

VOLUNTEERING WITH DVIP

Heather, Psychology student placement with the Yuva service

“I was particularly interested in the Yuva programme as it involved working with young people affected by domestic abuse – this was something I hadn’t at first considered to be an aspect of domestic abuse.

I found the work stimulating, interesting and worthwhile. My work experience within DVIP has opened my eyes to the countless implications of domestic abuse. I feel much more aware that domestic abuse is all around us, and also feel very positive about the work that DVIP does to help men, women and children.

What really stood out for me was the wide range of people who are offered help and support within DVIP. My placement showed me that the organisation is able to support everybody in the family. DVIP not only offer practical help such as perpetrator and women’s programmes, but also offer specialist support for Arabic speaking communities, people with dual domestic abuse and substance misuse issues and young people.”

Rosie, Violence Prevention Programme volunteer

“After working in the domestic abuse field as support worker for victims, I wanted to experience a change and to see what it’s like to work with a violence prevention programme. I find the role challenging and intense, but rewarding.

I feel privileged to work along side men (DVIP facilitators) who want to make a difference and care about what is right. To have a man putting forward respectful values and telling other men how to treat women is really powerful. This is especially the case when talking about sexual respect and a male facilitator says very clearly that consent is black and white – there is no excuse, end of. I think it’s also great that the group work is facilitated by a man and a woman. Having a man and woman stand up against domestic abuse is really important, and for the men on the group to see a respectful relationship between a man and a woman is really good. I think the work run by DVIP is really important but has to be more widely recognised.”

Children’s Therapist Volunteer

“Stephen’s Place Children’s Centre (SPCC) captured my attention in the way it talks about its work with children. I like that SPCC also helps mums during its work with children. It’s a struggle for mums overcoming domestic abuse to help both their children and themselves.

The role at SPCC gives me a deeper empathy and appreciation for families affected by domestic abuse. Each time I work with a child I learn more about how domestic abuse really attacks the core of their being and what a challenge it is to recover from domestic abuse. Importantly, I can see that children do recover if they are given space, encouragement and help. I find working with SPCC challenging and fulfilling, I think my work enables children to discover a sense of safety, because abuse doesn’t stop when the perpetrator leaves the home, it continues to attack the self and the mind. I think SPCC are champions in helping families recover from domestic abuse, and believe that there should be more specialist support for children like this.”

Women’s Support Service Volunteer

“10 years ago, I chose to volunteer for DVIP because I wanted to help women who have experienced violence and abuse. I started by providing phone support to them. I felt if I could help victims and their children in any way to get through the trauma and ordeal of domestic abuse, they could go on to not only survive but thrive. I have now become a co-facilitator for the women’s support group and set up a self-care group.

I am passionate about my work. I see women come into group feeling anxious, upset and uncertain as to what their future holds and blaming themselves. We work with them to develop an understanding of what has happened to them and the impact it has had on themselves and their children. Seeing them leave group feeling more confident and hopeful for the future is the best experience for me - knowing we can make a difference. There is life and possibly a good life to be had after their domestic abuse experience.

The guidance and help DVIP offers to women is invaluable. If they are willing to receive it I have seen it work.”