



# SAFER SPACE+

Specialist service for  
Children and Young People  
aged 5 to 18 affected by  
Domestic Abuse

**VS** VICTIM  
SUPPORT



COPING WITH THE  
EFFECTS OF CRIME  
TOGETHER



**chance uk**

## Safer Space+

Safer Space+ is a specialist support service for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. The project is open to children and young people between the ages of 5 to 18-years-old who reside or are educated within London, however, priority will be given to those boroughs where our CYP DV Advocates are based and co-located.

Most children and young people are acutely aware of incidents of domestic abuse within the home, even if they are not in the same room where it is taking place. Research indicates that children who have lived with domestic abuse can be at increased risk of suffering ongoing emotional trauma, mental health difficulties and behavioural problems (Women's Aid, 2009). Early intervention can help prevent this.

Our experience has taught us that domestic abuse affects each child and young person differently, so we offer a variety of services to suit their different needs.

## What do we offer?

We know that children and young people need time and space to understand their experiences. Safer Space+ is a confidential service which can be accessed on a weekly basis for eight weeks. Children and young people will have the opportunity to be supported from the following services dependent on need and fulfilment of certain criteria:

## One-to-one support

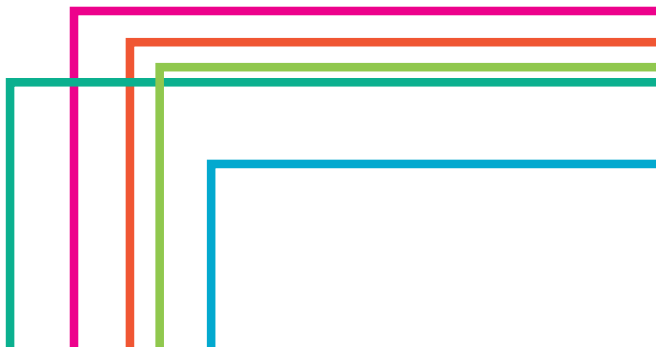
Our model focuses on reducing risk factors, increasing protective factors and resilience levels by analysing a Young Person's needs as an individual and providing holistic trauma informed support.

### **Our one-to-one support service includes:**

- Advocacy
- One-to-one emotional support
- Practical support
- Safety planning
- Support through the court process
- Confidence building
- Exploration of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Information regarding the criminal justice system.

Safer Space+ is committed to working alongside children and young people, involving them in decision making through youth forums, consultations and co-design of services.

Clients who have engaged in the one-to-one support service will also be assessed for additional services which aim to improve self-esteem, confidence and improve parent/young person relationships and wellbeing through difficult times.



## Additional services

Where appropriate and where need has been assessed, we will also look to provide additional services to allow for respite from DA trauma, or to build existing relationships within families. In line with a holistic understanding of wellbeing that encourages exploration of new skills and new environments these additional services aim to boost confidence and self-esteem, increase understanding of safety, reduce anxiety and improve existing relationships. These additional activities may include cinema visits, rock climbing experiences, adventure day trips and holiday packages.

## Mentoring

Safer Space+ works in partnership with Chance UK, who are able to provide a mentoring service to young people between 5 to 12 who meet the following criteria, where a child is referred to Chance UK the non-abusive parent may also receive parental support including parenting workshops:

### Referred children must:

- Have consent for the referral to Chance UK from the child and the child's main carer
- Be 5 to 12-years-old at point of referral (we can take year six referrals between September to April only)
- Be at primary school and/or resident in the borough accepting referrals.

### Referred children should not:

- Have a significant learning need or neurodevelopmental difference that would prevent them from having the necessary level of comprehension, communication and self-reflection skills to engage fully with our early intervention behavioural programme, talking tools and behaviour strategies. Examples of diagnoses we cannot work with would include Autistic Spectrum Condition.

For young people between 13-17-years-old a limited number of mentoring places will also be available provided by Victim Support.

## Workshops

We are able to provide workshops to small groups of young people, when supported by the establishment's qualified professionals such as within schools and youth groups. We are able to give insight to Domestic Abuse and relevant support services in an age appropriate manner.



## Accessing Safer Space+

We accept referrals from a range of professional agencies. Initial contact with the non-abusing partner will only be made following completion of a referral form from services who work with children and young people affected by DA. Consent to contact must be confirmed in line with GDPR, however, we are happy to fully discuss service with the parent who may be unsure. Parents or young people who are contacted cannot be obligated to complete the service.

Once a referral has been made, the information is reviewed to ensure the service is suitable to meet the needs of the child and/or young person.

Safer Space+ will contact original referring partner where contact cannot be made, and when uptake of service has been confirmed. However, the support service is confidential and details of support will not be shared unless there are concerns for safeguarding the welfare of the young person or if we are required to do so by law.

If we cannot meet the needs of the young person we will work alongside safe carers, children and young people to find a service that is right for them.

## Parents and carers

Once we have accepted the referral, we will arrange an initial meeting with the parent or carer so they can find out more about our services and offer them support where appropriate in line with their needs.

We offer a free, independent and confidential service for young people. This means that we will not discuss any information with the parents or young people unless we are asked to do so. The client will be informed about all communication we have with other agencies relating to their family, which will only take place in the interest of supporting their child and with their consent. The service also aims to engage parents in the support of the child with updates on engagement, recommendations, and advocacy where appropriate.



# To refer a Young Person to our service please email

**Email: [SaferSpacePlus@VictimSupport.org.uk](mailto:SaferSpacePlus@VictimSupport.org.uk)**

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