

## Working together to support you and your child

We understand that now is a difficult time for you because you may be dealing with your own feelings. And we believe that you have a vital role to play in supporting your child following their experience of domestic abuse.

Children often need time to make sense of the work we are doing. To keep on top of things, it will be helpful if you let us know about your child's reaction to the work, or about any changes in their behaviour or about any other significant events.

This'll help us to work together, getting better support to you both.

## Get in touch

If you have any questions or worries about DART, you can contact us at:

## Where to get support

If you have any worries about a child, the NSPCC helpline offers advice and support 24 hours a day. You don't have to say who you are. And the sooner you call, the sooner it's off your mind.

Call **0808 800 5000** or email **help@nspcc.org.uk**

**EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

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## Domestic Abuse Recovering Together (DART)

Information for mothers

**EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

## This booklet tells you all about DART and what you can expect from the programme.

### Who's it for?

DART is here for you and your child following domestic abuse. It gives you the opportunity to strengthen your relationship with each other. Over a 10-week group work programme you will be given the opportunity to explore your issues within a safe and friendly environment.

The programme works with one mum and one child per family. But if you have more than one child, you may be offered the opportunity to complete the programme with your other children at a different time. In any case, to attend the group, your child must be between 7-14 years old.

### What do we mean by domestic abuse?

The definition that DART works with is: "Domestic abuse (also called domestic violence) happens when one person hurts or bullies another person who is or was their partner or who is in the same family. It can happen between people who are going out together, living together, have children together or are married to each other. It can happen either when people live together or separately."

### What happens in a DART group?

We will explore:

- what domestic abuse is
- why it's okay to talk about domestic abuse
- some ways to protect you and your family from domestic abuse
- why you are not to blame for the domestic abuse
- some ways of building your own and your child's self-esteem
- how you and your child can express your feelings and emotions, such as anger, in a healthy way.

Each weekly session will last approximately two hours and will offer space for you and your child to work both together as well as separately. Mothers and children will work together for the first hour of the session before dividing into separate groups.

Please note that it is important that you feel safe enough to participate. Due to the nature of the programme, the perpetrator of domestic abuse must not be living within the family home and you can only access the service if you are no longer living with domestic abuse.

**"We have always had a closeness and that was damaged. It seems to be coming back."**



### How does domestic abuse affect children and relationships?

Domestic abuse can have a huge impact on children. Their responses to living with such abuse can be very different, and some are affected more than others. These effects may be short or long-term and can impact on many aspects of your family's life.

Often domestic abuse is not discussed between family members, which can have an impact on how women and children relate to each other.

### Getting to know you and your child

Before joining the programme we need to find out a little bit more about your family and how the domestic abuse has affected you and your child. In order to do this, your allocated worker will need to meet with you and your child a few times.

This is also an opportunity for you to get to know us and ask any questions or talk about any worries relating to the programme. We sometimes find that DART isn't the right support service for families, for various reasons.

After meeting with you and your child we will let you know if DART is right for you. If we think that it's not the best time for you to come, then we will see if we can find some different support for you and your family.