



Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme

The Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) aims to help people, who have been abusive towards their partners or ex-partners, change their behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships. Taking part in a DVPP can make a real difference to the lives of those involved, including children who have been affected. But it can be challenging and the court will make decisions about contact based on the progress a participant makes during the programme. In most cases Cafcass will assess a person's suitability for the programme and whether it is available locally and, following the court order, will make a referral.

About the programme

- * The programme is mostly run in groups so that you have a chance to learn from and support each other.
- * The sessions take place weekly or fortnightly and the number of group sessions that you will need to attend varies depending on the provider – the average is 28 sessions. It is important you are able to attend the whole course to demonstrate your commitment to changing your behaviour.
- * All DVPPs provide a Women's Support Service to give separate support to your former and current partners.
- * The other group members attending the programmes might be there on a voluntary basis, working with a local authority, or ordered to attend by a court.
- * The programmes are run by local or national organisations, which are accredited by Respect, or by Probation Trusts.

A DVPP might be appropriate when:

- * There is a pattern of acknowledged or proven domestic violence.
- * You are able to accept responsibility for the violence in your relationships, and show a willingness to want to change the way you behave.
- * The level of risk is not too high and is such that, upon successful completion of the course, safe and beneficial contact with your children is a realistic aim.

- * You are ready and able to work with a group.
- * As a Cafcass service user, your suitability to take part in a DVPP will be assessed by Cafcass and the DVPP provider and must be ordered by the court.


The Course

There is usually some introductory work to prepare for the group sessions.

The group programme will help you to change your behaviour and make decisions without resorting to violence or abuse. Groups are often arranged in modules on particular themes and will help you to:

- * learn about the effects and consequences of domestic abuse on your partner and family.
- * participate in group sessions with other individuals who have behaved in a similar way.
- * talk openly about your behaviour and the people affected by it.
- * identify the beliefs and attitudes which underpin violence and abuse.
- * cope with your behaviour and feelings in difficult situations.
- * learn how to react without being abusive.
- * learn about respect and responsible parenting.
- * learn to understand and want to change your behaviour.





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will help you make
decisions and behave
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violence or abuse.

In order to attend the programme you must:

- * sign a consent form to allow the DVPP provider to share information about you with your victim and / or partner, and agree not to interfere with this contact.
- * accept that we will be in contact with the police and local authority and other appropriate parties.
- * stop being violent or abusive to anyone, especially your partner or ex-partner and any children involved.
- * arrive on time and complete all sessions in full.
- * take part in the group exercises.
- * arrive with a clear head, and not under the influence of drugs, alcohol or solvents.
- * treat tutors and other group members with respect.
- * respect the confidentiality of other participants.

Feedback

Course providers report back to Cafcass during and on completion of the programme to inform us of a person's progress, or about any significant safety concerns that may have been identified. These reports form part of Cafcass' assessments about contact and can be part of the evidence which we provide to court, prior to it making a decision about contact. DVPP staff do not make decisions about contact.

To take part in a DVPP Course:

The providers who run the DVPP are listed on the Cafcass website (www.cafcass.gov.uk). Cafcass only works with accredited providers and we are working to ensure that there are providers in all areas in England. You can talk to a Cafcass practitioner, or directly with a DVPP Provider for more information.

There is no charge for Cafcass service users to take part in a DVPP when this is ordered by the court as a 'contact activity' in private law cases concerning contact and residence issues for children.

For further information and details of the programme you can request a leaflet from your local provider. More information about the programme is also available on the Cafcass website: www.cafcass.gov.uk.



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Cafcass, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF
www.cafcass.gov.uk

