

Bedfordshire Domestic Violence Partnership Newsletter - January 2010

BEDFORDSHIRE
DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
PARTNERSHIP

IT DOESN'T HURT
TO ASK FOR HELP!

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Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)

Since May 2007 the IDVA Service has been under the management of Victim Support Bedfordshire, originally there were two IDVA's and they covered the whole of Bedfordshire excluding Luton however on June 1st the service expanded and there are now six IDVA's in post.

All IDVA's have specialist training through the organisation CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) The service is Independent, confidential and free.

The role of the IDVA is defined, thus:

- Trained specialists, whose goal is the safety of their clients.
- Focussed on risk and risk management, gauging the current situation, directly working with high and very high-risk victims of Domestic Abuse on a casework basis.
- To provide advice and support to enable survivors to access a range of legal and non-legal services and resources. The various options would be explained to a victim, for example, relocating to emergency housing; making further statements to the Police; seeking civil law options to ensure protection to the

client, which may involve non-molestation orders which will deter the perpetrator from accessing further entry to the victim's home.

- Engaging proactively in multi-agency work, for example, with the Domestic Abuse Team officers based at Police HQ in Kempston, with the MARAC, and the Specialist Domestic Violence Court at Bedford Magistrates. Ultimately, to help survivors and their children move safely towards living violence-free lives.
- Offering support to a victim through the passage of the Criminal Justice System; attending court with them and explaining court procedures and what will happen when the abuser has been sentenced – what this means to the victim, and the victim's family.

The IDVAs are intrinsically vital in supporting a vulnerable group of people in the community, and are helping to lower the number of repeat cases that are being reported to the Police and thus, being heard at Court.

The IDVA service currently receives referrals from the police, social services, housing, health visitors, sure start to name a few.

Understanding Us

advocacy alliance

voice | view | action

Understanding Us is a project hosted by Advocacy Alliance and developed in partnership with the three commissioning areas of Supporting People, Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse. The project launched in September 2008 and helps people who use support services in Bedfordshire to have a voice in the decisions that affect them. Understanding Us works with people to promote their views in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the services they receive.

There are many ways for people to get involved in the project and have their views heard. They can become a member of the Expert Reference Group who meet monthly, set up a group in the service they use or take part as an individual. The project has recently supported women who have experienced using Domestic Abuse services to put forward their views about a new refuge.

They had the opportunity to give their opinion about the interior of the building, advising on decor, furniture and fittings. They also took part in interviewing companies applying to manage the refuge and had their say about what they would like to see from a new refuge. This is one example of how Understanding Us helps to involve people in decisions. Understanding Us also plan to support people to attend meetings where decisions are made and hopes to support a service user to attend the Domestic Abuse Forum in the near future.

Advocacy Alliance have recently rebranded so Understanding Us now has a new logo and a new information leaflet.

If you would like to receive some information leaflets or you would like to find out more about Understanding Us and the work they do:

Please contact Understanding Us on 01234 328020 or enquiries@understandingus.co.uk

Would you like to become a member of Understanding Us ?

Contact Us

By Post: Domestic Abuse Team
Room 613
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

Telephone: 0300 300 8103

Email: BDAP@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Website: www.bedsdv.org.uk



Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Information Line

For information regarding domestic abuse services available in Bedfordshire

**please contact
0808 202 1796**

Marac awareness training!

My name is Caren Irwin and I am the new MARAC Co-ordinator for Bedford & Central Bedfordshire.

MARAC stands for Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, it is a monthly multi agency meeting to discuss and produce safety plans for the very high risk victims of Domestic Abuse. The meeting is very well represented by both statutory and voluntary agencies, including (but not limited to!) Probation, Children's Services, Mental Health, 0-19 Teams, Educational Welfare Service, Midwifery, A&E, Housing, Drug and Alcohol Services, IDVA's (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) and is chaired by Bedfordshire Police. We have been running for over 2 years and in May 2009 were reviewed by CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse), one of the first 14 MARAC's running in England and Wales to do so. A number of

areas have been highlighted for improvement and, I believe!, excellent progress is already being made.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer FREE training to professionals in the aim of raising awareness of the MARAC, it's origins, aims and what it can do for you and the victims of Domestic Violence. The session lasts around 2 hours, is interactive and I attend your workplace - and all I need is a flipchart and up to 12 interested professionals! Following this you should be able to complete a risk assessment with a victim, understand the benefits of making a referral to MARAC and how to do so. And again, all this is totally free!!

Please contact me if you wish to book a 'MARAC Awareness Training' session, or have any queries regarding the MARAC – my telephone numbers are 01234 846916 or 07931227200, my email is 'bedford¢ralmarac@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk'.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Glossary of Terms

- **IDVA**
(Independent Domestic Violence Advisors)
- **MARAC**
(Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)
- **MODUS**
(multi agency computer database used by all agencies for the MARAC)

Place an article

Do you feel your agency could benefit from placing an article within the domestic abuse partnership newsletter?

For further information, please contact us via our contact details on the back page.



Training opportunities

The Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (BDAP) is currently delivering training to practitioners and professionals who wish to develop their knowledge and understanding around the subject of Domestic Abuse. We are offering a range of courses.

The Domestic Abuse foundation Awareness course particularly focuses on a holistic view of the impact of Domestic Abuse on victims and children and how this may affect your abilities to work with them.

We also offer Specialist Courses which focus on specific contributing factors within the topic of domestic abuse.



**Bedfordshire
Domestic Abuse
Partnership
would like to
wish all partners
& associates
a happy &
prosperous 2010**

New training programme available for 2010/2011

Domestic Abuse Foundation Awareness course - (Full Day)

29/04/2010	08/06/2010	22/07/2010
22/09/2010	21/10/2010	

Domestic Abuse, Mental Health & Alcohol course - (Full Day)

13/04/10	07/09/10	14/12/10
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Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment, Risk Management, Post Separation & Stalking Course- (Full Day)

18/05/10	16/09/10	11/01/11
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Domestic Abuse and Working with Perpetrators Course - (Full Day)

29/06/10	07/10/10	08/02/11
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Domestic Abuse and Male Victims Course - (Full Day)

20/07/10	04/11/10	22/03/11
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Course Fees are as follows:

Statutory Organisations	£50
Voluntary Organisations	£40

For more information on course content and to reserve your place, please contact:

Ritu Sharma,
Domestic Abuse Administrator,
Domestic Abuse Team
on 0300 300 6658
or email BDAP@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Bookings will be taken on a first come first serve basis!