

Stella Project

Separate **Issues** Shared **Solutions**

Policy and practice responses to
domestic violence related to substance
misuse

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February 2008

Stella ✨ **Project**
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- *“its like I’d drink to get rid of the pain and stop it hurting so much. Both emotionally but more at the time – it was more physically. Looking back in hindsight I can see that a lot of it was sheer terror of what was gonna happen and drinking enough kind of got rid of it but it was also the anaesthetic before the pain” (Survivors’ voices from Humphries, Thiara & Regan research, 2005)*

- *“Eventually I alternated between alcohol, tranquillisers, dope and any other illegal drugs I could get my hands on. I figured somewhere along the line something had to make me better. But it didn’t. It nearly killed me.”* – Survivors Voice, from Fylde Coast Women’s Aid research

Partnerships are easy!

- Share expertise
- Investigate what local services available
- Formal and Informal
- Cross agency training
- Establishing named contacts and referral routes
- Representation at the relevant forums/groups



Ways forward...



Specialist dv workers in drug/alcohol services (DASL, WAC, HAGA)

- routine questioning for dv
- posters/leaflets widely visible
- train internal staff and staff from other agencies – raise awareness
- undertake outreach work
- women only sessions and activities
- keep women's safety issues on the agenda

Outreach/satellite services (Nia, Family Justice Centre, Hearthstone/HAGA)

- Specialist worker comes to your service for x hours a week
- Provides support to agency/staff to develop practice
- Run groups and one to one work with women

Ways forward...

- Drug and alcohol workers visiting refuges or providing regular outreach
- Routine enquiry for substance use and domestic violence
- Perpetrator programmes which address substance use
- SM and DV working groups = development of policies and procedures, review risk assessments, info sharing procedures
- Women only safe spaces within substance misuse services – Phoenix House and Mayfield House (women's group)
- Build capacity of specialist women only ti services to respond to dv



London Borough of Camden

- 2004, Camden Safety Net, the local domestic violence service commissioned research into how services in both the domestic violence and substance misuse sectors link together.
- A recommendation from this report was for the post of a development coordinator – funded through LAA money
- August 2005 to March 2007, Substance Misuse Sub Group of the Domestic Violence Forum
- Training, referral directory, published the policies, procedures and protocols which were developed for Camden.

Refining the Routes, Domestic Violence and Substance Misuse can be downloaded from www.camden.gov.uk/domesticviolence

London Borough of Greenwich

- Alcohol Strategy identified borough having one of the highest records of alcohol related violence (dv 28.5% of violent crime)
- DAAT set up a dv and sm working group in response – lead by Alcohol Strategy Coordinator and supported by Stella Project
- Agreed purpose of group, outcomes and undertook audit of services in borough to ascertain current responses to dual issues
- A multi-agency partnership training - agencies were asked to consider ‘signing up’ to a negotiated set of standards. Set up a monitoring system
- Skills based training to each sector was delivered over the subsequent 5 months

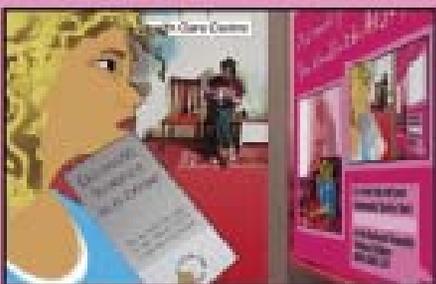
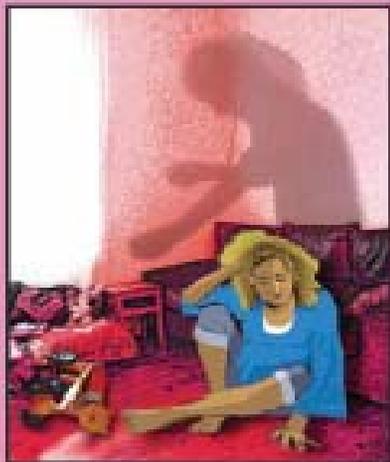
- The DAAT Data Officer supporting the development of a drug and alcohol recording spreadsheet for Greenwich Women's Aid
- DAAT visits to all domestic violence agencies to distribute information and vice versa
- Agreements to record victim and perpetrators of domestic violence within three substance misuse agencies (with this being formalised into an service level agreement with one agency)
- The commissioning of a package of further advanced training for 2008
- Funding secured from Supporting People for sm/dv floating support worker



London Borough of Lewisham

- Alcohol screening for dv
- arrestees in criminal justice system
- Highest rates of dv in London (MPS 06/07 data)
- Grant from GoL to set up six month pilot to fund worker in custody suit – complete AUDIT assessment on voluntary basis – sign post on to local and national services (TryAngle, BAGRA, Respect)
- Discovered hazardous and dependent drinkers not in contact with alcohol services, many repeat offenders
- Evaluation underway to ascertain effects on reducing repeat victimisation

Just cause you **USE**
You shouldn't be **ABUSED**

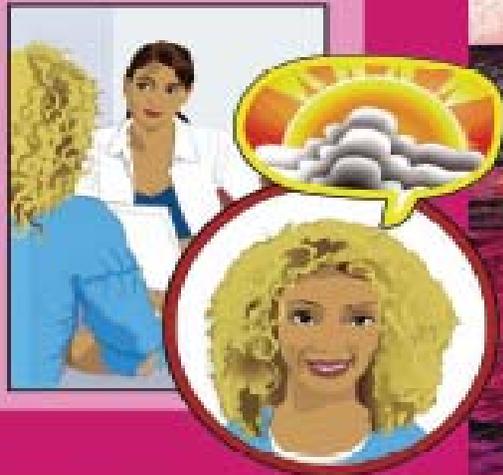


For local help call your
Community Safety Unit:

or the National Domestic
Violence Helpline:
0808 2000 247

Many women that use drugs
or alcohol experience
Domestic Violence.

There is help and support
available. Take the first step -
speak to your Key Worker
at your next session.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

DRUG MISUSE
IS NO EXCUSE

WDP IS COMMITTED TO CHALLENGING DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE IN ALL ITS FORMS. WE PROVIDE SUPPORT
AND ADVICE TO VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS WHO USE
DRUGS.

24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 200 0247

Men's Advice Line: 0808 80 1 0327

Broken Rainbow: 0845 260 4460



www.wdp-drugs.org.uk

Reaching out to drug users and communities

Case Study — Jackie, Camden Women's Aid and Margarete Centre

“ Jackie was 25 years old when initially referred to Camden Women's Aid via the police, after a neighbour made a complaint. She arrived at the refuge with serious immediate injuries and signs of burns and bruises at various stages of healing. She had been isolated from all family and friends for many years and her child was in care. Jackie told the police she was addicted to heroin and wanted support coming off the drug. She had not had any contact with any substance misuse agencies previously as she had not been allowed to access help by her partner. Jackie had been using before she met her abusive partner, but he had in her view, encouraged her use, kept her addicted and encouraged her to become involved in prostitution occasionally when they both needed money for drugs. She also stated she was using drugs to numb the pain and to feel closer to her partner.”

CWA responses

- **Immediate assessment and link with GP for immediate prescribing**
- **Joint care planning with a local drug and alcohol centre (Margarete Centre)**
- **Advocating to Social Services on Jackie's behalf**
- **Open, non-judgemental and accepting attitude towards drug use by CWA staff**

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The Stella Project is a partnership between the Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP) and the Greater London Drug and Alcohol Alliance (GLADA)



Case Study — Jackie, Camden Women's Aid and Margarete Centre

“ By the time Jackie left the refuge a year later, her confidence and self worth had increased tremendously and she looked like a completely different woman. She had reduced her script to much lower levels and was also having regular access to her child who was living with her mother. She was clear that she needed to be rehoused somewhere where she would not be in contact with users or ex-users. Her partner was sentenced to jail for serious assault. At no time did she pose a threat to other residents or staff in the refuge who were never aware of her drug use or history.”