

# STEVENAGE CARING DADS PROGRAMME

Caring Dads: Helping Fathers Value Their Children

A 17 week programme for men who have been abusive in their families

This programme is designed to enable men who have been abusive in their families to take responsibility for their children's future welfare and safety.

**The main aims are to:**

**Increase men's awareness of child-centred fathering.**

**Increase men's awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive, and neglectful fathering behaviours and their impact on children.**

The programme was originally developed in N America. It was a response to the recognition that frequently fathers are not held accountable for their abusive behaviour and its impact on their children. It is now being used in a number of different countries including the UK where it was first introduced by the London Probation Area. International research has confirmed it has a positive impact on those that complete the course.

The first 17 week pilot programme for men in the Stevenage area is starting shortly

An outline of the programme and a referral form are attached. Full information about the programme is available at [www.caringdadsprogram.com](http://www.caringdadsprogram.com)

Programme facilitators are Fiona Benjamin from Action for Children and Tony Holloway, Probation groupworker experienced in the IDAP the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme. Consultant to the Programme is Dawn Brooks, Treatment Manager, Hertfordshire Probation Service.

## **Referral**

Any father who admits being abusive and still in contact with children may benefit from the programme. Attendance is voluntary but we would welcome those who are motivated by a desire to demonstrate their fathering commitment to the Courts or statutory agencies. Suitability will be based on an assessment of the man's needs, ability to benefit from the programme and his current circumstances. We need an agency to undertake to ensure support for the other family members and provide feedback on the impact of the intervention in improving the man's fathering behaviour. We will report on attendance, risk issues and level of engagement in the process and provide a Final Report for the referring agency.

**Anyone wishing to refer a man to the programme can use the attached form which can be emailed.**

The cost of attending the first programme is being fully met by Stevenage Borough Council for men living in Stevenage Borough. The cost to men residing elsewhere is £500.

Contact: Tony Holloway [tony.holloway@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.holloway@ntlworld.com) 07766664296

## Major Goals and Activities in the *Caring Dads* program

### **Goal 1: To develop sufficient trust and motivation to engage men in the process of examining their fathering**

Session 1: Orientation	Program Overview
Session 2: Considering fathering	Group Rules
Session 3: Developing discrepancy	Genograms Family experiences My goals Continuing to develop discrepancy

### **Goal 2: To increase men's awareness of child-centred fathering**

Session 4: Child-centred fathering	Continuum of parenting behaviour Responsive and unresponsive praise
Session 5: Building relationships with our children	Review of praise How well do you know your kids?
Session 6: Listening to children	Listening to children
Session 7: Fathers as part of families	Relationship building challenges Setting a good example
Session 8: Eliminating barriers to better relationships	Appreciation for my children's mother The connections between thoughts, feelings and actions
Session 9: How are children different from adults?	Thoughts and beliefs to watch out for Understanding child development Practical applications

### **Goal 3: To increase men's awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviours and their impact on children**

Session 10: Recognizing unhealthy, hurtful, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviours	The other end of the continuum: child maltreatment A closer look at emotional abuse
Session 11: How am I responding to my children's needs?	Emotional abuse and neglect as forms of abuse
Session 12: Relationship with my child's mother	Problem-solving for parents exercise Problem-solving for parents continued What children learn from abusive and controlling fathering
Session 13: Problem-solving in difficult situations	Abuse of children's mothers Problem-solving for parents continued
Session 14: Decreasing denial and minimisation	Shame and secrecy Effect of denial on children Problem-solving for parents continued

### **Goal 4: Consolidating learning, rebuilding trust, and planning for the future**

Session 15: Rebuilding trust and healing	Taking responsibility for the past and moving into the future Rebuilding trust
Session 16: What about discipline?	Summarizing alternatives to punishment Defining discipline
Session 17: Wrapping up	Review of main concepts Where am I going from here?

**Caring Dads Stevenage  
Referral form**

Name of referrer:

Organisation:

Contact number:

Name of client to be referred:

DOB:

Address:

Contact number:

Domestic circumstance:

Reason for referral: