

# pa<sup>u</sup>se

creating space  
for change



# Why Pause?

**Pause** works with women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care. It aims to break this cycle and give women the opportunity to develop new skills and responses that can help them create a more positive future.

## The background

Every local authority within the UK has women with complex and challenging needs to whom multiple children are born and subsequently removed into the care system under child protection proceedings. These women are typically young, disadvantaged and living with intersecting and numerous social, emotional, environmental and health related challenges.

The numbers of women per borough may be relatively small, however the children they give birth to are numerous and their life course outcomes are potentially marginalised by not only having a traumatic start in life but also years of possible disruption and professional intervention.



Hackney Feasibility Study 2013

## The statistics

The research in Hackney in 2013 has been further supported by a national study by Broadhurst et al in 2014 which compiled a comprehensive national data set.

This 2014 study estimates the scale and pattern of recurrent care proceedings over a seven year period. The numbers are significant, showing a total of 46,094 birth mothers appearing before the courts of which 15.5% (7,143) were linked to recurrent care applications. As each woman may be linked to more than one child, the total

number of care applications associated with this cohort is as high as 29% of all care applications (22,790). (Broadhurst et al 2014)

Additional findings confirm that 'the women are caught in a cycle of short interval pregnancies and subsequent proceedings, giving them little time to make or evidence changes in their lives' (Broadhurst et al 2014). The table below illustrates the outcomes of the children born to the Hackney Pilot cohort.



Hackney Feasibility Study 2013

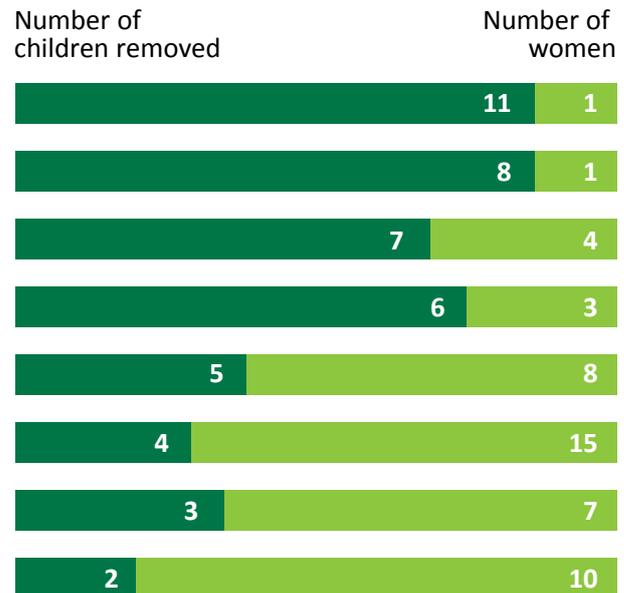
# Who are the women?

## Why are these women caught in this cycle?

There are a number of underlying assumptions, observations and data about the women on *Pause* and why they repeatedly have children who are taken into care. We acknowledge that women who have been in care themselves are more likely to have their own children taken into care, however there are many other reasons why this might happen. Each woman is likely to contain some or a combination of those reasons listed below:

- chaotic lives mean contraception is not well managed or not a priority
- influence of controlling partner
- a desire for a child to love, and be loved
- belief that next pregnancy may result in keeping the child
- desire for the nurturing experience of pregnancy
- concern over impact of contraceptives on their body.

Therefore, pregnancies may be the result of a conscious decision or through omission, or most likely, a complex combination of the two.



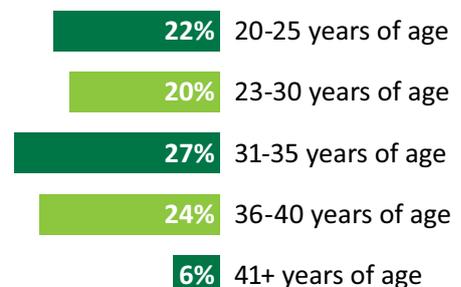
Hackney Feasibility Study 2013

## What happens after the removal of children?

Once the child has been removed into care these women still need support but often the appropriate care is not available. There are a number of reasons for this:

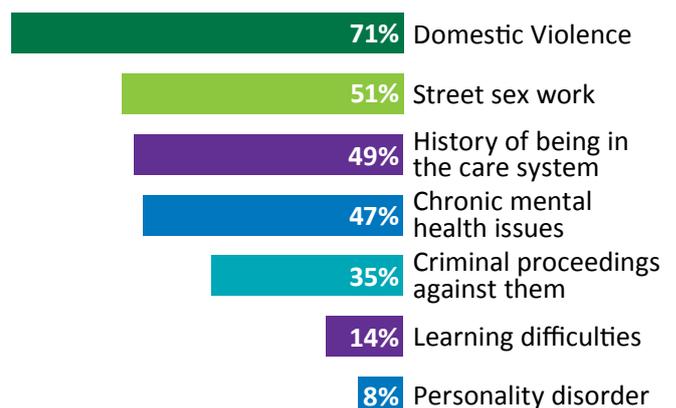
- The women have complex issues, can be challenging and often under prioritised by services once they are no longer responsible for a child.
- Whilst this group present with complex and often high needs, they often do not fit the referral criteria.
- The women may have built up hostility and mistrust towards different services that have worked with them and engagement can be problematic.
- The trauma of loss and ensuing grief is a substantial barrier to these women moving forward positively.
- The emotional trauma of loss has not been appropriately or effectively addressed.
- The women require long term, very intensive and systemic support that is not typically available through existing universal or specialist services, for this reason, this group often 'slip through the net'.

### Age of women



Hackney Feasibility Study 2013

### Presenting social issues



Hackney Feasibility Study 2013

# How Pause works

## The integrated model

**Pause** is an innovative, dynamic and creative approach designed to address the problems of women who have had, or are at risk of having multiple children taken into care and to ensure better outcomes of children in the future by intervening in this destructive cycle.

It offers an intense programme of therapeutic, practical and behavioural support through an integrated and systemic model. Each woman has a bespoke programme designed around their needs looking at the various elements of their system. *The diagram below explains the key elements of the Integrated Model:*



## A different way of working

**Pause** aims to break this cycle by intervening at a point when the women have no children in their care and offers them a chance to take a pause from the usual periods of chaos, anger and reaction to care proceedings in order to be supported to reflect and develop new skills and responses. **Pause** is different in that it does not define the women in relation to any one presenting issue e.g. substance misuse or criminal justice issues, or to others, but instead helps them to focus on themselves with the

purpose of supporting them to take control of their lives. To do this they are required to take Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) during the intervention, thereby creating a space to pause, reflect, learn and aspire.

In the future we believe that it also has the potential to be used as a wholly preventative solution rather than a reactive one (e.g. prior to any birth of any children for women who fit the profile).

# The Pause effect

What Pause does			What Pause does not do
Requires the women to take Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive	Helps build resilience and self esteem	Offers bespoke education/career plan	Work with women to get their children back
Models how to navigate every day systems and bureaucracy	Helps build healthy boundaries	Helps women learn ways to avoid adversarial interactions	Offer parenting support or parenting classes
Works closely with partners and others in their system	Reflects on responsibility to previous children	Addresses negative issues when ready e.g. chaotic drug use, domestic violence	Conduct parenting assessments
Supports the women into stable accommodation and helps to sustain it	Develops aspirations for the future	Supports the women to reflect on the past and face trauma	Rescue women and run their lives for them

## The financial benefits

### Without Pause

Projected Spend  
**£19,562,084**

### With Pause

Potential Cost Avoidance  
**£10,519,075**

Pause Budget  
**£9,043,009**

If we estimate that **100 women**, with a similar profile to the those currently on *Pause*, were spread over **5 sites** over a **5 year** period with no intervention, they could potentially have **264\*** children removed into care at a cost of almost **£20million**. These are primarily the costs of taking those 264\* children into care and do not account for other associated costs.

The cost to run *Pause* for these **100 women**, over the **5 sites** for the **5 year** period, would be approximately **£9million**.

Therefore the potential cost avoidance/savings is in the region of **£10million** if no children were removed into care from this cohort.

\*Data from Hackney Pause Financial Evaluation

## Some initial outcomes from Hackney Pause

There have been **no pregnancies** in the **18 month** pilot period

**10 women** supported to secure stable housing

**7 women** identified and supported into mental health services

**8 supported** into the Domestic Violence team

**5 women** supported to pursue volunteer work

**2 started** part time work

**3 received** support to work on a CV

**1 started** a business plan with the Prince's Trust

**8 women** supported into literacy, numeracy and ICT assessments

**4 women** have re-engaged in letter box contact with existing children

**12 women** have been given one-to-one support post-permanency

Pause  
4th Floor HLT  
1 Reading Lane  
London  
E8 1GQ  
020 8820 7251  
[www.pause.org.uk](http://www.pause.org.uk)