

This is a sample from our Working with Men Toolkit. The full kit and training for its use is one of the significant training opportunities for Social Workers in Newham.



# Working with Men Toolkit



## Introduction

NewDay was a Department for Education funded innovation programme working with children and families impacted by domestic abuse. We offered a range of interventions that aimed to work with whole families, including men who have used violence or abuse.

The London Safeguarding Children Board (2016) state that it is imperative to "hold the abusive partner accountable for their violence and provide them with opportunities to change"; and Vetere and Cooper (2005) suggest that "the rationale for working with men who behave with violence is essential to protect women and children now and in the future".

Over the course of the programme (September 2017 – March 2020) we have explored and developed our approach to working with men, recognising that men play significant and varying roles in families with a range of different structures. We have invited men to take responsibility for their actions; supported men to make changes in their behaviours and beliefs; and encouraged men to fulfil a more active role in their children's lives. This Toolkit introduces a range of ideas and activities that we have found helpful in achieving these aims.

The ideas and activities are intended to assist you in creating more helpful conversations with the men you are working with; the toolkit has not been designed as a 'programme' or 'course' for men.

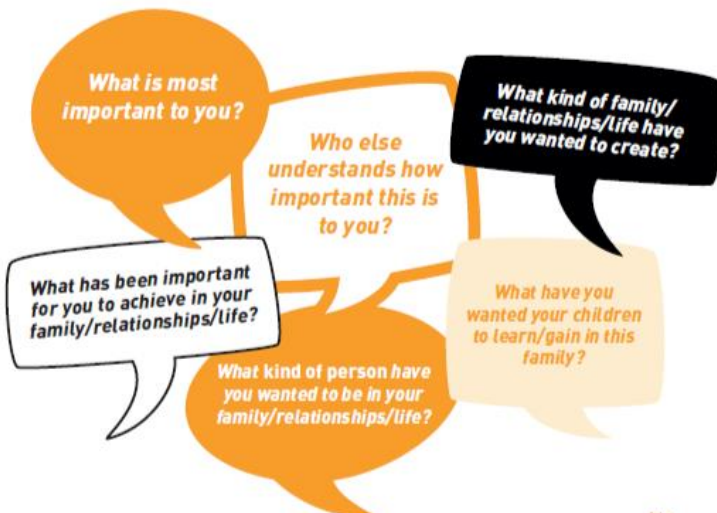
Relationships and rapport

## Invitational Questions

Invitational questions aim to encourage and invite responsibility for abusive behaviours, while helping the abusive adult to reclaim a sense of self-respect and integrity (Jenkins, 2009). By inviting the man to tell his story and modelling listening skills, the practitioner can support the man to develop capacity for listening respectfully to others' concerns and to build empathic connection.

Use open questions to broaden the conversation and invite the man to share his thoughts, feelings and wishes. Ask questions that position the man in his role as a father or as a partner, for example: "as a father, what are your hopes for your children's future?"; "as a partner, what do you want your relationship to be like". Focus on strengths and help men create alternative stories that they want to tell about themselves.

Some examples of invitational questions are below:



We recognise that men play significant and varying roles in families with a range of different structures. The 'Working with Men Toolkit' includes a range of ideas and activities to assist practitioners in creating more helpful conversations with men and fathers in children's lives. When men have used violence or abuse, invitational questions aim to encourage and invite responsibility for these actions, while helping men to reclaim a sense of self-respect and integrity to support them to make changes in their behaviours and beliefs.