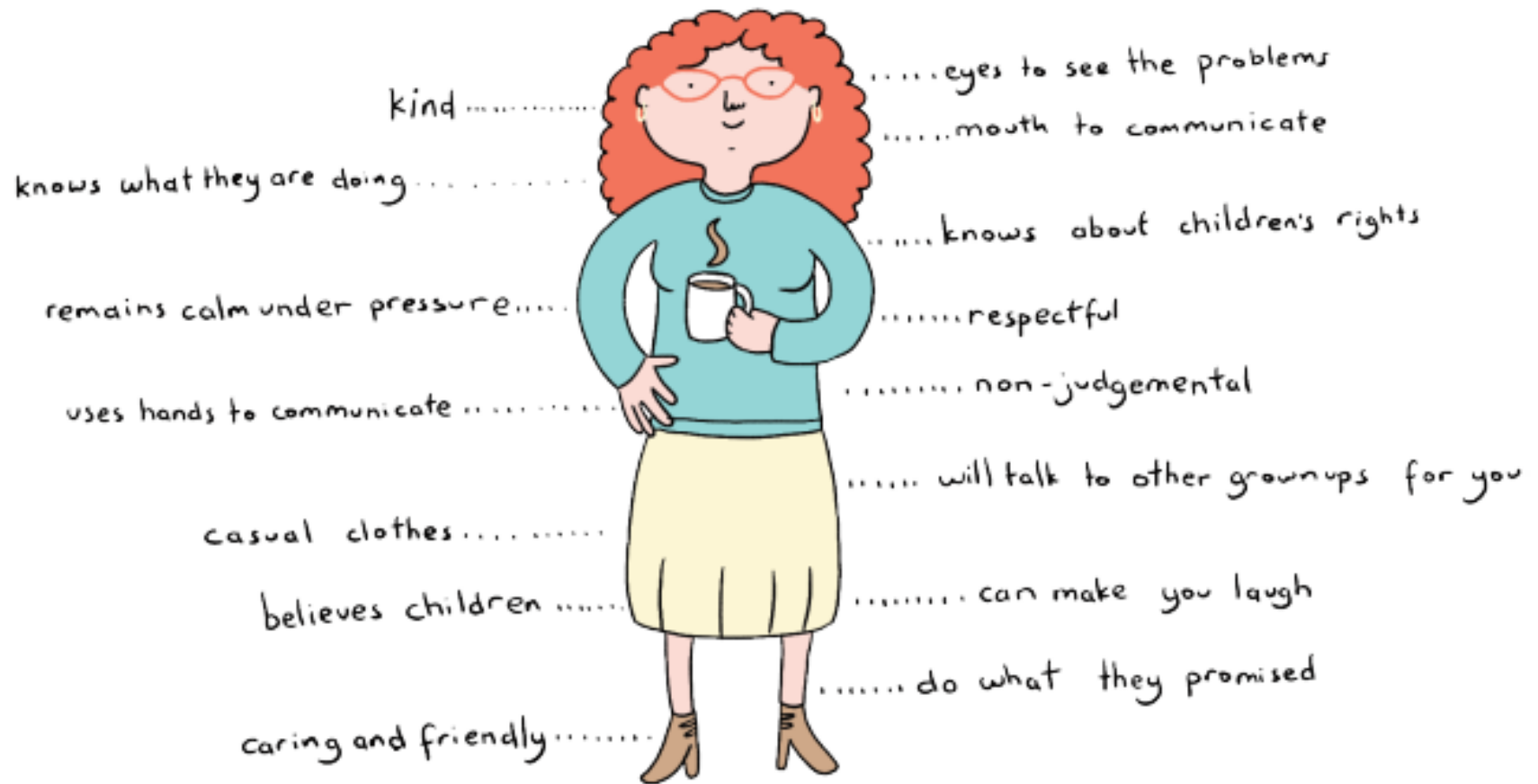
# What helps? Children's views

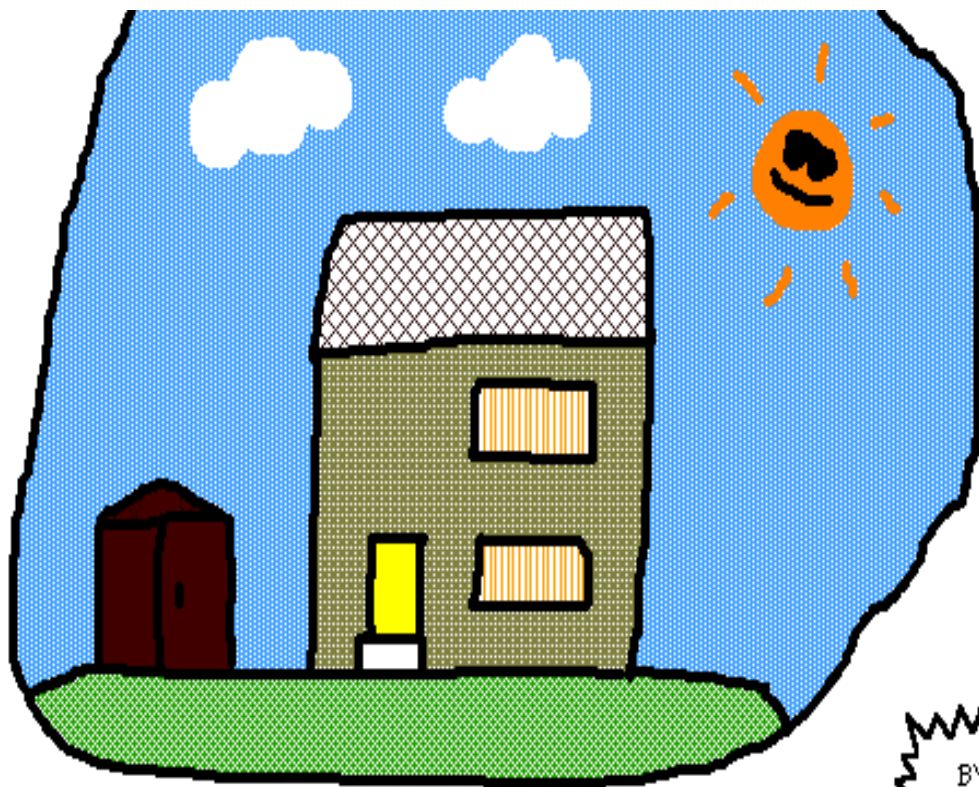
- » Adults being understanding about domestic abuse
- » Being able to talk about it openly
- » Trust
- » Respect and friendliness
- » Creativity and flexibility

*(Houghton, 2016)*



# Super Listener





BY SCOTT  
AGE 15

**THINGS GOT BETTER**



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