



**Domestic Abuse
Oxfordshire**
Reducing the Risk



Reducing the Risk

Issue 19 : May 2011

This is issue 19 of the Reducing the Risk e-bulletin. All information contained in this e-bulletin will be available on the reducing the risk website. Please use the website as your first point of call for information, advice and support regarding domestic abuse. Feel free to forward this e-bulletin onto anyone you feel would benefit from receiving this information.

If this email has been forwarded onto you but you would like to be included on the mailing list please [click here](#)

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www.reducingtherisk.org.uk or www.amiabused.co.uk

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[1. Changes to the Champions' Database](#)

How do I join the Champions Network?

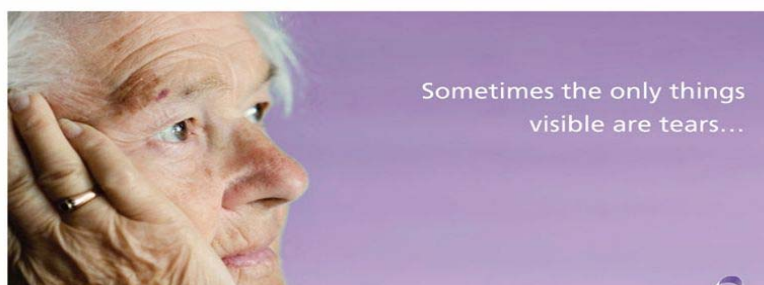
Joining the Domestic Abuse Champions Network has now got easier. To register, please complete the online [application form](#) on the *Reducing the Risk* website. Remember to insert your email address so that we can get back to you to confirm.

How do I contact other Champions?

If you are already a Community Domestic Abuse Champion you can access the database to search for champions in your area. To do this, login to the '[registered users](#)' section of the Reducing the Risk website using the login details that were given to you at the training session (the information contained within the database is not for general distribution and is only for use within the Champions network).

Please will you all check your details and if you can't find your name or have any amendments that need to be made please e-mail:
reducingtherisk@oxfordshire.gov.uk

2. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – 15 June 2011



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day · June 15, 2011

Domestic Abuse can happen at any age...

It's World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on 15th June. Play your part in raising awareness.

WEAAD happens each year on 15 June. Established by the United Nations in 2006, individuals and organisations come together to raise awareness of elder abuse and to fundraise for [Action on Elder Abuse](#). It represents the one day in the year when the whole world voices its opposition to the abuse and suffering that is inflicted on some of our older generations.

Domestic abuse can include elder abuse. This is where harm is done, or distress caused, to an older person within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust. Most victims of elder abuse are older women with a chronic illness or disability. Again, the most typical abusers are partners, adult children, or family members.

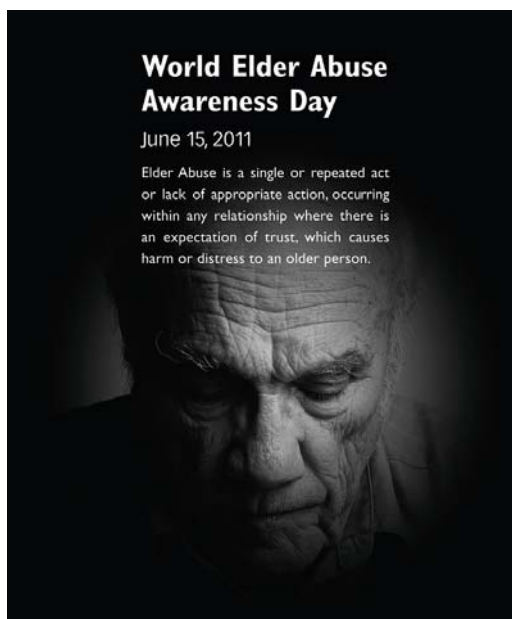
Why raise awareness about elder abuse?

There is significant under-reporting of domestic abuse among older women so people in this age group are being urged to step forward, explore their options and see the way out.

"Half a million older people experience some form of abuse at any point in time in England" (House of Commons Health Committee, *Elder Abuse. Second Report of Session 2003-4*)

Until initiatives began to address child abuse and domestic violence in the last quarter of the 20th century, abuse of the elderly remained a private matter. Today, it is increasingly being seen as an important problem and one that is likely to grow as many countries experience rapidly ageing populations.

Similar to other types of violence, abuse of the elderly includes physical, sexual, financial and psychological abuse, as well as neglect.



It's often assumed that domestic abuse is mainly experienced by younger women, but abuse against older women does take place. Women may have lived with abuse for decades, whether it is psychological, physical, emotional, sexual or financial.

Older people who experience domestic abuse may be reluctant to report it because they feel a sense of shame, fear not being believed, think support services are not for them, or fear consequences of any intervention. Adults who are particularly vulnerable to being hurt or abused are those with a disability, illness, or impairment.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is your opportunity to think about, recognise and learn how to prevent and report abuse.

What can you do?

- Show the world you care about ending elder abuse and neglect.
- "Wear something **purple**" on World Elder Abuse

Awareness Day every June 15th.

- Run an event of your own. Check out www.inpea.net or www.elderabuse.org.uk for some great ideas.

There is help available...

A key priority for the [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board](#) is safeguarding people who are at risk from harm as a result of abuse, neglect, exploitation or mistreatment and improving the choice and control people have in their lives. Look at the Safe from Harm website: www.safefromharm.org.uk for further information.

Useful contacts and Information

- If you are worried about a vulnerable person you can contact Oxfordshire [Social & Community Services](#) on 0845 050 7666.
- Abuse is often a crime. If you think a crime has been committed you can contact [Thames Valley Police](#) by telephoning 0845 8 505 505. In an emergency dial 999.
- [Oxfordshire Age Concern](#) provides help and advice.
- [Action against Elder Abuse](#) has a free helpline: 0808 808 8141.
- Look at www.reducingtherisk.org.uk for help and support.
- Just to Have a Peaceful Life. Video (10 minutes). This video tells the story of Pat, an older woman, who has been married to a physically and emotionally abusive husband for over 45 years. The video is an excellent training tool for illustrating the relationship between elder abuse and domestic violence. Available from: <http://www.terranova.org>

3. Domestic homicide reviews take effect

From Wednesday, 13 April cases where someone has been killed by their current or former partner must be reviewed.

Police, local authority, probation service, health service and voluntary partners should look into the circumstances of the case to learn lessons.

Where a local area doesn't undertake a review, the secretary of state now has the power to direct a specific person or body to establish or participate in a review.

It is hoped that this will help improve local and national approaches to tackling domestic violence.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further information

4. Domestic violence courts to close



Friday 06 May 2011 by **John Hyde**

More than one in six specialist domestic violence courts are set to close as part of the government's nationwide court closures plan, it has emerged.

Shadow justice minister Andy Slaughter has tabled a series of parliamentary questions to justice secretary Kenneth Clarke on the impact of the closures, due to be answered this week.

The Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) was introduced in 2005 to make it easier for victims to give evidence and bring more offenders to justice.

The scheme was hailed as an immediate success by government and court users, and within four years 127 had been established.

However, 23 SDVCs are among the 142 courts that the Ministry of Justice plans to close during this parliament as part of its cost-cutting measures.

Slaughter said: 'These specialist courts are a proven success at getting domestic violence cases through trial by supporting vulnerable women.'

'Closing one in six is further evidence that the government is targeting women and gives the lie to its claim that it is only outdated courts that are being closed.'

The SDVCs affected by possible closure are spread across the country, from Whitehaven in the north to Lewes in the south.

They currently provide independent advisers for victims and dedicated prosecutors, as well as specialist magistrates and police officers, and separate areas to make sure victims do not encounter their attackers.

A Law Society spokeswoman said the need for greater efficiency in the court system was understandable, but warned that cuts must not adversely affect vulnerable people.

National domestic violence charity Refuge said it will be difficult to convince victims to come to court if they have to travel a long way.

It warned there could be heavier caseloads for independent domestic violence advocates if they are covering a wider geographical area, and that while there is also a risk that alternative courts may not be fitted with necessary safety measures.

Refuge chief executive Sandra Horley added: 'Attending court can be a terrifying and intimidating experience for a victim of domestic violence.'

'Not only will a woman have to come face-to-face with her violent attacker, she may also have to deal with officials who have a limited understanding of domestic violence.'

A Ministry of Justice spokesman said: 'The closure of a courthouse that serves as the venue for a SDVC is not the same as the closure of an SDVC system.'

'Arrangements are being put in place to ensure the work of the SDVC systems continues after these courts have closed.'

5. Charging powers passed from CPS to police



Monday 09 May 2011 by **Catherine Baksi**

The power to decide charges for those suspected of crimes will be passed from the Crown Prosecution Service to the police under plans announced by the home secretary today, in what she called a 'radical leap forward for policing'.

Theresa May said the Home Office will pilot doubling the number of charges transferred to the police, making them responsible for 80% of charging decisions, including shoplifting cases.

‘This will save even more time, stopping them from having to ring up the CPS to make the decision for them or having to bail the offender to come back at a later date,’ said May.

If the pilot is successful and is fully rolled out, she said the change could save an estimated 40,000 hours of police officer time.

May said discretion over some charging decisions had already been restored to the police, and is being extended because of the CPS’ view of the ‘positive and effective’ way the police have responded.

Charging defendants by post was among other measures outlined today to provide a ‘new, simpler and potentially quicker’ way of bringing a defendant to court for a prosecution.

[CLICK HERE](#) for full article

6. Bishops act to tackle sham marriages

New UK Border Agency approved guidance for clergy should help prevent weddings for visas.

Guidance out today advises clergy not to offer to publish banns for any marriage which involves someone from outside Europe.

Instead, the couple will be asked to apply for a licence, which involves making a sworn declaration that is recognised in law.

It also says that if a member of the clergy is not satisfied that a marriage is genuine they must make that clear to the person responsible for granting the licence. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information

7. Response to sexual violence needs assessments (RSVNA) toolkit: informing the commissioning and development of co-ordinated specialist services for victims of sexual violence – Department of Health

This document is guidance for local area partnerships conducting a Response to Sexual Violence Needs Assessment. The guidance highlights the need for a wide range of services to be involved in needs assessment, including drug and alcohol agencies. [CLICK HERE](#) for information

8. 'Restoring confidence so victims report rape is key'

Interview with Keir Starmer, the director of public prosecutions



'I'm determined that the budget cuts will not affect our service to victims of sexual offences and domestic abuse,' says Keir Starmer. Photograph: Linda Nylind for the Guardian

As the director of public prosecutions, Keir Starmer is responsible for prosecutions, legal issues and criminal justice policy. Since he took up the post in November 2008, he has had to contend with the case of the death of Ian Tomlinson at the 2009 G20 Summit, the controversy around assisted suicide and has been drawn into the News of the World phone hacking scandal. Now he faces another challenge.

Last autumn, a 28-year-old mother began an eight-month prison sentence for "falsely retracting" a rape allegation against her husband, despite the court accepting that she had suffered prolonged domestic abuse and had withdrawn the rape accusation under pressure from her husband.

News of the case triggered outrage, and the woman was later freed by the court of appeal, with the lord chief justice, Lord Judge, commenting that there should be a "broad measure of compassion for women who had already been victimised".

To avoid the possibility of any repetition, Starmer, has since December requested that all perverting the course of justice cases that involve retracted rape and domestic violence allegations should be submitted to him for approval. [CLICK HERE](#) for full article

9. Madeleine Moon asks the Secretary of State for Justice what recent assessment has been made of the effectiveness of restorative justice in cases of domestic violence; and if he will make a statement.

(Written answers and statements, 31 March 2011)

Crispin Blunt (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Prisons and Probation), Justice; Reigate, Conservative)

The use of restorative justice conferencing for domestic abuse cases is contentious as it has implications for the safety of victims. Current guidelines do not encourage this

approach in domestic abuse cases, with victim-offender mediation pointing to the risks for victims. [CLICK HERE](#) for full response

10. Serious child abuse reports to NSPCC Helpline at all time high

Press Releases - 21 April 2011

Calls to the NSPCC Helpline reporting suspected child abuse and neglect have reached record levels, the charity reveals today.

Last year (April 2010 to March 2011), trained NSPCC counsellors working on the 24-hour freephone (0808 800 5000) service referred 16,385 serious cases to police or social services. This is 37 per cent higher than the previous year and the biggest annual increase in referrals to the Helpline yet recorded.

Recent NSPCC research found nearly one in five secondary school children in the UK has been severely maltreated during childhood, most commonly through neglect (1). There are currently around 46,000 children of all ages on a local child protection plan or register.

The NSPCC is calling for a major shift in UK child protection policy towards earlier and more effective intervention in child cruelty cases. This relies on people taking swift action to report any concerns about a child being maltreated.

Almost half (46%) the people who contacted the Helpline last year were reporting concerns so serious they needed to be passed on to the authorities - up from 39 per cent the previous year. (2)

John Cameron, head of the NSPCC Helpline, said: "We must pick up on children's problems as early as we can to stop their abuse. Social workers cannot be in the community all the time. But members of the public can be their eyes and ears.

"The NSPCC Helpline provides advice and counselling to people who have concerns about a child. It also brings abused and neglected children to the attention of local agencies and act as a gateway to local services.

"The increase in referrals over the last year shows more people want to play their part in keeping children safe. We refer only the most serious cases to local agencies for further investigation. More than one in three of these cases involve families previously unknown to local authorities."

Last year, the Helpline made 12,296 referrals about suspected child cruelty following contacts from neighbours and members of the public - up 4,588 (60%) from the previous year.

Other people contacting the Helpline included parents, other family members, and professionals such as teachers or health workers.

The biggest increase in referrals last year was for neglect, which jumped 81 per cent to 6,438 cases. Neglect remains the top reason for people contacting the helpline. We also

referred 4,113 cases of reported physical abuse, 1,520 cases of sexual abuse and 2,932 cases of emotional abuse.

John Cameron continued: "The rise in serious child abuse calls shows our Helpline is needed as much as ever. It only takes a few seconds to contact us. We urge people not to hesitate even if they have doubts. It could be the difference between life and death for a child."

Anyone with concerns about a child should call the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000. They can also email help@nspcc.org.uk or make a report online at www.nspcc.org.uk/helpline

Read a [summary of the NSPCC Helpline figures for 2010/11](#)

11. Thames Valley Partnership -Family Matters

The Thames Valley Partnership has had a long-standing interest in supporting practitioners who work with the children and families of offenders and prisoners. By encouraging multi-agency working and bringing Criminal Justice agencies 'into the loop' with family support services through training, networking and providing resources Family Matters has developed a model which enables this vulnerable group of families to be supported in a more integrated manner.



The Family Matters programme aims to support the resettlement of offenders and break the cycle of offending within families through:

- Improving access to support and provision of information for the families and children of offenders and prisoners
- Integrating the work of the criminal justice agencies and family and children's services in support of these vulnerable families
- Strengthening family ties of prisoners to aid their re-integration into their family and community where appropriate

Achievements to date ...

- **1300 resource/information packs** distributed across the country.
- **Awareness-raising training** delivered into 15 prison establishments nationally
- **Awareness-raising training** delivered in 8 areas of the Thames Valley
- **Regional and national recognition of the Family Matters model** - DCSF / MoJ Reducing Re-offending Framework document and National Think Family

- **Improved outcomes for families** - including reduced offending
- **New resources developed** – Custody-What Now? Guidelines for schools working with a child with a family member in prison, worksheets for educational practitioners working with school children



Some delegate feedback from the training ...

‘Excellent, very enjoyable – it was really informative and thought-provoking’

‘Practical and useful information and ideas’

‘Resources help me to empathise with the families of prisoners’

For further information on the work of Family Matters and how your local area can make a difference in supporting the needs of the families of offenders please contact Saj on 01844 202001 or alternatively email: sajida.khan@thamesvalleypartnership.org.uk

Related information ...

12. Too close? The drinks industry's unsteady deal with government

Two health organisations last month refused to sign a responsibility deal on reducing problem drinking because they felt the industry was dictating the terms. Six others have walked out. Is there a future for the initiative? [CLICK HERE](#) for article

13. New Book: Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse – Tackling the Health and Mental Health Effects

A new book, available online, explores appropriate treatment responses to those who have experienced and those who perpetrate domestic and sexual violence and abuse. Considers key factors in understanding how and why different groups experience greater risks including gender, sexuality, race, disability, and abuse by professionals. [CLICK HERE for information](#)

14. Avon and Women’s Aid Empowering Women Awards 2011 launch with a celebrity event at the May Fair Hotel

A host of celebrity supporters turned out for the launch of the Avon and Women’s Aid Empowering Women Awards at The May Fair Hotel in London on 5th May 11.

The exclusive event saw the announcement of this year's award categories, created to recognise and honour inspirational women who have either experienced domestic violence or who work tirelessly to support those affected by abuse.

The awards, now in their second year, help to mark the cosmetics company's global 125th anniversary and its dedication to helping end violence against women. New to the 2011 awards is an additional category, Child Survivor of the Year, which will sit alongside the existing recognition of Woman Survivor of the Year, Grass Roots Hero and Marie Claire Campaigner Against Domestic Violence.

The category winners will be selected by a high profile judging panel including Alesha Dixon; Sarah Brown; TV presenter and child survivor of domestic violence, Charlie Webster; senior vice president of Avon WEMEA, Anna Segatti; Women's Aid chief executive Nicola Harwin and Marie Claire editor Trish Halpin.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further information

15. The Wedding Dress Ball, Eynsham Hall

Re-wear your wedding dress for a good cause!

To raise money for Women's Aid and Eve Appeal, we would like to invite you to attend The Wedding Dress Ball to be held at the stunning Eynsham Hall in Oxfordshire. Grooms, best men, ushers and bridesmaids are also welcome!

Read more about our chosen charities [here](#).

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information

16. DASH Risk Assessment training - Oxfordshire

DASH Risk Assessment training is now available to all Professionals. This is a half day training event.

The introduction of the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH 2009) Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model means that a large number of agencies across the UK will be using a common checklist for identifying and assessing risk, which will save lives.

- To help front line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence.
- To decide which cases should be referred to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and what other support might be required. A completed form becomes an active record that can be referred to in future for case management.
- To offer a common tool to agencies that are part of the MARAC1 process and provide a shared understanding of risk in relation to domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence.

- To enable agencies to make defensible decisions based on the evidence from extensive research of cases, including domestic homicides and 'near misses', which underpins most recognised models of risk assessment.

Dates:

Tuesday 19 July 2011	West, venue tbc	09:30 - 12:30
Thursday 29 September 2011	North, venue tbc	13:30 - 16:30
Monday 12 December 2011	City, venue tbc	13:30 - 16:30

Requirements:

This is multi agency training.

Booking link: <http://learning.myoxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/portal>

17. Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse



The OSCB is running two half-day training sessions on Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse. These sessions will be delivered by Dr. Lynda Meina, Chartered Consultant Clinical & Forensic Psychologist, on the following dates:

17th June, 9.30 – 12.30 at County Hall
 6th Oct, 9.30-12.30 at County Hall

The sessions will explore the psychology of victims and perpetrators and their patterns of interacting, both with one another and with professionals. The training will also help practitioners to improve their engagement with victims and perpetrators to reduce risk of harm to children in domestically abusive families.

Please book online at www.oscb.org.uk

18. The AVA Community Groups Project– new training dates for facilitators -FREE



The AVA Community Groups Project involves establishing Community Group Programmes in London and across the UK. The programmes are for children, young people and their mothers who have experienced domestic violence and provides a community based setting for them to share and talk about their

experiences. It is originally a Canadian model and has been piloted and successfully evaluated in the London Borough of Sutton.

Historically, recognition of the needs of children living with domestic violence in the UK has been largely confined to refuge services. Research in the UK suggests that the majority of children who have lived with domestic violence would prefer to talk to other children with similar experiences. For most children outside of the refuge system this is sadly not an option due to the severe lack of community-based programmes for children who have witnessed domestic violence.

Each programme runs over a twelve-week period for children aged 4 - 21 (children are divided into age-specific groups).

How you can be involved in London

AVA has been funded by Comic Relief to roll out a community groups programmes (cgp) across London.

Group Facilitators

As of March 2011, we have currently trained facilitators in approximately two thirds of London boroughs.

New training dates

The dates for the next facilitator course are:

- 1 June
- 24 June
- 27 June

NB: this training is **free** but you **must** attend all 3 dates...

For more information...

- Visit [website here](#)
- Contact Jo or Linda



19. Training: How The Perpetrator Operates - 2 day programme

How the Perpetrator Operates a two day programme (Understanding men who abuse their female partner).

Presenting to practitioners and professionals who may be considering working with perpetrators or would like more in-depth knowledge and understanding.

The programme covers:

- Exploration of the typical belief systems and values of the male heterosexual domestic abuse perpetrator, including other minority cultures
- Exploration of the cultural and historical context in which the perpetrator commits abuse
- How these belief systems influence the perpetrator's parenting

- The links between domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and child sexual abuse
- Key risk factors for domestic abuse
- Links between domestic abuse and stalking
- Developing skills in engaging with perpetrators; use of key learning and analysis tools e.g. critical thinking
- A glimpse inside a perpetrator programme

Thu, 2nd Jun 2011, 09.30 - Fri, 3rd Jun 2011, 16.30

Hosted by: Sea Change
 Venue: Cheltenham Gloucestershire
 Contact: [Laura Kavanagh](mailto:Laura.Kavanagh@sea-change.org) 01242 580702

20. Training: Recovering from the Impacts of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – Unresolved Anger, 9 June, London



Date: 9 June 2011

Venue: Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, London, EC2A 4LT

Cost: £90 vol / £130 stat

This course will run from 10am-4.30pm.

Delegates attending this course will receive a copy of the Sane Responses toolkit.

Course description

Anger is a natural reaction to violence against women and girls (vawg) but anger is a particularly problematic emotion in our society, especially for a woman. Many learn that 'nice' women don't raise their voices - they are supposed to just cry or cope. A woman might also learn to hide anger because her abuser 'would give her something to be really angry about' or because she is determined not to 'sink to his level.' Women become prevented from natural expression of their feelings - but may suffer from suppressing or over-controlling their emotions. Having these left over feelings can come out in various ways: women might feel like they have lost any feeling, like zombies; they might snap when they don't mean to or they might get depressed or sick (turning the anger on themselves). This course is based on principles that all feelings are healthy, that beliefs influence how we express feelings and that we can complete 'unfinished business' or unresolved anger in a safe way, using techniques adapted from experiential therapies.

[CLICK HERE](#) for further information

21. And Finally – Last Minute Places...

We have some last-minute places available on our training courses running in May. We offer the lowest rates in the UK for practical, timely and effective training and discounts are always available for those who buy in bulk. Would you or any of your colleagues benefit from attending the following?

Dealing with Difficult People

Develop techniques for dealing with people who are hard to manage, shout, are abusive or just plain difficult.

Birmingham, 24.5.11

Train the Trainer

Why not train your best and brightest members of staff to deliver training in-house, and save on outsourcing training costs at the same time?

Manchester, 18.5.11 & Birmingham 25.5.11

Coping with Organisational Change

Change seems to be the only constant for many organisations at the moment, so help to reduce the stress by training staff to deal effectively with change and they may even learn to embrace it.

Manchester, 17.5.11

Full programmes are available to view online at www.trainingdevelopment.biz.

Times

We start at 10 am and finish by 4.30 pm.

Venues

Our venue details and maps are available online.

Costs & How to Book

Our lowest rate, £99 plus VAT p.p., is available to all delegates who pay at the time of booking by credit/debit/procurement card, or, if, you wish to be invoiced, whereby you have up to 14 days after the delivery of the training course to make payment, the rate is substantially higher at £129 p.p.

We also offer a number of optional add ons for delegates attending our external courses:

Lunch @ £12.99

Training course materials and website membership @ £6.99

Certificate of completion @ £4.99

Bookings can be done securely online, or, if you prefer, by telephone, or email.

Discounts

We do offer discounts, but only on bulk bookings, and they are as follows:

6 or more delegates 10%

10 or more delegates 15%

In-house courses: Our in-house rate for a full day is £999, if you pay at the time of booking, but is substantially more, at £1,299, if you pay on invoice after the date of booking. We can take a maximum of 16 delegates per day. In-house bookings assume delivery on-site and catering supplied by the client.

All costs are subject to VAT.

If you'd like to know more about this, or any of our other training courses, go to www.trainingdevelopment.biz or to arrange a no obligation call back [click here](#).

I hope you find the above interesting and informative.

Julia

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