

Best Practice: Support groups for women from Black, Asian, and Ethnically Diverse (BAED) communities in Oxfordshire

Introduction

These guidelines were created by the BAED WORLDS Group, an Oxfordshire multi-agency group set up to support women from BAED communities coping with abuse and restrictions from the Covid-19 outbreak. The group reports to Oxfordshire County Council's Domestic Abuse Partnership. Organisations who participated in the BAED WORLDS Group are listed at the end of this document.

The following guidelines are designed to support the specific needs of women from BAED communities. They are suggestions for best practice and the creators appreciate that "no one size fits all" and there are multiple nuances when considering the needs of different cultural groups. It may also be helpful for group founders to refer to the Freedom Programme guidelines attached when thinking about issues relevant to all groups, such as the timing of sessions, safeguarding and crèche facilities, for example. We are not suggesting that the Freedom Programme is appropriate for BAED groups (although it may be in some circumstances), only that the guidelines have some helpful guidance for all groups.

Oxfordshire County Council (and other sponsors) are likely to want to ensure providers comply with these guidelines before agreeing funding and group organisers are encouraged to demonstrate this at the outset (for example, through a checklist).

Organisations committed to best practice will:

Representation

- Involve specialists from BAED communities in programme design, delivery and evaluation
- Deliver the programme with at least one facilitator from a BAED community (approachability of co-facilitators can be increased by ensuring diversity in ethnicity and training background)
- Consider recruitment – what qualifications/equivalents are needed when advertising for facilitators? – lived experience is often far more valuable than qualifications.
- Consider intersectionality issues – which groups is the programme for? How are the group members likely to identify in terms of race and religion and will the group identify with the programme content?
- Use terms that the group can relate to, for example "wellbeing" instead of "mental health."



Promotion and communications

- Ensure promotion and communications are transparent about the content of the programme and whether the content is linked to a faith/religion. Share promotion and communications in appropriate languages.

Ensure facilitators have the essential training:

- Domestic Abuse Champions training
- Generalist Safeguarding training for Children and Adults
- DASH Risk Assessment
- HBA
- Programme being delivered
- GDPR
- Stalking and harassment
- *Any additional training required to meet the needs of each group, e.g. substance misuse*

Recognise where facilitators have desirable training:

- Level 3 (Caseworker) Safeguarding Training
- Unconscious Bias
- Shari'a Law
- FGM
- Spiritual abuse and witchcraft
- Modern slavery
- Benefits system
- Women's Rights
- No Recourse to Public Funds
- Substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse – the trio of vulnerabilities
- Sexual abuse training
- Immigration law and status
- Housing
- Suicide awareness

Quality Assurance and Evaluation

- Ensure initial development of programmes, or later adaptations, involve/are co-produced with members of BAED communities
- Submit timely evaluation and observation to Oxon VAWG Coordinator
- Join meetings of Oxon facilitators for shared learning – every 6 months
- Incorporate learning into future sessions, including feedback loop for those who shared their experiences



Venue

- Ensure that venues selected for programme facilitation are suitable, accessible and welcoming for those attending. Consider the impact of Police Community Support Officer / police hub presence and potential to cause discomfort; proximity to spaces which might 'out' group members and place them at risk; use of religious buildings; whether there are cameras in place; and ability to provide 'cover story' (near shops, fitness classes, etc).
- Consider Covid-19 safety requirements, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups.

Ongoing support for participants and signposting

- Signpost to therapists regulated by a professional body as appropriate
- Safety plan according to the specific needs of the women in the group, considering additional challenges and systems to navigate. Safety planning should be held by specialist support services. If this is not currently in place please contact [Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Services](#).

Data

- Ensure a commitment of facilitators to GDPR
- Collect data including ethnicity, religion, honour codes, age etc to ensure that services are relevant and effective
- Inform participants about how their data will be used and whether it has been collected to inform best practice and/or funder

Date: 1 December 2020

Oxfordshire BAED WORLDS Group Membership

Lead: Oxford Against Cutting
A2 Dominion Group
Asylum Welcome
Elmore Community Services
Independent Islamic Values Consultant
Oxford City Council
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Oxfordshire County Council
Oxfordshire Mind
Refugee Resource



