



FATHERS TO FATHERS

Home-Start Bromley is a local charity that seeks to support parents to provide the best nurturing and stimulating environment in which their children can maximise their potential. Working with local families, supported by our team of parent volunteers, home-Start Bromley has been able to deliver tailored support to individual families, through periods of crisis and transitions.

As part of our whole family approach “Fathers to Fathers” is a project that is designed to support fathers improve their interactions with their families, where there has been a history of abusive and neglectful behaviours. The programme ultimately wants to support fathers to provide nurturing and child centred parenting practices with their children.

Participants on the Fathers to Fathers programme benefit from evidenced based support elements, which includes - the established Home-Start parent mentoring support, and the 17 week Caring Dads programme.

What are the programme aims?

- To develop sufficient trust & motivation to engage men in the process of examining their fathering
- To increase men’s awareness and application of child-centred fathering
- To increase mens’ awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive & neglectful fathering behaviours and their impact on children
- To help fathers improve their relationships with their children
- Consolidating learning, rebuilding trust and planning for the future

Who is eligible?

Fathers who

- Have been abusive to their partners and/or children
- Have at least weekly contact with a child in a role as parent
- Accept they have behaved abusively towards their partner and/or children
- Have some motivation to change their behaviour.

Probation referrers need to acknowledge that Caring Dads is not to be used instead of a perpetrator programme and should read the document ‘*Caring Dads – Eligibility and Referral*’ .

Anyone excluded?



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- Fathers with previous sexual offending history against children or vulnerable adults or where concerns of this nature exist.
- Fathers whose drug and/or alcohol use will get in the way of their attendance or engagement.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE FATHERS-TO-FATHERS PROGRAMME



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1-2-1 WEEKLY PEER TO PEER MENTORING SUPPORT



17 WEEK CARING DADS PARENTING PROGRAMME

1-2-1 Peer Mentoring

As part of the “Fathers to Fathers” programme, participants are matched with a parent volunteer who provides one to one peer mentoring support. The “Fathers to Fathers” parent mentors, are fathers or have parenting responsibilities themselves, and have been fully trained and vetted. They provide weekly peer mentoring support sessions which are between 2-3 hours and are based on a tailored action plan for each father. All programme participants must be committed to engage with their mentor throughout the programme. Both mentors and programme participants will have regular reviews related to progress and their development in key areas. The parent mentors are supervised by our family co-ordinator and has regular supervision sessions and are fully conversant in safeguarding procedures.



Caring Dads© programme

Caring Dads is a 17-session programme designed for fathers who acknowledge the need to change their behaviour towards their partner (or ex-partner) and children and have regular contact with their children.

What type of work will be undertaken within the Caring Dads programme?

The emphasis in the early stages is to build trust with the father and help him move from a position of likely resistance and suspicion.



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He will be asked to consider his own childhood, how he wants his own children to feel and what he needs to do as a parent to ensure they experience safety and emotional warmth.

He will be asked to consider how he behaves to the children's mother, acknowledge the impacts of abusive behaviours and be introduced to and practice strategies to manage his own frustrations.

Models and strategies used are: Child Centred Parenting, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Goal Centred and Solution Focussed approaches.

He will have tasks to practice with his children throughout the programme.

Responsibilities of referrers?

- Talk with the father and encourage his interest.
- Ensure you can identify some realistic positive outcomes for the mother and children from the father's participation in the programme.
- Agree that you will retain responsibility for the man throughout the life of the programme or ensure that some other person/agency will take on that role.
- Attend a part of the assessment interview with the man and any meetings arranged halfway through and at the end of the programme.
- Probation referrers can stipulate that attendance at the assessment interview is a condition of a Community Order. However, the man's attendance at the group is voluntary; it can be counted as part of the order.
- Engage with us over your experience of the programme and inform us of any ways we need to improve.
- If the referrer is not from Children's Social Work Service (CSWS) it is important that they confirm, at the point of referral, details of any CSWS workers involved with the family. Caring Dads will make contact with CSWS to confirm they agree that the man meets the criteria for Caring Dads.

Mother Contact and Support

Support is offered to all mothers where the father is on the programme. Where possible we want mothers to have clear information about the programme and



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its content and access to support and advice. We want to respond appropriately to any emerging risk issues.

Thinking of Making a Referral? – Things to Consider:

Remember the criteria:

- **He has to have at least weekly contact with his child/ren.**
- **No previous sexual offences.**
- **You have to remain as case holder, or take responsibility for constructively passing the case on to another case holder, for at least the life of the group.**
- **We cannot work with men in total denial. Most men are likely to minimise, deny, blame but we can consider a man for assessment if he regrets some action of his, accepts he needs to change something.**

Getting him to the Fathers to Fathers Assessment

Not surprisingly Fathers to Fathers is all about relationships. The men who can benefit from this programme are likely to have poor experiences of relationships with their own parents, with agencies. How he experiences his relationship with you is crucial to how well he's likely to engage with the programme.

He is likely to feel wary, hurt, suspicious, vulnerable, deeply shamed by what he's done. He has learnt to cope by withdrawing, rebelling. He is likely to be primed - to thinking you're not really bothered, don't really want to engage with him, that you're only going through the motions - to feeling patronised, put down, judged. He is likely to be feeling and reacting like, that vulnerable abused child he once was.

We can't 'sell it' to him if we don't see him. Take him/arrange to meet him before, ring him the day/the morning before to remind him...We need to model, consistency, dependency, reassurance.

How Do I Refer/ Find Out More?

For more about Fathers to Fathers and Referral Information contact us on 0203 665 9860 or email sheron.mills@home-startbromley.org.uk

Completed referral forms should be sent to admin@home-startbromley.org.uk