



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

The Legacy of Change: Supporting Children Across Wales

Home Office Children Affected
by Domestic Abuse (CADA) Fund
2022 – 2026

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From 2022 to March 2026, the Home Office CADA Fund supported a network of 16 local organisations across Wales. Led by Welsh Women's Aid, this partnership brought together local specialist services to provide regular, practical support for children and young people dealing with the impacts of domestic abuse. Instead of working in isolation, these 16 services shared resources and ideas to make sure specialised support was available to families who needed it.

CADA services across Wales:

- 1 Aberconwy Domestic Abuse Service
- 2 Clwyd Allyn Women's Aid
- 3 Calan DVS
- 4 CarmDAS
- 5 Cyfannol Women's Aid
- 6 DASU
- 7 Llamau, Cardiff
- 8 Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre
- 9 Safer Wales
- 10 SMT
- 11 Swansea Women's Aid
- 12 Threshold Domestic Abuse Services
- 13 Thrive Domestic Abuse Services
- 14 Vale Domestic Abuse Services
- 15 West Wales Domestic Abuse Services
- 16 Welsh Women's Aid



Why this project was needed

Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021¹ for England and Wales, children and young people are now viewed as victims in their own right and new guidance from the Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) has stated that children affected by domestic abuse will be automatically treated as victims regardless of whether they were present at the time of the incident².

Welsh Women's Aid found that an average of 281 children were supported in refuges and community-based services supported approximately 3918 children³. Research from Public Health Wales on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) found that 16% of adults in Wales grew up in a household with domestic violence⁴ and approximately 52% of adults who experienced abuse before the age of 16 were said to have also experienced domestic abuse in later life, compared to 13% for those who did not experience abuse before the age of 16⁵. It is estimated currently that around 1 in 5 children are victims of domestic abuse across England and Wales.⁶

The CADA project started because children are affected by domestic abuse in their homes, not just as onlookers, but as individuals experiencing the abuse themselves. The main goals for this funding included:

- **Meeting Legal Changes:** The project upheld the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which recognizes that children are victims if they see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse.
- **Early Support:** Stepping in early helps children process difficult experiences and reduces the chance of these patterns repeating in future generations.
- **Filling Service Gaps:** The project provided dedicated workers who understand the intersect between trauma and VAWDASV, offering unique specialist and trauma informed support.
- **Fair Access:** The funding aimed to make sure a child could get high-quality, local support regardless of where they live in Wales, reducing the provisions gaps between different regions.

1 Criminal Prosecution service (2023). Children classified as domestic abuse victims under new guidance. Available at: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/children-classed-domestic-abuse-victims-under-new-guidance>

2 Criminal Prosecution service (2023). Children classified as domestic abuse victims under new guidance. Available at: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/children-classed-domestic-abuse-victims-under-new-guidance>

3 Welsh Women's Aid Membership Data (2024–2025)

4 Welsh Women's Aid, Children in Wales, and NSPCC Cymru (2021) Briefing on the joint CPG on violence against women and children and CPG on children and young people. Available at: <https://welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Domestic-Abuse-Its-impact-on-children-services-in-Wales-and-what-we-are-calling-for.pdf>

5 Welsh Government (2022) Welsh Government Children's Rights Impact Assessment. Available at: <https://welshwomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Domestic-Abuse-Its-impact-on-children-services-in-Wales-and-what-we-are-calling-for.pdf>

6 NSPCC (2024) Statistics on Child Abuse. Available at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/statistics-child-abuse>

What the project set out to do

The grant set specific, practical goals that the local partners worked towards. These included:

- Delivering tailored 1-1 support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
- Providing high-quality support to children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse, delivered through trauma-informed support in refuges, schools and community settings.
- Delivering interventions for children and young people as survivors of adult or peer to peer abuse.
- Delivering interventions for children and young people that exhibit harmful behaviours.
- Delivering specialist training and resources for children and young people.

The future of the services

Over 13,273 children, young people and their families were supported during the course of the grant, far exceeding the original figure proposed by the Home Office. Each organisation focused on the distinct needs of its area. This included visiting hard-to-reach rural communities, using specialised play therapy, and helping teenagers build life skills and self-expression alongside providing 1-2-1 support and group work when appropriate. At the same time, many projects trained everyday community members to spot signs of abuse and offer safe, early help and signposting to specialist services.

When the funding ended in March 2026, it left behind a huge gap in vital provision for children and young people but also a practical template for what works. The 16 organisations involved have built and developed local referral routes, shared training, and enhanced staff skills that stay within these Welsh communities. This grant showed how bringing together the daily work of the local services and consistent funding can help build lasting support and recovery for children recovering from domestic abuse.

Intervention/Program specific support provided

Definitions

The STAR Programme/Club

Through WWA's flagship intervention for CYPs, STAR delivers a structured curriculum (often 6–8 weeks) covering healthy relationships, personal safety, consent, and the impacts of abuse, exploitation, and pornography. Provides a safe, non-judgmental space for children and young people to talk openly.

[Drawing and Talking](#)

A gentle, short-term creative intervention (typically 12 one-to-one sessions) that allows children to use drawing to express complex, anxious, or traumatic feelings without pressure to speak.

Play Therapy

Non-directed, play-based therapeutic sessions designed specifically for younger children to process deep emotional trauma, communicate complex experiences, and build emotional coping skills entirely through play.

One-to-One Therapeutic Support & Advocacy

Tailored individual sessions and safety planning built around a child's specific personality and self-identified needs. Includes helping older teens navigate peer violence, substance use, and legal or independent housing transitions.

[Respect Young People's Programme \(RYPP\)](#)

An intervention for families where children or young people aged between 8 and 18 are abusive or violent towards the people close to them, particularly their parents or carers. The programme works with young people and their families, encouraging everyone to take a role in stopping the abuse and learning respectful ways of managing conflict, difficulty, and intimacy.

Multi-Agency & Regional Collaboration

Partners closely with schools, local authorities, GPs, and frameworks like MARAC and Early Help Hubs to ensure safeguarding remains a priority and care transitions smoothly between services.

[Ask Me CYP - Interactive Modules](#)

WWA's discussion-based, peer-led intervention program for youth aged 13–18 covering toxic relationships, online safety, bystander interventions, and how to handle or report abuse.

ACEs Recovery Toolkit

A trauma-informed psychoeducational program designed to help adults and children heal from childhood trauma and toxic stress. The programme teaches practical coping skills, emotional regulation, and resilience-building methods rooted in CBT, mindfulness, and attachment theory.

Aberconwy Domestic Abuse Service



Introduction

Aberconwy Domestic Abuse Service (ADAS) is a specialist frontline provider dedicated to supporting survivors across Conwy County Borough. The organisation provides the essential localized expertise necessary to reach vulnerable families in coastal towns, rural villages, and valley communities. For the past three years, ADAS has proudly delivered the STAR programme to children and young people, intentionally creating a safe, non-judgmental space where they can talk openly about their feelings and emotions while knowing a professional is truly listening to them.

Delivery summary

The program relies on frontline, direct support and exceptionally close multi-agency collaboration. Support workers partner daily with families and external professionals to deliver the structured STAR curriculum. Support offers young people practical, everyday tools and strategies designed to promote personal safety and build a foundational understanding of what a healthy relationship actually looks like.

Outcomes and impact

The STAR programme has delivered positive outcomes for families navigating the aftermath of domestic abuse. Staff have had the privilege of watching children and young people significantly grow in confidence, regain their trust in adults, and rebuild their shattered self-esteem. Through these sessions, the children successfully internalize the realisation that it is never okay to hurt others, but crucially, that the abuse they witnessed or experienced was not their fault. Ultimately, the project has equipped these young people with the knowledge and support needed to stay safe and practice kindness, a success reflected in the praise received from grateful parents.

"Thank you so much, I really appreciate your support. Thanks again for everything you do."

"Seems to have come a long way, I think the STAR programme has really helped him."

"Thank you so much for all your help and support. They have loved all the sessions."

"Thank you for helping him. He is more settled and so happy."

"She has a job and she has done so well since your meetings. She is so much calmer and thinks more about my feelings."

"Thank you so much, he has really enjoyed it with you."



"It's been making his week seeing you. It has helped, he's much more settled."

Introduction

This project was run by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association (CAHA) who used the CADA grant to build a really strong support network for families across Flintshire. The main goal was simple: to give children and young people who have lived through domestic abuse a safe, quiet space where they could just be themselves. The team wanted to make sure these children felt heard and could get real, specialized help to process the trauma they'd been through.

Delivery Summary

One of the best things the project did was to introduce weekend support at the refuge. Before this, there was a huge gap in help outside of regular 9-to-5 office hours, so being there on the weekends made a massive difference for consistency. The team spent a lot of time talking with the young people about what a healthy relationship looks like, helping them spot warning signs and unhealthy behaviour patterns. But they also knew that recovery isn't just about sitting in therapy sessions, it's about letting children and young people be children and young people. CAWA organised fun family day trips, like autumn farm visits and holiday parties, to bring a bit of joy back into their lives.

Outcomes and impact

By talking openly about relationships, the project gave children and young people the confidence and knowledge to recognise and walk away from toxic situations in their own lives. The trips and holiday events were a huge hit, giving families living in the refuge a chance to smile, connect with others, and take a break from a really stressful transition. The real legacy of the project is that the service is now much more flexible and completely focused on the children and young people, making a long-term difference in how safe and supported they feel across Flintshire.

Calan Domestic Violence Service



Introduction

The CADA funding gave Calan Domestic Abuse Service a great opportunity to use their experience across South and Mid-Wales to offer some much-needed therapeutic support for children and young people. The main part of this was the "Drawing and Talking" program.



Research has shown that recovering from trauma takes time, so this project focused on a gentle, creative approach. It simply gave children a safe, reliable space where they could feel respected and slowly process what they'd been through.

Delivery summary

The programme was set up as a short-term support option, consisting of twelve one-to-one sessions with a trained worker. Instead of putting pressure on the children and young people to talk, it encouraged them to express themselves through drawing while they chatted. This made it a lot easier for them to explore complicated feelings that are usually really hard to put into words. Over the weeks, the sessions helped them build up their confidence, understand their feelings a bit better, and find practical ways to cope at their own pace.

Outcomes and impact

The programme made a genuine difference, with assessments showing a real improvement in the children and young peoples' emotional well-being and confidence. The most memorable changes were the small, quiet breakthroughs like a child finally finding the words to describe how they felt, showing off a drawing, they were proud of, or just looking less anxious. The non-judgemental environment gave the children an opportunity to get their voice back and a sense of control over their own stories.

From a Drawing and Talking Practitioner: "One child I worked with is 11 and initially presented as very anxious and would not speak at all. I adapted my communication with her to hand signals and writing things down and through the sessions she gradually began to say a word or two and will now use complete sentences when talking to me which is a huge achievement for her."



From a parent: "Vital, a real lifeline. Don't know how we would have coped without you. Calan are making such a difference to the future of children's lives. An invaluable piece of the puzzle when putting our lives back together."

From a child: "I enjoyed the sessions, I felt listened to, I can express my feelings and control my emotions, and I enjoyed talking to my CYP support worker."

Introduction

CarmDAS used the CADA funding to offer a mix of different support to help children, young people, and their families process the effects of domestic abuse. The goal was to give children different ways to understand what they had been through, while also working with non-abusive parents. This support helped caregivers understand how the abuse affects a child's well-being, making it a bit easier to set up calm, steady routines at home.

Delivery summary

The team put together a wide range of options based on what families needed, including individual support, drawing and talking sessions, and play therapy where children and young people could process things through play. They also ran the Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP) for mothers and young people, alongside back-to-back STAR group sessions that kept the children and young people really involved. To help families connect and feel less isolated, especially in rural areas, the funding paid for a weekly summer club, a family trip to the Dinosaur Park in Tenby, and community picnics. They also hosted fun seasonal events like an Easter trail, a Halloween family paint-along, and a Christmas disco, while handing out community holiday donations through the Mr. X scheme.

Outcomes and Impact

The clubs and trips made a big difference in helping young people feel less isolated and gave families a chance to bond during stressful transitions. A nice highlight from the summer club was a 17-year-old former service user who came back to help mentor the younger children. Outside of direct support, the CarmDAS team did some great work in the wider community too. They built better connections with other local agencies by working on a video podcast for schools, helped design Carmarthenshire's new Early Help Hub, and even won "The Catherine Thomas Award" for their work. They also launched a casual online youth forum that quickly got a high turnout, and they've secured resources to build a brand-new community hub for the future.

Introduction

Cyfannol used the CADA grant to provide regular support across Gwent, and they intentionally changed how they worked to make sure children and young people were recognised as victims of abuse in their own right. The project moved away from standard, more prescriptive programmes, focusing instead on practical everyday support and helping each child recover from trauma in a way that suited them best.

Delivery summary

Over the course of the grant, Cyfannol focused heavily on one-to-one support, which allowed workers to tailor sessions to the personality and specific needs of each child. This direct approach worked really well for younger children, who were able to do the structured STAR programme individually rather than having to be in a group. Support workers also played an active role in safeguarding and legal processes, going to multi-agency meetings to speak up for non-abusive parents and help other professionals understand how domestic abuse impacts the whole family. Additionally, the team adapted well when they started seeing an increase in more complex referrals involving older teenagers dealing with substance use and relationship violence among their own peers.

Outcomes and impact

Cyfannol's advocacy work made a real difference in how social services managed complex cases, encouraging an approach where both the parent and the child were supported and protected together. The team also made sure to bring some normal, everyday fun into the children's recovery by organising local cinema trips and holiday parties. As the funding wrapped up, they put a safe exit plan in place to hand over care smoothly, leaving behind a well-connected service and a team with extra training in handling child exploitation and trafficking.

Domestic Abuse Safety Unit



Introduction

DASU used the CADA fund to support children and young people living both in the refuge and out in the wider community. By focusing on what things look like from a child's perspective, the workers built steady, trusting relationships with the children and young people. This consistency helped the young people gain the confidence and emotional strength they needed to settle back into school and community life.

Delivery summary

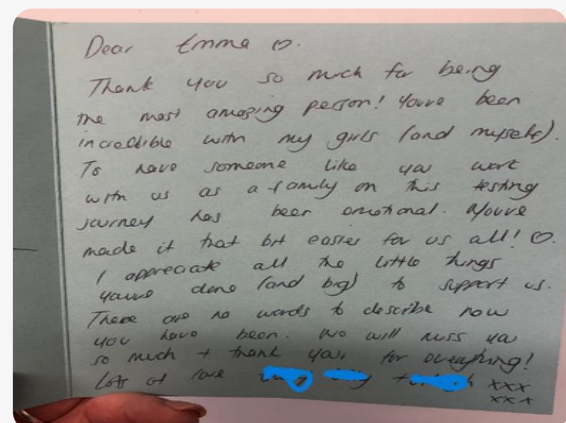
Most of this work relied on using everyday toys and play-based activities to give children and young people a comfortable space to process what they'd been through. Workers used hands-on tools like Emotions Jenga, puppets, sand trays, and air-dry clay so children had a non-verbal way to express themselves. They also did creative exercises, like decorating masks to chat about the difference between inside feelings and outside appearances or mapping out what anger feels like. Support workers also read gentle stories with the children and young people like *The Invisible String* and *The Fluffy Bunny* to talk about safety and attachment in an easy, natural way, while coordinating closely with schools to keep things consistent.

Outcomes and impact

These creative activities gave the children a practical way to name and talk about difficult or confusing emotions. Because the support workers and school staff teamed up so well, the children and young people had steady, reliable support throughout their normal school day.

The feedback from local schools really showed the difference this made:

"The support worker has provided an exceptional level of care and support during her time in school. Her kind, caring, and committed approach has, in my opinion, made a real difference to the emotional well-being. She has worked in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner, using a range of engaging games and activities tailored to her needs. The client looked forward to the weekly visits and would beam with happiness when she saw her arrive, showing the strong and trusting relationship they had built."



Introduction

Llamau, stepped in to manage the CADA project in Cardiff following the closure of Cardiff Women's Aid. The organisation provided vital continuity of service for existing survivors, focusing heavily on reducing the generational impact of trauma on early-years children and adolescents who had experienced domestic abuse.

Delivery summary

Llamau's work in Cardiff focused on therapeutic support using non-directed Play Therapy. Because young children frequently struggle to put deep emotional trauma into words, this approach allowed them to communicate their complex experiences entirely through play. The sessions gave children a private space to process their emotions at their own pace, while parallel support gave non-abusive parents practical strategies to manage behaviour and establish daily routines at home, working collaboratively with local agencies to keep safeguarding a priority.

Outcomes and impact

The service led to profound behavioural changes and practical progress for the families involved. Parents and practitioners reported that children who previously struggled with severe, angry outbursts became significantly calmer over the course of the therapy. Sibling relationships within the home improved dramatically, and parents felt empowered to manage daily routines. Ultimately, families reported a renewed sense of trust in professionals, leaving behind an established, practical framework for incorporating play therapy into domestic abuse recovery services.

Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre



Introduction

Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre used the funding to support children and young people living across rural Mid Wales. By getting out into schools, community spaces, and refuges, they were able to meet families right where they were across Montgomeryshire.

Delivery summary

To help tackle the isolation that comes with living in a rural area, the team ran recovery programs like the STAR Club and the ACEs Recovery Toolkit to help children and young people sort through what they'd been through and learn how to cope. A big part of the project was also a Healthy Relationships initiative in local high schools. This included school assemblies, hands-on workshops, and weekly drop-in sessions so students could learn to spot signs of abuse and figure out where to get help early on.

Outcomes and impact

The funding helped create a much tighter support network for children and young people in North Powys, and local families now have a much better idea of the help available right on their doorstep. The team also went the extra mile to reach communities that don't usually access services; staff took the time to learn about Polish culture to better support Polish children, and they actively reached out to young people in the travelling community. By adapting to what these specific groups needed, they made sure help was there for every child, no matter their background or where they lived.

Introduction

Safer Wales used the CADA funding to provide direct, hands-on support for children and young people dealing with the combined challenges of domestic abuse, violence, and exploitation. By working out of schools, community hubs, supported housing, and family homes, the team put the immediate safety and well-being of these young survivors first, building the support around what the young people said they actually needed.

Delivery summary

A big focus for their project was transitional safeguarding, which is all about supporting vulnerable young people as they turn 18 and navigate the journey into adulthood. The team combined individual catchups with simple fitness and well-being plans to help young boys work through behavioural challenges, keep them away from anti-social behaviour orders, and reduce their risk of being exploited. The team worked hard to raise awareness in the wider sector by running workshops at Child Sexual Abuse conferences, speaking at the Cardiff Executive VAWDASV meeting, and visiting local schools.

Outcomes and impact

The one-to-one support made a massive difference in real-life situations. In one case, it helped a young person spot ongoing medical and financial abuse at home, and the team was able to help them move safely into their own independent, supported place. The project also gave young survivors a chance to share their stories through art and music. At the Wales Social Justice Conference, a young woman who used the service performed an original song she'd written about her trauma. This ended up leading to opportunities for her on Radio Cardiff and a path into community volunteering, giving her a solid foundation for the future.

Introduction

The CADA project at Safer Merthyr Tydfil (SMT) focused on supporting the local community by working directly with children and young people. By running a variety of different sessions, the team was able to tackle some really tough social issues while helping the children and young people learn practical ways to cope with their emotions over the long term.

Delivery summary

At the centre of the project was the STAR Programme, a 6-to-8-week course for students aged 11 and up that covers important topics like healthy relationships, domestic abuse, consent, and the impact of pornography and exploitation. SMT also offered structured play therapy for younger children from the age of three, which gave them at least 15 sessions alongside regular reviews with their parents. On top of that, staff ran specific workshops on modern challenges that youth face today, including misogyny, online safety, body safety, and dealing with childhood trauma (ACEs).

Outcomes and impact

The feedback from families showed just how much these sessions helped in everyday life. The children and young people said they understood their own feelings a lot better, which made them feel more confident in spotting unsafe situations and making better choices. Parents noticed a big difference at home as well, pointing to better family communication, a better understanding of safety, and their children and young people doing better at school. By teaming up and sharing information with other local services, SMT also managed to close a lot of the old gaps in community care.

Swansea Women's Aid



Introduction

Swansea Women's Aid (SWA) set up a really broad support system to build recovery right into the daily lives of families across Swansea. By working across local schools, refuges, and their main offices, they were able to mix individual therapy with community play and group activities. This helped families feel less isolated and gave them a chance to reconnect.

Delivery summary

The project made some practical changes to help families get into crisis care much faster. Staff also took extra training in neurodiversity so they could properly tailor their sessions for children with additional needs. SWA built some lovely local connections too; they teamed up with a local art gallery to display the children's artwork publicly, and a group of secondary school students chose to represent SWA in a community project, which ended up winning a nice donation for the charity.

Outcomes and impact

One of the biggest achievements of the project was managing to cut the local waiting list for support right in half, meaning families got the help they needed much quicker. Through the one-to-one sessions, every single child put together a basic safety plan and really came to understand that the abuse they'd experienced was not their fault. In addition, mothers living in the refuge mentioned that the play sessions helped rebuild family bonds that had been strained after fleeing a crisis, while the team's advocacy in schools helped students noticeably improve their attendance and behaviour.

Introduction

Under the CADA project, Threshold filled a really big gap in local care by creating support for early-years children and expanding their group work in Carmarthenshire schools. Workers understood how much early trauma can alter a child's development, so play based sessions were integrated to help toddlers express difficult feelings that they aren't yet old enough to put into words.

Delivery summary

The team put together age-appropriate, play-focused sessions specifically for very young children. At the same time, Threshold partnered with local primary schools to run structured recovery groups in the classroom, covering topics like self-esteem, safety planning, and emotional expression. To make sure the impact of the project lasts, they also used the funding to train school staff and community volunteers on how to spot childhood trauma and respond to it safely.

Outcomes and impact

Working directly with primary schools made a huge difference. Teachers were able to see immediate, noticeable improvements in how engaged the children and young people were in class and how much better they got along with their peers. By running these groups in the familiar school environment, Threshold helped make getting emotional support feel like a normal, everyday part of the school day without any stigma attached. One of the most significant impacts of the project is that the local community is now much better equipped to understand and help young survivors long after the funding end.

Thrive Domestic Abuse Services



Introduction

Thrive utilised the CADA funding to improve and update their family support services. The main focus was on giving staff extra training so they could offer a safe, modern, and really inclusive space for children, teenagers, and mothers working through their recovery.

Delivery summary

The team delivered training on the STAR and "You and Me, Mum" programs, as well as alcohol awareness and LGBTQ+ experiences of domestic abuse. They also co-delivered with organisations like ITEC and joined in on local family festivals to network with organisations effectively. Meanwhile, their youth worker went along to local forums to make it easier for schools to refer children and young people who needed help. For a more relaxed way to connect, they used their "LIFE" coffee mornings to give mothers a casual, low-pressure space to talk about parenting, and any behaviour worries they had.

Outcomes and impact

The programme brought about some really positive changes at home for the families. Children who used to react to their trauma with anger learned to see that they were actually feeling scared or sad, and they started using calmer ways to cope, like reading or taking a timeout. This made a huge difference in family life, with parents reporting far fewer outbursts and a real return of trust at home. On top of that, the young people said they felt genuinely listened to, often for the first time, and left the programme with the tools they needed to handle their emotions on their own.

Introduction

The CADA project allowed Vale DAS to focus completely on what the children actually needed, prioritising the safety, well-being, and long-term emotional health of young survivors. The team worked closely with local authorities and schools to make sure that families moving through a transition received smooth, continuous support without any gaps.

Delivery summary

Vale DAS used a mix of different approaches to help the children and young people, from putting together personalised physical and digital safety plans to running sessions on mental health and healthy relationships. To help the children mix with others and take a break from their worries, staff organised fun school holiday trips like bowling and ice-skating. Vale DAS ensured that the needs of survivors were met holistically by utilising multi agency support and co-ordination with their local partner organisations like the Local Authority, Llamau and MARAC forum.

Outcomes and impact

Holiday trips gave parents and children a relaxed, happy space to just enjoy being together and rebuild their bonds after some really tough times like moving house suddenly or dealing with a perpetrator going to prison. In one standout case, a young woman who felt completely ignored by other services got the support she needed from Vale DAS to find her voice, spot abusive behaviours, and safely move into her own independent place. Ultimately, the project helped families move past just getting through the crisis and start looking toward a stable future, even using creative projects like songwriting to help children and young people regain their confidence.

West Wales Domestic Abuse Services



Introduction

WWDAS used the CADA funding to set up a mobile outreach service specifically designed to tackle the challenges of living in isolated parts of rural Ceredigion and North Pembrokeshire. The main goal was to remove the barrier of transport, making sure that a child's location or a family's financial situation never hindered the support they received.

Delivery summary

Instead of making families come to a traditional office, staff travelled directly to rural schools, community centres, and family homes so that a lack of transport did not affect the children receiving support. Alternative provisions were integrated to support children and young people; WWDAS introduced outdoor, nature-based activities to help the children and young people build physical confidence, learn to work as a team, and practice simple mindfulness. At the same time, staff worked closely with parents and caregivers to help them understand why their children's behaviour might have changed through experiencing trauma, giving them practical ways to help regulate them at home.

Outcomes and impact

The mobile service made a huge difference in breaking down the isolation of these rural areas, ensuring children and young people had equal access to support no matter where they lived. Through this project, the WWDAS team gained a lot of vital and complex experience in dealing with the tricky combination of rural isolation, poor public transport, tight budgets, and domestic trauma. By building up these skills and forming strong, lasting connections with rural schools and local services, they created a really solid network of care across the region.

Welsh Women's Aid

Ask Me CYP - South Wales



Introduction

Ask Me for Children and Young People (CYP) is an early intervention and prevention program developed in collaboration with children and young people across Wales. The program provided free training and resources aimed at anyone aged 13-18 years. Each interactive module was designed to help Children and Young People understand abuse and the attitudes, beliefs, and actions that underpin gender-based violence. Ask Me CYP aimed to empower young people to build confidence in making positive changes to their own behaviour and to raise awareness among their peers, contributing to sustainable and lasting change within their communities.

Delivery summary

Ask Me is a discussion-based course that was delivered through interactive workshops facilitated by experienced specialist practitioners covering diverse topics including; Online Safety, Technology- facilitated abuse, Relationships, Misogyny, Bystander Interventions and much more.

Outcomes and impact

The feedback from young people who took part in the sessions offer a clear insight into the impact of the work. Their reflections suggest a deepened understanding of unhealthy relationships, violence and abuse, with many describing how their perceptions have shifted and become more informed. Through their own words, it is evident that the course created space for learning, reflection, and increased awareness, enabling participants to better recognise and make sense of harmful behaviours.

"Learning how to open conversations about abuse"

"Learning how to handle trouble and where to go"

"It was good to learn who deals with misogyny and how they cope"

"I want to learn more how to help women that I'm close with"

"Learning how to be a better person"

"My favourite part was learning all the signs of a toxic relationship"

"My favourite part was the group work because it gave us a chance to speak our minds"



Conclusion: Summary of collective work

The end of the Home Office CADA fund marks the loss of a rare and powerful opportunity for 16 local services to work together in sustained, meaningful ways to support children across Wales. Over four years, this partnership brought together teams deeply rooted in their communities, creating a network of care that offered trauma-informed and person-centred support to families affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. With its closure, there is a real risk that some of this collective strength, connectivity, and shared learning will be diminished.

CADA enabled a shift away from short-term crisis responses towards steady, longer-term support that allowed children and young people the time and safety to begin to heal. Through this work, young survivors were able to build coping skills, make sense of their experiences, and strengthen their relationships with their non-abusing caregivers. The loss of dedicated funding inevitably places pressure on services' ability to sustain this depth and continuity of support, which is so critical for recovery. It will also place additional strain on already over-stretched local delivery partners and statutory services.

While the tools, training, and referral pathways developed during the programme remain, and will continue to influence practice, they cannot fully replace the capacity and resilience that the fund made possible. What is lost is not just resource, but time — the time to build trust, to work at a child's pace, and to provide consistent, relational support.

At the heart of this work were frontline staff and specialist services, whose daily commitment ensured that children, young people and their families were not left to navigate their experiences alone. Their efforts demonstrated what is possible when services are adequately and sustainably resourced to respond with care, flexibility, and specialism. The ending of the fund risks narrowing these possibilities, even as their dedication remains unchanged. CADA also gave local services the flexibility to draw on a range of interventions, tailoring support to the unique needs of each child and family. The potential loss of this adaptability is significant.

We hope that this report underlines the importance of recognising not only what has been achieved, but also what stands to be lost when investment of this kind in collaborative, long-term work comes to an end. We urge the UK and Welsh Government to review their commitment to investing in the vital specialist services needed to support children and young people along their recovery journey.

Welsh Women's Aid

Pendragon House, Caxton Place,
Pentwyn, Cardiff, CF23 8XE

02920 541 551

info@welshwomensaid.org.uk

Follow us:

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Putting Women & Children First