



HM Government

# TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

The safety of women and girls  
across the country is  
**very important for everyone.**

Easy read version

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[www.building-bridges-training.org](http://www.building-bridges-training.org)

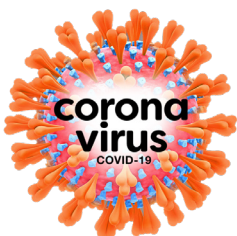


## Introduction



Crimes of violence against women and girls include **rape** and other **sexual offences**. **Stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour-based' abuse** (including **female genital mutilation, forced marriage** and **'honour' killings**), **'revenge porn', 'upskirting'** and many others.

**There is a dictionary at the end of this report to explain what these crimes are.**



There have been more reports of domestic abuse because of COVID-19.



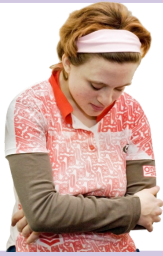
In 2021 there were some women killed by violent men.  
These stories were in the news.

**everyone's  
invited**  
everyonesinvited.uk

School girls have put their stories of sexual abuse on a website called 'Everyone's Invited'.



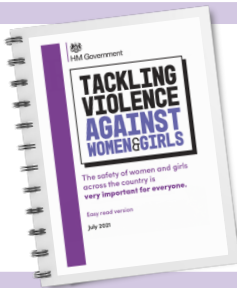
These crimes can affect women for a long time.  
It is not always easy to get help and support.



Women and girls should be safe and feel safe.  
If they don't, they can't have the same chances in life as men and boys.



The government has already done work to help stop violence against women and girls. Such as increasing the punishment for people who stalk or harass women.



This new plan is about the extra things the government will do to keep women and girls safe.



Some of the plans come from what people told the government about violence against women and girls in the surveys and group meetings earlier in 2021. They heard from 180,000 people.



There is a new Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Soon there will be a plan like this one, to help tackle domestic abuse.

## Violence against women and girls



Women in their lifetimes are more likely to be victims of violence than men.

- 1 in 5 women are victims of sexual attacks
- 1 in 4 women are victims of domestic abuse
- 1 in 5 women have been **stalked** by other people.



The effects of being a victim can last a long time. They include

- mental health problems
- physical health problems
- not doing well at school or work
- becoming homeless
- children being harmed
- not feeling safe



Not all crimes are reported to the police.



Often in **rape** cases women decide to stop the investigation before it can go to court.



More people recognise violence against women and girls now. But some victims do not recognise all crimes as abuse or a crime.



Women with disabilities are more likely to suffer abuse than non-disabled women. Women from LGBT communities are more likely to suffer abuse than straight women. Young women are more likely to be victims than older women.

## Work to stop violence against women and girls



We need to stop women and girls being victims of violence.  
We need to change how men think about women, and how they behave with them.



There are many reasons why people can be violent.



The government want people and professionals to get more education on how to treat women better.



They want young people to know how to have better relationships with women.



The government is already working to stop violence. For example all school children now get sex education.





There is a Safer Streets Fund which can pay for local changes like better street lighting.



Technology companies must do more to stop women and girls being abused online.



The government wants the legal age of marriage to go from 16 years to 18 years.



There are also plans to make trains, buses and taxis safer for women.

## New plans to stop violence against women and girls



There is a national plan to help people understand more about violence against women and girls. It will help people change their behaviour.



£3 million will be spent on finding out what can help stop violence against women and girls.



£5 million will be spent on helping women to feel safe when they go out at night.



There will be a pilot of StreetSafe. An online tool that lets people report areas where they feel unsafe, without having to give their name.



Teachers will get more support to give lessons about relationships, sex and health education.

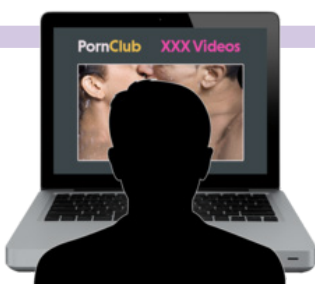
## Supporting victims



There will be more support for victims and survivors of violence and abuse.



There will be Independent Sexual and Domestic Violence Advisors to give help to victims.



There will be extra help for victims of **revenge porn**.



There will be work in colleges and universities to stop **sexual harassment** and abuse of students.



Victims who have mental health problems after surviving sexual abuse will have special help.

## Making sure people who are violent and abusive are caught and go to court



Violence against women and girls can often be a hidden crime and it can be hard to report it. The abusers use this to get away with their crimes.



In the future, more people who commit these crimes will go to court and get a sentence if they are found guilty.



People who are found guilty of **rape** will have a longer prison sentence.



There will be more programmes in prison for people who have done these crimes. This will help them to change so they won't do the crimes again when they are let out of prison.



## Making sure things change



Everyone should work together to make violence against women and girls stop. This includes the government, police and courts, teachers, health and social care workers and charities who support people.



The police will do more to protect women and make sure people who are violent or abusive are dealt with properly.



The system that checks people's records to see if they have done crimes in the past will be improved.



There will be a new transport champion, to make sure women are safer on trains and buses.



The government will get more information so they can understand violence against women and girls better.

## **Sexual offences and crimes of violence against women and girls.** What do the words mean?

### **Cyber flashing**

Sending sexual or rude photos to another person's phone to shock and embarrass them.

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### **Domestic abuse**

Controlling, bullying or violent behaviour, including sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner.

Women are usually the victims and men are the abusers.

But men can also be victims, and the abusers can be any family members.

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### **Female genital mutilation or female genital cutting**

When a young girl or teenager has part of their private parts cut off for cultural or religious reasons and not medical reasons.

It is against the law.

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### **Forced marriage**

When someone is made to marry a person they have not chosen themselves.

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### **Harassment**

Behaving in a way that frightens or upsets another person or makes them feel stupid.

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### **Honour based abuse**

Violence or threats done by someone in a person's family or community to protect the name of the family or community.

Sometimes it is a punishment for breaking the family or community's rules. It can be physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

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**Honour killings** When someone in the family or community kills a woman for breaking the rules of the family.

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**Online dating** Using the internet to help find a girlfriend or boyfriend.  
Usually the couple then meet in real life.

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**Online forum** A place on the internet where people can chat to each other by typing messages. People can use false names so no one knows who they really are. This means some people can say things they wouldn't say in real life.

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**Perpetrator** A person who commits a crime against someone else.

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**Rape** This is when a person forces someone else to have sex.  
It could be by using physical force or by frightening them.

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**Revenge porn** Sharing private rude or sexual messages, photos or videos to others to cause embarrassment. Often the photos or video were made with the person's agreement, but are shared later to upset them.

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**Sex worker** Someone who earns money by doing sexual acts.

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**Sexual offences** These are sex crimes where the person doing the crime can be a stranger, a friend, a partner or ex-partner, or even a family member. Usually women and girls are the victims.

**Sexting**

Text messages that use sexual words, photos or videos.

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**Stalking**

When someone keeps bothering someone else and won't leave them alone.  
They may keep calling them or turning up where they know the person will be.  
This can make the victim frightened and upset.

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**Upskirting**

Taking a secret photo of another person under their clothes to see their private parts or underwear.

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