

DV-ACTION BESPOKE PROGRAMME FOR MOTHERS



DV-ACT is an independent organisation that provides domestic abuse services for social services and the family courts in the UK. One of the services that we provide is the DV-ACTION Bespoke Programme for Mothers. This programme is for mothers who are in court proceedings or in child protection measures because of concerns that their child/ren may be at risk because of domestic abuse. The aim of the programme is to help mums keep their children and themselves safe from abuse in the home.

The programme includes 10 weekly one to one treatment sessions completed remotely using Zoom alongside online learning exercises. All the sessions and online learning have been created by DV-ACT experts who have worked with domestic abuse victims for many years.

How does the programme work?

First, you will meet with your treatment worker to create a programme. All of our programmes are tailored for each family that we work with so the package of topics and learning is put together especially for you. This will be guided by any assessments that have already been completed or based on interviews you have had with a DV-ACT assessor. At this session, you will also plan when your treatment sessions will take place.

Our programme team will also contact you and send you a tablet, this is yours to keep so you can set this up with your own details. The team will also arrange a time to complete a video call with you, this call is to help show you how to use the tablet and how to access your online learning.

You will then complete 1 treatment session each week and complete online exercises according to the programme of work you have put together with your treatment worker. When you have finished your 10 sessions you will then have an interview with a DV-ACT assessor who will complete a final report to feedback your progress to the court or social worker.

What will I have to do?

We want your time on the programme to be as useful and positive as possible. We find that women who attend the sessions weekly report better outcomes. All appointments take place via zoom and we ask that you:

- Attend an initial planning session with your treatment worker and a 30-minute Zoom call with the programme team to get you started
- Attend the pre-arranged hourly treatment sessions on time each week
- Complete the online tasks in full every week (approximately 1 hour of work each week)
- Attend a final interview (2 - 3 hours) with your domestic abuse risk assessor

We would ask that you please let us know as soon as possible if you have any problems that might affect your attendance or your ability to complete the online work.



What topics will be in my programme?

There is a selection of over 80 different topics related to domestic and sexual abuse that can be included in your treatment plan. The topics are grouped into sections like this:

- **Domestic abuse knowledge** - topics like what is non-physical abuse? What is abusive?
- **Sexual abuse** - exploring sexual abuse and consent
- **Attachment** - discussing why you stayed, understanding your relationship
- **Children** - focus on talking to your children about the abuse and how to manage contact
- **Safety planning** - how to plan to keep your children safe and spot early warning signals
- **Personal insight** - discussing the impact the abuse has had on you and exploring your childhood experiences
- **Moving forward** - with topics like building self-esteem, working with professionals, what to do when starting a new relationship
- **Additional needs** - this section will cover specific needs not included in the above areas like alcohol abuse, grieving and loss and immigration concerns.



How will treatment sessions work?

The links for your treatment sessions will be on your tablet so you have everything in one place. For each session you will need to make sure you:

- Have somewhere quiet and comfortable to sit where no one will disturb you for at least 1 hour
- Are in a place where you cannot be overheard, your treatment worker will ask at the beginning of the session if anyone is present in the home, this is particularly important if you are still with your abusive partner
- Have childcare arranged so that you can concentrate on the session without interruption
- Have your journal with you and any notes from your online learning
- Have a pen and paper handy to write down any notes.

Is the programme confidential?

Anything discussed in your sessions will be treated with sensitivity and will only be shared outside of DV-ACT with children's services or other professionals identified as being involved in your case. However, if you tell your treatment worker something which leads them to believe that there may be a risk of harm to yourself, others or that a crime is likely to be committed, this may need to be reported to the authorities. Wherever possible, this will be discussed with you first.

Your treatment worker will take notes during your sessions and these will be used to review your progress and will be shared with the assessor who will use them to complete your final report.

When completing online treatment sessions you should always make sure that you are able to talk freely without the possibility of being overheard. You should also keep your online programme, tablet and journal secure with a passcode.

What is the DV-ACTION learning platform?

DV-ACT has built an online learning platform on Moodle just for our clients and it is only available through an app or link on your tablet. You will be given your own unique username and password to access the platform and you will need to keep this secure.

The topics that you will work on are chosen by your treatment worker to run alongside your 10 treatment sessions with 1 - 3 topics unlocked for you to use each week. Each topic will include:

- Learning on the subject to read
- Videos to watch
- Interactive activities to complete
- Extra information and resources on the topic
- Self-care tips and time for reflection.

Your online learning is an essential part of your programme so you should always try to finish your topics and submit your reflective journal before your next treatment session.



What else is on the platform?

As well as the topics that your treatment worker will pick for you, you will always have access to resources and information including:

- **Your personal safety plan** - this will be set up in your first session with your treatment worker but you can update this whenever you want by completing the form on the page.
- **Calendar and links to your treatment sessions** - The calendar will have the dates and times of all your treatment sessions and the zoom links will be in this section for you to use.
- **Access to a daily journal** - this will give you tips on the different ways you can journal your experiences throughout the programme.
- **General resources about domestic abuse** - this will include information leaflets, links to support services, interesting news articles, videos or interviews, formal resources such as power and control wheels and even music videos.
- **General topics** - some topics will be available to everyone at the beginning of the programme this includes: self-care, how to get the most from the programme, confidentiality and how to keep your device secure.



What happens when I finish the programme?

When you have finished your treatment and assessment sessions the learning platform will unlock many more topics not included in the treatment plan. This means that you can keep the learning you have already done and also access a wealth of online learning and resources related to domestic abuse.

You keep the tablet and can continue to use the platform, update your safety plan and complete other topics or use the resources for as long as you want.

Any ongoing work that you complete after your assessment is complete will not be reported back to the local authority/court it is there for your personal development and support if and when you need it.