

Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Manager's Blog

January 2019

A safeguarding haircut

I go to get my hair cut about every four to six weeks. I have been going to Darren for a good number of years now. Before him it was Nick for twenty years plus. In fact, I can remember feeling a little apprehensive when I made the change and saw Darren for the first time. Would he cut my hair as I liked it?

Having your hair washed and cut is a very intimate thing. And it takes time to find the right hairdresser* to do this. This is someone you will see on a regular basis, possible for years. For some who change their hairdresser after a long time there is even something called [hairdresser guilt](#). In her article on the topic [Sarah Edner](#) noted "*The relationship between a woman and her hairdresser is unique. There aren't many people a woman visits regularly, confides in and trusts enough to alter her physical appearance, sometimes radically.*"

I am sure hairdresser guilt is one of lesser problems in the world today, but it does indicate the strong relationship which can be built between you and the person who cuts your hair. And while this is happening many people talk. I have wondered for a long time if they teach hairdressing students how to start a conversation because they seem skilled at it, everything from the mundane to the personal (depending on how well you and your hairdresser know each other). This places the hairdresser in a unique position to pick up when things are not good, even when there are issue of abuse and harm.

A recently published Norfolk Domestic Homicide Review (April) [interviewed professionals in the beauty industry, who reported that every fourth young woman they see is a victim of abuse of some sort. The hairdresses described how clients talk as if they almost expect to be a victim of domestic abuse in a relationship \(3.2.9\)](#). The review recommended a specific awareness campaign for hairdressers and beauticians as potential confidantes of victims.

There are other examples of how regular relationships can be an important avenue to reach those at potential or actual risk or vulnerable. For example the Home Office has funded a trial scheme in parts of Liverpool in which [Royal Mail postmen and women provide a new community service to help tackle loneliness](#);

there is also a brilliant local project (12th Man Campaign) to train [barbers as mental health first aiders](#).

On the **21st December** the Norfolk Domestic Abuse Network, which supports [Norfolk's Domestic Abuse Change Champions](#), announced details of a FREE training event for hairdressers and beauty therapists (see [Tweet dated 21st December 2018](#)). Also see [EDP: Hairdressers in Norfolk to be given training to help victims of domestic abuse \(04 January 2019\)](#).

Just before Christmas I saw Darren, and as well talking through the details of the Norwich City football club festive fixtures (most important!), I also mentioned the forthcoming domestic abuse training session for hairdressers and beauty therapists on (**Monday 11th February**). **Please note this event is only open to those working in Norfolk**. Darren was keen for his salon to get involved and send someone on the training.

So here's what I want you to do:

- If you've having your haircut in the next few weeks, tell your hairdresser/barber about this training and encourage them to attend
- If you haven't got an appointment before Monday 11th February, call into your salon and tell your hairdresser about it. Why not ask to speak to the owner for a few minutes

Anyone who wants to book a place should email da.change@norfolk.gov.uk. The training is taking place on Monday 11th February at **Blackfriars Hall, St Andrews Hall, St Andrews Hall Plain, Norwich NR3 1AU**. Doors open at 6pm for a 6.30pm start finish at 8pm. There will free nibbles and drinks.

With hundreds of hair salons across Norfolk, let's see if we can fill Blackfriars Hall!

* Hairstylist, barber etc.

Walter Lloyd-Smith
NSAB Board Manager

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PS If you are looking for a new hairdresser, Darren is great. You can find him at the Gallery on Waterloo Road Norwich.

