



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

A consultation document for young people

Our plan to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

The Welsh Government wants Wales to be a safe place for everyone to live.

This document will tell you about the things we want to do to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We have explained the meaning of some words in this document – they are written in **blue**. These words may be explained where you first see them or at the end of this document.

When we say “we” in the document, we mean the Welsh Government and its partners.

Our partners include the police, social services, health services, local authorities (councils) and other private or voluntary organisations who provide support services.

You can visit our website for more information: **Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence**

What this document is about?

We want to make Wales a better place to live.

We want people to feel safe in their own home, where they go to school, where they work, in their communities and on the street.

We want to put an end to violence and abuse. Especially:

- **Violence against women and girls**
- **Domestic abuse**, and
- **Sexual Violence**

Violence against women and girls is violence against someone because they are a woman or a girl. It could be verbal threats, physical and/or sexual assault or rape. It can happen in their home, where they go to school, where they work or in the community.

Domestic abuse is when someone abuses another person that they are in a relationship with or have had a relationship with, they are related or closely connected to, and both people are 16 or over. Men and women can be victims of domestic abuse.

It is also domestic abuse where a child sees, hears or experiences the effects of abuse towards a parent or relative.

Sexual violence is any sexual act that is not wanted. It can include rude phone calls, being touched in a sexual way and rape. Men and women can be victims of sexual violence.

Introduction

We want to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. A lot of good work has already been done, but we want to do more, to protect more people.

We want to make sure that violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is seen as everyone's problem – not just those who experience abuse or those who abuse them.

We want to support everyone.

We know most victims are women but we will also support men who are victims.

We know most people who abuse others are men, but there are also women who abuse others.

We know that this can affect children and young people too – by being abused or them abusing others.

We want everyone involved in tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence to agree to work together on the things we suggest in this document.

We think that men must play a bigger role in telling other men that it isn't right to abuse women and girls.

When we say "violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence", we mean a lot of different things.

Sometimes, people only think about domestic abuse.

We need to make sure that we recognise the different things that count as violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

What counts as violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?

We have listed some of the things that count here, but more information is available at the end of this document.

- Sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation
- Honour based violence
- Abuse of older people
- Coercive control
- Stalking
- Harassment

What do we want to do?

We have set out six things we want to do to tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence:

- 1. Make people more aware of the problem and change their minds on what they think is ok behaviour, so it happens less.**
- 2. Make sure children and young people know what a safe and healthy relationship is and that they know abusive behaviour is always wrong.**
- 3. More work with people who abuse others – working with them to change how they behave, so they do not continue to abuse others.**
- 4. Acting to stop before it happens or doing something about it quickly if it does happen.**
- 5. Professionals (like the police, healthcare workers, teachers and social workers) are trained to provide the best support for people who experience abuse.**
- 6. People who are abused should be able to get a good support services when they need it, wherever they live in Wales.**

How will we do it?

Our plan covers the whole of Wales. We want all those involved in helping people who experience abuse to work together.

We will set up a new group (National Partnership Board) for the whole of Wales, led by a Welsh Government Minister, to make sure we do what we say we will. This group will work with local groups already in place.

Local groups see what is needed in their own areas to support people who are being – or have been – abused.

We will also set up smaller group to tackle specific things like:

- **Harassment in the street and safety in public places**
- **Harassment in the place where you work**
- **Working with those who carry out abuse**
- **Funding and development of services**
- **Awareness raising**

Street harassment – this is when someone behaves in a way that makes you feel distressed, humiliated or threatened when you're out and about.

We need to understand more about the problem so we know how best to tackle it. We will work together with those who promote community safety and with the police.

Workplace harassment – this is behaviour that makes you feel intimidated or offended at the place you work.

We will look for examples of organisations who have good things in place to prevent workplace harassment. We will learn from this.

Working with those who carry out abuse – we will challenge those who abuse others to change their behaviour and help them as they do this.

We will do this by working within the systems of police, Courts, prisons and probation services.

Promoting a change in people's attitudes so we change from blaming the victim to focusing on the men who are violent. We want more men to be supportive and tell other men it's not ok.

Sustainable commissioning – we will ensure that we fund and develop services based on needs and what works and make sure that they can focus on the services they provide.

Promoting and supporting healthy relationships through education in schools and the way we support families and vulnerable people. This helps people to know how they should be treated and treat others in a relationship.

Awareness raising – we will continue the work we already do to make sure professionals have the training they require, recognise when someone is being abused and know where to advise them to go for help.

We will also continue to do public awareness campaigns to encourage everyone to think about their behaviour – those who are abusing others, those who stand-by and do not report their concerns and those who are abused but do not report it.

Education and support for those at risk of carrying out abuse, to help them not to harm others.

Good planning – we will make sure we listen to our partners and the people who use the services. We will also make sure we know what services work best and what services are needed, by working with local partners.

National Standards – we want to ensure services are at the same standard anywhere in Wales. We will have a national set of standards that set out what a good service looks like and what the minimum level of service should be.

National Indicators – these are things we can measure to make sure we are making a difference. We will review them to make sure we are measuring the right things.

Voices of survivors – We will listen to people who are survivors of abuse in planning what we are going to do and how we are going to do it. We will also listen to people who have abused others in the past to understand what can prevent people abusing others.

Equality – To make sure we address the problem for everyone in Wales, we need to consider the impact of lots of factors. This includes looking at the needs of children, older people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, disabled people and LGBTQ+ communities.

What approach are we going to take?

The way we work to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence will be based on:

- **Everybody having a role to play – making it everyone’s business**
- **Tackling male violence**
- **Knowing more about what the problems are**
- **Equality**
- **Hearing from survivors**
- **Providing the right kind of support**
- **Trauma informed**
- **Working together**

Everybody having a role to play (a whole society approach) – bad attitudes about masculinity, blaming victims rather than the person who acted badly and other things can lead to bad behaviours being seen as normal and abuse not being challenged.

Everybody has a role in stopping abuse from happening – individuals, families, communities, organisations, Government – everybody in Wales.

Tackling male violence – not all victims are women, but most of those who commit abuse are male. We want to challenge male violence, attitudes to male violence and the things that cause it – this includes challenging the way men think and behave

Knowing more about what the problems are – we want to make sure we tackle all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Equality – people’s experiences of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence can be affected by things like age, race, culture, sexuality, gender identity. We want to ensure that everyone is supported.

Hearing from survivors – to be able to help survivors and those who have abused others, we need to listen to what it is they need from services that are there to support them.

A **Public Health approach** – this understand the causes and consequences of violence, abuse and control. It is based on understanding the causes of health and social problems through lots of different organisations working together.

Prevention will be the key to our Plan – we want to move from just supporting survivors of abuse to preventing abuse from happening.

A **trauma-informed** approach aims to understand how sometimes traumatic experiences can lie behind violent behaviour or lead to people accepting being treated in ways they shouldn't put up with. It also tries to understand the impact of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and help them to feel safe, develops trust and get the support they need. We also want to make sure we understand the impact on people who work with people who have experienced abuse and make sure they are not harmed by it.

Working together – We have worked with a lot of different people, in a lot of different organisations, to make our plans. We will continue to work together to put them into action.

What will we do to start?

We will work with our partners to develop an action plan, but these are the things we will start working on immediately:

We will set up the new National Partnership Board and its sub-groups.

We will set up a team, or information hub, (Central Repository of Knowledge) to bring together what we know (research and studies) about how well things we've tried have worked in the past and what will prevent violence and abuse. This will help us understand more about the issue and what works to improve things, so we can make better decisions in future.

We will make sure the right people are involved in local groups dealing with VAWDASV issues across Wales and that they are in contact with other areas of Wales to ensure we work in the best way with other services.

We will keep developing awareness raising campaigns to let people know about the subject and where to get help – including tackling street harassment.

We will work with others to decide how best to tackle the issues – including how best to plan and pay for the services that are needed.

We will develop training and materials for professionals (teachers, healthcare workers, social services and others) to use to promote healthy relationships through their work.

What do you think?

We would like to hear what you think of our plans, so we are asking you for your views on the questions:

Do you think our strategy will help stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?

What problems do you think we might have stopping violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales?

What is the most important thing Welsh Government could do to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?

How will we know if our plans to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are working?

Is there anything else you would like to say about stopping violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales?

What do these words mean?

Abuse of older people

Where a person over the age 60 is a victim of violence, abuse or threats.

Coercive behaviour (or coercive control)

When someone uses violence, threats, puts you down or scares you. They do this to harm, punish or frighten you.

Controlling behaviour

This might be:

- Stopping you from seeing your friends and family, or anyone that support you.
- Stopping you from being independent and making your own choices.
- Stopping you from going out or talking to people outside your home.
- Taking away your money or making you work for no pay.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be a lot of things.

- Hurting you, or threatening to hurt you.
- Shouting at you and bullying you.
- Doing sexual things to you that you don't like or want.
- Taking away your money or things you own.
- **Controlling behaviour.**
- **Coercive behaviour.**

Abuse of older people

Where a person over the age 60 is a victim of violence, abuse or threats.

Female genital mutilation

When a young girl or teenager has part of their genitals cut for cultural or religious not medical reasons.

It is against the law.

Forced marriage

When someone is made to marry someone else.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted communications and contact in a manner that could be expected to cause upset, alarm and fear.

Honour based violence

Honour based violence is where you suffer abuse, violence or threats by someone in your family or community because they think you have brought shame or dishonour to the family.

LGBTQ+

This stands for:

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer or Questioning
- + is to be inclusive to everyone that feels part of the LGBTQ+ community but feel they don't fit into the groups listed in LGBTQ

Abuse of older people

Where a person over the age 60 is a victim of violence, abuse or threats.

Sexual exploitation

When another person makes/gets you to do sexual things for them. You may be forced to do things you don't want to do. You may think you don't have a choice because you're being controlled or forced. You may feel you have to do sexual things for basic living needs such as food, somewhere to stay or money.

Stalking

Stalking is unwanted and obsessive attention towards you by an individual (or group) that makes you feel afraid. It can include someone following or watching you, or sending you unwanted presents.

Abuse of older people

Where a person over the age 60 is a victim of violence, abuse or threats.

Street harassment

Street harassment is when someone behaves in a way that makes you feel upset, alarmed, humiliated or threatened when you're out and about. It is communication you do not want and did not ask for that may cause you distress and fear.

It could be someone you know, like a neighbour or people from your local areas, or it could be a stranger.

It might include:

- unwanted whistling
- sexist, homophobic or transphobic slurs
- repeated requests for your name, number or where you're going after you've said no
- sexual names, comments or demands
- following you
- performing a sexual act in public
- groping or sexual
- rape

We would like to thank the following organisations for their help:

