

CASA Family Service

AIMS:

- To reduce 'Hidden Harm'
- To strengthen:

Protective parenting; Resilience in children; Family relationships

- To reduce:

Substance Misuse

- To raise awareness:

Among professionals who work with children; Among alcohol and drug professionals

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide therapeutic support to families affected by parental substance misuse
- To provide peer support groups for parents and for children and young people
- TP provide input into universal services, e.g. Children's' centres and schools, that are tailored to each particular setting
- To provide information, consultation and training to other professionals in the area of 'hidden harm'

Approaches to working with families:

- Strengths based
- Child Focused Family Intervention (Wendy Robinson)
- 'Think Family'
- Strong emphasis on working relationship with family
- Strong emphasis on multi-agency working/joint working
- Does not have to be time-limited

Domestic Abuse:

- Incidence:

Approximately 60-80% either current or in the past, but impact still current

- Pre-disclosure- creating a safe space
- Current: high risk- referral to specialist services
- Low risk- safety planning, support

Past but impact still clear- obvious indicators in women and/or children:

- Space to acknowledge impact
- Strategies for coping
- Plans for next phase of life

- Referral where necessary

How do we respond?

N.B. Working with domestic abuse is fully compatible with the service aims and objectives. Much of staff knowledge and skills are transferable.

What extra do we need?

- Policy on domestic abuse
- Training for staff- beyond the level of basic 'domestic violence awareness'
- A working culture which includes a constant awareness that domestic abuse may be a factor in family life, and a sensitivity to communication around this (routine questioning/information)
- Knowledge of high risk indicators, and risk management/safety planning
- Good working relationships with local domestic violence services and knowledge of referral procedures
- Skills in raising the complex relationship between domestic abuse and substance misuse with other professionals

What would we avoid?

- We do not see whole family (including perpetrator) together where domestic abuse is a factor
- If we do have contact with both perpetrator, victim/survivor, and children, we do not share information about disclosures of the domestic abuse with the perpetrator, or share any other information that might put the woman or children at risk