



HM Government

Violence Against Women and Girls Newsletter

March 2015

Contents

Ministerial foreword by the Minister of State for Crime Prevention.....	3
Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation (FGM)	5
Sharing best practice on tackling FGM with European partners	5
Violence Against Women and Girls Communications Insight Pack.....	5
This is Abuse	6
New Independent Inquiry Into Child Sexual Abuse	6
Funding for victims of child and sexual abuse.....	7
National Conference on Rape Investigations and Prosecutions	7
Domestic Abuse Guidance to Prosecutors Updated	8
Public Health England - guidance for faith leaders on domestic abuse	9
Training Resource For Mental Health Staff on Routine Enquiry into Violence and Abuse.....	10
Department for International Development	10
Accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes work.....	11
From Caada to SafeLives	14
Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance	15
White Ribbon Campaign	16
NSPCC Share Aware campaign to help parents keep their children safe online ..	18
NSPCC – The change in the law on sexual communication with a child	18
Transforming Lives – reducing women’s imprisonment	19
‘Play Pause Stop’ - Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support	20
Programme of Research on Violence in Diverse Domestic Environments (PROVIDE)	21
New legal briefing to ensure women students safety, by the End Violence against Women Coalition.....	22
Woman’s Aid.....	23

Ministerial foreword by the Minister of State for Crime Prevention



Welcome to the Violence Against Women and Girls Newsletter for March 2015, which we are publishing to coincide with International Women's Day.

I am delighted to be working alongside the Home Secretary once again as we now take stock of our progress towards our vision to end violence against women and girls. In November 2010, we set out our strategy to achieve this ambitious vision. Our key themes of prevention, provision of good quality services, improved partnership working, better justice outcomes and risk reduction remain as relevant today as when we first agreed our approach. We published our first "Call to end violence against women and girls: Action Plan" in March 2011, with updated Action Plans in each subsequent year, and to mark International Women's Day, this Coalition Government is publishing our Progress Report on the actions we have taken to reduce violence against women and girls.

I am proud of our achievements since the beginning of this Parliament in tackling all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), both in the UK and overseas. Our approach has supported a fundamental shift in attitudes with an improved awareness of VAWG and a growing understanding that all forms of gender based violence are unacceptable – and are never the fault of the victim.

I strongly believe that the broader work that the UK has done to address violence against women and girls overseas has set a high threshold for engagement and action which must be continued by any future government. During my time as Cross-Whitehall Ministerial Champion on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas, I have met with women and girls who have experienced the most devastating human rights abuses. The UK has played a significant role in pushing hidden, sensitive and neglected issues into the spotlight, not only Female Genital Mutilation, but also sexual violence in conflict and the need to address violence against women and girls in humanitarian emergencies.

In this newsletter I am pleased to see articles from the Crown Prosecution Service on their first national conference on Rape Investigations and Prosecutions and on their updated guidance on domestic abuse prosecutions. I am also pleased to see articles from the voluntary and community sector on the important work they do to support the survivors of violence against women and girls. We have provided £40 million in stable funding to critical frontline services, and supported VAWG through a number of additional funding streams across Government.

There is more to do to make women and girls safe and to ensure they are able to make a full contribution to their family lives and wider society, and I am committed to working with partners to do all we can to end violence against women and girls.

Together, we can make a difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Featherstone', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rt. Hon Lynne Featherstone MP
Minister of State for Crime Prevention

Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation (FGM)

On 12 February the Home Office announced that front line professionals will have a [mandatory duty](#) to report cases of female genital mutilation (FGM).

The Government has tabled amendments to the Serious Crime Bill to ensure the new duty is legislated for ahead of the dissolution of Parliament. The government has also included a measure to provide multi-agency statutory guidance for front line professionals.

The move follows a public [consultation](#) which sought views from a wide range of professionals, community groups, survivors and law enforcement on how a mandatory reporting duty could work and who it should apply to.

Sharing best practice on tackling FGM with European partners

On 5 February the Home Office hosted a European Learning Forum on Tackling FGM. The event was attended by representatives from European governments, non-governmental organisations, UK community organisations, police and healthcare professionals.

Attendees learnt about different approaches to tackling FGM and identified examples of good practice that will help inform government policies on FGM across Europe.

For more information about the Government's work on FGM, please contact the FGM Unit at fgmenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Violence Against Women and Girls Communications Insight Pack

We have updated the Communications Insight Pack which has been developed to provide partners with key insights into violence against women and girls (VAWG) which can help to inform local communications activities.

The pack covers a wide range of VAWG areas and includes key national statistics, background information on policy, government and partner campaigns which tackle VAWG. It also signposts other useful research and how to access various free support materials which are currently available to partners. The pack will be updated on a regular basis as new statistics and campaigns become available. The pack is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/violence-against-women-and-girls-communications-insight-pack>

We would like to hear what you think about this pack, any comments you provide will be used to evaluate the pack to inform future updates. Once you have read the pack you can access the online survey to let us know your views via this link

<http://www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/s/115218PQBRR>

This is Abuse

Following feedback from partners we have updated the 'This is Abuse' discussion guide to include two new sections on 'girls and gangs' and 'sexting (nude selfies)'. The discussion guide, originally published in December 2013, was developed for professionals and sets out lesson plans using the 'This is Abuse' support materials to facilitate discussions with young people on relationship abuse and consent. The PSHE Association quality assured guide and it is disseminated to teachers but is also useful for other practitioners who work with young people. Working with CEOP new sections on 'sexting' have been using their film 'Exposed' to help facilitate discussions. The University of Bedfordshire have also given permission to include three of the films they have developed on 'girls and gangs' to help facilitate discussions with young people on this specific issue. The guide also provides further information for facilitators on pornography as well as information on the issue of abuse within LGBT relationships following contributions provided by the Government Equalities Office (GEO).

The 'This is Abuse' website has also been updated to include more information for teenagers who are worried about abusive relationships.

Details on how to access all the support materials are on GOV.UK

New Independent Inquiry Into Child Sexual Abuse

Announced on 4 February by the Home Secretary, a new independent inquiry into child sexual abuse will be chaired by Justice Lowell Goddard. Justice Goddard has absolute independence from the executive, a proven track record of holding state and non-state institutions to account, and forensic skills necessary to digest and analyse vast quantities of evidence. She is a judge with a longstanding commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, both in New Zealand and within the United Nations system. A new panel will be formed and will have powers to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence by institutions and individuals. <https://childsexualabuseinquiry.independent.gov.uk/>

Funding for victims of child and sexual abuse

The Home Office has established two new funds to support victims of child and sexual abuse across England and Wales which will be overseen by Stephen Bett, Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner:-

- The Child Abuse Inquiry Support Fund of £2m for those organisations who have experienced an increase in demand as a direct result of the Inquiry.
- The Child and Adult Victims of Sexual Abuse Support Fund of £2.85m to help meet increased service demand.

The fund closed for bids on 2 March 2015 and these are now being reviewed.

National Conference on Rape Investigations and Prosecutions Crown Prosecution Service

Consent was on the top of the agenda at the first National CPS/Police Rape Conference on Rape Investigations and Prosecutions held on Wednesday 28 January 2015 because it is vital that the public, police, and prosecutors understand this area of law. More than one hundred police and prosecutors attended the conference to discuss the issues and hurdles facing them when dealing with rape cases.

The CPS has created toolkits for prosecuting solicitors and in-house barristers on dealing with the issue both before and at trial. The new documents highlight that context is all-important to the consideration of freedom and capacity to choose and questioning this needs very careful consideration.

Under s74 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, consent was redefined in law:

- Someone consents if s/he agrees by choice and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.
- Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, or with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.

In investigating the suspect, it must be established what steps, if any, the suspect took to obtain the complainant's consent and the prosecution must prove that the suspect did not have a reasonable belief that the complainant was consenting.

The CPS must consider issues of consent in rape cases when applying the two stages of the Code for Crown Prosecutors' Full Code Test: (i) the evidential stage; followed by (ii) the public interest stage.

A public facing leaflet document called 'What is Consent?' is available on the CPS website [here](#).

To further support improved investigations and prosecutions a Joint Protocol on the Investigation and Prosecution of Allegations of Rape (available [here](#)) came into effect on Thursday 8 January 2015.

This work forms part of a CPS/Police National Rape Action Plan available [here](#).

Domestic Abuse Guidance to Prosecutors Updated Crown Prosecution Service

New guidance on handling cases of domestic abuse has been published, setting out handling on all aspects of domestic abuse offending. The key changes are:

- advice for prosecutors following the change in domestic violence definition and guidance around coercive and controlling behaviours through committing clear offences without necessarily carrying out a physical assault.
- guidance to prosecutors on casework improvements to enhance casework quality including the Joint CPS-Police Domestic Violence Evidence Checklist; detailed guidance around victim reluctance and witnesses summoning; and issues relating to deceased victims.
- advice relating to specific groups of people including children of adult victims, teenagers in abusive relationships and teenagers in gangs. Further detailed advice covers older victims; victims from minority ethnic communities; immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers; and individuals involved in prostitution. It also reminds prosecutors that domestic abuse occurs in all communities and to both sexes.

The updated legal guidance is available [here](#).

Public Health England - guidance for faith leaders on domestic abuse

Public Health England has launched guidance for faith leaders on domestic abuse. This guidance provides knowledge and support to faith leaders on how to respond to domestic abuse within their faith communities.

This guidance has been commissioned by Public Health England and developed by [Faith Action](#). This guidance is meant to complement [AVA's toolkit for faith leaders, faith organisations and members of faith communities](#) by providing the perspectives of faith leaders themselves. Faith Action is a network of faith-based and community organisations serving their communities by delivering public services. Faith is often a resource, a place of support, solace, reflection, refuge and renewal for many. Faith leaders are trusted and respected within their community and have a wide range of experience providing care, counselling, support to people experiencing distress.

However, as domestic abuse occurs across all incomes, ethnicities and faiths in England, domestic abuse may be occurring within each faith community. Faith leaders have strong potential to respond to the domestic abuse occurring within their communities. This guidance builds upon the resources and strengths of faith leaders. Faith leaders are provided with knowledge about domestic abuse, how to ask about it safely, how to respond supportively and how to engage with local support services. Faith leaders may be able to identify and support people who are experiencing domestic abuse who would not access support elsewhere. Faith leaders may also raise awareness within their communities to challenge and prevent domestic abuse.

Faith Action was able to draw upon its network of faith leaders to create guidance that is relevant, respected, religiously and theologically sound. Various perspectives from different faith communities were built upon. There can be uncertainty on how to respond, a tension between a faith-based focus on marriage, family and community and how to respond to domestic abuse. There can also be a misuse and misinterpretation of faith-based teachings to justify abuse. This guidance responds by providing various examples of religious texts and interpretations that clearly forbid abuse and emphasize peace, compassion and forgiveness.

In using this guidance, faith leaders raise awareness about domestic abuse within their communities and help support people experiencing domestic abuse.

Disability and Domestic abuse: Risks, impacts and responses

Public Health England is also launching a topic overview titled Disability and Domestic abuse: Risks, impacts and responses, with the support of Women's Aid. Disabled people experience twice the rates of domestic abuse than the general population and also experience barriers when accessing support services. This topic overview draws together some of the existing information on prevalence, risk factors and impacts of domestic abuse on disabled people. The topic overview then discusses possible prevention strategies and responses – both by domestic abuse

services and health and social care. This topic overview aims to improve understanding of the complexities of disabled peoples' experiences of domestic abuse, and to promote consideration of these complexities within the public health system. This topic overview also aims to support local and national action, to prompt a response across local authorities, health and social care services, clinical commissioners, domestic abuse services, disability services, police and crime commissioners and the wider public health system.

Training Resource For Mental Health Staff on Routine Enquiry into Violence and Abuse

Over half of inpatients in mental health have experienced some form of violence or abuse in their lives, which they believe to be related to their condition but is seldom acknowledged. Routine enquiry in mental health care has been a DH policy since 2006. This online training course for trainers incorporates the evidence base from DH policy research on responding to violence and abuse. Used locally, it introduces mental health practitioners to the practice of routinely and sensitively having conversations during mental health assessments about client whether clients have experienced violence or abuse at any point in their lives so that they may be provided with a trauma-focused approach to their care and supported Appropriately.

For more information visit:

<http://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/domestic-violence-and-abuse/trainer-resources/>

Department for International Development

International work to address VAWG

In February 2015, the UK hosted a conference on Mobilising Faith Communities to End Sexual Violence. The event was hosted by the Rt Hon William Hague, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie. DFID PUS Baroness Northover hosted the closing session of the conference, in which faith leaders announced a high level declaration on addressing violence against women and girls, with recommendations and actions for faith leaders, governments and humanitarian agencies.

On 6 March, the International Development Secretary, Justine Greening, gave a keynote speech at an International Activism Event, part of the [Women of the World Festival \(WOW\)](#), 2015. WOW is a global festival which launched in 2011 to coincide with the centenary of International Women's Day. It celebrates the achievements of women and girls and looks at the obstacles they face across the world. The SoS highlighted the UK's leadership on female genital mutilation (FGM) and Child Early

and Forced Marriage (CEFM) and made a call to action for men and boys to join the movement.

This month, Baroness Northover will attend the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women ([CSW59](#)). This is an important opportunity to progress the UK's key international priorities for girls and women, including Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict (PSVI), addressing social norms, women's economic empowerment, education and VAWG. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the [Beijing Platform for Action](#) (BPfA). The UK stands committed to the objectives that were laid out in the BPfA and is calling for a strong and explicit commitment to women and girls in the post-2015 sustainable development framework.

What Works to Prevent VAWG?

DFID recently launched the third component of the [What Works to Prevent Violence](#) programme, to analyse the economic and social costs of VAWG in Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan. This is led by the National University of Ireland (Galway), the International Centre for Research on Women, and Ipsos-MORI. It will calculate the cost of the loss of productivity, out-of-pocket expenditures, and foregone income due to domestic violence as well as the social impacts of VAWG on community cohesion and wellbeing. The three-year research project is part of DFID's flagship £25 million/5 year What Works programme which is also funding [innovative grants and operations research/impact evaluations of programmes in over 14 countries](#).

VAWG Helpdesk

DFID have contracted Social Development Direct to manage a [VAWG Helpdesk](#), a demand-led research and advice service available to all teams working on VAWG issues across HMG. A helpdesk team of experts respond to short-term queries or undertake more detailed country assignments, including evidence reviews on specific VAWG issues and support to VAWG programmes. Details of the services offered are available from Social development Direct at enquiries@VAWGHelpdesk.org.uk/ +44 (0)207 654 2019.

Accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes work

Respect, the UK organisation for work with domestic violence perpetrators, is delighted to welcome the publication of the results of the Mirabal research, a five year project led by Professors Liz Kelly and Nicole Westmarland, which shows:

The vast majority of men who abuse their partners stop their physical and sexual violence if they attend a Respect accredited domestic violence perpetrator programme

- Before attending a programme a third of men made women do something sexual they did not want to do but none did so after taking part in the programme (30% to zero).
- Cases of the men using a weapon against their partner reduced from 29% to zero.
- Far fewer women reported being physically injured after the programme, with 61% before compared to 2% after.
- Over half of the women reported feeling 'very safe' after the programme, compared to less than one in ten before the programme (51% compared to 8%), with those feeling 'not safe at all' reducing from 32% to 6%.

Findings were presented at special conferences at the London Metropolitan University on 13 January and at the University of Durham on 15 January. The researchers found that the process of group work interventions which the men participated in was a vital part of them making sustained changes in their behaviour:

"It was clear that this [change] was not a process that involves a 'lightbulb' moment but rather a series of sparks – different for each man – that eventually combine".

One of the men in the study, speaking after the programme, said:

"I don't think there was a moment... during the programme they all say like the penny drops, as it were, all of a sudden this light-bulb moment and there never is... it's like a little fairground machine where you put a coin in and it bounces off various little pegs and it's only working its way to the bottom and the programme is like that... I know that I will be remembering it when I'm in my 70s and my 80s ... But it's never like this light-bulb moment. I always say it's like this little coin that you drop in and it bounces around for ages and it sort of argues with yourself and all of a sudden dink it's in the bottom before you know it." [KIERAN, TIME 2]

The research supports the value of Respect accreditation, which ensures that partners and ex-partners receive integrated support and that risk management takes place; vital for all women but particularly to ensure safety for those whose partners do not stop their violence and abuse.

Home Secretary, The Rt Hon. Theresa May, MP, said: "In order to end violence against women and girls and prevent perpetrators becoming repeat offenders, we must understand and address the root causes of violent and abusive behaviour. This research provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of domestic violence perpetrator programmes.

"Domestic violence can shatter the lives of victims and the government is committed to putting a stop this hideous crime."

Jo Todd, Respect CEO, said: “We’ve always been confident that our members’ services and our accreditation standard are effective in increasing the safety of women and children. It’s fantastic news that large scale independent research confirms this. Everyone can have confidence that Respect accredited Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes give the best possible chance for safety and lasting change and that these services should be part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence”.

Monica Tuohy, chair of Respect said: as chair of Respect I am really pleased to welcome the findings of this research. It’s vital that the criminal and civil justice systems continue to do their jobs and improve what they do to protect victims and children but it’s also vital that perpetrators are held to account and offered a chance to change where possible. Perpetrators go on from one victim to the next – we need to stop this, and the Mirabal research shows that a well-run Respect accredited programme has a unique contribution to make to ending domestic violence.

Polly Neate, CEO of Women’s Aid, said: “We welcome the evidence that for some men, Respect accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes can help reduce their coercive and violent behaviour as part of a package of specialist support for women and children experiencing abuse. This research shows that one of the reasons perpetrators are abusive is because they have unhealthy ideas of masculinity and gender roles, and these take time and significant work to challenge. We urge commissioners to consider this evidence carefully and ensure high-quality specialist services for perpetrators as well as for women and children are properly funded.”

Vera Baird QC, Police & Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and former Solicitor General, said: “As Police & Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, we have worked hard to tackle domestic violence and have introduced a number of innovative ideas, such as domestic violence workplace policy and domestic violence champions. Domestic violence affects women, men and children – we will continue to take a pro-active stance in tackling domestic violence in Northumbria. It is vital that we always have a coordinated community response. The Mirabal research gives commissioners and policy-makers confidence that perpetrators programmes work and the Respect accreditation system forms an effective quality assurance system”

Ben Jamal, CEO of DVIP, one of the programmes involved in the research, said: “DVIP’s internal evaluations have always told us that violence prevention programmes working alongside robust partner support services increase the safety of women and children. In the current climate, where resources are tight, external agencies, particularly those funding projects require the highest standards of evidence. This independent research, which is the most extensive undertaken in the field in the UK, should provide an important benchmark. We have good evidence that Respect accredited programmes work. The challenge now is to see how we can extend the spread of the work and further improve outcomes by embedding programmes within the wider coordinated response.”

From Caada to SafeLives

SafeLives is a national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse. Previously called Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (Caada), we chose our new name because we're here for one simple reason: to make sure all families are safe. Our experts find out what works to stop domestic abuse. Then we do everything we can to make sure families everywhere benefit.

On the new strategy – how does this work?

We are proud of the difference that our work has made in our ten years. Improving help for high-risk victims will always be part of SafeLives' work. But we have to change how the whole system deals with domestic violence. So we are changing what we do.

SafeLives is about making sure all families become safe, and stay safe in the long-term. And that will mean a transformation of the whole system. So, alongside our work to help every high-risk victim, we are starting a new, wider programme. It will look at how we find every family where there is abuse as quickly as possible, and get them the right help fast. We'll work out how to help all victims, at all levels of risk, and their children too. And we will look at how to change perpetrators' behaviour and stop repeated abuse.

Getting it right first time

SafeLives has published a new report "Getting it right first time" which shows that victims suffer domestic violence on average for nearly 3 years before getting the help they need – and some will suffer more than 50 incidents in that time. Worryingly, more than 85% of victims are in contact with professionals - on average five times – in the year before they get effective help. And almost a quarter of victims at high risk of harm go to an A&E department because of their injuries – some as many as 15 times.

Find out more

To learn more about SafeLives and its work, visit safelives.org.uk or contact info@safelives.org.uk

To read the latest report "Getting it right first time", visit www.safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/getting-it-right-first-time

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

A national alliance formed to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse, has engaged over 50 housing providers since its launch in September 2014.

The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) brings together the expertise of London based housing association Peabody, social business Gentoo Group, and charity Standing Together against Domestic Violence, who share a longstanding commitment to tackling domestic abuse, partnership working and sharing best practice.

More than a million women are subjected to abuse in the home every year. Housing staff can be the friendly, familiar face offering the first step of support towards safety. Through training, education and a partnership approach, they can spot the signs of at a much earlier stage; prevent the situation from spiralling out of control and ultimately save lives.

DAHA have produced an accreditation process which examines service delivery nationally and brings together best practice. The process allows organisations to assess existing practice and implement an improvement plan.

Why?

- Improves staff confidence in identifying and dealing with domestic abuse
- Standardises processes so residents get the right response every time
- Increases staff skills and their interaction with local initiatives, by adopting industry-standard referral tools
- Reduces costs to organisations, from domestic abuse-related repairs, turnover of housing stock and rent arrears
- Reduces costs to the public purse in relation to domestic abuse via earlier interventions by housing providers

To increase awareness, DAHA is working closely with local councils and housing providers across the UK, and have engaged with professionals at conferences and workshops.

To date there have been 50 expressions of interest from housing providers. DAHA is currently following up with these organisations with a view to carrying out initial assessments on their performance and any gaps in their service.

Over five million people live in council and housing association homes in England and Wales. Both governments recognise and support the key role of housing, in ensuring a co-ordinated, multi-agency community response to domestic abuse.

For more information on DAHA contact:

Gudrun Burnet, Senior Business Partner, Peabody

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E: gudrun.burnet@peabody.org.uk

Kelly Henderson, Business Manager (Domestic Abuse) Gentoo Group

T: 0191 525 5974

E: Kelly.Henderson@gentoogroup.com

You can follow @DAHAlliance on Twitter.

White Ribbon Campaign

Sports Work

Involvement through sports development has been very busy.

Nottingham versus Worcester Rugby Union was designated a White Ribbon Match. As well as speaking at half time to the whole crowd, and to the VIP marquee before the game, the match programme cover featured articles about White Ribbon by the Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council and the Chairman of the Rugby Club. Nottingham Rugby Club shirt has a large white ribbon on the front of their shirts the whole season.



Hull City Council launched their white ribbon award in front of a packed house of 10,000 at Hull FC, 20 new Ambassadors including the Chief Executive of the Humberside and East Yorkshire NHS Trust, and the President of Hull Students Union attended.

In Wales at Cardiff Arms Park the big international took place- Welsh Assembly v Commons and Lords with all the players sporting a large white ribbon. The new

Welsh Assembly team strip features a white ribbon logo on the sleeve. The Sports Campaign also embraces Football and Cricket.

Ambassadors

There are now 120 White Ribbon Ambassadors spread across the UK, ranging from students to Company Directors, Lecturers to Professional sportsmen. All are required to undertake e-learning modules and attend group training meetings. There is a dedicated facebook page and website pages to support them. The number of pledgers on the website counter has now passed 20,000 and nearly 7,000 following @menantiviolence, our very active twitter feed. West Yorkshire PCC has funded a post for a 1 day a week Ambassador support worker

DaVey, the new White Ribbon Mascot has already taken part in events at Housing Associations, Sports clubs and Family fun days and taken part in a Mascot race. He has proved very photogenic and popular with press officers.

E-learning

Six short e-learning modules are available on the White Ribbon campaign [website](#).

The Secretary of State for Wales, with White Ribbon Mascot and Ikram Butt, White Ribbon Sports Campaign Manager at Cardiff Arms Park



NSPCC Share Aware campaign to help parents keep their children safe online

In January, the NSPCC launched [Share Aware](#) – a public education campaign to help parents keep their children as safe as possible when they are socialising online. It provides parents, particularly of those aged 8-12, with the tools to help them feel confident talking to their children about staying safe online.

As part of the campaign, the NSPCC created a [Parent's Guide to Social Networking](#) – an overview of the social sites, apps and games used by young people. The guide was developed from the views of 1,850 young people and the experiences of over 500 Mumsnet parents, who tested the most popular sites against criteria such as reporting mechanisms, privacy and prevalence of inappropriate content.

We often hear that parents feel overwhelmed by the speed of change of the internet and the purpose of the [guide](#) is to provide them with the information they need on the different sites and apps that their children are using. It encourages parents to pay more attention to what their child is doing online, help them form their own views about the appropriateness of popular sites and gives confidence to facilitate balanced and informed conversations to help children stay safe.

To further support parents there is also a downloadable ['Parents' guide to being Share Aware'](#), which gives parents simple steps on how to talk to their children about safe sharing online, including what to share and what not to share, with whom and on what sort of sites, as well as information on what to do if your child overshares.

The campaign also includes two animations, [I Saw Your Willy](#) and [Lucy And The Boy](#), engaging films with a serious message. They follow the stories of two children who share too much about themselves online. Both films contain the simple message that although children are taught it's good to share, this is not always the case online.

Further information about the campaign and all resources can be found at www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware

NSPCC – The change in the law on sexual communication with a child

As you may already be aware, in October 2014 the NSPCC launched a campaign calling for a change in the law, to strengthen provisions to protect children online. From the calls we get to ChildLine from young people, we know that they are experiencing various types of abuse online, including sexual grooming by adults.

Parents tell us that keeping their children safe online is a key concern for the welfare of their child.

Offenders have kept up with changes in technology, using it to harm children online, but legislation has not. The NSPCC is concerned that there is currently inadequate protection for children from adults who send sexual material to them (primarily over the internet). The current law in this area is fragmented and confused, making it hard for police to deal with sexual messaging appropriately and meaning vital opportunities to stop abusers grooming young people online are being missed.

The NSPCC was pleased that, in December, the Prime Minister announced his intention to legislate to make it always illegal for an adult to send a sexual communication to a child. The Government has now amended the Serious Crime Act 2015 to make it an offence for an adult to send a sexual communication to a child for the purpose of sexual gratification. The Act received Royal Assent on March 3.

Transforming Lives – reducing women’s imprisonment

In December 2014 the findings of the inquiry into criminal justice system’s response to women, conducted by Soroptimist UK in partnership with the Prison Reform Trust, were published and presented to the Rt. Hon Simon Hughes MP, the Justice Minister with responsibility for female offenders in England and Wales, at a meeting of the Advisory Board on Female Offenders. Dr Kay Richmond, Chair of the Soroptimists International UK Programme Action Committee, co-presenting, said “Preventing violence against women has been at the core of Soroptimist project work for many years and having learnt that it is so often an underlying factor in women’s offending we welcomed the opportunity to provide a voice for women who, very often, are victims themselves.”

[The report](#) *Transforming Lives – Reducing Women’s Imprisonment* distils a wealth of information gathered by Soroptimists across the four nations of the UK. It paints a mixed picture, profiling some excellent local initiatives whilst mapping overall patchy provision of services for vulnerable women. Recommendations include improved police training, protocols and diversionary measures that recognise the impact of violent and coercive relationships on women’s offending. Further information, the report and its Executive Summary can be found [here](#). The Prison Reform Trust has also responded to the [College of Policing consultation](#) on the national policing guidance on investigating and responding to domestic abuse, recommending that there be improved recognition of domestic abuse as a driver to women’s offending, such that police officers need to be aware when arresting women that they may need to be given the opportunity to disclose abuse and referred to support services.

For further information about the Prison Reform Trust's programme to reduce women's offending please contact jenny.earle@prisonreformtrust.org.uk

'Play Pause Stop' - Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support



Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (SARSAS) have launched a consent campaign called 'Play Pause Stop' that intends to get people talking about enthusiastic sexual consent to reduce rape and sexual assault incidents. Pause Play Stop aims to inform all - though it has started with a social media campaign focusing on students in its first phase.

The drive by SARSAS follows official figures that report almost a third increase of reported rape cases in the area, considerable disquiet around the conduct of some male university students, and a dramatic surge in calls to the SARSAS support service.

Activity in the lead up to the launch began in late November, where Pause Play Stop was marketed as 'The South West's newest movement' to suggest the campaign as a new club night. The Twitter profile @PausePlayStopUK provided content about local events and cultural activities, and flyers with the campaign logo minus the words 'sexual consent' were distributed with nightclub flyers.

Additional online activity followed when people took to Twitter with pictures of themselves holding a piece of paper with the hashtag #IGetConsent and campaign materials have been circulated around local universities and popular student venues.

The campaign materials include flyers that detail what healthy consent looks and sounds like and a website: <http://pauseplaystop.org.uk/>. The campaign will now start working on materials to be delivered in schools and colleges to young adults.

Programme of Research on Violence in Diverse Domestic Environments (PROVIDE)

The Programme of Research on Violence in Diverse Domestic Environments (PROVIDE) has been a 5-year programme of research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), under their Programme Grants for Applied Research scheme (RP-PG-0108-10084). On Wednesday 19th November 2014, the PROVIDE Conference allowed delegates an opportunity to hear about and discuss the findings and impact of PROVIDE and other health-related gender violence research at the partner institutions, putting research into the context of NICE guidance and the commissioning of domestic violence services nationally. The title of the day encapsulated the main context of the conference, “Domestic Violence and Health: What does it mean for you and your sector?” The organisers had taken a strategic approach to delegate invitation, which followed a stakeholder mapping exercise in order to increase reach so that delegates were representative across sectors engaged with domestic violence and included health care professionals (including GPs), DV advocacy services, commissioners (NHS and local authority), other third sector agencies, researchers and survivors of abuse. This mix ensured lively discussion and debate.

For further information on the PROVIDE Conference and associated output from the Programme, please visit:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/social-community-medicine/projects/provide/evidence-into-practice/provide-conference/>

PROVIDE was a collaborative programme of research involving researchers at University of Bristol, Kings College London, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Bristol City Council, Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group (formerly Avon Primary Care Trust), DVTraining Ltd, Next Link, Respect and Cardiff Women’s Aid.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health.

New legal briefing to ensure women students safety, by the End Violence against Women Coalition

In light of alarming levels of sexual violence against women at universities and colleges, the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Coalition has published a new [legal briefing](#) showing that UK institutions are legally obliged to protect women students from sexual assault and other forms of violence against women - and highlighting that many are likely to be in breach of their obligations.

Authored by leading public lawyer Louise Whitfield, the briefing sets out the legal obligations for universities and colleges to prevent violence against women under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Human Rights Act. It also finds that universities and colleges may be in breach of the law and open to challenge if, for example, they fail to investigate a report of rape and regard it as a purely external police matter; or they cannot demonstrate that they took women's equality and safety into account when developing policy on accommodation, governance for student societies, campus security and more.

This February, EVAW sent the briefing to Business Secretary Vince Cable who has responsibility for universities. We are delighted that he responded by agreeing to a meeting, saying: "Sexual assault is a horrific crime and has no place in our educational institutions. The Government takes this matter very seriously and I look forward to our meeting to discuss how government can further support this agenda."

We are also meeting with Association of Colleges which represents further education colleges to discuss the issues, and are encouraging students and university staff to take the matter up directly with their Vice Chancellors or Principals.

For more information about the EVAW Coalition and to download our new briefing, visit: <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/>

Woman's Aid

Routes to Change

Women's Aid is developing a cross sector model that will open up routes to change for service users and service providers. We have long campaigned for the survivor's voice and experience to be at the heart of professional responses to domestic violence and abuse. We do not feel survivors' voices are reflected in current service models. At Women's Aid we believe that an important reason why professional and agency responses are inconsistent (and therefore ineffective) is because of the complexity of women's responses to domestic violence and abuse. Authorities and agencies have boundaries – both geographic and organisational – whereas women and children have needs that lead them both to cross geographic boundaries and access support, advice and assistance beyond the boundaries of any single agency. Therefore, an effective overall response requires a holistic understanding of women's needs, strengths and coping strategies, and must incorporate agencies' specific, specialist and boundaried responses within a wider frame.

The voices of women and their children currently navigating their way from abuse to safety, and the voices of survivors who have made that journey, are central to developing and maintaining an effective overall response. The model being developed focuses on the journeys women and children make – the different stages and steps taken.

There needs to be a general understanding of how such journeys can be enabled or blocked, facilitated or stalled, made more or less necessary, fragmented, dangerous and incomplete by agency responses. Responses to domestic violence have a responsibility to allow, enable and assist women to continue to manage their own lives and to empower them to make the choices that will facilitate change. Key interactions and interventions can make or break this journey.

Women's Aid is working with a number of key stakeholders in the development of this new model and the processes and tools to support its implementation. We consulting widely with survivors and partners from across sectors. If you wish to learn more about this work please follow this link:

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001001400130011§ionTitle=Routes+to+Change>

Women's aid training

The Women's Aid National Training Centre continue to run the Award and Certificate in Tackling and Preventing Domestic/Sexual Violence/ Abuse and for the first time the Diploma.

The Centre also offers a number of CPD courses:

- Courses for Facilitators of support groups for adult and child survivors of domestic abuse including Power to Change, Helping Hands and You & Me Mum (Bursaries available for members!)
- Domestic Abuse and Teenage Relationships

- Supporting Survivors from the European economic area
- McKenzie Friend
- Domestic Abuse and the Impact on Children and Young People.

The Centre also offers Bespoke Training and half day workshops on Clare's Law and Coercive Control. For further information please visit

<http://www.nationaltrainingcentre.org.uk/>

The Home Office endorses the Women's Aid National Certificate and Diploma in Tackling and Preventing Domestic Violence that is run through the National Open College Network (NOCN), as suitable for the IDVA role.

Next date and Location for all our qualifications:

Award- (Bursaries available for members!)

Manchester

Unit 1 - 28th & 29th January 2015

Unit 2- 10th & 11th February 2015

Unit 3- 11th & 12th March 2015

Certificate-

London

Unit 1- 14th – 16th April 2015

Unit 2- 12th-13th May 2015

Unit 3- 9th-11th June 2015

Unit 4- 7th& 8th July 2015

Diploma-

Bristol

Unit1 - 23rd & 24th September 2015 (Mental Health)

Unit 2- 20th & 21st October 2015 (Equality & Diversity)

Unit 3- 11th November 2015 (Feminist Principles)

More information on these courses and all of the other courses we run can be found on our website www.nationaltrainingcentre.org.uk

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