

Providing 24/7 help and advice  
on violence against women,  
domestic abuse and sexual violence.



# Live Fear Free

Contents:

Campaign purpose	5
What we're trying to do	7
Who the campaign is for	8
What can you do?	10
Recognising possible signs of abuse	12
Important note for campaign and partner teams	15
Support the campaign	16

This toolkit aims to help recognise when someone you meet or engage with may need support related to sexual violence, domestic abuse or coercive control, and how to offer support in a safe and calm way.

Older people can experience all forms of abuse, including sexual violence, yet it is often hidden, misunderstood and underreported.

**Abuse Can Happen at Any Age.**

**If you are worried about  
someone, don't wait.  
Contact Live Fear Free  
for confidential advice.**

## Campaign purpose

**Raise awareness that abuse can happen at any age, to anyone.**

Sexual violence against older people is often minimised or dismissed, and survivors may feel unable to speak out. It is often hidden in plain sight – a cancelled appointment, a change in demeanor, a bruise explained away. This campaign seeks to break that silence.

We want to open up conversations that have long been hidden, challenge stereotypes, and empower both survivors and the people around them to act.







## What we're trying to do

---

**Raise awareness** that abuse can happen at any age, to anyone, including sexual violence.

---

Encourage professionals, friends and family to **recognise the subtle signs** and start compassionate conversations.

---

Build visibility of the **Live Fear Free Helpline** as a trusted first step for advice and support.

---

Empower older people to feel seen, heard, and respected, reframing help-seeking as a sign of **strength, not weakness**.

---

# Who is this campaign for?

## Victims and survivors

Victims and survivors of sexual violence may not recognise their experiences as abuse, or may feel isolated, ashamed or dependent on the person harming them. Older victims live with abuse for twice as long before they seek help.

This campaign empowers victims and survivors to seek support by increasing awareness of Live Fear Free and the help available to them, helping them feel seen and know it's never too late to ask for help.





# Who is this campaign for?



---

## Bystanders and professionals

Older victims rarely disclose voluntarily and often wait for someone to ask how they are before they open up.

Family and friends may suspect something, but feel uncertain, conflicted, or fearful of overstepping.

That's why this campaign focuses on bystanders — particularly professionals who see older people regularly during everyday life: GPs, Pharmacists, Hairdressers, Care workers, Community volunteers.

---

**These are trusted figures in older people's lives — often seeing what others can't. By focusing on them, we empower bystanders to recognise the signs, respond with empathy, and start the conversation.**



**What can you do?**

**Listen carefully and ask gentle questions to help them reach safe support sooner.**



## Live Fear Free (LFF)

**Live Fear Free is a free, confidential, 24/7 helpline providing advice, information and support for:**

Anyone experiencing domestic abuse or sexual violence.

Anyone concerned about a friend, family member, or neighbour.

Professionals seeking guidance.

### **LFF contact options:**

Email: [info@livefearfreehelpline.wales](mailto:info@livefearfreehelpline.wales)

Webchat via [www.gov.wales/livefearfree](https://www.gov.wales/livefearfree)

Call: **0808 80 10 800**

Text: **0786 007 7333**

BSL users can use the Convo app: **Type in 'Live Fear Free'**

It's open to all ages, genders, and backgrounds.

**Older people are especially encouraged to reach out. Abuse can happen at any age, and it's never too late to ask for help.**





## Recognising possible signs of abuse

### You might notice they:

Sound **nervous, tearful, or hesitant** to speak.

---

**Apologise frequently** or seem **fearful** of being overheard.

---

Rarely attend appointments **alone** and often whoever attends with them **speaks on their behalf**.

---

Mention someone else **controlling** what they do, who they see, their finances or where they go.

---

**Refer to isolation** ("I don't get out much anymore") or **fear** ("I can't say too much").

---

Speak about a friend or neighbour who seems **withdrawn or "different lately"**.

---

Clothing choices that don't fit the wearer but seem **designed to hide injuries**.

---



If something feels worrying,  
trust your instincts, it's okay  
to ask a gentle, open question.



# Recognising possible signs of abuse



## Respond

- Believe and validate: "You're not alone – this is not your fault."
- Prioritise autonomy: Ask what they want to happen next.
- Contact Live Fear Free for specialist guidance

We recognise that older people's experiences of sexual violence and how they seek help are shaped by factors such as disability, culture, sexual orientation or cognitive health. Our approach must always be person-centred and inclusive.



## Important note for campaigns and partner teams:

While this toolkit aims to support consistent awareness and response across Wales, we must remain mindful that your organisation will have safeguarding procedures and reporting protocols in place.

This guidance should complement — **not replace** — your safeguarding processes, ensuring that any immediate concerns are managed through established channels.



## Support the campaign

---

Extend reach and reinforce **consistent messaging**.

---

Share social content using **LFF-approved** visuals and hashtags.

---

**Display stickers** that share the Live Fear Free contact information in community spaces.

---

Use **plain, everyday language** (avoid jargon like “coercive control”).

---



To book an awareness raising session on  
Live Fear Free and find out what we  
can offer your organisation, please email:  
**[info@livefearfreehelpline.wales](mailto:info@livefearfreehelpline.wales)**

