

Acorns First Response

The Acorns First Response Service is accessible, child centred and friendly and acts as a trusted adult, offering support to young people aged 11 – 18 who are affected by domestic violence. We offer:

- Short-term support for young people who are not eligible for counselling, but who may need practical and emotional help to deal with current crisis situations;
- Safety planning and risk assessment where a young person resides with a perpetrator or has regular contact with a perpetrator including within their own relationships;
- Advocacy – for example at meetings or appointments in school or court;
- Practical advice and guidance and mentoring – around future choices and decisions, education, employment, mental and physical health, etc
- Intermediate emotional support for young people waiting for counselling (where capacity allows)

This service offers short-term work only, so the work has to be quite directive in order to cover specific topics and areas of support for the client. Intervention may involve; 1-1 face to face sessions; telephone support; online messaging; one off sessions or a number of sessions – based on the individual wishes of the young person.

Once a referral has been received we will liaise with agencies involved to ensure intervention fits into any planned support around the family. As such, we do require consent to share information with other agencies to carry out this work. When interventions are completed young people will have ongoing access to our weekly drop-in service if any further support is required. Where a higher level of need is identified, young people will be referred into Acorns services or signposted appropriately, in line with support plans.

Referral Criteria

To refer into the service, a young person must meet the following criteria:

- Aged 11 – 18 and resident in North Tyneside, or going to school in North Tyneside

- Exposed to domestic violence within the last 8 weeks and displaying the impact from this;
- Parental consent is mandatory for young people aged 11-13
- Parental consent is preferred for young people aged 14-16
- Young people need to be aware that we will share information with involved agencies where
- appropriate.

Please note that young people who meet these criteria can self-refer – so if support is initially refused, they are able to contact us in their own time once they've had a chance to consider if this is something they may be interested in exploring.