

## Engaging mothers and children affected by family and domestic violence

### Deanne's story

Peter, Deanne, and 2 kids: Melinda (8) and Sam (6)

Peter is a mechanic who runs a small garage servicing cars. Business is going badly. He grew up with a violent and abusive father, and experiences depressive moods that can last for weeks or months.

He tries to function during these moods, with varying success. He drinks to self-medicate, and when he drinks heavily, his behaviour changes and he becomes violent towards Deanne – however this is always done sneakily, with sly acts of violence that hurt, but are not overt or easy to spot.

He usually doesn't remember these incidents the next day and is always remorseful when she tells him. Deanne has encouraged him to receive counselling through a mental health plan for his depression, which he has agreed to do.

She is feeling afraid of his behaviour, which has started to escalate, and his moods have become increasingly angry and loud even when sober. She wants to be supportive of him, but she also wants things to change, and doesn't know how to achieve this. She is hoping that the counselling will do something. She is also managing their finances as Peter has become less able to cope with the stress of bill payments and business-related costs.

They are always short on money, and this has become increasingly more dire as Peter's work has started to dry up. She attends a community finance service for a loan to help cover food and bills costs. She doesn't tell Peter this.

Follow [this link](#) to watch a short one minute video of Deanne's story.