

'THAMES VALLEY' SEX OFFENDER GROUPWORK PROGRAMME

Information For You

(named after Thames Valley Probation Area where the programme was developed)

Run by *(name to be inserted)* Probation Area

This leaflet will answer some of your main questions about the programme. If you have any extra questions after reading the leaflet, please talk to a member of Probation staff.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

Our staff are trained to help you have a better understanding of your thoughts, ways of thinking and feelings. You can change. We are going to teach you a set of self-control devices that can be used to change your sexually abusive behaviour. This work will reduce the chances of you offending in the future.

HOW LONG IS THE PROGRAMME?

Each person is looked at and assessed to find the right way for them. At this stage - without the right tests - we cannot say which parts of the programme you will need to do. Listed below is the full programme and the words we use. You will take part in group sessions with other offenders who have done similar crimes. This is known as groupwork. What you hear from group members, and what you say, should be treated with respect and not gossiped about with others.

This programme involves a lot of work but it is worth it. Stick at it. Our research shows that the work you do now can bring about new changes and a new way of life. There will also be appointments on your own with your Probation Officer before and during the groupwork.

Foundation Block

a full time two-week period, Monday to Friday.
There is a break for lunch.

Victim Empathy Block

Two sessions per week for four weeks. Each session is two hours.

Life Skills Block

Two sessions per week for ten weeks. Each session is two hours.

Relapse Prevention Block

One evening per week for six months. Each session is two hours.

Your Probation Officer will let you know the exact times of the sessions and if the programme is to be run in the daytime or evening.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE TREATMENT PROGRAMME?

The rules of the programme will be explained. You will also be asked to sign a contract to show you are willing to take part and understand everything. The Probation staff, who will work with you, have been specially trained. They will want you to talk about what has happened in the past and your view of things. Don't be put off. Other group members will have committed a similar type of offence as you. Probation staff may ask you to look at an event or situation and play out a part. The idea is to think and talk about how you would act.

WHAT YOU WILL HAVE TO DO

You will get more out of the programme if you:

- arrive on time,
- be active and take part in every session,
- do any work that is asked of you,
- don't turn up having used drugs or alcohol,
- don't say or act in a way that is racist or sexist.

It is important to attend all appointments with the Probation Officer and to attend all sessions of the programme. If you miss a session after the Foundation Block, you may be allowed to catch-up on the work. Only two sessions can be missed in the entire programme. Missing a day of the Foundation Block, with a reason that is judged to be alright, will mean having to restart the programme again.

If Probation staff reject the reason you give for not attending, you could be in further trouble. You may be taken back to court to be re-sentenced or returned to prison. Your Probation Officer and the programme staff will tell you more about the rules concerning missed sessions and catch-ups.

FAIR PLAY

Wherever possible we try to avoid making up groups where a black or Asian offender is the sole Minority Ethnic offender.

USE OF VIDEO

Programme sessions are recorded on video tape. The tapes are only looked at by other Probation staff. They check that the programme is being delivered in the right way. The tutors will explain more at the start of the group session.

COMPLAINTS

You feel things are not going well? Speak to your supervising Probation Officer if you have a problem. If you want to take the matter further, ask for the leaflet that explains how we handle complaints.

DIVERSITY

The National Probation Service recognises that minority ethnic offenders, those with a disability or other special needs may have additional issues. These issues will be fully addressed in order that they derive maximum benefit from Aggression Replacement Training.

