

# **Responding to Adolescent-to-Parent Abuse: Conceptualising Interventions Across Agencies**

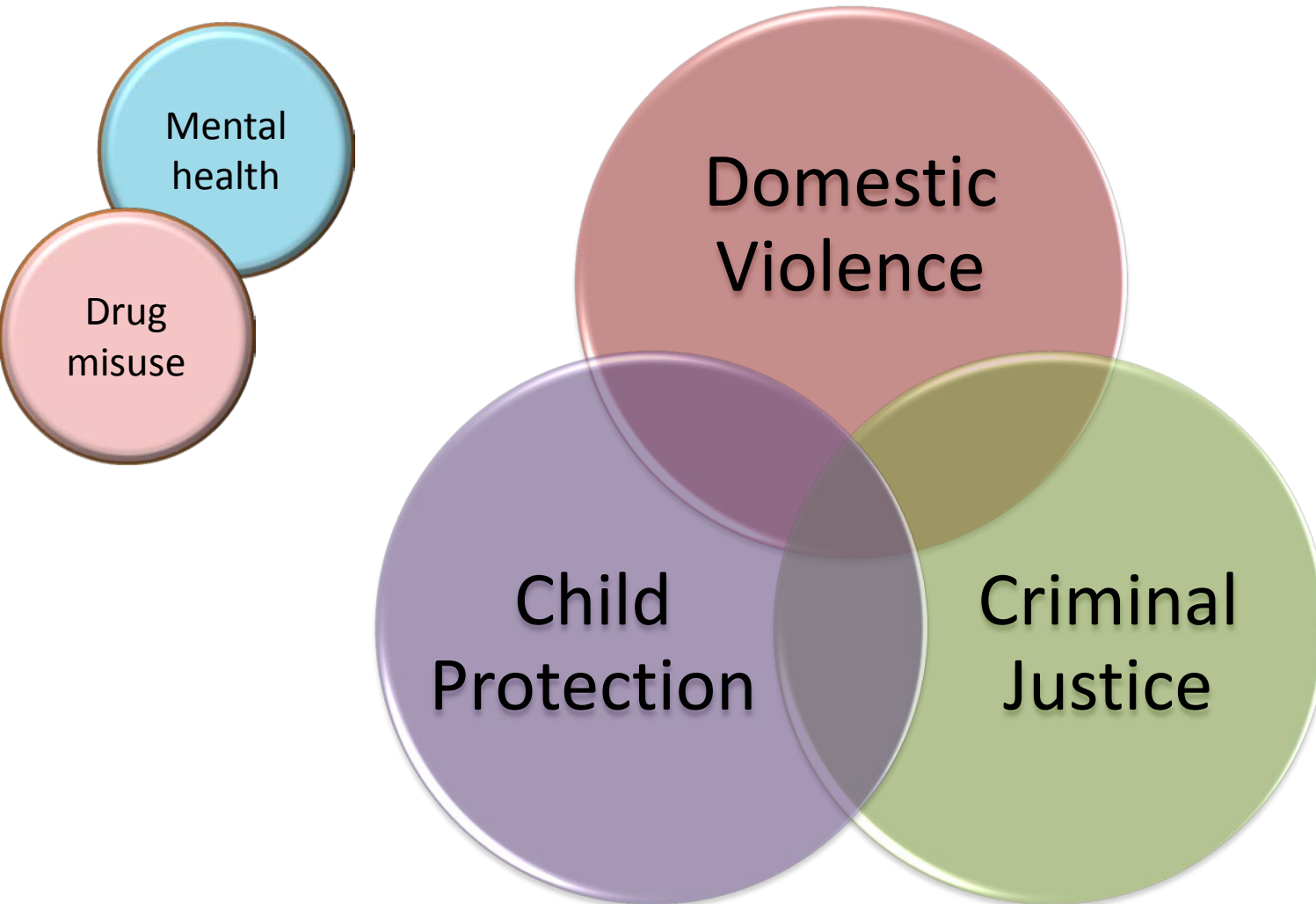
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Child abuse	Sibling abuse	IPV	Elder abuse	Parent abuse
Gendered dynamic Poly-victimisation: physical, emotional, sexual, financial abuse Short-term and long-term harms 'Veil of silence'				
1860-1910; 1960s	–	1960s-1970s	1980s	–
NSPCC; Barnardos; Action for children; Save the Children		Women's Aid; Refuge	Action on Elder Abuse	–
Family courts; Local authorities (social services)		Multi-agency, inc. specialist police response	Dept of Health; Local authorities	–

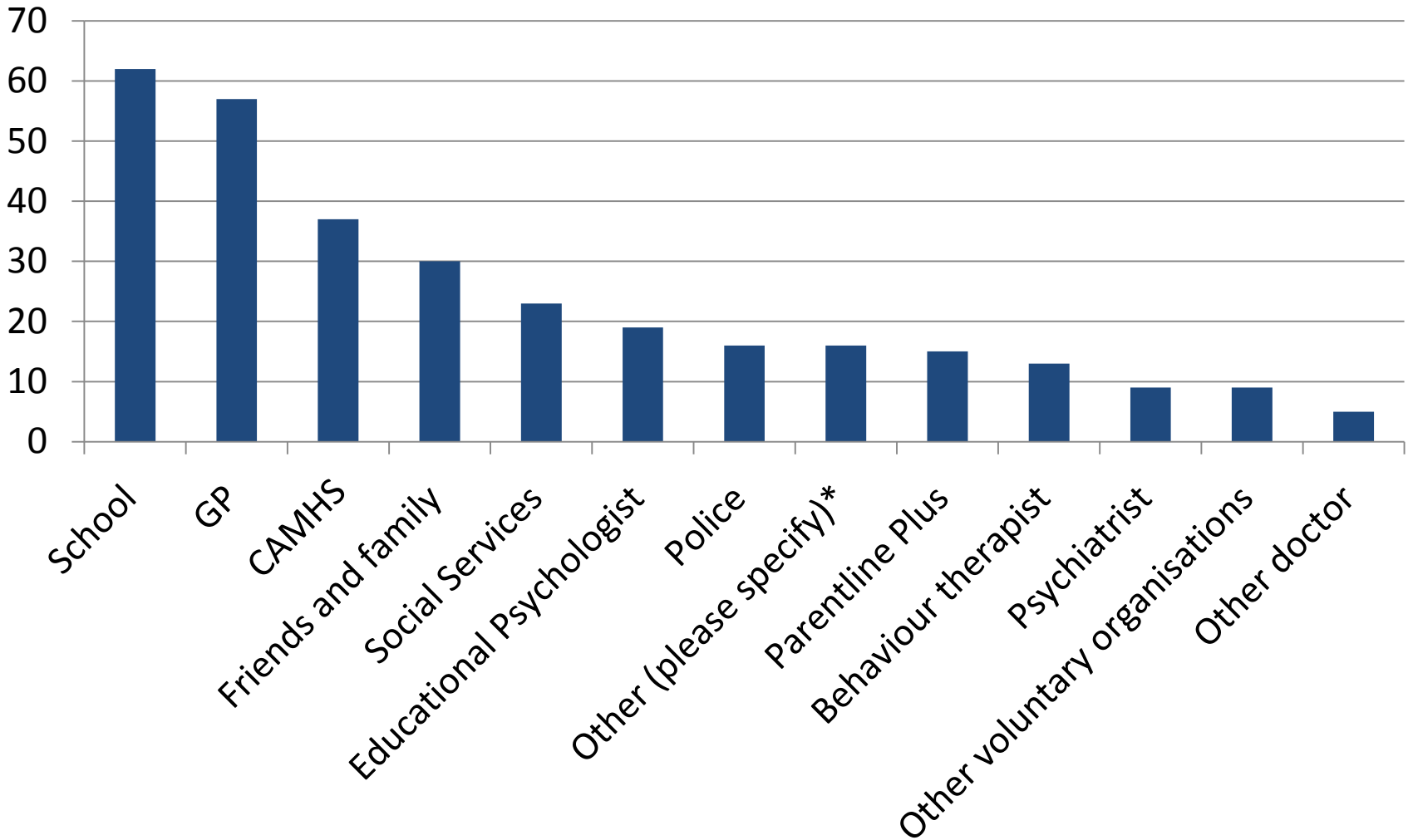


# Conceptualising adolescent-to-parent abuse

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# Who do parents turn to?



# Criminal Justice responses: Police

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- ▶ *“The most difficult decision of their lives”* (Routt & Anderson, 2011)
- ▶ Disparity between parent expectations and police response:

Parents’  
expectations

- Send a message
- Clip round the earhole

Parents’  
experiences

- Positive action policy, use of MARACs, advice (contact social services), sometimes nothing
  - Consequences for parent-child relationship (*“What kind of parent...?”*)
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# Criminal Justice responses: youth courts

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- ▶ Perverse outcomes:
  - Parents receive a **Parenting Order**, issued to make parents ‘take responsibility’ and receive ‘parenting support’
  - A breach can result in **conviction**
  - **Aggravate** already tense parent-child relationships (*“What kind of child...?”*)
- ▶ International evidence suggests greater court leniency for family violence assaults (compared to those outside the home) (Gebo, 2007)





# Social care responses

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## ▶ Children's social care

- Social workers struggle to conceptualise the notion of 'children' aggressing against their 'caregiver' (Holt & Retford, 2013) > perverse outcomes reported
- 2 thresholds: Risk of 'significant harm' or child 'in need'

## ▶ Adult social care

- *"All citizens should have the access to relevant services for addressing issues of abuse and neglect"* (Safeguarding Adults, 2005)
- Multi-agency response for those adults 'at risk'



# Conceptualising parent abuse as Domestic Violence

## Similarities

Gendered  
Polyvictimisation  
Immediate and long-term harms  
Ongoing patterns of abusive tactics shaped by family relationship  
'Veil of silence'  
Victim-blaming

## Differences

Spousal relationship  
Support options & responses (non-molestation order; refuges)  
HO definition covers all

Parental relationship  
Few support services & options inappropriate  
HO definition relevant to half of cases (16 years +)



# A domestic violence response?

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## ▶ To what extent can DV interventions be applied to work with adolescent-to-parent abuse?

- Some interventions foreground **gender** (e.g. PACT at Leeds YOT)
- Some interventions have applied the **Duluth Model**, and the *power and control wheel* (Step-UP, Routt and Anderson, 2012; Step-Up UK at Hull YOT)
- Some interventions have emerged from DV organisations and foreground **child's background in trauma** (e.g. *Wish* in Bristol)



## ▶ What can we learn from our progress with DV?

- Challenging 'victim-blaming culture'? Raising public awareness?

## ▶ Which agency is best placed to lead on intervention responses?

- ▶ DV orgs , parenting support orgs, YOTs, family mediation services?

# References

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