



BEDFORDSHIRE FREEMASONS

Luton families can rebuild after domestic abuse thanks to Bedfordshire Freemasons

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Women and children recovering from domestic abuse in Luton will receive specialist, joined-up recovery support thanks to a major grant to Women's Aid Luton from Bedfordshire Freemasons.

This £40,000 grant will enable Women's Aid Luton to provide specialist recovery support to families who have fled abuse and are rebuilding their lives in safety in Luton.

The three-year grant will fund two trauma-informed programmes, *You and Me, Mum* and *Drawing and Talking*, supporting 35 women and children living in refuge. The programmes will help mothers understand the impact of domestic abuse on family relationships while giving children a safe, therapeutic space to express difficult experiences and build confidence, resilience and coping strategies.

The funding comes at a time when one in four women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime and an estimated one in five children in the UK are exposed to domestic abuse, often with significant and lasting effects on their emotional wellbeing, development and relationships.

For many families, the impact of domestic abuse does not end when they reach safety. Women rebuilding their lives after abuse are often managing their own trauma while supporting children who may be experiencing anxiety, low self-esteem, behavioural difficulties and disrupted education. Without timely support, the effects of trauma can continue into adulthood, increasing the risk of poor mental health, educational disengagement and difficulties forming healthy relationships. This funding will help ensure that families living in refuge can access specialist support at a critical stage in their recovery.



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Recovery does not happen in isolation. By supporting mothers and children alongside one another, Women's Aid Luton can respond to the needs of the whole family, strengthen communication and help rebuild secure, healthy relationships after abuse.

Gaby Price, CEO of Women's Aid Luton, said:

"We're extremely grateful to Bedfordshire Freemasons for this generous grant. Domestic abuse can have a profound and lasting impact on the whole family, so it is vital that recovery support does not treat mothers and children separately. This funding will allow us to work with families in a joined-up way: helping mothers rebuild confidence in their parenting while giving children a safe space to process what they have experienced. Together, these programmes will help families rebuild trust, strengthen relationships and move forward with greater confidence and hope."

Steve Attwood from Bedfordshire Freemasons, said:

"I'm really pleased we've been able to help Women's Aid Luton with their hugely important programme helping women and children recovering from domestic abuse. Sadly this is a growing problem, with one in four women and one in five children experiencing abuse in their lifetimes. This wonderful charity helps both of them to move on and to rebuild their lives in safety."