



One minute guide

PACT Programme

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What is the PACT Programme?

The PACT programme (Parents And Children Together) was developed by the Youth Justice Service (YJS) as a response to an increasing awareness of incidents of children behaving abusively towards their parents.

The main aims of the PACT programme are to:

- Reduce incidents of child to parent violence and abuse;
- Increase family safety;
- Promote positive relationships within families; and
- Improve other outcomes for families e.g. school attendance and entry into employment.

PACT is a 12 session parallel group work programme for mothers/ female carers and for their children between the ages of 14 and 17. There are also several pre-engagement sessions to prepare participants for the programme.

PACT adopts a multi-layered approach weaving together [cognitive behavioural therapy](#) (CBT) and skill development, in a restorative practice framework with family safety and respectful family relationships at the centre.

Who does the programme work with?

PACT works with mums or female carers who are experiencing a pattern of child to parent violence and abuse from their children. To be suitable for the PACT, children must be aged 14 to 17. There must have been a pattern of abusive behaviour over a period of at least six months.

Ideally both parent and child will attend the programme. The PACT programme facilitates separate groups for children dependent on gender. Due to service capacity, the programme does not work with dads who are experiencing abuse nor any siblings in the family who are affected.

Where do referrals for PACT come from?

Referrals for the PACT programme are welcome from anywhere, although the majority of referrals come from clusters, Children's Social Work Service and targeted services. The safest and most effective approach for the family is when the referrer stays involved for the duration of the PACT programme and reinforces the work done.

There is a guidance document available for referrers, which details the structure of each session. Referrers are asked to facilitate the transport of the parents and children to the group; this is a critical success factor.

What does the programme involve?

The **PACT parents' group** runs over 12 sessions facilitated by two female staff and a parent mentor. A focus of the parents' group is to reduce any feelings of guilt and shame and increase confidence, so that parents feel ready to deal with their child's abusive behaviour. Family safety is central to all of the work, and dealing with violence and safety planning is an early focus of the group. Parents learn skills in how to deal with their child, within a context of abusive behaviour.

The **PACT young people's groups** run over 12 sessions in parallel with the parents' programme. This is to ensure that key skills and concepts are covered at the same time and reinforced by an individual family session. The group looks at how young children behave towards their parent/ carer, and teaches thinking and behavioural strategies to avoid the use of violence and abuse. There is a focus on rebuilding family relationships and repairing harm. PACT takes a non-judgemental approach and acknowledges that the children are children, as underpinned by a [Child First](#) approach.

Key contacts and for more information

To find out more about PACT and to discuss possible referrals you can call Sue Pearson, PACT Co-ordinator, on 0113 378 2055 or 07891 275 899 or email: susan.pearson@leeds.gov.uk