

# Impact Report

## +Choices

2023

2024



**F** FOUNDATION

Inspiring independence. Transforming lives.

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# Introduction

## What do we do?

Positive Choices is a bespoke programme that supports perpetrators of domestic abuse age 16+, regardless of gender or sexuality, through the stages of behaviour change. The service aims to reduce risks to those involved in domestic incidents and reduce the opportunity for a repeat incident to occur.

## What do we offer?

We offer a voluntary service for perpetrators of domestic abuse, providing an opportunity to recognise, acknowledge and change their abusive behaviours. We offer group and 1-1 delivery options.

In 2023-24, three groups have been delivered across the week; two online, and one face-to-face at our York office. There were 71 new engagements on our triage, group and 1:1 behaviour change pathways.

## What else do we offer?

1. Access to peer support networks
2. Triage support such as immediate intervention, advice, motivational interviewing, and onward referral
3. Creation of a client-led support plan
4. Tailored support and intervention
5. Specialist stalking intervention
6. An Integrated Support Service for the partners, ex-partners and family members of perpetrators
7. Bespoke domestic abuse prevention toolkit workshops



# Highlights



Client engagement and in-person activity has increased and continues to do in the years post-covid. In person group interventions and attendance at our sites and outreach locations continues to build, we had 71 new engagements on triage, group or 1:1 support pathways, with a 23% increase in completions in a planned way this year. Sustaining change and exit support planning, including strategies for maintaining change is vital to what we do, with an overall 83% risk reduction reported by victim-survivors saying they felt safer.

This year we were really pleased to be awarded an internal grant to improve our group delivery room in York. The design was co-produced with clients and this has helped to ensure the space is trauma informed, as well as generally being more welcoming. The 'fidget' toys and wellbeing resources have been effective at supporting anxiety and concentration during sessions.



We hosted a service open day and had the pleasure of an OPFCC visit as part of '16 Days of Action.' We had a client attend the event and speak about his experience of being supported by the service. His words now help others as a peer mentor in service.

**CLIENT TESTIMONIAL**

It's an insight into your own life story...The points of view which come across in sessions give you a better knowledge of things.

- Positive Choices client

**CLIENT TESTIMONIAL**

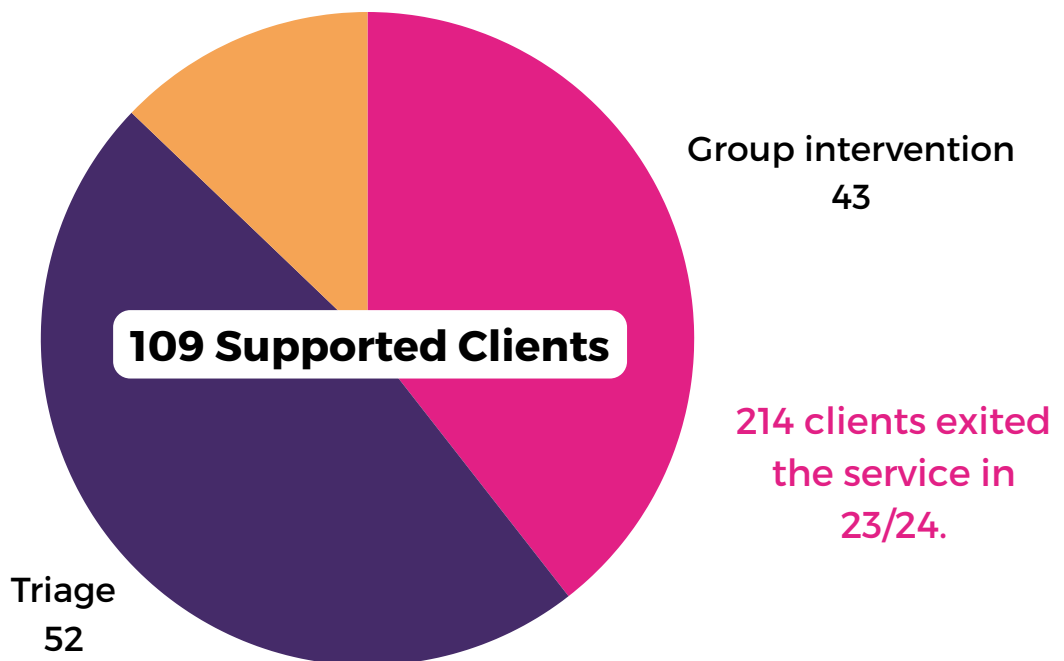
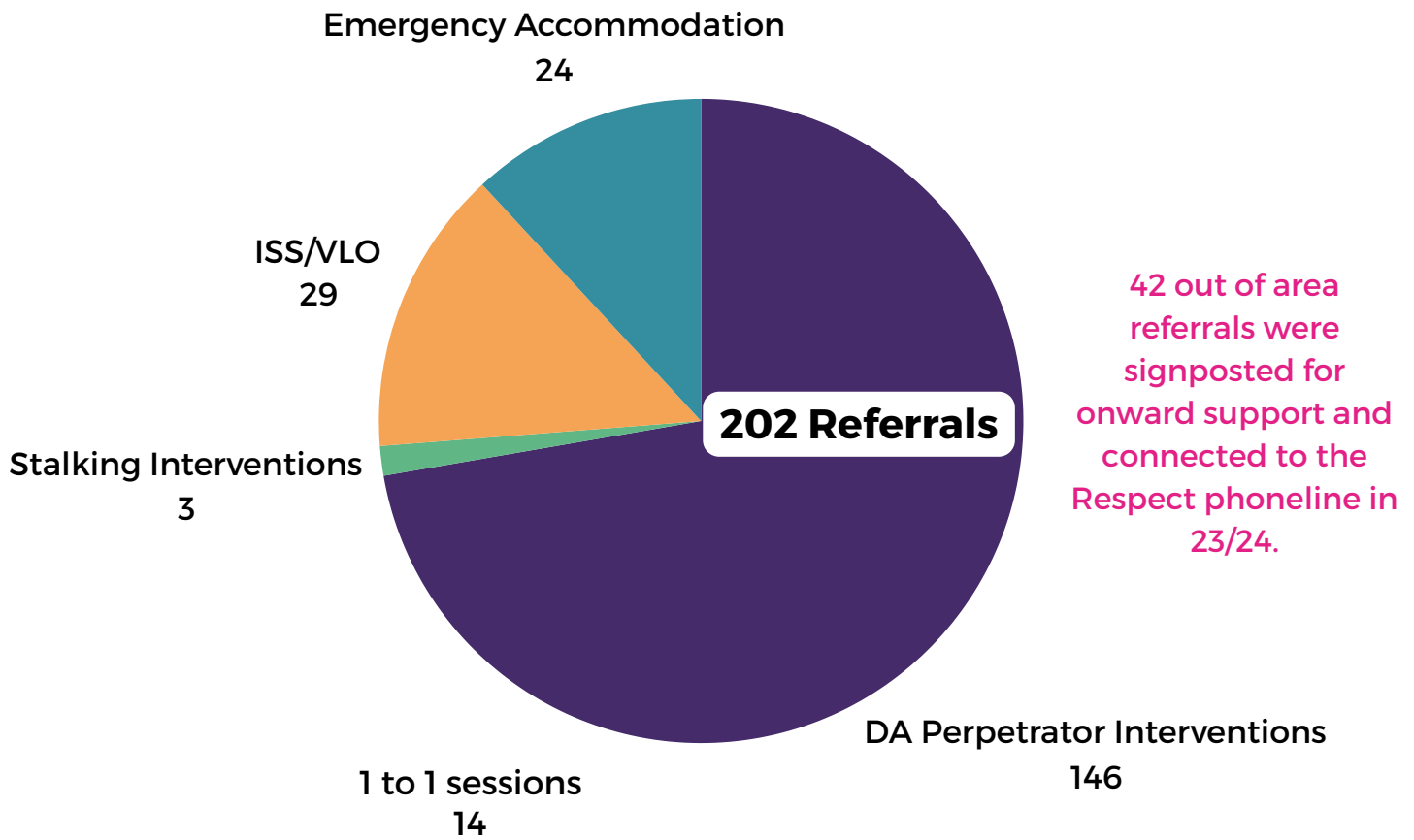
It's a safe space, non-judgmental. You can take things away from group sessions even when you're just listening.

- Positive Choices client

Our service, amongst other North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire domestic abuse services have taken part in a University of Leeds research project, looking at changing the narrative and response to domestic abuse. This research is due to be published, with an opportunity to build a partnership response, focused particularly on early intervention and education with children and young people.



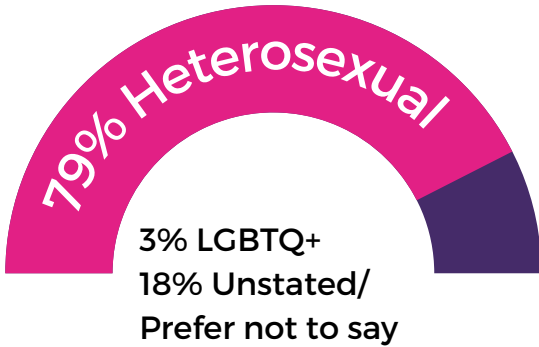
# Referrals





# Demographics

## Sexuality

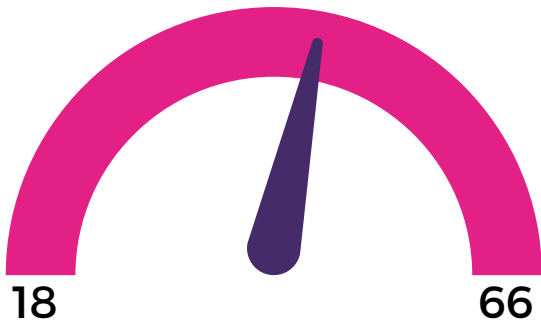


## Gender

89% of clients identified as male.  
10% of clients identified as female.  
1% of clients identified as transgender.

## Age Range

Average 37

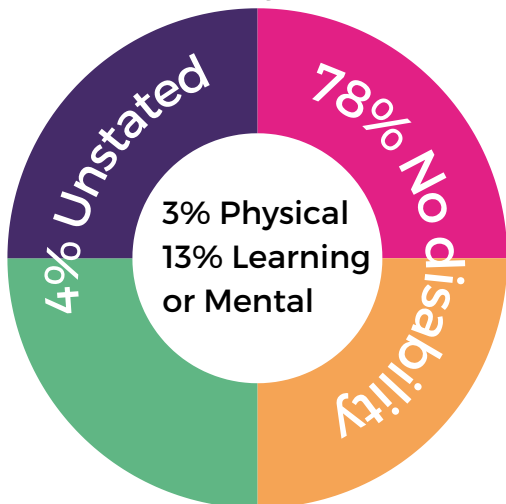


## Ethnicity

90% White  
5% Asian  
1% Black  
4% Unstated/Prefer not to say



## Disability

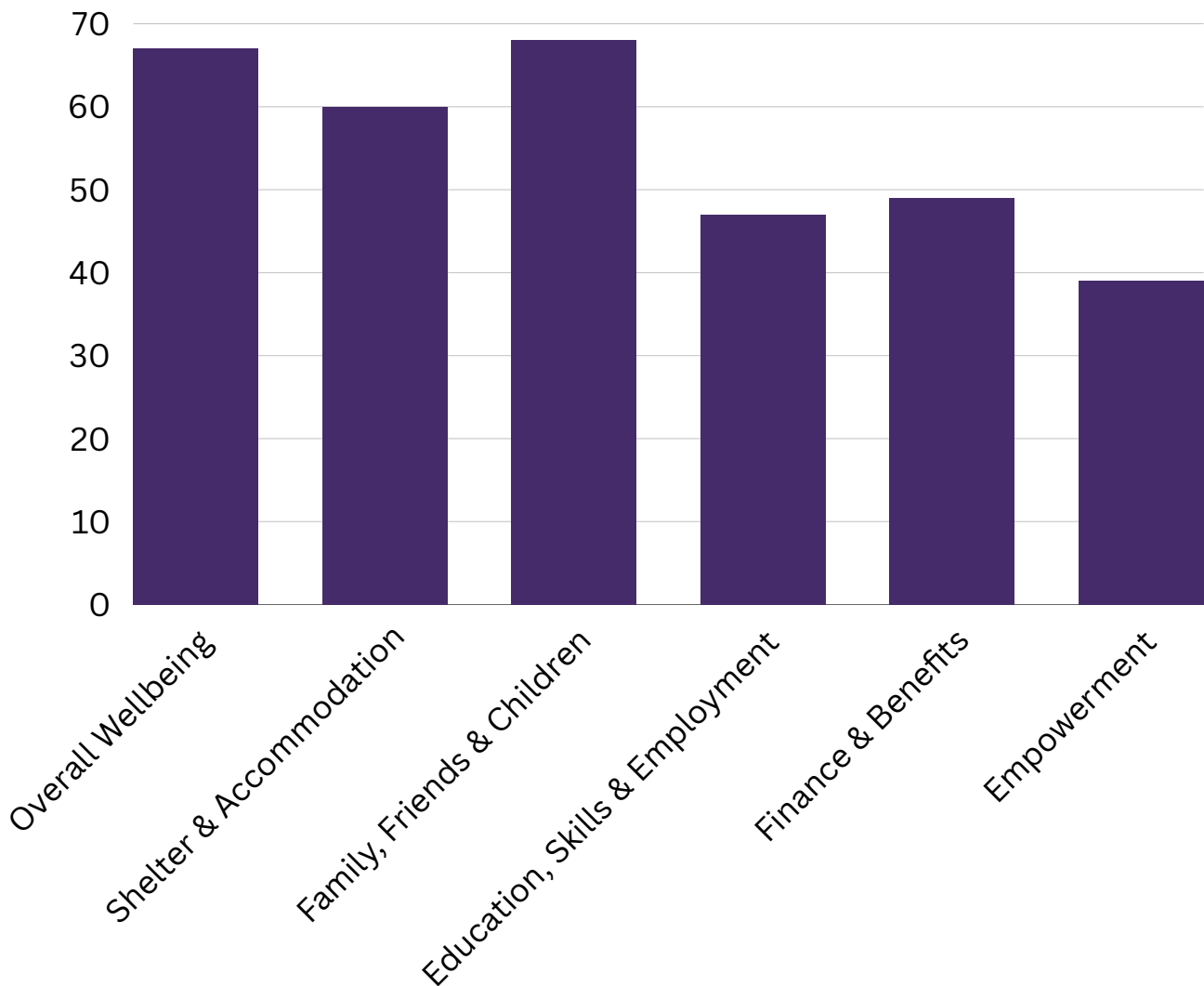


“I feel the service is excellent. My needs around my physical health were well respected and accommodated.”

“Time was taken to understand me, I was worried about engaging in group sessions and felt my mental health may be a barrier but this was not the case.”

# Perpetrator KPIs

## Clients who reported improvements upon exit

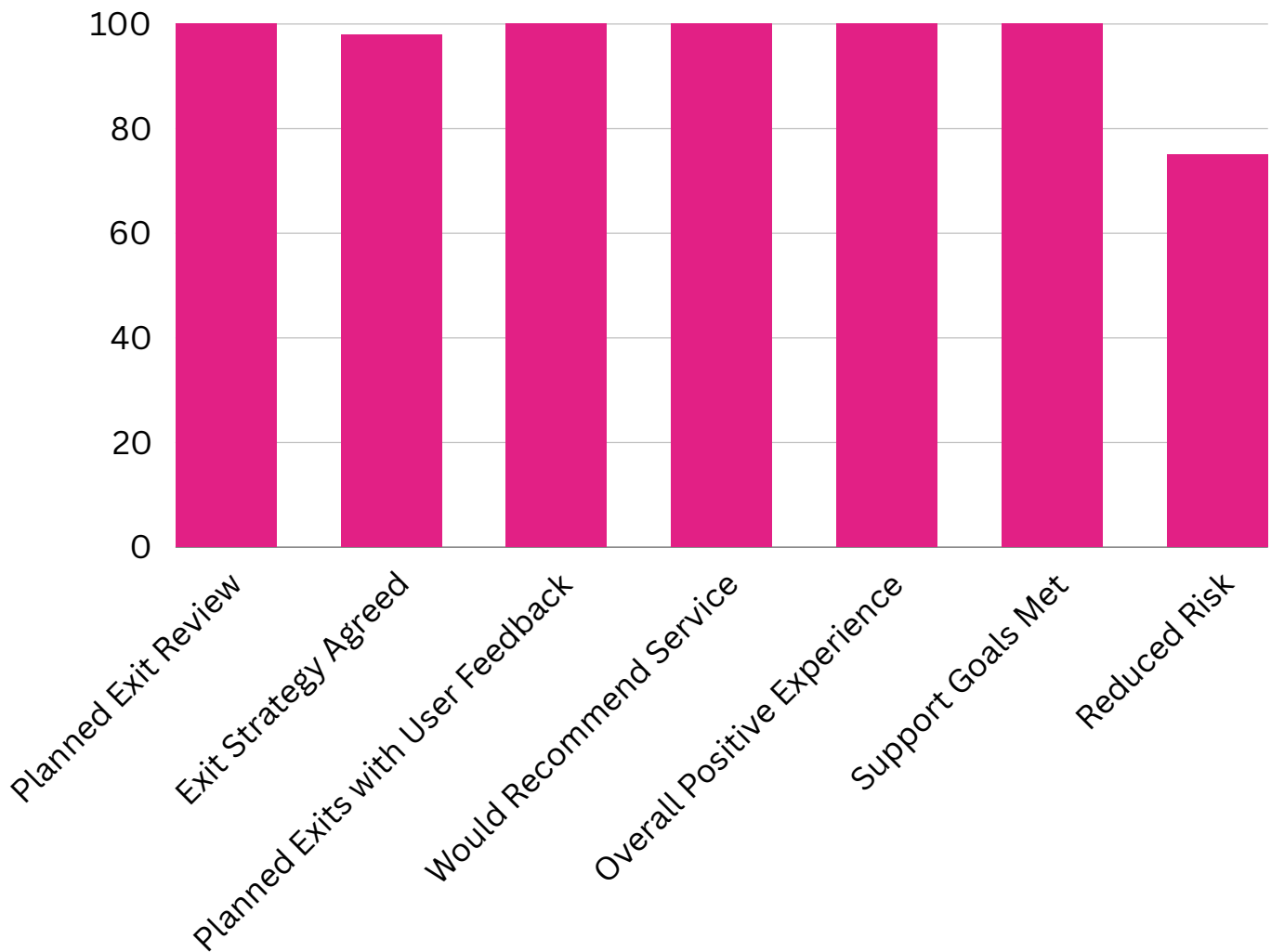


In 2023-24 we offered emergency accommodation for perpetrators on a short term basis



In 2023-24, we had 24 referrals, with 3 nights being the average number of funded nights. 98% of referrals for emergency accommodation were based in Scarborough.

# Perpetrator KPIs



## Data Snapshot - Feelings of safety and risk reduction

- 192 of our referrals were contacted in less than 72 hours, which was above our 90% target.
- There was a 23% increase in planned exits after engagement with group, 1:1 or triage support pathways this year.
- 75% of cases saw a reduction in risk on exit, increasing to 83% risk reduction reported by victim-survivors saying they felt safer.
- 100% of clients reported having their support needs met and would recommend the service.



# Feedback

From perpetrators

"I am no longer abusive, in particular no longer experiencing jealousy which was the significant cause for me to be abusive."

"The sessions are really good. The open space has been really helpful because it makes things real."

"It's easier now to find outlets. I hadn't heard of the service until I was referred. I would've loved to have known about it sooner."

"The most difficult part was opening up as I had really bad trust issues but what has also been the most helpful is knowing I am not alone and there is help and assistance."

- "I have stopped using violence, my partner feels safe around me and I am a better parent."

"My attitude has changed for the better and my outlook is more positive looking forward. I have learnt my triggers and how to control them."

# Stalking Intervention

In 2022 we incorporated a Specialist Stalking Intervention Worker (SSIW) into the team to engage with clients displaying stalking and/or harassment behaviours. The SSIW supports North Yorkshire's response to stalking and harassment in domestic settings as opposed to stalking and harassment by strangers and acquaintances.

## Role duties & responsibilities

- Engaging with perpetrators of domestic stalking and harassment, encouraging them to participate on the +Choices domestic abuse perpetrator programme.
- Delivering bespoke, short term work focussing on and addressing specific stalking and harassment behaviours.
- Attending meetings with North Yorkshire Police stalking support team, discussing who has been cautioned for stalking or harassment and whether they fit the eligibility criteria to work with +Choices.
- Attending multi-agency stalking tasking meetings for Scarborough and Ryedale districts, discussing current stalking cases and collaborating together to create action plans.
- Making contact with individuals that have been cautioned for stalking or harassment, introducing +Choices, and offering a referral.
- Screening referrals for stalking and advising on cases where stalking and/or harassment behaviours may be present.
- Researching, designing and delivering bespoke stalking identification and intervention tools, and creating awareness raising materials.

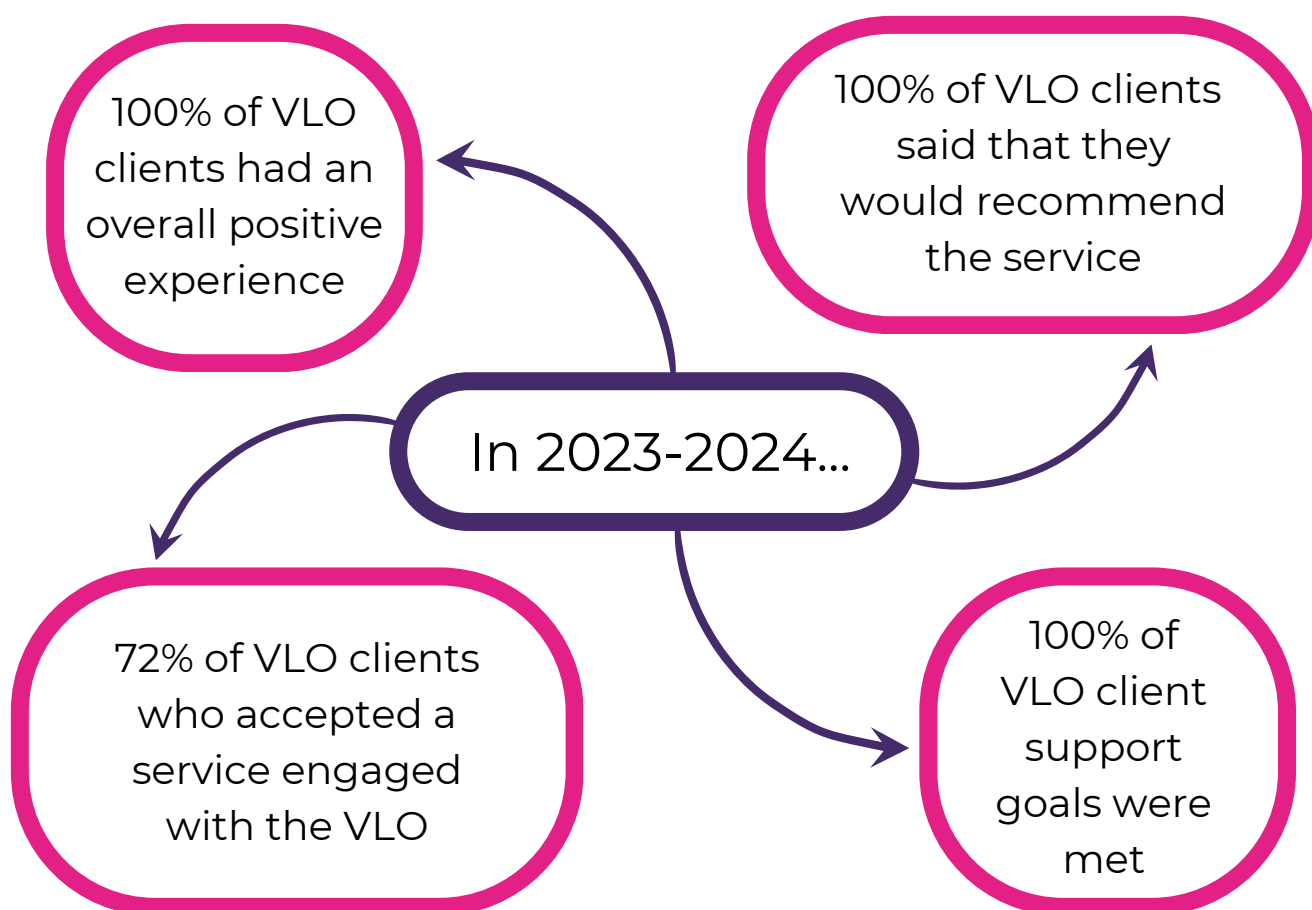
In 2023-24, an additional 2 clients were referred and engaged in support, with 4 clients exiting the service, 75% of those in a planned way.

For stalking awareness week 2023, Positive Choices staff contributed to a multi-agency briefing on stalking, alongside staff from IDAS and North Yorkshire Police.



# Integrated Support Service

+Choices is delivered as part of a whole-family system wherein the primary victim (whether that be partner, ex-partner or another family member) are offered access to our integrated support service (ISS). The Victim Liaison Officer works in partnership with IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service) to provide a robust and integrated system of support for the family members of the clients that engage with the programme, with the key focus to increase the safety of the whole family.



ISS client engagement continues to increase year on year, with 50 victim-survivors supported, which equates to an 11% increase from the previous year.

# Feedback

From ISS clients

"It made the difference between feeling alone or not alone. In terms of the course for him, it has all really helped our marriage, we are both much happier."

"The parenting sessions have also had a good effect so the content of these are very good." Things are much better for all of us."

"I got helpful updates, which gave a sense of direction and a go between, which was vital and really important, as I would have felt more alone without this support and the decisions made, could have been very different."

"Things are going really good, I have a new job as a housekeeper in the Travel lodge and love it. I still get anxious at times but very few and far between. I no longer tremble. I have been able to leave the relationship safely."

"It is valuable to have a trustworthy source, when all that I did have was the influence from an untrustworthy person."

"I didn't realise I would be part of the programme the way I was so that was very good to talk to you."



# Engagement and Prevention Toolkits

## Training, prevention toolkits, and awareness sessions

Our aim is to work with a range of professional statutory third-party and voluntary agencies to provide a bespoke professional toolkit workshop around domestic abuse and our role in prevention.

The toolkit aims to increase professionals' understanding of perpetrator prevention, bust myths, increase knowledge of complex areas of abuse, and provide an opportunity for other services to become aware of +Choices and how to refer to our service.

In 2023-24, we have delivered workshops, training, drop-ins, and awareness sessions to statutory and voluntary agencies, including:

- Social care
- North Yorkshire Police
- Universities
- Schools
- Addiction support
- Citizen's advice
- Healthcare providers
- Youth hostels
- and many more!



“Great to attend and I learned a lot.”

“Informative and interesting, learnt so much about the programme you provide.”

In 2023-2024 we have delivered a bespoke training workshop in collaboration with Early Help focussing on the effects of domestic abuse on children and adolescents. 100% of survey respondents said they found this training beneficial.



# Engagement and Prevention Work

## Promotional campaigns and multi-agency working

2023-2024 has been a landmark year for our engagement and prevention work. We are proud to have contributed to several campaigns, awareness days, and multi-agency projects. In 2023-2024 we gave out over 1000 leaflets to public and professionals. Organisations can contact us to request leaflets.

We have delivered several bespoke training and awareness sessions alongside other organisations. During North Yorkshire Safeguarding week, two presentations were delivered, one on motivation, and one in collaboration with IDAS about the whole family approach to domestic abuse.



Positive Choices has attended several community events, drop-ins, and networking days to share information about our service, raise awareness of support for those experiencing domestic abuse, and signposting members of the public to support. These events include York St John University's "Fresher's" Fair, the York Carer's Centre and York in Recovery substance use marketplace, York's Our City festival at York explore library, and SJP Law and The Retreat's "Pave the Way" network of York family services.


The team has also taken part in several campaigns over the course of 2023-2024 to coincide with various social awareness days and events throughout the year. Staff came together to reflect on what Inclusion means to them for International Women's Day, Foundation Durham and Positive Choices came together to produce a blog on the cycle of abuse and love-bombing for Valentines Day, facts about LGBTQ+ experiences of domestic abuse and healthcare were shared for LGBTQ+ history month, and we highlighted key theoretical texts written by Black women for Black History Month.



# Contact us

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