



Responding to Child to Parent Violence & Abuse in Europe

Development of Self-Efficacy
Tools - Workstream 3

Development of self-efficacy tools for practitioners in Responding to Child to Parent Violence and Abuse across Europe: Bulgaria, England, Republic of Ireland, Spain and Sweden

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Many thanks go to the young people, parents and professionals in the five countries that took part in this study and who made our training, learning and interventions possible.

Galway, Republic of Ireland, January 2015

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Daphne Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Declan Coogan (National University of Ireland, Galway) and Eileen Lauster, (National University of Ireland, Galway) and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



With financial support from the Daphne programme of the European Union

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Introduction

The Responding to Child to Parent Violence (RCPV) Project

Funded by DAPHNE III European Union

1. The Daphne Project

1.1 Introduction

In 2006 the European Youth Forum identified the need for research and policy on child to parent violence (CPV) and the Daphne II programme (2004-8) indicated a rise in reported cases. As a result the Daphne III programme put out a call for proposals on 'Children as victims and perpetrators of violence'. It was thanks to this call that the 'Responding to Child to Parent Violence' (RCPV) action research project was funded from February 2013 until the end of January 2015.

CPV is one of the most hidden, misunderstood and stigmatised forms of family violence. It involves teenage and younger girls and boys who use physical, psychological, emotional and financial violence and abuse over time to the extent that parents/carers live in fear of their child. The idea that parents, who are responsible for children's welfare, can become victims of abuse from their own child is extremely challenging not only for the parent experiencing violence from their child but also for practitioners and wider society. This particular form of violence in the family is not yet being adequately addressed in Europe; CPV is largely absent from national and European programmes on the violence of young people, domestic violence and on violence against women and girls.

A partnership of six institutions from five European countries was granted a two-year action project (2013 – 2015) within the framework of the Daphne III programme. RCPV examined whether violent and abusive behaviour by children towards parents/carers can be changed in 5 European countries: Spain, England, Ireland, Bulgaria and Sweden; the project's focus was on children aged 10 – 19 (WHO definition of adolescence). Adult 'children' can also be violent and abusive to parents but this aspect of CPV was not included in the scope of RCPV. The project explored the ways practitioners currently respond to this social problem focussing on two European-based interventions: Break4Change (see <https://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/effective-practice-library/break-4-change>) and Non Violent Resistance (Omer, 2004).

The RCPV partnership was led and coordinated by the University of Brighton working with Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC), England; National Association XXI Century Rhodopa Mountain Initiative, Bulgaria; Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC), England; National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG); Polibienestar Research Institute, University of Valencia, Spain and Åmåls Kommun, Sweden. There were also two associate partners: COPE Galway (domestic violence and outreach service) and the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior – Smolyan. The project produced a range of useful resources for policy makers and practitioners contained on an RCPV USB card and available on the project website www.rcpv.eu : films on CPV, filmed role plays for use in training professionals and tool kits for the Break4Change and Non Violent Resistance models are available on the website via the RCPV YouTube Channel.

RCPV adopted an action research methodology motivated by the quest to map policy, practice and knowledge in relation to CPV in each partner country and to learn how to improve these by reflecting on the changes made through project actions. The aims of the project were as follows:

- To research understanding and raise awareness of CPV
- To improve policy and practice
- To develop an evaluation framework
- To implement intervention programmes
- To develop tools for practitioners and families in Spain, Bulgaria, England, Ireland and Sweden.

All with an underpinning focus on gender dynamics and preventing and responding to violence against women and children.

The two intervention models chosen to be implemented and studied as part of the research project were Break4Change (B4C) based in Brighton and Hove and works with parents and young people in parallel groups over 10 weeks and Non Violent Resistance (NVR) based in Galway, as adapted in Ireland, works with parents usually on a one to one basis for up to 10 sessions with additional telephone support, if required (NVR can also be used with groups of parents).

1.2. Work stream 3

During a consultation process with local agencies and with RCPV Project partners, it became clear that there were a variety of unmet needs in relation to the treatment and prevention of child to parent violence in Ireland and throughout partner countries. Consultations with practitioners, RCPV partners and researchers indicated an absence of clear policy guidance in relation to child to parent violence and a lack of reliable and research informed methods of intervention. Practitioners have also described varying levels of confidence and competence among individuals and teams working with parents. Therefore there was a clear need for the provision of training to enhance awareness and skills of practitioners working with families in identifying and responding effectively to child to parent violence and abuse.

In Workstream 3, the focus was on developing self-efficacy tools that could be implemented alongside intervention training programmes being delivered as part of the RCPV Project in Workstream 4. NUI Galway designed a two day training programme for practitioners on the Non Violent Resistance model, delivered a series of two day training workshops to practitioners and led the development of a series of three staged questionnaires to evaluate practitioner self-efficacy focusing on whether practitioners' sense of competence and confidence increases following a training and awareness raising event. NUI Galway and Brighton and Hove City Council co-facilitated a four day training event on Break4Change and Non Violent Resistance in May 2013. Our partners in England delivered a one day training course on Break4Change in Ireland in June 2013.

NUI Galway collaborated with child and family violence specialists in Ireland in services such as the Irish Probation Service, Parentline and Le Cheile in developing training programmes specific to the needs of each agency and with RCPV Project partners in the development of the self-efficacy assessment questionnaires. NUI Galway also hosted a two day international conference in Galway on the 12 and 13th June 2014 to raise awareness locally and nationally about the nature and extent of child to parent violence and to increase practitioner confidence and competence in responding to the problem of child to parent violence. A further aim of the conference was to inform practitioners and researchers about the key responses to child to parent violence investigated by the RCPV Project partners – namely the Non Violent Resistance and the Break4Change programmes. More information on these programmes can be found in the RCPV project toolkit.

2. Self-Efficacy and Training and Learning Methodology

As this was an action research project, partners discussed and came to common understandings of the issues of Child to Parent Violence and the different interventions in each of the respective countries before and after implementing the above activities. Assessing the effectiveness of the training and learning was inbuilt into the evaluation approach which links with Workstreams 1, 2 and 4. Self-efficacy research questionnaires and training evaluation questionnaires were distributed to participants taking part in training in the Break4Change and/ or the Non Violent Resistance Programmes. Interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders, with practitioners and relevant parties in each of the countries, with the exception of Bulgaria where due to the sensitivity of the context the focus was on awareness raising on CPV. In Ireland, NUI Galway assisted in the development of practitioner self-efficacy through delivering training in the Non Violent Resistance and Break4Change (facilitated together with Brighton & Hove City Council) programmes and through supporting the emergence of local adaptations of the programmes throughout Ireland (such as, for example, The Parentline NVR Intervention, the Power To Change and the Le Cheile Parents Groupwork Programmes).

3. Focus of Activities

a) Phase 1: Developing and Delivering the Self Efficacy Questionnaires.

The aim of the self-efficacy questionnaires was to measure and track changes in the self-efficacy of practitioners in relation to child to parent violence. Self-efficacy can be defined as an individual person's set of beliefs about their ability to perform (Bandura 1994). Self-efficacy influences an individual's feelings, thinking, motivation and behaviour. There are four main sources of self-efficacy – past performance (in relation to a skill/ task), vicarious experience (learning through others), social persuasion (conscious efforts by others to instil a strong self-belief) and a person's physiological and emotional state. These four factors inter-relate to affect an individual's sense of ability and competence. People are likely to engage in activities to the extent that they perceive themselves to be competent in those activities. In relation to child to parent violence, it was hypothesised that child and family practitioners would assess and intervene in cases of child to parent violence to the extent that they perceived themselves as competent and confident to do so. The aims, then, of the training days on the Break4Change and the Non Violent Resistance Programme included increasing practitioners' self-efficacy (perceived confidence and competence) in responding to child to parent violence.

It was necessary therefore to develop a research method that could assess the self-efficacy of practitioners in relation to assessing and responding to child to parent violence. Bandura (2006) states that it can be very difficult to predict an individual's self-efficacy in a given situation by using general measuring tools; therefore self-efficacy is best assessed by asking a series of questions that invites an individual to rate their ability to be effective in different tasks and scenarios. Scourfield et al (2011) outline a two day training course for practitioners which was piloted in two Welsh local authority areas and which aimed to raise awareness and improve practitioner self-efficacy; similarly, Maxwell et al (2012) describe the benefits and challenges of providing awareness raising and skills training to practitioners in relation to working with men and fathers, particularly where there are child protection and welfare concerns.

Building on the work of Scourfield et al (2011) and on questionnaires developed for a separate and distinct project (Coogan, 2013), a quantitative questionnaire was developed to measure self-efficacy (knowledge, skills, values and team culture). This last factor was included as it was hypothesised that the working environment and team culture can be strongly related to perceived self-efficacy in responding to child to parent violence.

b) Phase 2: Developing and Piloting the Self-Efficacy Questionnaires.

Following consultation by email with project partners from the 22nd of February 2013, the pilot/ first version of questionnaires 1 and 2 were launched during the pilot Non Violent Resistance two Day practitioner training programme which took place in the west of Ireland on the 12th and 19th March 2013. Following review of the questionnaires and feedback from partners, the subsequent final versions of the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire 1 and 2 were circulated to all partners and copies of these are available in the RCPV Project toolkit.

It was envisaged that there would be three points at which the self-efficacy questionnaires would be administered – at the start of Day One of the RCPV training, at the end of Day Two of the training and at a follow up period 3-4 months following the RCPV training. Questionnaires 1, 2 and 3 were divided into a series of self-explanatory sections as described below. Following consultation with RCPV project partners, questionnaire 3 was later replaced by follow up research interviews, due to poor return rates of questionnaire 3 in England and Ireland.

c) Phase 3: Reviewing the Self-Efficacy Questionnaires.

Following the completion of the pilot Non Violent Resistance Training Programme and the piloting of self-efficacy questionnaire during the training, the process of evaluation and review took place, involving

the RCPV Project Partners. The aim was to have the approved version of the self-efficacy questionnaires 1 and 2 ready for a series of two day training events on Break4Change and Non Violent Resistance Programmes scheduled to take place in Brighton, England on the 20-24th May 2013.

d) Phase 4: Analysis of the Results of the Self-Efficacy Questionnaires.

One of the overall goals of the two day trainings, as set out in the initial proposal, was to "Increase capacity and skills of front line workers to recognise and respond to CPV". Under Workstream 3 of the project, we also hoped to "...ensure workers are able to feel confident to work in this area".

Therefore, when researching the difference between the pre-training and post-training results, we particularly aimed to measure the difference in the Confidence and Skill Levels of the workers.

From July 2013 through September 2014, six trainings in the Non Violent Resistance programme were presented over two days each in Ireland. 145 people attended one or both days of training, with practitioners drawn from the disciplines of Juvenile Justice, Probation, Social Work, Family Support, Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Psychology, Policing and School Completion Practice. Among the 145 who took part in the training, 140 completed Self-Efficacy Questionnaires 1 and/or 2. Of these, 110 attendees completed both Questionnaires 1 and 2. The first 42 questions in questionnaire 1 and 2 are identical. They are Likert scaling questions for a statement rated 1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4-Disagree, and 5-Strongly Disagree.

Data was grouped by question numbers into four separate sets, based on the questions selected for analysis from the Self-Efficacy Research Parameters document (see appendix). Questionnaire 1 (pre-training) values and Questionnaire 2 (post-training) values were listed for all attendees that completed both questionnaires. The number of pre-training questionnaires discarded due to non-paired was 13 and the number of post training questionnaires discarded due to non-paired was 17. Therefore, the total number of complete sets was 110.

The questions chosen for analysis, 28 in total, were then tested for reliability using the Cronbach's Alpha test. Since Question 1 was written as a negative, it was reversed before analysis. A reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations (DeVellis, 2003 in Pallant, J. 2011). This indicates a high level of internal consistency for the scale. The Cronbach's Alpha results for the questions, grouped by four headings were: Worker Confidence Levels with Parents- .762, Worker Confidence Levels with Children/Young People- .761, Worker Skill Levels with Parents- .808 and Worker Skill Levels with Children/Young People- .792. The lower level of change in responses relating to working to children as distinct from the higher levels of change relating to working with parents could be accounted by the fact that the NVR training programme, as adapted in Ireland, was developed for practitioners working primarily with parents.

Any missing data for each question was discarded. The paired T-Test was performed in SPSS. Overall the results for the majority of questions were statistically significant. This means that the increase in ranking scores for each of the four headings was not due to chance (See Appendix). It should also be noted that the data gathered in the self-efficacy questionnaires that were used during training carried out in England are available for further detailed comparison with this data set. Due to unexpected circumstances, it was not possible to complete the comparison within the life time of this project.

In the tables below we present the results of the t-test analysis performed. This statistic indicator shows the probability (p) that the results (mean and standard deviation) of the measurement in the different moments (pre-training versus post-training) could be reached/obtained randomly (per hazard). When p is lower than 0,05, it can be argued that the statistical differences between the instances are significant (not random differences); furthermore, it could be argued that the intervention is an explanatory factor relating to behind the differences. However, it should be noted that significant differences must not be linked with causal explanations, but are regarded as a powerful statistical indication of the effectiveness of the training.

The quantitative responses are presented in the following four charts: *Worker Confidence Levels with Parents*, *Worker Confidence Levels with Children/Young People*, *Worker Skill Levels with Parents* and *Worker Skill Levels with Children/Young People*.

Table 1: Worker Confidence Levels with Parents

ITEMS		STATISTICS			
		X	S.D.	T	p
1.1 I find it difficult to accept that young people/children can be violent and abusive to their parent	Pre (1.1)	3.89	1.15	-1.522	.131
	Post (1.1B)	4.11	1.22		
1.4 I can talk about issues of gender in relation to power and control in the family when working with parents	Pre (1.4)	2.06	.74	2.448	.016
	Post (1.4B)	1.87	.58		
1.7 I can help parents make a distinction between unruly behaviour and behaviour that is CPV	Pre (1.7)	2.35	.89	6.976	<.001
	Post (1.7B)	1.71	.47		
1.10 I can draw on practical strategies for parents living with CPV	Pre (1.10)	2.87	.88	12.891	<.001
	Post (1.10B)	1.74	.49		
1.12 I am actively able to support parents in strategies to increase their self confidence in responding to CPV	Pre (1.12)	2.83	.86	11.893	<.001
	Post (1.12B)	1.75	.49		
1.13 I am actively able to support parents in feeling less fearful and afraid of their children	Pre (1.13)	2.80	.81	9.658	<.001
	Post (1.13B)	1.91	.65		
1.14 I am actively able to support parents in reducing their sense of shame and guilt	Pre (1.14)	2.56	.86	9.013	<.001
	Post (1.14B)	1.76	.48		

X=mean; S.D.= Standard deviation

Table 2: Worker Confidence Levels with children/Young People

ITEMS		STATISTICS			
		X	S.D.	T	p
2.16 I can talk about issues of violence in the family when working with children/young people	Pre (2.16)	2.10	.69	-1.232	.221
	Post (2.16B)	3.71	13.42		
2.19 I can talk to children/young people about their use of CPV	Pre (2.19)	2.49	.81	-.942	.348
	Post (2.19B)	3.75	13.55		
2.22 I can help children/young people make a distinction between unruly behaviour and CPV	Pre (2.22)	2.77	.79	11.107	<.001
	Post (2.22B)	1.87	.646		
2.25 I can draw on strategies for children/young people who are using CPV	Pre (2.25)	3.23	.83	13.025	<.001
	Post (2.25B)	1.97	.71		
2.30 I can help children/young people to understand issues of gender difference in relation to power and control in the family	Pre (2.30)	2.7	.89	6.725	<.001
	Post (2.30B)	2.11	.68		

X=mean; S.D.= Standard deviation.

Table 3: Worker Skill Levels with Parents

ÍTEMS		STATISTICS			
		X	S.D.	T	p
3.31 I can use assessment techniques to assess the violence and abuse present in CPV	Pre (3.31)	3.06	.99	11.117	<.001
	Post (3.31B)	1.95	.70		
3.32 I can use solution focused interviewing skills with parents experiencing CPV	Pre (3.32)	2.67	.97	9.412	<.001
	Post (3.32B)	1.76	.58		
3.34 I can use group work skills to support parents experiencing CPV	Pre (3.34)	2.90	.99	10.326	<.001
	Post (3.34B)	1.94	.70		
3.35 I can equip parents with specific skills to deal with the CPV	Pre (3.35)	2.97	.95	12.195	<.001
	Post (3.35B)	1.75	.55		

X=mean; S.D.= Standard deviation

Table 4: Worker Skill Levels with Children/Young People

ÍTEMS		STATISTICS			
		X	S.D.	T	p
4.37 I can use assessment techniques to assess the violence and abuse present in CPV	Pre (4.37)	3.11	.93	10.796	<.001
	Post (4.37B)	2.08	.75		
4.38 I can use solution focused interviewing skills in relation to CPV	Pre (4.38)	2.74	.89	8.992	<.001
	Post (4.38B)	1.87	.64		
4.40 I can use group work skills when working with children and young people in relation to CPV	Pre (4.40)	3.08	.92	9.043	<.001
	Post (4.40B)	2.24	.73		
4.42 I can teach children and young people skills so that they can stop violent actions or abusive language towards their parents/carers	Pre (4.42)	2.94	.83	9.091	<.001
	Post (4.42B)	2.06	.66		

X=mean; S.D.= Standard deviation

The findings from the Follow-Up Interviews with practitioners further demonstrated the positive effects on self-efficacy of the RCPV Project training. There were 10 Follow-Up Interviews with practitioners held three to six months after they had attended the training. Seven of the ten practitioners implemented the NVR programme with parents in their workplace in the intervening period.

The remaining three practitioners said they would have liked to implement the training; however they had not encountered any referrals relating to CPV prior to the Follow-Up Interviews.

Two questions from the interview with a sample of responses illustrate the impact of the training. A full list of questions used can be found in the Appendices.

Q: How does your agency/organization support you in your work on CPV? Has this changed since you took part in the training?

“We are more aware of it and we now feel we have the wherewithal or the better skills.” Interviewee 0053

“I would go to my line manager where I would have supervision...and the topic would be discussed. I share an office with (another practitioner trained in NVR) so if I had any child to parent violence issues I would think I would just consult (him/her).” Interviewee 0075

“So since doing the 2 day workshop... I was able to bring that (the NVR programme practices) in around parents going home at weekends to visit teenage children and the domestic violence what’s happening there so I think that’s what changed.” Interviewee 0099

Q: If a case does come in relating to CPV do you think you will be able to implement what you have learned in the RCPV training programme in future?

“Yes- 90% confident of that.” Interviewee 0049

“I do feel I was adequately trained that I could run with it with - another trained co-worker.” Interviewee 0075

“Yes I do, I definitely do. I would like a case, that’s terrible to say but they are out there, I would like a case where I could use those skills.” Interviewee 011.

e) Phase 5: Communication and Dissemination of Findings.

[See also WS5 Dissemination Report]

The activities listed as below include a selection of the dissemination activities in which we took part. For a complete list of activities, please refer to the WS5 Dissemination Report.

Regional seminar in Åmåls Kommun, Sweden 12 June, 2013

Regional seminar in Smolyan, Bulgaria 25-26 September, 2013.

Mid project internal audit and progress report end of Jan 2014

RCPV First International Project Conference: **Child to Parent Violence – Innovations in Practice, Policy and Research**, 12- 13 June 2014, NUI Galway.

RCPV Second International Conference: **Challenges in Positive Parenting**, Valencia, Spain, 26 September, 2014

RCPV Policy round table in Smolyan 31 October 2014

E.U. RCPV Policy round table in Brussels 20 January 2015

RCPV End of Project International Conference: **Child to Parent Violence – European Perspectives**, 28-29 January 2015

Material will available on the project website www.rcpv.eu after the conference

Final project Evaluation Report due end April 2015.

4. Key Learning and Messages.

The key messages from this Workstream in the RCPV Project include:

- (a) The training programmes in Non Violent Resistance developed and implemented by the RCPV project increased practitioner awareness and understanding of child to parent violence;
- (b) The training programmes developed and implemented by the RCPV Project increased practitioner self-efficacy;
- (c) The training programmes developed and implemented by the RCPV Project provided practitioners with the relevant skills to work with parents and children when child to parent violence takes place;
- (d) The RCPV Self Efficacy Questionnaires are statistically reliable measurements/ tools that can be used in future research;
- (e) The fact that requests for RCPV training exceeded the resources of the project to provide the training within the lifespan of the project highlights the fact that child to parent violence is a growing social problem and there is a high demand for the practitioner training packages that were developed as part of the Project.

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- (f) One of the unanticipated but welcome outcomes of the RCPV training programmes were the local developments in Ireland of adapted and innovative responses to the problem of child to parent violence through which practitioners and agencies developed interventions that specifically addressed the needs of their client groups following the training and incorporating much of the training material and methods. These included the development of the Le Cheile NVR Parents Groups in Limerick, of the Power to Change Children and Parents Programme in Galway, of the Parentline NVR National Telephone Service Intervention in Dublin and the emerging local child to parent violence response steering committees in Cork, Galway and Dublin.
- (g) As the Project is making the training and research resources freely available via the end of project conference and the **www.rcpv.eu website**, further training and research should be provided to track the development of practice, policy and research responses to this problem.
- (h) Future research could explore parent/ carer self-efficacy in relation to responding to child to parent violence.

As mentioned previously, it was hypothesised that child and family practitioners would assess and intervene in cases of child to parent violence to the extent that they recognised the problem and perceived themselves as competent and confident to assess and intervene when confronted with child to parent violence in their practice. The legacy of this Workstream is clear - in a relatively short period of time, the training programmes developed by the RCPV Project has had a significant impact on the learning, skills and confidence of practitioners in recognising and responding to child to parent violence, some of whom have implemented innovative responses to this growing social problem.

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