

# Domestic Abuse

## “Investing in Early Interventions to Prevent Offending”



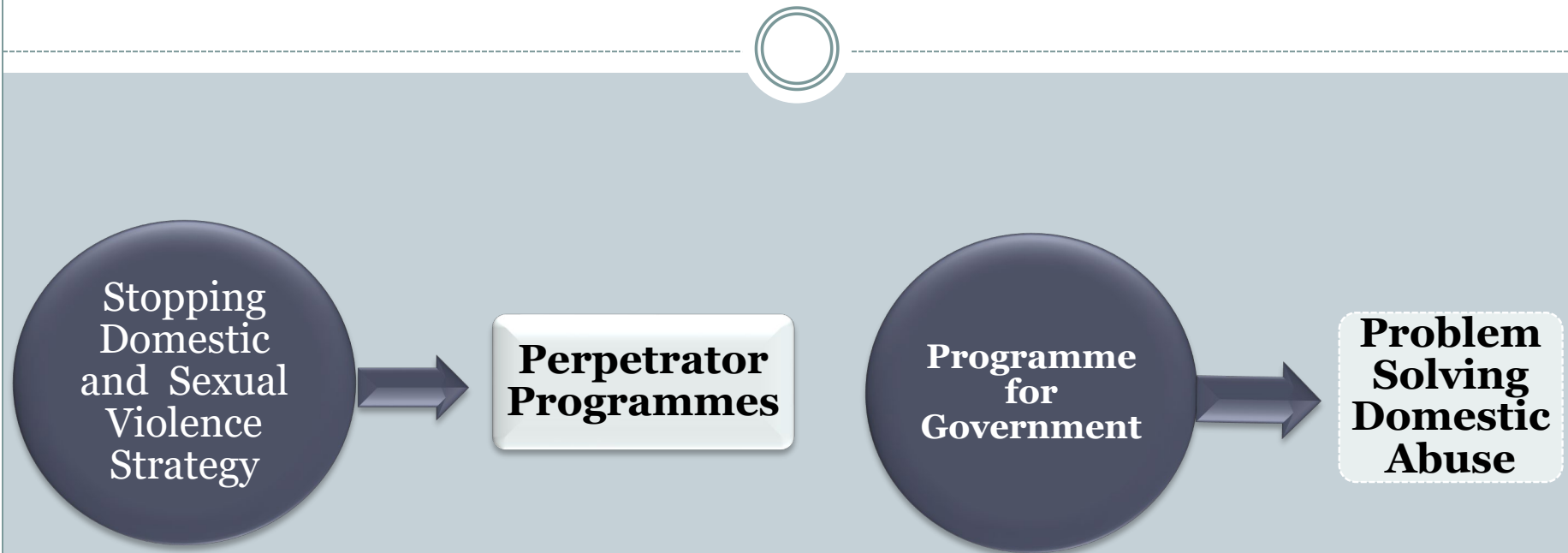
CEP/Europri International Conference  
Irish College Leuven, Belgium  
1-2 December 2021

**Dr Geraldine O'Hare**  
**Director of Rehabilitation**  
**Probation Board for Northern Ireland**

# Overview



# Domestic Abuse as a key Priority in Northern Ireland



## ✓ Why invest in treatment?

- ✓ Benefits for the Criminal Justice System, Health & beyond
- ✓ N. Ireland Domestic & Sexual Violence Strategy & PFG
- ✓ Reducing the number of victims through early Intervention & treatment

# Problem Solving Justice/Problem Solving Courts



## OUTCOME 7

**We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other**

- **Indicator 1:** Reduce crime and the harm and vulnerability caused by crime (prevalence rate)
- **Indicator 38:** Increase the effectiveness of the criminal justice system
- **Indicator 39:** Reduce re-offending



# Problem Solving Justice



**PSJ  
addresses the  
root causes of  
offending**

Innovative,  
creative early  
interventions

**PSC's  
alternatives to  
imprisonment**

Treats the  
individual  
risks &  
needs

Joins up  
justice &  
other key  
services to  
achieve the  
same goal



# Why Invest In Treatment?

## Benefits Of Problem Solving Justice & Initiatives

**Treats the  
root causes  
& problems**

More  
appropriate  
options for  
sentencers

**Reduce  
prison  
populations**

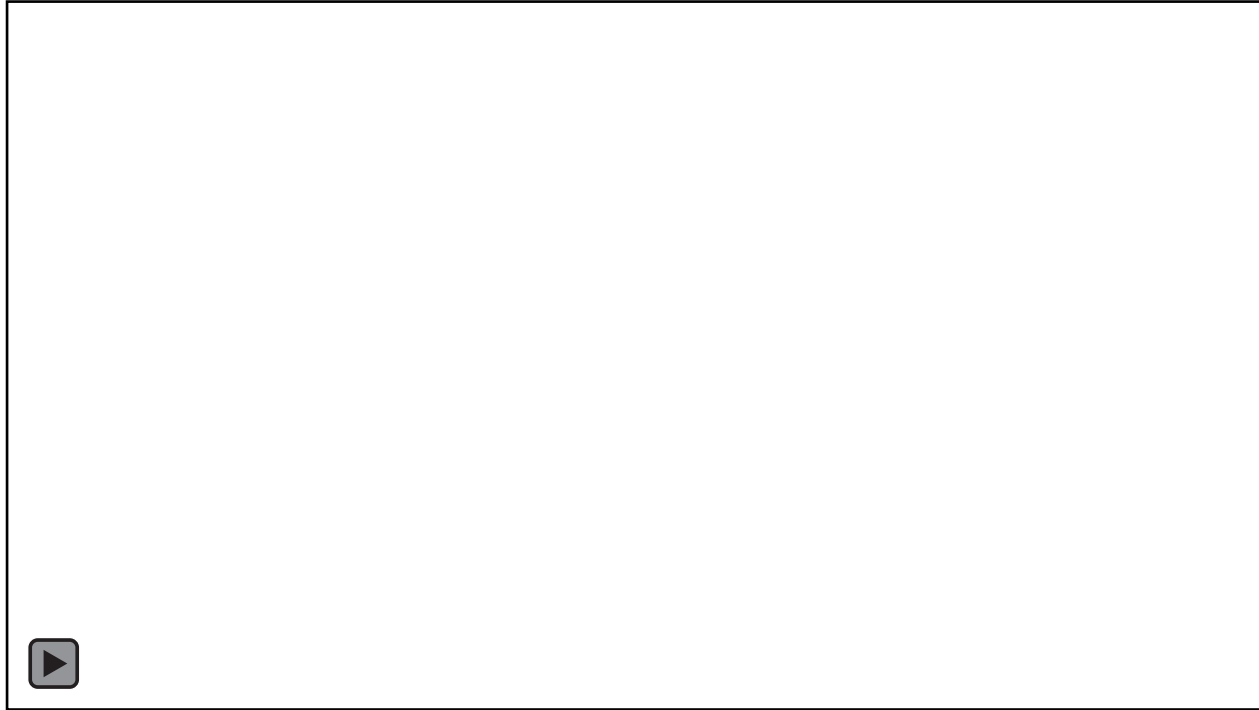
Reduced  
recidivism

Fewer  
victims

Cost  
effective



# Problem Solving Justice Animation



# Problem Solving Initiatives & Problem Solving Courts

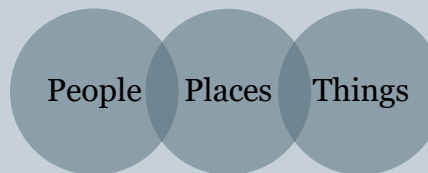


- Referral to a judicial process or criminal justice approach which addresses underlying root problems that contribute to criminal behaviour
- Based on concept of therapeutic justice:
  - offender engagement
  - specialist court
- Origins in USA late 1980's
- 4000+ Problem Solving Courts

# 6 Principles of Problem Solving









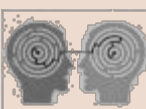



1. Enhanced Information
2. Community Engagement
3. Collaboration
4. Individualised Justice
5. Accountability
6. Outcomes



These principles look beyond the offence of the courts & seek to address the circumstances that contributed to the offending behaviour

# Procedural Justice: Dimensions



	Voice	
	Respect	
	Neutrality	
	Understanding	
	Helpfulness	

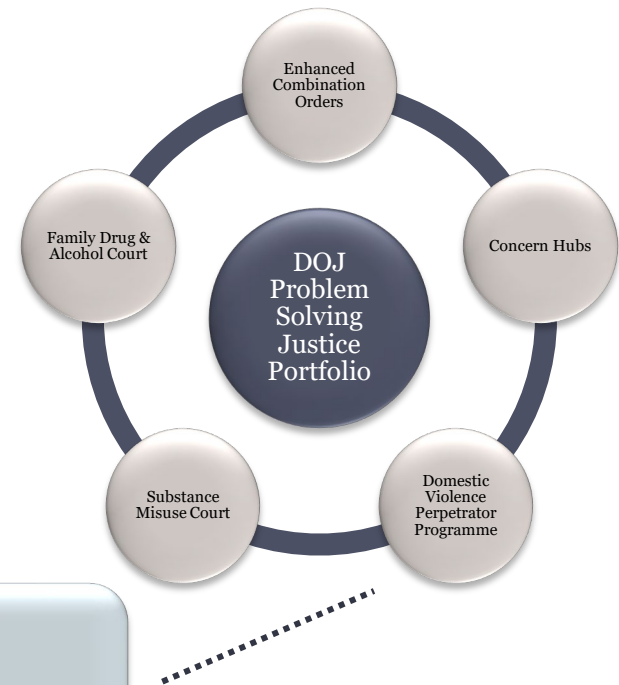


# Why Un-adjudicated Domestic Abuse Programmes in Northern Ireland?

# Domestic & Sexual Violence Strategy & Programme for Government

DOJ investment in non-court mandated interventions

**Domestic Violence Interventions**





# Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes



- What we know about Domestic Abuse programmes
  - “Not a soft option”
  - Strengths based approaches
  - Impact of DV and who it impacts

- The journey of Perpetrator Programmes:



- Why should we intervene early and with who?



- Partnerships & an integrated approach

# DV Trust Programme (PPRP)



- DV Team / Social Services / Woman's Aid
- Programme suitability/referral made by Social Services
- PBNI determine programme need using B-SAFER assessment tool
- Current/former partner offered support from Partner Support Worker (PBNI and Women's Aid partnership), then Programme commenced.
- Weekly information sharing with Social Workers. Regular practitioners meetings scheduled with Social Services, PSNI Women's Aid and PBNI to share information.
- Programme completed and PBNI completes end of programme report for Social Services.
- Evaluation

# **TRUST DOMESTIC ABUSE PROGRAMMES**



**REFERRAL  
MADE TO PROGRAMME**



**PBNI B-SAFER ASSESSMENT**



**CURRENT/FORMER PARTNER OFFERED SUPPORT FROM WOMEN'S AID**



**PPRP OR RRI PROGRAMME COMMENCES**



**REGULAR REVIEWS SCHEDULED**



**PBNI COMPLETE END OF PROGRAMME REPORT**



**EVALUATION**

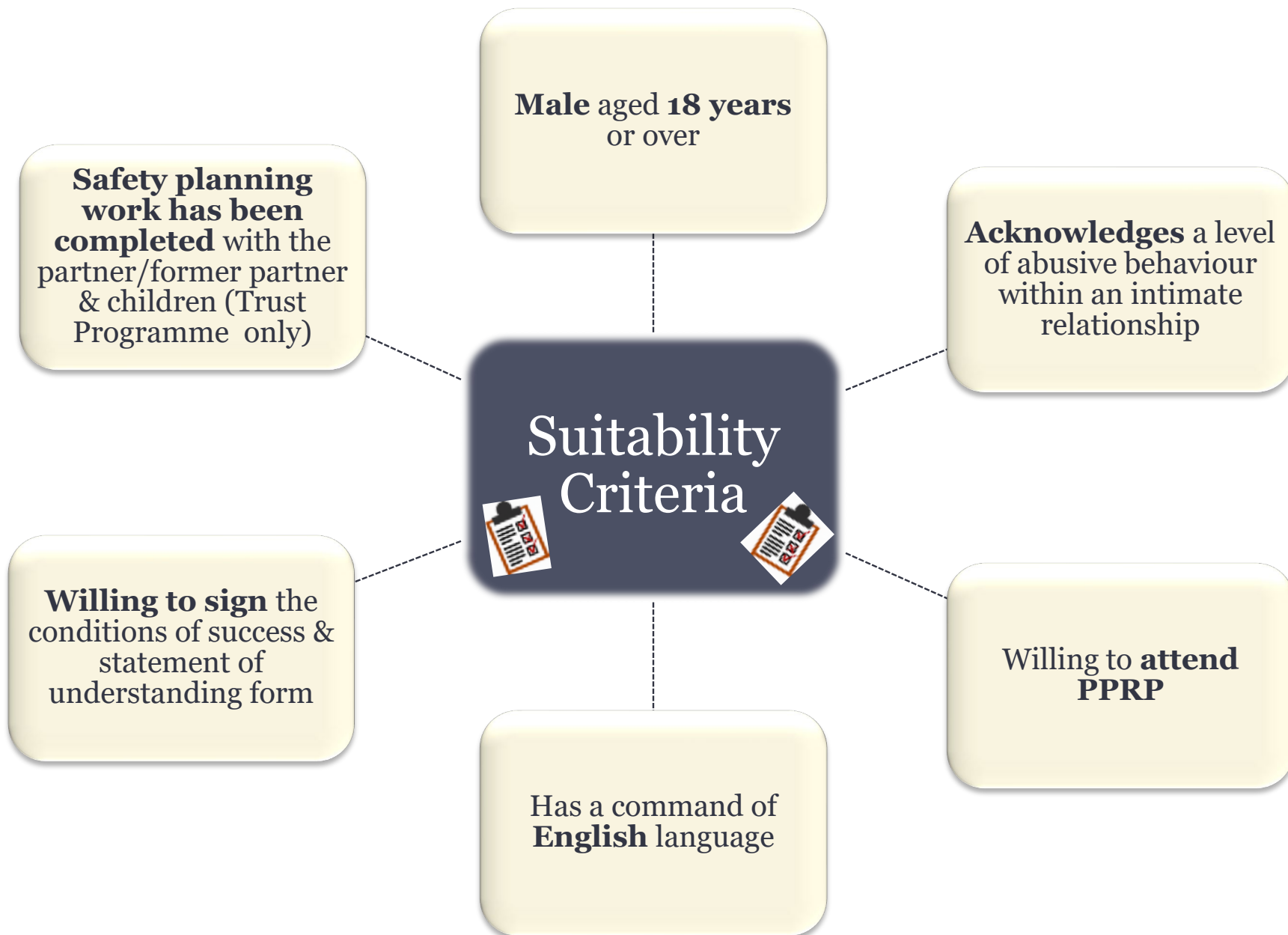
# PBNI Domestic Abuse Programmes



- PBNI domestic abuse programmes are strengths based. They incorporate educational, CBT, skills practice techniques and the development of emotional intelligence to address unhealthy and abusive behaviours in intimate relationships. All PBNI domestic abuse programmes are supported by evidenced based research.
- Promoting Positive Relationships Programme (PPRP)
- Respectful Relationships Interventions Programme (RRI)

## **PROGRAMME AIMS**

- Primary goal is to promote healthy relationships and reduce risk of abuse against intimate partners and children.
- Exploration of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships. Including the personal identification of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and physiology in relation to participant's own behaviours.
- Education on the impact of healthy and abusive behaviours on victims, including children.
- Development of communication skills, emotional management techniques, supportive resources and responsible parenting.



## PBNI **B-SAFER** assessment



```
graph TD; A[PBNI B-SAFER assessment] --> B[Low Need]; A --> C[Moderate to High Need]; B --> D[Respectful Relationship Intervention (RRI)]; C --> E[Promoting Positive Relationships Programme (PPRP)]; D --> F[Individual or Group Work]; E --> G[Group Work Programme];
```

The diagram is a flowchart titled 'PBNI B-SAFER assessment'. It starts with a central box at the top. Two arrows point down from this box to two separate boxes: 'Low Need' on the left and 'Moderate to High Need' on the right. From 'Low Need', an arrow points down to 'Respectful Relationship Intervention (RRI)', which then points down to 'Individual or Group Work'. From 'Moderate to High Need', an arrow points down to 'Promoting Positive Relationships Programme (PPRP)', which then points down to 'Group Work Programme'. All boxes are light orange with black text. Arrows are black. A horizontal dashed line is present behind the top box.

**Low Need**

**Respectful Relationship  
Intervention (RRI)**

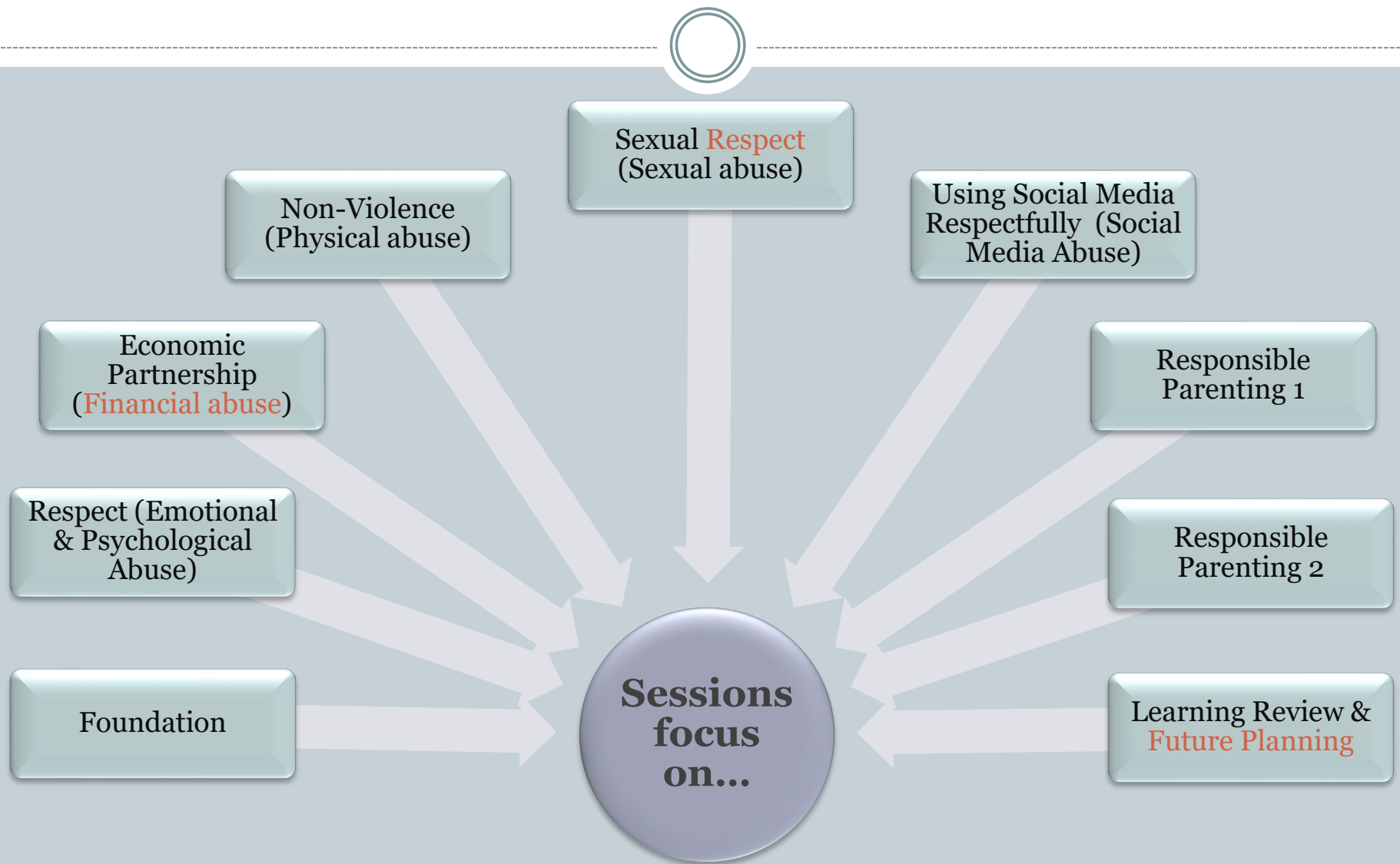
**Individual or Group Work**

**Moderate to High Need**

**Promoting Positive Relationships  
Programme (PPRP)**

**Group Work Programme**

# Respectful Relationships Intervention (RRI)



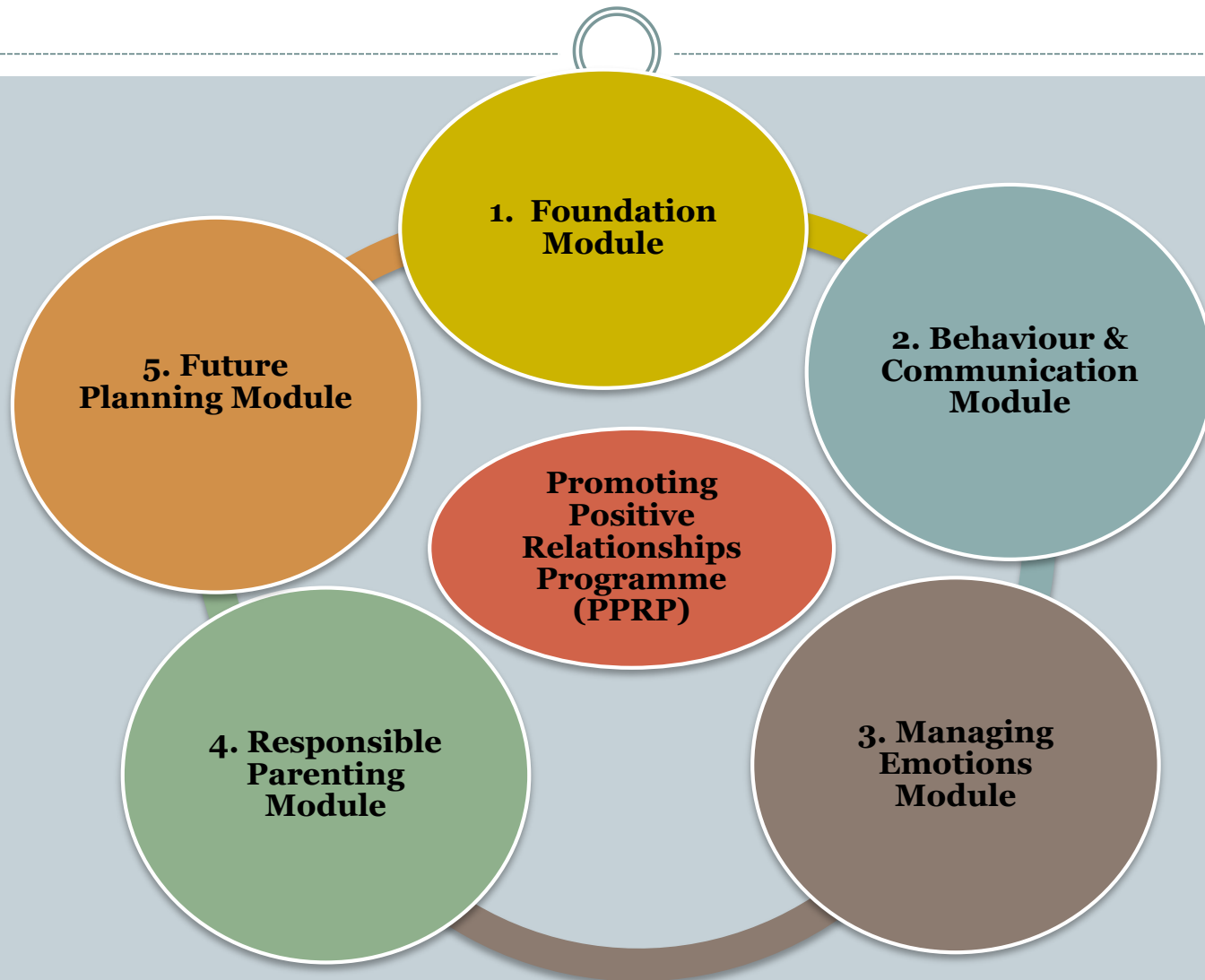
# PROMOTING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAMME (PPRP)



- Programme length: 24 weekly sessions
- Session length: 2 hours
- Made up of 5 core Modules
- Key Element within the programme is partnership working with Woman's Aid and Social Work staff within the Trust Teams.



# Programme Modules



# Skills covered:



**TAKING  
TIME OUT**

**SELF TALK**

**MINDFULNESS**

**NON VERBAL  
COMMUNICATION**

**ACTIVE  
LISTENING**

**COMMUNICATING  
THOUGHTS &  
FEELINGS**

**NEGOTIATION**

**RESPECTFUL  
ARGUING**

**MANAGING ANGER**

**MANAGING  
STRESS**

**MANAGING  
JEALOUSY**

**CHANGE, ACCEPT  
LET GO**

# Promoting Positive Relationships Programme



	2018 – 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021-2022
Number of Participants	31	67	60	60
Number who completed	27	37	31	In progress

- Trust & Court Programme in 2018-2019
- 4 groups operated within Western Trust area;  
3 non- adjudicated groups/1 adjudicated
- The programme was subsequently extended in 2019/20 to include the Belfast, Northern, South Eastern and Southern Trusts.

# Evaluation of PPRP (2019-2020 programme)



## Benefits

- Participants said that the programme had a positive impact on their behaviour and that it was likely or very likely that they will now take more responsibility for their harmful behaviour.
- Majority reported that it had enabled them to manage their feelings/emotions and approximately one fifth stated that it had made them more self aware. Others said it had enabled them to recognise triggers, understand the impact of their actions on others, and have a more positive outlook.
- Social Workers reported notable changes in behaviours from those who engaged in the programme, stating some were more open to considering the impact of their behaviours and evidenced more willingness to apply learning and make progress.
- Three quarters of partners said that overall the programme had been helpful or very helpful in addressing their partner's abusive behaviour
- Initial long-term data supplied by the PSNI Public Protection Branch one year post programme for the 2018/19 cohort showed that one incident had resulted in prosecution and had been brought before the court. While seven of the other 24 participants had been involved in domestic abuse incidents, these had not resulted in any prosecution.

# Evaluation of PPRP (2019-2020 programme)



- Over 70% of partners / ex partners said they had noticed their partner/ex-partner using the skills they had learnt through the programme these include:
  - Open and willing to discuss feelings
  - Willingness to listen to partner
  - Use of time out
  - Anger management
  - Spending quality time with family
  - More patient with children
  - Taking responsibility for actions
  - Referring to coping mechanisms
  - Improving decision making
  - Understanding consequences of choices

# Longer term outcomes



- Reduction in reoffending/desistance from crime
- Increase in use of appropriate skills in relationships
- Improved victim awareness
- Improved relationships with children
- Increase in personal responsibility for behaviours

# The future for this Problem Solving Approach



- Problem solving justice – 5 year strategy
- Accreditation of PPRP
- A Needs Analysis to be undertaken 2021-22 to determine how many places are required in each Trust area. The operating model should have built in flexibility to divert resources across the five Trust areas to facilitate fluctuating demand.
- Evaluation to be carried out in 2021-22 for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 phases;
- Additional places to be provided across Northern Ireland in 2022-23 and 2023-24 if supported by evidence from evaluations; and
- an evaluation should be carried out in 2023-24 to inform decisions on increasing the number of places by a further 30 in 2024-25 (to 120 places in total).

# Hope...

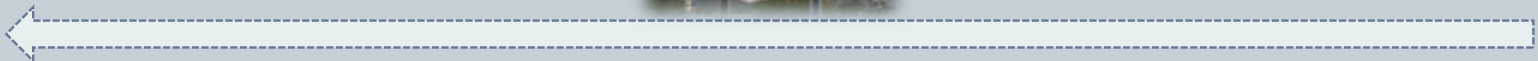
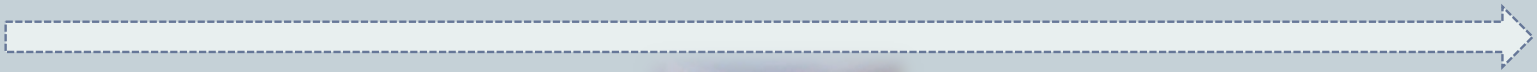


Hope for the  
individual

Hope for  
community  
& victims

Hope for the  
family

Hope for the  
Criminal  
Justice  
System





# Thank You



Dr Geraldine O'Hare  
Director of Rehabilitation  
Probation Board for Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 90 522522  
[geraldine.o'hare@probation-ni.gov.uk](mailto:geraldine.o'hare@probation-ni.gov.uk)