



**Preventing Domestic Abuse Enquiry – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019**  
**Southampton Children and Families Service**

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# Overview

## Strategic Level

- Service Lead chairs Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategic Group
- DSA strategic plan – focus on children within families experiencing domestic abuse.
- 0-19 strategic group and integrated service development
- Youth Offending Service Management Board



## Operational Level

- MASH and HRDA alignment
- Training delivered by Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service jointly with The Hampton Trust
- Relationships work in schools
- Extended Locality Model



# Practice Examples

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# Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART)

- DART seeks to address the ‘legacies of secrecy and of protecting one another from painful knowledge that may be hard patterns to break’ (Mullender et al., 2002).
- The impact of DA on children continues long after steps have been taken to ensure their safety (Holt 2008);
  - more likely to have long term M/H problems (Kilpatrick et al 1998),
  - anxiety / depression (Russell et al 2010),
  - Bair-Meritt (2006) found positive correlation between exposure to IPV as a child and longer term risk-taking behaviour, including substance misuse & risky sexual activity
  - Longitudinal research mixed, in terms of lower academic achievements (Edleson 99).  
Truancy & externalising behaviour more of immediate effects of exposure (Emery 2011)
  - they may be more aggressive and behavioural issues (Meltzer et al 2009)
- Research (Humphreys, 2008) has highlighted that children's outcomes are improved if the mother is supported to take an active part in the child’s recovery – post abuse

# DART

- DART aims to address the IMMEDIATE and LONG TERM negative effects: improve educational attainment, reduce related presentations to services (emotional distress and behavioural issues, increase self esteem and confidence in both, including increase in parenting confidence)
- DART is a NSPCC positively evaluated programme for mothers and children, aiming to help recovery from the adverse effects of domestic abuse. DART is designed to build positive mother and child relationships – thus helping to stop inter-generational DA, promote positive family relationships and to prevent escalation in safeguarding

# DART

- SCC working with the NSPCC have ensured continuation of the DART programme within the city. SCC is part of national evaluation programme
- Led & coordinated by IDVA, together with Women's Aid & SCC family support workers. The programme includes:
  - Family impact through comprehensive assessment (between 4-8 sessions)
  - 10 weeks of linked 2 hour group work programme for mothers and children
  - Ongoing & individual family support and assessment throughout
- 12 DART programme facilitators trained. Programme started Sept 18, 10 families maximum per group

# DART

- Two groups (7-10 & 11-14), currently running one group per school term,
- Referrals mainly from C&F Services / IDVAs. Referrals increasing as awareness grows
- 9 referrals 7-10yrs (Sept 18) , 6 referrals 11-14yrs (Jan 19), 6 referrals 7-10yrs (April 19)
- Groups has been very successful for the mothers and children who are participating, with very powerful feedback in terms of relationship building between parent and child, post domestic abuse
- DART artwork exhibition being planned for White Ribbon Day 2019
- Referrals to be sent to: [Dart@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Dart@southampton.gov.uk)

# Sure Start Special

- **Sure Start Special** is a joint project with Southampton's Women's Aid and Southampton Sure Start Children's Centres funded by Children In Need.
- It is a unique and new project for children who have been exposed to parental domestic violence and abuse.
- It is an early intervention programme for both children aged 3 or 4 years and their mother/carer.
- It offers small group work with children delivered by an experienced play therapist and Sure Start worker with a focus on improving communication and building resilience. Plus, running at the same time, group work with mothers/carers, delivered by an experienced domestic abuse trainer covering parenting skills and strengthening family communication post-abuse.

# Sure Start Special

- It seeks to address the potentially lasting impact of parental domestic violence and abuse on children. It is specially designed to meet the needs of children under 5 years, who are not only the most prevalent group of children affected by DVA but also most likely to experience adverse impact due to their age and development.
- The programme works with both children and their mothers to explore improved parenting support, post-abuse for children in their early years.

# Sure Start Special

- The programme runs for 8 weeks and is delivered from Children's Centres.
- So far there have been referrals for 37 families; translating into 10 mothers and 11 children attending 3 groups. The fourth is due to start on 26/2/19 at Thornhill Children's Centre, with a fifth pending for the 7/5/19 at Millbrook, Redbridge & Maybush Children's Centre (Pickles Coppice).
- The age of the children has been difficult in that many children are in nursery placements or at school, if the placements clash with the course days then Mum's can be reluctant to engage. Also, a lot of our Mum's don't drive, so the courses need to be as local to them as possible. We often receive referrals scattered across the city so we have to accommodate this by running smaller groups in different Children's Centres.

# Children's Resource Service

## Multi-disciplinary team comprising of:

- Edge of Care Team
- Specialist assessment team
- Family Drug and Alcohol Court
- Missing, Exploited Trafficked Hub
- Behavioural Resource Service



## Partnership working:

- Social Workers
- Psychologists
- Nurses
- Family Engagement Workers
- Mental Health Practitioners

# Children's Services has access to the following to support working with children

- Early help assessments & plans
- Child in Need assessments & plans
- Child protection assessments & plans
- SAT: Capacity to care /Capacity to Change
- Protective Parenting – individual & group work
- SafeLives YP & Adult DASH assessments
- Duluth Power & Control Wheels
- Cycle of Abuse tool
- HRDA – Daily case review meeting
- MARAC
- Police
- IDVAs
- Yellow Door
- Hampton Trust
- No Limits
- DART
- Sure Start Special
- BRS
- CAMHS
- PIPPA helpline
- Edge of Care
- FDAC



# Young perpetrators

# Young Perpetrators

- Teenage intimate relationships: Safelives (2012) 13-19 yr olds accessing specialist DVA services found 30% **extreme** levels of physical abuse, sexual abuse and jealous & controlling behaviour
- SCC young persons DA advocate (YPVA): levels of high risk physical abuse alarming; culture of abuse (lack of empathy, ACEs, no consequences)

- **Both** victim and perpetrator of abuse have to be age 16 and over to meet definition of DVA (police, HRDA)
- Numbers unknown

- Adolescent on Parent Violence & Abuse (APVA): recognised as emerging problem; often ignored, limited response
- Condry et al (2014); 2000 cases reported to Met – 87% were male 77% were female offenders. Mothers overwhelmingly victims of physical abuse by their children

# Youth Justice



- Works with 10 – 18 year olds subject to criminal orders or out of court disposals

- YOS use Asset Plus assessment tool which includes consideration of domestic abuse in families. 119 assessments completed in 2018; 37 (31.1%) had a DA flag.

- Service formerly had licence to deliver LINX programme but this was not renewed as staff change meant that there was a qualified facilitator deficit

- There is a opportunity for criminal justice professionals to more fully consider domestic abuse in the context of the Joint Decision Making Panel. But this would require police agreement.



# Opportunities for effective practice

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## Restorative Practices, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) and Trauma Informed Training Suite

- The training supports the ambitions of the Southampton Working with Families Group, Hampshire Constabulary and partners desire to become more ACE's aware and supports the principles of a Families Approach, being led within our LSAB's. The new training will be promoted via the LSCB and LSAB and should be accessible to staff, working cross sector, inclusive of voluntary and community sector agencies, working in Children's, Health, Housing, Community Safety or Adult Services.
- This suite of training supports a Pan Hampshire ambition to create a 'whole system approach' that supports our workforce to work restoratively with children, families and vulnerable adults; at the same time as having a greater awareness and understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experience, trauma and the effects of parental conflict.
- The training will benefit from being delivered by staff from across these sectors. We want our workforce to be working restoratively and supported to be trauma informed and ACE's aware, as well as more able to support parent's manage and deal with conflict



# Next Steps – Task and Finish Group

- Co-ordinated by Senior Commissioning Manager
- To include:
  - Integrated Commissioning Unit
  - Children and Families Service
  - Adults Services
  - Safeguarding (Clinical Commissioning Group)
  - Providers
  - Public Health

- Focus on early prevention
- Wider services that can be utilised to support or enhance the early prevention approach.
- ACE (Adverse childhood experiences)
- Invest to save schemes

# Analysis - Strengths

- Strategic focus – DSA strategic group, Early Intervention Group, YOS Management Board.
- Development of Extended Locality Model
- High Risk Domestic Abuse response embedded in MASH
- IDVA service providing training to staff
- Relationships work in schools

- Evidenced based / local programmes – DART and Sure Start Special
- Well connected specialist provision (Community Resource Service)
- Specialist assessment tools used (CRS / YOS)
- Early intervention / criminal justice diversion opportunities (Joint Decision Making Panel)
- New multi-agency task and finish group

# Analysis – Areas for improvement

- Ensure that domestic abuse interventions are embedded in Extended Locality Model provision.
- Increase referrals into and take up of group work provision.
- Consider role of specialist services (CRS, IDVA) and possible consultancy role.
- Improve understanding of and response to young perpetrators, both in and out of criminal justice system. Improve youth justice diversion panel response domestic abuse.
- Ensure partnership engagement with ACE, RP and trauma informed training suite
- Use task and finish group to develop traction of early intervention response.