

RESOLUTION NO. LXIV/1673/23 OF THE WROCLAW CITY COUNCIL dated 19 January 2023

**on the Correction and educational programme for family violence perpetrators
You Decide for 2023**

Pursuant to Article 18(2)15 of the Act of 8 March 1990 on municipal local government (Polish Journal of Laws of 2023, item 40), Article 12(11), and Article 92(1)1 and 92(2) of the Act of 5 June 1998 on district local government (Polish Journal of Laws of 2022, item 1526), and Article 6(4)2 of the Act of 29 July 2005 on prevention of family violence (Polish Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1249), the Wrocław City Council adopts the following resolution:

Article 1 The council adopts the Correction and educational programme for family violence perpetrators You Decide for 2023, appended hereto.

Article 2 The resolution is to be executed by the Mayor of Wrocław.

Article 3 This resolution becomes effective on the date of its adoption.

Deputy Head of the Wrocław
City Council

Bartłomiej Ciężyński

**Correction and educational programme for
family violence perpetrators You Decide for 2023**

Contents:	Page:
I. INTRODUCTION	3
II. OBJECTIVES	3
III. BACKGROUND	3
IV. FORM AND TIMEFRAME	4
V. TARGET GROUP AND QUALIFICATION PROCESS	4
VI. TERMS OF PARTICIPATION AND COMPLETION CRITERIA	4
VII. METHODOLOGY	5
VIII. TOPICS FOR MODULE I GROUP MEETINGS	5
IX. TOPICS FOR MODULE II GROUP MEETINGS.	7
X. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES	9
XI. GROUP DOCUMENTATION	9
XII. PROGRAMME EVALUATION	9
XIII. PROGRAMME STAFF	9
XIV. FUNDING	9

I. INTRODUCTION

Considering the causes of violent behaviour, one finds a guide in Philip Zimbardo. He claims we are all capable of evil depending on the circumstances. 'People may at any time possess a particular attribute (say intelligence, pride, honesty, or evil) to a greater or lesser degree. Our nature can be changed, whether toward the good or the bad side of human nature.'¹ The author concludes that 'we can learn to become good or evil regardless of our genetic inheritance, personality, or family legacy.'²

You Decide emphasizes two main assumptions. First, anyone can be violent, not only 'the bad' people—as we are used to believing—but 'the good' ones too. Therefore, no one is free from the danger of using violent behaviour. It is especially clear when we accept the definition of violence proposed by Mahatma Gandhi that 'Anytime we impose our will on another, it is an act of violence'.

Second, violent behaviour is learnt, which means we learn it, mostly through primary socialisation. We can also learn to refrain from it, which is the purpose of this programme.

II. OBJECTIVES

The target group of You Decide is persons who use family violence. The programme's objectives are:

1. To stop the participants from committing family violence in the future;
2. To develop behavioural self-control in the participants;
3. To help the participants understand family violence and embrace their responsibility for resorting to it;
4. To give the participants knowledge about the aetiology of family violence and improve this knowledge;
5. For the participants to learn how to communicate and resolve family problems without violent behaviour;
6. For the participants to develop the skill of rearing children not turning to violence.

III. BACKGROUND

The programme consists of two modules. Module I targets adults who inflict violence on other adult family members. Module II targets parents who inflict violence in the process of rearing minor children. The reason for the separate module for parents is that children are a particular group of people who experience violence. Therefore, any correction of violent behaviour in parents requires a broader knowledge of developmental and educational psychology.

The programme integrates multiple theoretical approaches, focusing on the Duluth Model, solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), cognitive behavioural therapy, motivational dialogue, systemic structural family therapy, nonviolent communication, and some elements of parenting competence workshops.

¹ Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil* Random House, New York, p 7.

² *Ibid.*

IV. FORM AND TIMEFRAME

The programme timeframe is ten months from February to December. February–June is the time of Module I ‘I can do it differently’, and August–December is the period for Module II ‘I (don't) bring up because I love you’. Participants can take part in both modules. The decision on whether or not to qualify a potential participant for a specific module is made by the instructor during a one-on-one consultation with the programme candidate.

Each module includes 20 group meetings, 3 hours each (generally once a week) and 15 one-on-one meetings, 1 hour each for every participant. The one-on-one consultations are completed before group meetings. The only exception is when a participant joins the programme at a later stage. In such a case, a one-on-one meeting is held immediately after they apply. Participants can join the programme no later than for the second focus block. One-on-one meetings are consultations for participants to become familiar with the programme agenda and objectives. During the one-on-one consultations, the instructor will perform a preliminary assessment of the situation of the family of the potential participant, identify the nature of violence during an interview, and qualify the candidate. The participants will learn the programme agenda and objectives during the one-on-one meetings.

V. TARGET GROUP AND QUALIFICATION PROCESS

You Decide is intended for persons referred by a court, the police, the interdisciplinary team, workgroups, probation officers, social workers, coordinators of foster families, family assistants, school counsellors and psychologists, and NGOs, such as churches and religious associations, which diagnosed an individual as a family violence perpetrator. People who apply voluntarily may participate in the programme as well. No formal referral is required to participate in the programme. The only prerequisite is for the person to admit resorting to family violence. People with mental and/or neurological disorders will not be qualified for the programme unless they produce a valid certificate from a psychologist and/or neurologist stating they may participate in a corrective and educational programme for family violence perpetrators. Furthermore, persons addicted to psychoactive substances are excluded from the programme unless they have completed basic withdrawal treatment. An addicted person undergoing therapy can be qualified as long as they have consent from an addiction counsellor. Residents of other districts may participate in the programme.

VI. TERMS OF PARTICIPATION AND COMPLETION CRITERIA

Participants are qualified to participate after a one-on-one consultation and signing the participation terms. A participant completes the programme if they participate in all 20 group meetings and their safety plans are approved by all the other participants and instructors. Each participant is allowed one absence due to health reasons provided they produce a valid doctor's certificate. If no such certificate is provided, the participant loses the status of a person who completed the programme. A participant loses the status of a person who completed the programme when their safety plan (a tool for recognising red flags of potentially violent behaviour aimed at preventing the use of force and violence) is not approved by all the other participants and instructors. Such a participant may continue to participate in the programme but shall not

complete it. To achieve the status of a person who completed the programme, they need to participate in the next edition of the programme.

The instructors do not issue participation certificates or completion certificates, but they may notify relevant referring institutions and organisations. No certificates are issued because participants take part in the programme to eliminate their violent behaviour, not to be certified.

Instructors reserve the right to exclude from the programme a participant who exhibits mental disorders. The participant is excluded also when they violate the terms of participation and/or contract drafted at the first group meeting.

VII. METHODOLOGY

- Experience sharing at the beginning and end of meetings;
- Brainstorming;
- Sociodrama;
- Conversation, discussion;
- Mini lecture;
- Group work (workshops);
- Video (as a source of examples);
- Homework.

VIII. TOPICS FOR MODULE I GROUP MEETINGS

1. *Let's get to know each other.* This meeting is for the instructors and participants to get to know each other, sign the group contract, and discuss the goals and background of the project and the topics it includes.
2. *What is violence.* The participants will learn about the types, forms, and effects of violence. They will discuss the cycle of violence. The instructors present non-violent behaviour.
3. *Sociocultural determinants of family violence.* The participants will discuss myths and stereotypes related to family violence, focusing on those concerning gender, relationships between women and men, and between parents and children.
4. *Power and control in interpersonal relationships.* The participants will learn about denial and illusion mechanisms employed by family violence perpetrators. The instructors will introduce the attribution theory.
5. *Control questionnaire as a tool for analysing participants' violent behaviour.* The participants will learn about the control questionnaire for analysing their violent behaviour. The participants will learn how to fill in the control questionnaire, which they will use throughout the programme. The participants will fill in control questionnaires at home, between sessions, and discuss them during sessions.
6. *Feelings and emotions.* The participants will learn about feelings and emotions and their role in

human life. They will also learn how to express them constructively. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.

7. *Addictions and violence.* The participants will learn about the basic signs of addiction. The instructors will point out that no addiction is a cause for family violence. The participants will learn that no addiction can be used to justify family violence. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
8. *Responsibility and fault in family violence.* The participants will learn that a family violence victim is not to be blamed or considered responsible for it. The instructors will explain to the participants that the only person responsible for family violence is the perpetrator. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
9. *Nonviolent communication.* The participants will learn how to identify and express their feelings constructively and communicate their needs. They will also learn how to listen empathically and respond to the needs of others with respect. The participants will learn the 'time out' method to avoid aggressive behaviour. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
10. *Sexual violence as a special form of family violence.* During this session, the participants will learn what sexual violence is. The instructors will inform the participants that rape can happen in a family as well. They will also discuss sexual violence against children. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
11. *The genogram as a tool for getting to know oneself and the family.* During this session, the participants will create their genogram, which is a map of the family with relationships and bonds between their relatives. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
12. *Expectations of oneself and others as a source of frustration and/or satisfaction.* The participants will learn to set feasible requirements for themselves and others. They will also learn about the consequences of too high expectations. The instructors will point out distorted thinking patterns that often lead to frustration and anger. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
13. *Stress and how to manage it.* The participants will learn about stress and how to manage it. The instructors will present the positive side of stress to the participants. The participants will learn about the 'Safety plan for family violence perpetrators'. The instructors will teach the participants how to cope with the urge to resort to violence.
14. *People with disabilities and older people in my life.* During this session, the participants will acquire skills relevant to difficult communication with people with disabilities and older people. The instructors will point out the need for treating people with disabilities and older people with due respect and understanding. The participants will create their safety plans. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
15. *Legal aspects of family violence.* The participants will learn about legal regulations related to preventing family violence. They will continue working on their safety plans. The control

questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed. Sessions from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. will be devoted to the creation of and discussion on the safety plans. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.

IX. TOPICS FOR MODULE II GROUP MEETINGS.

1. *Let's get to know each other.* This meeting is for the instructors and participants to get to know each other, sign the group contract, and discuss the goals and background of the project and the topics it includes.
2. *What is violence.* The participants will learn about the types, forms, and effects of violence, focusing on child neglect. They will discuss the cycle of violence. The instructors present non-violent behaviour.
3. *Sociocultural determinants of parenting violence.* The participants will discuss myths and stereotypes related to violence against children, focusing on those concerning relationships between parents and children. The instructors will present various parenting concepts.
4. *Power and control in parenting.* The participants will learn about denial and illusion mechanisms employed by parents who use violence against children. The instructors will introduce the attribution theory. The participants will learn about the difference between power over children and care for children. The participants will learn about the consequences of the reward and punishment system.
5. *Control questionnaire as a tool for analysing participants' violent behaviour.* The participants will learn about the control questionnaire for analysing their violent behaviour. The participants will learn how to fill in the control questionnaire, which they will use throughout the programme. The participants will fill in control questionnaires at home, between sessions, and discuss them during sessions.
6. *Feelings and emotions.* The participants will learn about feelings and emotions and their role in human life. They will also learn how to express them constructively. The instructors will outline how children experience feelings and emotions. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
7. *Addictions and violence.* The participants will learn about the basic signs of addiction. The instructors will point out that no addiction is a cause for family violence. The participants will learn that no addiction can be used to justify family violence. The participants will learn about the roles assumed by children in families affected by alcoholism. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
8. *Responsibility and fault in family violence.* The participants will learn that the child is not to be blamed for the parent using violence against it. The instructors will explain to the participants that the only person responsible for family violence is the perpetrator. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.

9. *Nonviolent communication.* The participants will learn how to identify and express their feelings constructively and communicate their needs. They will also learn how to listen empathically and respond to the needs of children with respect. The instructors will present the 'Circle of Security' and attachment styles. The participants will learn the 'time out' method to avoid aggressive behaviour. The control questionnaire will be further analysed.
10. *Sexual violence as a special form of violence against children.* During this session, the participants will learn what sexual violence against children is. The instructors will help the participants realise the damage to children who are victims of sexual violence. The instructors will point out the danger of sexual violence against children committed by so-called 'friends of the family'. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
11. *The genogram as a tool for getting to know oneself and the family.* During this session, the participants will create their genogram, which is a map of the family with relationships and bonds between their relatives, focusing on the place of children in the family framework.
12. *Expectations of oneself and others as a source of frustration and/or satisfaction.* The participants will learn to set feasible requirements for themselves and their children. They will also learn about the consequences of too high expectations. The instructors will point out distorted thinking patterns that often lead to frustration and anger. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
13. *Stress and how to manage it.* The participants will learn about stress and how to manage it. The instructors will present the positive side of stress to the participants. The participants will learn that stress is a body response that children experience, too. The instructors will inform the participants that the children's response to stress depends on their age and the psychoemotional and social development of the child. The participants will learn about the 'Safety plan for family violence perpetrators'. The instructors will teach the participants how to cope with the urge to resort to violence.
14. *A child with disabilities in my life.* During this session, the participants will learn skills relevant to difficult communication with children with disabilities. The instructors will point out the need for treating children with disabilities with due respect and understanding. The participants will create their safety plans. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.
15. *Legal aspects of violence against children.* The participants will learn about the legal regulations related to preventing violence against children. They will continue working on their safety plans. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.

Sessions from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. will be devoted to the creation of and discussion on the safety plans. The control questionnaire will be further analysed, and the 'time out' used by the participants will be discussed.

X. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Thanks to the programme the participants will learn to refrain from using violence and how to control their behaviour. The participant's knowledge of family violence and the perpetrator's responsibility for it will improve. At the end of the programme, the participants will have the skills to resolve conflicts constructively and communicate without violence.

Participants in module II will learn the skills necessary to bring up children without violence.

XI. GROUP DOCUMENTATION

The instructor will record every group session in a form with:

- the date of the meeting,
- the topic and a short summary of the meeting,
- the attendance list,
- instructors' signatures.

One-on-one sessions will be recorded in consultation notes containing the meeting's topic and a description of individual work. The purpose of the one-on-one sessions is to diagnose the situation of the candidate and prepare them for work with the group.

XII. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

The programme will be evaluated through survey questionnaires completed by the participants. The responses will help the instructors implement any changes necessary to improve the programme.

XIII. PROGRAMME STAFF

The Correction and educational programme for family violence perpetrators You Decide for 2023 will be delivered by qualified employees of the City Social Welfare Centre.

XIV. FUNDING

The Correction and educational programme for family violence perpetrators You Decide for 2023 will be funded through the budget of the Municipality of Wrocław and non-budgetary funds, such as grants from the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship Office in Wrocław.