The FReDA project: **F**amily **Re**covery after **D**omestic **A**buse:

Information sheet for mothers/female carers

Hello, we would like to invite you and your child to take part in a research study being carried out by a team of researchers from Universities around the UK. Before you decide whether you and your child wish to take part, please read this information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If you have any questions, please ask the research team using the contact details at the end of this information sheet. Remember, it is completely up to you if you and your child take part or not.

**What is the study about?** We know that children who experience domestic violence or abuse (DVA) are more likely to have mental health difficulties than children who do not experience DVA. Children Overcoming Domestic Abuse (CODA for short), is a programme that aims to prevent or reduce the impact of DVA on children’s mental health. Over a 12-week period, children attend the CODA group sessions where they take part in activities which encourage children to recognise, name and explore feelings surrounding DVA, and to develop coping strategies to deal with conflict and other stressful situations in the future. At the same time, mothers/female carers attend a (separate) group session, which aims to give women the knowledge of how best to support their children in the healing process. As well as connecting with other mothers/carers, it also focuses on developing connections to your child(ren) and can enhance the therapeutic experience of the group sessions for your child(ren). You can look at the content of the child and parent sessions before you decide whether you want to take part if you would like to.

Since CODA has never been tested before, we don’t know whether it is a helpful way of preventing or reducing children’s mental health difficulties. This is why this study is needed. It is important to compare the differences between those families receiving CODA (in addition to services they would usually access) and those who are not. So, half of the families taking part will do the programme, and the other half will get other kinds of support. This study is also a practice run for a much bigger study which will involve more families and across the whole country. By finding out what helps, we hope to improve support for other families in future.

**Why have I been invited to take part?** You and your child have been invited to take part because your family has experienced DVA, and an agency you are working with, thinks you and your child may be able to help us with our project. With your permission, Cardiff Women’s Aid passed your contact details to the research team so we could contact you to set up a meeting to talk about the study in more detail. We have given you this information sheet because you were interested in finding out more about our study. We will also provide your child with an information sheet so they can find out more and think about if they want to take part.

**What will happen if I and my child take part?**

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| 1.  | **First meeting:** We have given you this information sheet because Cardiff Women’s Aid told us (with your permission) that you were interested in finding out more about the study. Today, we will talk you through the study and answer any questions you have. We will ask you if you are happy to be part of the study. Please note, you are welcome to see any of the study materials (e.g. questionnaires) before deciding. A worker from Cardiff Women’s Aid can also come to the meeting so they are on hand to talk about options for support, whether or not you decide to join the study. |
| 2.  | I**f your answer is yes to joining the study**, we will also ask you and your child to sign a consent form. It is important that your child is happy to participate, although it is ultimately your decision whether or not to take part. We will also collect safety information so that we know how we should safely contact you during the study, and how we might be able to get in touch if we have difficulties in contacting you in the future.**If your answer is no,** we will give you a leaflet telling you how to contact the study in the future if your change your mind. We will let Cardiff Women’s Aid know about your decision. They will then get in contact to look at your support needs with you. If a worker is present at the meeting, they will be able to discuss this with you immediately. Your decision not to take part in the study, will not affect the support you receive from them or any other organisation. |
| 3. | **If you have agreed to be part of the study** we will ask you to complete a questionnaire. We can do this in our first meeting or arrange another time and place. The questionnaire is about your child’s behaviour, relationships, health and wellbeing, as well as your own health and wellbeing, and the abuse you have experienced. We will also ask your child to complete a short questionnaire about their health and wellbeing. We would like you and your child to complete these questionnaires separately, where possible without discussing your answers, but you can complete them in the same room if this feels more comfortable. A researcher will be there at all times to help you both to complete your questionnaires. *You will receive a £20 shopping voucher for attending this meeting (whether or not you chose to participate) and your child will receive £10 voucher. We will also cover your travel expenses.*  |
| 4. | **After completing the questionnaires, you and your child will be allocated to one of two groups** (either **Blue** or **Green**). The researcher will not know which group you will be placed in ahead of time and has no influence over the group allocation. To ensure they cannot influence the decision, the researcher will contact a central system, which will decide at random which group you will be allocated to – this is like flipping a coin. **Families in the blue group will attend CODA over a 12-week period in addition to the usual care that Cardiff Women’s Aid provide.****Families in the green group will access other kinds of support provided by Cardiff Women’s Aid and other agencies. After the study is over, you and your child will be offered the chance to take part in the group programme if you want to.** |
| 5. | We will ask you to and your child to complete the questionnaire another three times: once in four months from now, again in six months from now, and then finally in twelve months from now. *You will receive a £20 voucher and your child a £10 voucher when you complete the questionnaires in four- and six-months’ time. You will receive a £30 voucher and your child a £15 voucher when you complete the final questionnaires in twelve months.* The research team will only contact you by phone or text if it is safe to do so. Ideally, we would like to meet with you and your child in person to complete each questionnaire. Where a face-to-face meeting is not possible, you will be able to complete the questionnaire online, or as a last option, complete them over the telephone. We can discuss how you would like to complete the questionnaires.  |

**Whatever group you might be in, we hope that the support you receive and the research you take part in will take place face-to-face, but if Covid-19 measures do not permit this then services may need to deliver support virtually and the questionnaires may need to be completed over the phone or online. We will keep you updated about how support will be delivered and how we will need to carry out the research with you considering any lockdown measures. If you or your child are not comfortable with any of the changes, remember that you can always withdraw from the study any time if you want to.**

**Is there anything else involved?** Part way through the study, we will ask a small number of families to take part in an interview. The aim is to ask some families from each group about their experiences of the support they had. At this point, we would just like to know if you would be interested in being contacted about this part of the study. We do not know if you and your child will be invited for an interview but if you are, we will give you separate information sheet explaining what is involved at that time. **You can say no to being contacted about an interview whilst still being part of the study**.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?** All information we collect about you and your child will be kept confidential. We will not share the names of anyone who is taking part in this study with anyone outside of the research group, and we will not link your name to any information you provide. The findings may be used in presentations, academic articles and reports, but you won’t be named in any of these.

The only exception to this will be if you tell us something that suggests a serious risk to any person (including yourself). At that point, for safety reasons, we will share this information with appropriate services, but if possible, we will try to let you know we will do this first. For example, if you tell us something that makes us worried about your child’s wellbeing, we will contact your domestic abuse service provider to offer further support and where appropriate share this information with safeguarding services.

**Do I have to take part?** You **do not** have to take part in this study, and you do not have to give a reason for not wanting to take part. If you decide not to take part, **it will not affect the support you receive** in any way. If you choose to participate, **you can also withdraw from the study at any time** without giving a reason. If you decide to withdraw, the research team will still use the information that you have provided up to that point, unless you request otherwise. If at any point in the study you develop mental health problems so severe that we do not think you are able to understand what taking part in the project means, we would withdraw you from the study.

**Are there any advantages and disadvantages of taking part?** What we find out from this study will help us find out what kind of support is most helpful for children, because at the moment we don’t know. With your help, we can provide evidence to help improve the support children are offered in future. We do not know whether you will receive CODA or whether you will only initially access other support. One possible advantage is that one type of support might be more helpful than the other, but we do not know that. As with the possible advantages, we do not know whether one type of support is better than the other, so one possible disadvantage is that one type of care may be less helpful than the other. Those mothers and children who don’t receive CODA as part of the study will be offered the chance to take part in it when the study is over. Taking part in this study will also take up some of your time, we think about 4-5 hours over the course of a year. This increases to up to 20 hours if you are in the group receiving the CODA programme. Another possible disadvantage is that the questionnaires we ask you to complete will ask you to answer questions about how you are feeling and the abuse you have experienced. You may find this upsetting. Your child may also find completing the questionnaires upsetting. Remember **you can see the questionnaires before agreeing to take part,** and when completing them you (and your child) do not need to complete any questions that make you feel too upset or uncomfortable. The researchers will provide you and your child with details of relevant services and organisations that can offer support or help should you feel you or your child need to talk to someone while you are taking part in the research. There are some national and local organisations for adult survivors of abuse and families listed at the end of this leaflet.

**How will my data be lawfully processed?** The University of East London is the sponsor for this study. The University of East London will be using the information you share to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly, and we will keep information about you for up to 15 years after the study has finished. We are completing this study as a Task in the Public Interest in line with GDPR legislation (Article 6,1e). You can find out more about how the University of East London uses your information at [[insert](https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data) website] and/or by contacting the University’s data protection team [insert email] or its Data Protection Officer [insert email].

**Has the study received ethical approval?** The study has been approved for the NHS by the Health Research Authority (HRA) and approved by an independent NHS Ethics Committee [Insert FReDA details IRAS reference number xxxxxx].

**Who is funding the study?** The research has been funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Public Health Research Programme. The study is led by Dr Emma Howarth at University of East London (email: e.howarth@uel.ac.uk Phone: 020 8223 4574).There is a team of researchers from DECIPHer at Cardiff University and University of Cambridge that are carrying out the research.

**What if I am unhappy with something about the study?** If at any point, you are unhappy about an aspect of the study and wish to speak to someone independent of the study team or make a complaint, you can contact Dr Tim Lomas (Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee), School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ (Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk).

**What happens next?** Thank you for considering taking part in this research. If you and your child would like to take part in the study please let the researcher know. If you have questions about the study and would like to discuss it further before deciding, you can get in touch with us directly: Dr Lauren Copeland (Cardiff University) Tel: 02920 687658 Email: Copelandlc@cardiff.ac.uk

**Thank you**

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| If you need **further help or advice**, below are the details of several organisations that support survivors of domestic abuse: |
| **The National Domestic Violence Helpline** is a Freephone 24-hour helpline which provides advice and support to women and can refer them to emergency accommodation. **Helpline number: 0808 200 0247 (24 hours)**Email: **helpline@womensaid.org.uk** (you will receive a response within 3 working days)Website: **www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk**  | **RISE** is Cardiff’s specialist service for Women experiencing violence of any kindPhone: 029 2046 0566 Website: <https://rise-cardiff.cymru/>                     |
| **The Samaritans** provide support 24 hours a day, on the phone, online or by email.Phone: 116 123 | **NAPAC** support adult survivors of childhood abuse. Phone: 0808 801 0331 |
| Website: [https://www.samaritans.org/?nation=wales](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.samaritans.org%2F%3Fnation%3Dwales&data=02%7C01%7CBuckleyK3%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C4b5624b6161a4efbb8f308d7ecf1857a%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C637238394384472352&sdata=n2pCTP7K6v%2B%2B1AATQxc6cAAbBAoiIM%2FxmHReEIpLNjc%3D&reserved=0) | Website: [https://napac.org.uk/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnapac.org.uk%2F&data=02%7C01%7CBuckleyK3%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C4b5624b6161a4efbb8f308d7ecf1857a%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C637238394384462355&sdata=XB3iVDkiZmkN2ZVHl%2Fcp1mP6%2FsbUO8tJaiiZRR3rL%2Bo%3D&reserved=0) |
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| **Victim Support** provide support for those who have been affected by any crime in England and Wales. **Free Support line number: 0333 259 6584**Website: [**www.victimsupport.org.uk**](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk) | **CARDIFF MIND** support people with emotional and mental health problems.Phone: 02920 402040Website: [http://www.cardiffmind.org/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cardiffmind.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CBuckleyK3%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C4b5624b6161a4efbb8f308d7ecf1857a%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C637238394384462355&sdata=Yg86pleCoSDbD3zzlYyZC9fk7ItVTOqH0SZm%2BUEn%2BXY%3D&reserved=0) |
| **Barnardo's Family Wellbeing Service** provide specialist support for families. Phone: 02920577074Website:  [https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/family-wellbeing-service-cardiff](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.barnardos.org.uk%2Fwhat-we-do%2Fservices%2Ffamily-wellbeing-service-cardiff&data=02%7C01%7CBuckleyK3%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C4b5624b6161a4efbb8f308d7ecf1857a%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C637238394384502339&sdata=wHsijpRaMvpdCMWm5xrKVQmjAbk3T73J1Cb5T1BML7o%3D&reserved=0)  | **New Pathways** offer a range of counselling, advocacy and support services for women, children and young people.Phone: 01685 379310Website: http://www.newpathways.org.uk |