



# Black Country Women's Aid

*we listen, we support, we care*



# Our Future

**OPERATION  
ENCOMPASS**  
In every force. In every school. For every child.

**School based support for children and young people  
living in the Black Country affected by domestic abuse.**



Support with  
safeguarding

One to one  
casework

Group  
programmes

Training for  
staff

Contact: [youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk](mailto:youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk)

# About Our Future



Home Office



**Our Future is a project delivered by Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA), funded by the Home Office.**

Our Future offers a range of school based support to children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

Our Future is available for children and young people aged between 5-18 years in **Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton.**

Our Future underpins **Operation Encompass**, a police and education partnership in which police provide notifications to schools when there has been a call-out to a child's home relating to domestic abuse.



## REFERRING TO THE SERVICE

### REFERRAL PROCESS

Referrals into Our Future are accepted from all agencies.

#### SUPPORT NEED IDENTIFIED

Child or Young Person affected by domestic Abuse. (Current or Historic)



#### CONSENT OBTAINED TO MAKE REFERRAL

Parental consent required for all children under age 13 years.



#### COMPLETE SCREENING AND REFERRAL TOOL

Refer to Our Future via Secure Email .



#### REFERRAL PROCESSED AND ALLOCATED

One to one sessions or group work will commence in school.



We accept referrals from all agencies. We can support children affected by domestic abuse currently and historically.

To refer into the service, we will ask you to complete a screening tool identifying what you know about the child's needs. Our team will then discuss an appropriate support package with you. The options may include:

1. Advice and guidance from our team on supporting the child through internal safeguarding;
2. One to one support and advocacy based on the child's needs;
3. Group support programmes where there are a number of children with identified needs within the school.

#### Consent:

We need parental consent in order to provide one to one or group support, however if consent is unavailable our team can still advise and work with you to support children through internal safeguarding.

## CONTACT US

For more information and to request a copy of the screening tool/referral form:

**Email:** [youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk](mailto:youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk)

**Call:** 0121 553 0090

# Support for children

## THE EFFECT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE ON CHILDREN

In 90% of cases of domestic abuse, children are in the same or the next room when an incident happens. Children directly witness 75% of abusive incidents. Even where children do not directly witness violence, living with coercive, controlling behaviour in the home can severely affect them. The impact of this early trauma can last a lifetime, and may include:

- Anxiety, fear and confusion: in younger children this may be expressed through tummy aches, biting nails, tantrums, and in older children and young people through panic attacks, depression and self-harm;
- Anger and disruptive behaviour towards authority figures;
- Harm to physical, emotional, cognitive and social development leading to behaviour problems, poor academic achievement, illness, and depression;
- Increased risk of being taken into care or of becoming a victim of child abuse, up to 40% of child abuse victims report domestic abuse in the home, and domestic abuse is a factor in 93% of serious case reviews concerned with child deaths;
- Disrupted family dynamics, with parenting and attachments destabilised by domestic abuse;
- Risk of becoming a victim of grooming, exploitation, or abuse in their own relationships;
- Risk of becoming abusive to others.

## ONE TO ONE SUPPORT AND CASEWORK

Our Future's Advocate-Educator team can offer child-centred one to one support which provides a safe space to work through how domestic abuse in the home may be affecting them. This includes:

- Emotional support, with space and time to talk about how they feel;
- Working on healthy ways to express emotions, and healthy coping strategies;
- Discussing safety, danger signs, identifying healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship, and identifying safe adults and support networks;
- Access to counselling services if needed;
- Working alongside school staff to help keep children engaged with education;
- Attend case reviews and multi-agency briefings;
- Onward referrals to alternative agencies.

### What children and Young People say

*"Doing work around domestic abuse made me understand more about what my mum went through and why we had to leave"*

*"My confidence has improved and I have someone that I can talk to about anything. I am always smiling now. Every time I see my support worker at school she makes me smile."*

*"I am glad I now have someone to talk about things that have happened as I never had a good relationship with workers before"*

*"I've learned how to love myself and smile"*

# Support for children

## 3. GROUP SUPPORT

<p><b>You &amp; Me, Mum</b> Group size: up to 10 (min 6) Women-only 10-sessions</p>	<p>Where children are too young for direct support, we can work to identify parenting support or offer You &amp; Me, Mum. This is a course to help mothers understand how domestic violence affects their parenting, and build strategies to help them address the needs of their children.</p>
<p><b>Helping Hands</b> Age: 5-8 Group size: up to 10 (Min 6) Mixed or single-sex 6-sessions</p>	<p>A programme aiming to help children cope with and recover from their experience of domestic abuse. The themes include developing children's self-esteem; gender, stereotypes and assumptions; feelings and emotions; the right to feel safe; warning signs; safe adults; others have the right to feel safe with us; secrets and surprises.</p>
<p><b>Inside-Out</b> Age: 8-11 Group size: up to 10 (min 6) Mixed or single-sex 6-sessions</p>	<p>A BCWA programme focussing more in-depth on understanding, dealing with and expressing emotions helping children to understand how they can control their actions. Themes covered also include self-esteem, gender stereotypes, understanding safety/warning signs, secrets and surprises.</p>
<p><b>Trapped</b> Age: 11-18 Group size: up to 10 (min 6) Mixed or single-sex groups Single sessions or as needed</p>	<p>A group awareness and resilience-building programme which raises awareness of potential vulnerabilities including domestic abuse, teenage relationship abuse, grooming, CSE and online safety. Each session covers a single topic, with activities appropriate to varied age groups. TRAPPED provides healthy messages around gender, consent and healthy relationships. It empowers children and young people to be aware of their rights, recognise warning signs, and identify where to go to for help.</p>
<p><b>VIVA</b> Age: 11-18 Group size: up to 10 (min 6) Single-sex groups 6-8 sessions</p>	<p>A small group programme run with boys and girls separately, focussing more closely on self-esteem, safety and risk, particularly effective for young people who are forming their own relationships and risk repeating family patterns of domestic violence and abuse.</p>
<p><b>VOICES</b> Age: 13-18 Group size: up to 10 (min 6) Female-only 10 sessions</p>	<p><i>Voices is a programme particularly suitable for delivery in PRUs or to groups of girls who are at risk of exclusion or offending. It addresses trauma as a result of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; physical neglect, or exposure to domestic violence. Voices includes modules on self, connecting with others, healthy living, and the journey ahead. It advocates a strength-based approach, tying feelings to subsequent actions to help girls and young women build a hopeful future.</i></p>

**100%** of staff would recommend Inside-Out to other schools and felt the programme had helped students improve their emotional health and increase their confidence.

Helping Hands and Inside-Out meet the requirements of SMSC and Ofsted regarding behaviour and conduct including:

- management of feelings and behaviour, and how they relate to others;
- understanding of how to keep ourselves safe from risks.
- The programmes also support schools who are working towards being a UNICEF Rights Respecting School.

# More about our group programmes

Helping Hands and Inside-Out are group programmes for children affected by domestic abuse. Each is aimed at a particular age-group, using appropriate tools and methods to convey the key messages that: **we all have the right to feel safe all the time; there is nothing so awful (or so small) that we cannot talk about it with someone; and others have the right to feel safe with us.**

## Benefits of the programmes for children:

- Therapeutic: enables them to explore and express their feelings safely, teaching them that feelings are okay;
- Preventative: explores how their choice of behaviour can affect the feeling of others, encouraging them to express strong feelings without violence, and identify ways to manage conflict;
- Building resilience: develops self-esteem and confidence;
- Increasing safety: informs them of their right to feel safe at all times, encourages them to ask for support when needed, and empowers them to identify their own personal support network.

## Key Stage 1: Helping Hands

**Age:** 5-8

**Group size:** up to 10 (minimum group 6), mixed or single-sex groups

**Sessions:** 6-one-hour sessions, delivered weekly

Helping Hands aims to increase children's understanding of feeling safe and to explore and promote behaviours which will contribute to a safe environment.



### Week by week

1. Helping Hands
2. I Feel Safe When...
3. Developing Children's Self Esteem
4. Feelings and Emotions
5. Honesty/Conflict Management
6. Gender Roles & Stereotypes

### What children say

- "You can find ways to calm your angry"*
- "I have learnt who to talk to if I have a problem"*
- "You can have many emotions and its ok not to be scared of them"*

## Key Stage 2: INSIDE-OUT

**Age:** 9-11 (Year 5 & 6)

**Group size:** up to 10 (minimum 6)

**Sessions:** six one-hour sessions, delivered weekly

The primary purpose of Inside-Out is to increase children's understanding of their feelings and emotions and how to deal with these internally and externally. This allows them to gain a better understanding of themselves and how to keep safe. It can also help to reduce potential behavioural issues arising from witnessing domestic abuse.



### Week by week

1. Me and my feelings
2. Recognising and dealing with anger
3. Managing your fears
4. The right to feel safe and who helps us
5. Secrets and surprises
6. Coping strategies and celebrations

### What children say

- 96%** of children said it helped them increase in confidence. **92%** said it had improved their emotional health.
- "I definitely feel more confident."*
- "I did not really understand some emotions but I do now."*
- "I enjoyed everything about Inside Out and want them to stay all of the time."*

# KS3 group programmes

**TRAPPED** is a group education and awareness programme for children and young people which educates and empowers them around the crucial issue of relationship abuse.

It features detailed lesson plans for ages 11-15, providing healthy, age-appropriate messages around gender, consent, healthy relationships, sexuality, abuse, cyber-safety, gangs, and other risk factors. TRAPPED offers them the language and understanding to communicate about these issues, know their rights, increase their resilience and know where to go for help.

TRAPPED was originally developed in partnership with the Home Office, Sandwell MBC and West Midlands Police. It was designed in accordance with PSHE Association guidelines on Sex and Relationships Education. It was peer-reviewed and recommended as good practice by the Department for Education and Home Office in the report: Tackling Knives and Serious Youth Violence Programme Good Practice Guide 2010-2011.



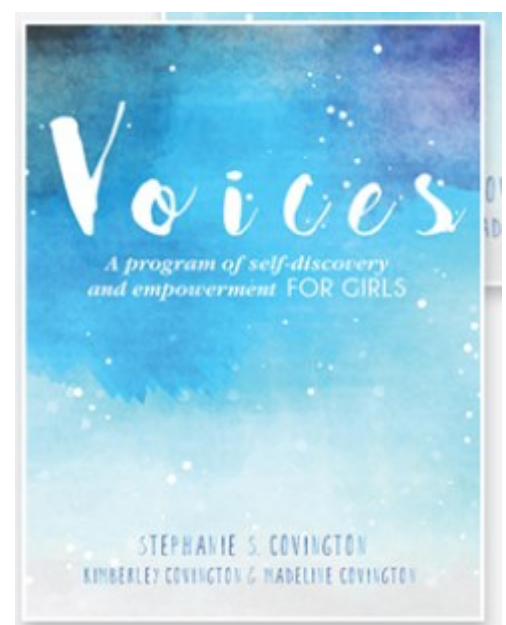
*93% of secondary pupils said they enjoyed all or part of the session; 72% said they learned something they didn't know before ; 36% of boys and 41% of girls recognised from their own lives issues covered in the session. 86% said that following the session they would know where to go to get help if they faced any of the issues covered themselves.*



VIVA is a group programme for young people who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation. The six-week programme further explores self-esteem, risk taking, trusted adults and healthy relationships. One to one work is also available with young people who are suffering any kind of abuse.

VIVA can be offered in schools and community settings

**Voices** is a programme to address the unique needs of adolescent girls and young women. It encourages them to seek and celebrate their “true selves” by providing a safe space, encouragement, structure, and the support they need to embrace their journeys of self-discovery. The program includes modules on self, connecting with others, healthy living, the pressures of social media, early puberty, gender exploration, human sex trafficking, and binge drinking. It also covers pressures from texting, social media, and online or “in real life” (IRL) friends





# Black Country Women's Aid

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*"They helped me to regain my confidence and rebuild my life"*

*"Lots of organisations sit around and talk about it; [they] are out there doing the work"*

Black Country Women's Aid (formerly Sandwell Women's Aid) is a leading regional charity which supports victims of violence across the West Midlands.

We offer sensitive and holistic **support** services which each year help thousands of **victims of abuse** to **escape from violence**, cope with trauma and rebuild their lives. We place victims' voices at the heart of our work and we constantly develop our services in response to needs in our communities.

Our services include support for both adult and child victims of domestic abuse, stalking, sexual violence, exploitation and international human trafficking, and women in the criminal justice system.

First established 30 years ago in Sandwell, we have grown from a small local refuge provider to a diverse organisation which works across Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

BCWA won the Black Country Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award 2015, and the One to Watch Award and Highly Commended overall at the Investors In People Awards 2014.

Our Future is BCWA's latest project, working across the Black Country to support children living with domestic abuse at home. Our range of other support services in the four boroughs include:

## Services in Sandwell

- **Domestic abuse**  
community support services for victims 16 + and refuge accommodation
- **Stalking and harassment**  
support for women & girls 13+
- **Rape and sexual violence**  
support for adults and children 5+
- **Young People's services**  
for victims of domestic abuse, grooming and exploitation 11+
- **Modern slavery** services
- **Women's Justice**  
services for female offenders and those with complex needs
- **Training**

## Services in Dudley

- **Domestic abuse**  
community support services for victims 16 +
- **Stalking and harassment**  
support for women & girls 13+
- **Rape and sexual violence**  
support for adults and children 5+
- **Young People's services**  
for victims of domestic abuse, grooming and exploitation 11+
- **Modern slavery** services
- **Women's Justice**  
services for female offenders and those with complex needs
- **Training**

## Services in Walsall

- **Domestic abuse**  
community support services for victims 16 +
- **Stalking and harassment**  
support for women & girls 13+
- **Young People's services**  
for victims of domestic abuse, grooming and exploitation 11+
- **Modern slavery** services
- **Training**

## Services in W'ton

- **Stalking and harassment**  
support for women & girls 13+
- **Rape and sexual violence**  
support for adults and children 5+
- **Young People's services**  
for victims of domestic abuse, grooming and exploitation 11+
- **Modern slavery** services
- **Training**

For more information about any of our services please contact our Head Office on 0121 553 0090 or email [info@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk](mailto:info@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk)



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**Our Children's Advocate Educators also deliver training to include;**

- **Impacts of Domestic Abuse on Children.**
  - **Handling Disclosures**
- **Supporting Gang Affected CYP at Risk of CSE/Sexual Assault.**

We also deliver Assemblies, workshops and awareness sessions.

**Please email [youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk](mailto:youngpeople@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk) for further information**

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