

DAPP Motivational Session # 3

Impact on children

Aims

- Develop understanding the impact that domestic abuse has on family functioning
- Develop understanding of the impact on children individually
- Understanding that choosing to perpetrate domestic abuse is a parenting choice

Timing

1 hour/45 minutes

Resources

Pen and paper. Notes from session 1 & 2 to refer back to

Exercise

Ask the father if he remembers the list that we come up with in relation to the needs of children from [session 1](#). Ask him to recap, asking what he remembers most from the exercise?

Then share the list that you created together.

We are going to come back to our family where we left off from the last session. Now focusing on the perspective of the children.

Children's bedroom

This takes place at the same time as the scene that we discussed last in the [previous session](#). Ensure that the father remembers this, if not you may need to recap and reread the scene for him. Ensure that you use the names he has given each of the family members.

Children's bedroom

Younger Child - 'I can hear dad shouting again'

Older Child - 'It's alright just go back to sleep'

Younger Child - Starting to cry

Older Child - 'Come on don't cry' They get down from their bed, get out the tablet, putting the headphones on child 1 so they can't hear the argument.

Older Child - Goes to the bedroom door to listen, they hear the door slam. They stay listening at the door. Then hear a knock on the front door. 'Put that away and pretend to be a sleep, I think the police are here. We need to pretend to be a sleep'.

Following reading out the scene explore what was happening in it

How might [younger child] be feeling? What might they be worried about? What behaviour are we seeing that they are using to cope with how they might be feeling? What role are they taking on?

How might [older child] be feeling? What might they be worried about? What behaviour are we seeing that they are using to cope with how they might be feeling? What role are they taking on?

Are the needs that we identified for children being met? Which ones aren't? How is dad's behaviour contributing to these being met? How is dad's behaviour preventing these from being met?

What choices is the dad making as a father/parent? How does his behaviour directly impact his parenting?

Do you think a social worker would be worried about these children? Are you worried about them?

The next day

The next day mum tries to get the children up and ready for school. They don't initially get up and don't want to.

Before they go to school

Child 1 - 'did you remember the money for the school? It's the last day to pay'.

Mum - 'Your not going to be able to go'

Child 1 - 'It's not fair, I wish dad was here as he would give it to me'.

Child 2 - 'Shut up about it, it's just a school trip'.

The child are late to school

Child 1 - Has PE first thing. They have forgot their kit so have to sit it out. It's one of their favorite things at school. During the session they get told off by the teacher for misbehaving

Child 2 - Is distracted for most of the day and the teacher notices they don't not seem their self, as they are usually very happy and outgoing. The teacher tries to talk to them, they get upset when asked about home, but say everything is fine.

Following reading out the scene explore what was happening in it

How has what happened the following night impact [younger child] at school? How might they be throughout the rest of the day? What have they learned about how to behave? How might they feel about their dad? What might they want from their dad?

How has what happened the following night impact [older child] at school? How might they be throughout the rest of the day? What have they learned about how to behave? How might they feel about their dad? What might they want from their dad?

Are the needs that we identified for children being met? Which ones aren't?
How is dad's behaviour contributing to these being met? How is dad's behaviour preventing these from being met?

What choices is the dad making as a father/parent? How does his behaviour directly impact his parenting?

Do you think a social worker would be worried about these children? Are you worried about them? What can dad do differently? What might we want to see from dad?
What would make the social worker less worried?

Pregnancy

We've seen that mum is pregnant.

How might she be feeling? What is the impact on her and the baby's development? Are the needs that we identified for children being met? Which ones aren't?

How is dad's behaviour contributing to these being met? How is dad's behaviour preventing these from being met?

What choices is the dad making as a father/parent? How does his behaviour directly impact his parenting?

Do you think a social worker would be worried about these children? Are you worried about them?

Alternatives

- How can we support [child 1] and [child 2] going forward?
- What will they need from their father?
- What will the baby need when he or she arrives?
- What changes does he need to make?
- How might he make these changes?
- What will help him to change?
- What might get in the way of him making changes?
- What might he find difficult? What might he be worried about?
- What is the cost to him of acknowledging his behaviour?
- What is the benefit to him of acknowledging his behaviour?

Things to consider

While we want to highlight the negative impact that domestic abuse has on children, facing the reality of this may be very difficult for fathers. Therefore we want to ensure that they are supported to understand that once the violence and abuse ends children can be supported to heal from the impacts with the right support.

Key messages:

- That the dad's behaviour has a direct impact on the children and the care they receive, even if they are not in the room or in the home when incidents have happened
- That children need love, safety and security that domestic abuse prevents this from being met
- That violence and abuse needs to stop for them to be able to thrive