



PRESS RELEASE

Attention: News Editor

For immediate release (10.06.10)

WORLD CUP: JEANETTE SHOWS RED CARD TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BIRMINGHAM

LIKE millions of others Jeanette Mulcare is concerned about injuries during the World Cup.

But Jeanette, manager of Stepping Stones Spurgeons' Family Support Project in Small Heath, Birmingham, is more worried about those that don't hit the headlines - sustained by frightened women and children on the receiving end of domestic violence.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) reports that violence in the home increased by an average of 25 per cent on England's match days during the last World Cup in 2006. Annually, reported rates of domestic abuse in Birmingham are among the highest in the country.

'These statistics are both sad and frightening - especially for women and children at the receiving end,' said Jeanette. 'The World Cup should be a time for celebration and fun not fear.'

Jeanette delivers the Freedom Programme, a community-based training and education course for women delivered by Stepping Stones Spurgeons. Women wishing to learn more about domestic violence and abuse are invited on the programme.

'They gain a better understanding of the myths and dynamics of abuse,' explained Jeanette. 'The programme provides access to other specialist support agencies and empowers women to make positive and informed choices. It is delivered at all times of the year, not just during football's international showcase. It gives women the chance to see they are not the only ones it happens to, that it isn't their fault.'

Stepping Stones Spurgeons launched the programme in Birmingham almost three years ago when Jeanette recognised abuse as a major factor for four out of five families referred to the project. According to the Birmingham Safety Partnership 2008, in one year alone more than 26,000 women will be affected by a significant incident and 33,000 children will have witnessed such violence.

The free, 12-week Freedom Programme is run across three venues in Birmingham and so far 80 women have accessed it.

All Spurgeons children's centres and family support projects work with families who have experienced domestic violence - from Bedfordshire to Salford, Sussex to Stoke.

(ends)

• Issued for Spurgeons by Stephen Goddard Associates: 01744 733898 or 07930 198209.

Notes for editors

* Spurgeons was founded in 1867 when Anne Hillyard, a London widow, read an article by famous Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon and donated £20,000 to found an orphanage for fatherless boys.

** Spurgeons maintains a distinctly Christian ethos with numerous projects working with vulnerable children and young people across the UK and more in a number of locations internationally.

www.spurgeons.org