

Prevention of Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

Further Reading and Resources

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Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Further Reading and Resources for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

About This Resource

This document has been developed as a supplementary learning resource for individuals who have attended Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) awareness, prevention, safeguarding, community safety, workplace culture, equality, inclusion, or bystander intervention training across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The purpose of this resource is to:

- Increase understanding of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

- Explore the social, cultural and systemic factors that contribute to violence and abuse.
- Support positive conversations about gender equality, respect and inclusion.
- Develop confidence in recognising and responding appropriately to harmful behaviours.
- Encourage the creation of safer workplaces, communities and social environments.
- Promote trauma-informed approaches when engaging with individuals affected by abuse.
- Support personal wellbeing when working with sensitive or challenging issues.
- Provide access to further learning, resources, organisations and support services.

This document is not intended to provide specialist advice, counselling or safeguarding guidance. It should be used alongside organisational policies, safeguarding procedures and specialist professional advice where appropriate.

Section 1: Understanding Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is an umbrella term used to describe acts of violence, abuse, coercion, harassment and intimidation that disproportionately affect women and girls because of their sex or gender.

VAWG exists on a continuum, ranging from everyday experiences of sexism and harassment through to serious offences including domestic abuse, stalking, sexual violence and homicide.

While anyone can experience abuse, evidence consistently demonstrates that women and girls are disproportionately affected by many forms of violence, and that most perpetrators are men.

Preventing VAWG involves more than responding to incidents. Effective prevention requires challenging the attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and social norms that enable harm to occur.

Section 2: Key Topics for Further Learning

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality occurs when individuals experience unequal treatment, opportunities or outcomes because of their gender.

Although significant progress has been made, inequalities continue to exist in areas including:

- Employment and pay
- Leadership and representation
- Personal safety
- Caring responsibilities
- Access to opportunities
- Media and cultural representation

Research demonstrates a clear relationship between gender inequality and increased levels of violence against women and girls.

Gender equality is not only an equality issue. It is also a violence prevention issue.

Gender Norms and Masculinity

Gender norms are the unwritten expectations society places on individuals based on gender.

Examples include beliefs that:

- Men should always be strong and emotionally resilient.
- Men should be dominant or in control.
- Women should be caring and accommodating.
- Men should avoid showing vulnerability.

While many aspects of masculinity can be positive, difficulties arise when masculinity becomes associated with:

- Dominance
- Control
- Aggression
- Entitlement
- Emotional suppression

Healthy forms of masculinity encourage:

- Respect
- Accountability
- Empathy
- Equality
- Emotional awareness

- Positive role modelling

Understanding how gender norms influence behaviour is an important part of preventing violence and promoting healthier relationships.

Coercive Control

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour designed to dominate, intimidate, manipulate or restrict another person.

Examples include:

- Monitoring movements
- Restricting access to family or friends
- Controlling finances
- Excessive jealousy
- Threats and intimidation
- Constant criticism
- Monitoring online activity

Abuse is often about power and control rather than physical violence.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can involve:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Technological abuse
- Coercive and controlling behaviour

Domestic abuse can affect any individual regardless of age, ethnicity, disability, faith, sexuality or socioeconomic background.

Common Myths

Myth: Domestic abuse only involves physical violence.

Reality: Many victims experience emotional, psychological and controlling behaviours that may not be visible to others.

Myth: "If it was really bad, they would leave."

Reality: Leaving an abusive relationship can be complex, difficult and dangerous.

Sexual Violence and Consent

Sexual violence includes any sexual activity that occurs without free and informed consent.

Examples include:

- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Sexual coercion
- Sexual harassment
- Unwanted sexual contact
- Image-based abuse

Understanding Consent

Consent must be:

- ✓ Freely given
- ✓ Informed
- ✓ Ongoing
- ✓ Specific
- ✓ Reversible

Consent is an ongoing conversation, not a one-time event.

Stalking and Harassment

Stalking

Stalking is a pattern of repeated unwanted behaviour that causes fear, distress or alarm.

Examples include:

- Repeated contact
- Following someone
- Monitoring social media
- Sending unwanted gifts
- Persistent communication after being asked to stop

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Stalking and harassment should always be taken seriously.

Everyday Sexism and Harmful "Banter"

Everyday sexism includes behaviours, comments and attitudes that reinforce gender stereotypes and inequality.

Examples include:

- Objectifying comments
- Sexual jokes
- Dismissing women's views
- Gender stereotypes
- Talking over women
- Assumptions about competence or roles

Comments described as "just banter" can still contribute to harmful workplace or community cultures.

Intent and impact are not always the same.

Misogyny

Misogyny refers to prejudice, contempt or hostility towards women and girls.

Misogyny can be:

- Overt
- Subtle
- Online
- Offline
- Individual
- Cultural

Examples include:

- Victim blaming
- Hostile attitudes towards women
- Online abuse and trolling
- Disrespectful language
- Opposition to gender equality

Understanding and challenging misogyny is a key component of VAWG prevention.

CLEAR Training: Male Ally and Champion Training: [Our Courses - CLEAR](#)

Trauma and Trauma Informed Practice

Trauma may occur when someone experiences or witnesses events that overwhelm their ability to cope.

Experiences may include:

- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence
- Harassment
- Stalking
- Childhood adversity

Trauma Responses

Individuals may experience:

- Anxiety
- Hypervigilance
- Withdrawal
- Sleep difficulties
- Concentration difficulties
- Emotional numbness
- Memory problems

Trauma-Informed Responses

Helpful responses include:

- "Thank you for telling me."
- "You do not have to share anything you are not comfortable discussing."
- "What would feel helpful right now?"
- "Would you like support to find further help?"

Trauma-informed approaches focus on:

- Safety
- Trust
- Voice and Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment
- Cultural Awareness

CLEAR Training: Understanding Trauma: [Our Courses - CLEAR](#)

Section 3: Emerging Issues

Technology-Facilitated Abuse

Technology-facilitated abuse is the use of technology to harass, monitor, control, threaten or exploit another person.

Examples include:

- GPS tracking
- Monitoring devices

- Cyberstalking
- Social media surveillance
- Digital harassment
- Intimate image abuse
- AI-generated deepfakes

Online Harms

Current concerns include:

- Online misogyny
- Cyberflashing
- Gender-based harassment
- Online grooming
- Extremist and misogynistic content
- Abuse through gaming platforms and social media

Professionals are increasingly seeing abuse that moves seamlessly between online and offline environments.

Legislative Developments

Areas to remain informed about include:

- Domestic Abuse legislation
- Online Safety legislation
- Stalking legislation
- Sexual offences legislation
- Workplace sexual harassment duties
- Victims' rights frameworks

Regularly reviewing government, safeguarding and criminal justice updates is recommended.

Section 4: Bystander Intervention

One evidence-informed approach is the **5 Ds of Bystander Intervention**.

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Direct

Address inappropriate behaviour directly where safe to do so.

Example:

"I don't think that's appropriate."

Distract

Interrupt or redirect the situation.

Delegate

Seek assistance from others.

Delay

Check in with the affected person afterwards.

Document

Record information when safe and appropriate.

Any evidence should only be shared with the affected person or relevant authorities.

CLEAR Bystander, Safe Spaces, Male Ally Network training: [Our Courses - CLEAR](#)

Section 5: Looking After Yourself

Work relating to Violence Against Women and Girls can be emotionally demanding.

Individuals may experience:

- Emotional fatigue
- Frustration
- Vicarious trauma
- Burnout
- Feelings of overwhelm

Practical Self-Care Strategies

Physical Wellbeing

- Prioritise sleep
- Stay hydrated
- Exercise regularly
- Take breaks
- Use annual leave

Emotional Wellbeing

- Talk to trusted people
- Practise self-compassion
- Reflect on achievements
- Seek support when needed

Social Wellbeing

- Maintain supportive relationships
- Connect with peers
- Participate in community activities
- Access professional supervision if available

Reflection Questions

Consider:

- What have I learned?
- What challenged me?
- What support do I need?
- What will I do next?

Sustainable engagement in VAWG prevention requires healthy boundaries and self-care.

CLEAR Training: Managing Stress, Overwhelm & Burnout: [Our Courses - CLEAR](#)

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Support Services

Emergency

Emergency Services – 999

Domestic Abuse

Safer Futures www.saferfutures.org.uk

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247

Sexual Violence and Abuse

The Oak Service www.oakservice.org.uk

The Survivors Trust Resources and information to aid understanding around sexual violence and sexual abuse <https://thesurvivorstrust.org>

Safeguarding and protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults 01.7.2020

The Adult Safeguarding Triage Team
Co-ordinates safeguarding adults work across Cornwall. The team works alongside partner agencies and is committed to multi-agency working. This is to protect adults at risk from abuse and neglect.



The Adult Safeguarding Team consists of:

- Service Manager
- adult safeguarding triage team
- the risk managers (conference chairs) and
- Administrators

It also hosts the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Contact:
Access Team 0300 1234 131 Option 3
01872 326433 (Adult Safeguarding Triage Team)

Email:
adultsafeguardingconcerns@cornwall.gov.uk
safeguardingadultsboard@cornwall.gov.uk

 **CONTACT**
www.nuco-training.com
01456 444999

Children and Young People

Childline 0800 1111

Barnardo's Cornwall 01736 756655

Safeguarding and protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults 01/07/2020

Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU)
The MARU provides a multi-disciplinary response to concerns about the welfare or safety of a child or young person in line with statutory guidance from Our Safeguarding Children Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
The multi-disciplinary team also provides advice and guidance to parents and professionals about the wide range of services available to children and families in Cornwall.

Children and Families Services
The MARU will try to help you by signposting you to the service that can best help meet your child's needs. Sometimes they will recommend you speak to the [Early Help Hub](#) or pass your concerns to the Early Help Service and they will complete an Early Help assessment.

Contact:
Multi Agency Referral Unit
3 North
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro
TR1 3AY
0300 1231 116



 **nuco training**
CONTACT
www.nucotraining.com
(0456) 444999

Mental Health Support

NHS Mental Health Support Line 0800 038 5300

Samaritans 116 123

Victim Support Services

Victim Care Network Devon and Cornwall 0300 303 0554

Out of Hours: 0808 168 9111

Victim Support <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk>

Specialist Services

Olive Project 07990 858510

Intercom Trust www.intercomtrust.org.uk 0300 612 3010

Inspiring Women Network www.inspiringwomennetwork.org.uk

Influencers, Educators and Organisations

Michael Kaufman

- White Ribbon co-founder
- Gender equality advocate

Jackson Katz

- Violence prevention educator
- Bystander intervention specialist

Dr Michael Flood

- Researcher in masculinities and violence prevention

Equimundo

- Organisation promoting healthy masculinity and gender equality

Laura Richards

- Criminal behavioural analyst
- Violence against women and girls campaigner

Ashley James

- Broadcaster and advocate on women's safety and equality

White Ribbon UK

- Campaign to engage men and boys in ending violence against women
www.whiteribbon.org.uk

Recommended Videos and Learning Resources

Recommended Videos

- Bystander Intervention: <https://youtu.be/ESYySPjHrbU?si=kHSsQxD1m4p0ALYk>
- Bystander Intervention: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbk3iJqmjNU>
- Bystander Intervention: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t21vwD5eHJc>
- Consent: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU>
- Stalking: Alice Ruggles - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML9MIqivZRE>

Masculinity and Gender Norms

- Jackson Katz TED Talks
- Tony Porter: *A Call to Men*
- Equimundo educational materials
- She's Not Crazy: [Facebook](#)

Useful Websites

Devon & Cornwall Police

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk>

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner: Disrupt VAWG

<https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/disrupt-vawg>

Male Ally Network Cornwall

- Join the network <https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/disrupt-vawg/man>
 - Sign up for Ally or Champion training <https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/disrupt-vawg/man>
 - Download more resources
- <https://devonandcornwall-pcc.gov.uk/disrupt-vawg/man>

Women's Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk>

Victim Support

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk>

White Ribbon UK

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk>

Training:

CLEAR Emotional Trauma & Therapy Specialists www.clearsupport.net

Further Reading

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023-2028
[Cornwall Council Business Plan 2022 to 2026](#)
- Safer Cornwall VAWG publications and local data
- Devon and Cornwall Police VAWG resources and updates
- Devon and Cornwall OPCC Disrupt VAWG Programme

National Research and Guidance

- Office for National Statistics: Domestic Abuse in England and Wales
- National Police Chiefs' Council VAWG Publications
- College of Policing VAWG Guidance
- The Femicide Census
- Women's Aid Research and Publications
- Refuge Research and Resources
- The Survivors Trust Publications
- SAMHSA Trauma-Informed Care Framework

- Duluth Model and Power and Control Wheel
- Research on technology-facilitated abuse, online misogyny and bystander intervention

Final Reflection

Preventing violence against women and girls is a shared responsibility. Every respectful conversation, challenge to harmful behaviour, supportive response to a disclosure, and commitment to learning contributes to creating safer communities, workplaces and relationships across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Meaningful culture change happens through collective action, sustained commitment and a willingness to listen, learn and act. This resource is intended to support that ongoing journey.

