

Two Page Guide

Caring Dads Programme



CHILDREN
& FAMILY
SUPPORT SERVICE

What is the Caring Dads Programme?

Caring Dads is a structured, multi-agency approach to addressing men's abusive behaviours within families. It is based on a model developed in Canada and has been adopted in a number of places both in Europe and across the UK. Caring Dads provides opportunities for fathers to make positive changes in their parenting and should not be confused with anger management or domestic violence perpetrator programmes, though some of the topics covered are similar.

The Caring Dads approach recognises the importance of working with fathers in order to change controlling, abusive and neglectful behaviours and to improve their relationships with their children. Research indicates that men are more likely to engage with services to address their abusive behaviour if they think it will benefit their relationship with their children.

Who does the programme work with?

In Warwickshire, the Caring Dads programme works with men who:

- have been abusive to their partners and/ or children;
- have regular contact with a child, in a parental role;
- accept that they have behaved abusively towards their partner and/ or children; and
- have some motivation to change their behaviour.

However, the programme does not work with men who have a history of sexual offending against children, and/ or those whose alcohol or substance misuse is likely to prevent their full attendance and engagement.

Where men are assessed and considered not currently appropriate for the programme, the Caring Dads team can signpost to other services and provide support and advice regarding work with men who have behaved abusively.

What does the programme involve?

The Caring Dads programme is a voluntary 17-session group work programme which focuses on developing trust with the men, increasing their awareness of abusive behaviours and the consequences, and helping them to take responsibility for their actions.

The group work involves encouraging men to think about their own childhood experiences, consider how they want their children to feel, and what they need to do as parents to make sure their children can experience safety and emotional warmth.

The group also looks at how the men behave towards their partners and ex-partners, the impact of their abusive behaviours, and strategies for managing their own frustrations. Models and strategies used throughout this work include child centred parenting, cognitive behavioural therapy, and goal-centred and solution-focused approaches. All female partners of the men assessed for the programme are offered support through a referral to Refuge Floating Support.

Who delivers the Caring Dads programme?

There is a Caring Dads team in place which provides facilitators for the programme. These practitioners have a range of experience in working with men and women on parenting and domestic abuse and are carefully selected through an assessment that tests their expertise and engagement skills.

Each group has three facilitators; they co-deliver the first three sessions, before the two main facilitators, always one man and one woman, deliver the rest of the programme.

Where do referrals to Caring Dads come from?

Referrals will come from colleagues within Children and Families. Men referred must have a child who has an allocated worker who is willing to oversee the involvement of the family for at least the length of the programme.

Referrers are asked to attend the initial assessment with the father and attend meetings at the midway stage and at the end of the programme.

How to make a referral to for the Caring Dads Programme

The worker for the child should complete an Edge of Care Referral on MOSAIC which will be picked up by the Caring Dads Team Leader for review and allocation. *Please refer to this [MOSAIC guidance](#) on completing the Edge of Care Referral.*

Key contacts and more information

To find out more about Caring Dads programme in Warwickshire, and to discuss possible referrals, you can contact the team at CaringDads@warwickshire.gov.uk. We aim to respond to emails in 3 working days.

Julie Low is the team leader for Caring Dads and is contactable via JulieLow@warwickshire.gov.uk

Rachel Watt is the operations manager for DAST and Caring Dads and is contactable via RachelWatt@warwickshire.gov.uk