

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.

Understanding Violence against Women & Girls (VAWG) - the six areas:

1. Domestic abuse and coercive control
2. Sexual violence and sexual abuse
3. Sexual harassment and stalking
4. Honour-based abuse and forced marriage
5. Sexual Abuse and spiking
6. Online and technology-facilitated abuse.

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

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.

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.

The Power and Control Wheel

The Power and Control Wheel is a widely used framework for understanding Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). It illustrates how abuse is often not just about physical violence, but a pattern of behaviours used to gain and maintain power and control over another person. These behaviours can include intimidation, emotional abuse, coercion, isolation, economic control, stalking, digital abuse, sexual violence, and the use of privilege or societal inequalities. Physical and sexual violence often sit on the outer ring of the wheel, reinforcing the ongoing pattern of control at its centre. Understanding the Power and Control Wheel helps us recognise that abuse is rarely a one-off incident, but a deliberate pattern designed to limit a victim's freedom, safety, and autonomy.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Abuse

Sexual violence and sexual abuse include any sexual activity, behaviour, or act that takes place without a person's free, informed, and ongoing consent. Sexual violence is not about attraction, misunderstanding, or poor communication. It is about a person choosing to ignore, pressure, manipulate, or override another person's right to make decisions about their own body.

Understanding Sexual Violence

Rape A woman repeatedly tells her partner she does not want to have sex, but he continues and forces sexual activity against her wishes. Being married to, dating, or in a relationship with someone does not remove the need for consent. This is rape.

Sexual Assault A man deliberately touches a woman sexually in a nightclub without her permission. She has not consented to the contact. This is sexual assault.

Non-Consensual Sexual Activity A woman agrees to kiss someone but does not agree to further sexual activity. The other person ignores her boundaries and continues. Consent to one act does not mean consent to any other act.

Sexual Violence Can Include:

- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Sexual coercion
- Sexual harassment
- Unwanted sexual touching or contact
- Image-based abuse, including sharing intimate images without consent
- Sexual exploitation
- Technology-facilitated sexual abuse

Understanding Consent

Consent is the foundation of all healthy sexual relationships. It must be:

✓ Freely Given

A person must make the choice without pressure, threats, manipulation, intimidation, or coercion.

✓ Informed

A person must understand what they are agreeing to.

✓ Ongoing

Consent is not a one-off agreement and can be withdrawn at any time.

✓ Specific

Agreeing to one activity does not mean agreeing to another.

✅ Reversible

Anyone can change their mind, even after sexual activity has begun.

When Consent Cannot Be Given

A person cannot freely consent if they are:

- Asleep or unconscious
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the point they cannot make an informed decision
- Experiencing fear, threats, intimidation, or coercion
- Being manipulated or pressured
- Unable to understand what is happening

Consent is not the absence of a "no". Consent is the presence of a clear, willing, and informed "yes".

Understanding consent and respecting boundaries are essential to preventing sexual violence and creating safe, respectful relationships.

Stalking and Sexual Harassment

Stalking and sexual harassment are serious forms of abuse that can have a significant impact on a person's safety, wellbeing, confidence, and freedom. While they may sometimes be dismissed as unwanted attention or "just a joke", both behaviours can cause fear, distress, and lasting psychological harm.

Stalking

Stalking is a pattern of repeated, unwanted behaviour directed at a person that causes them to feel frightened, distressed, intimidated, or unsafe. It is often characterised by a fixation or obsession with the victim and may escalate over time.

Examples of stalking behaviours include:

- Repeated unwanted calls, messages, emails, or contact
- Following or monitoring someone in person
- Watching someone's home, workplace, or daily activities
- Excessively monitoring social media or online activity

- Sending unwanted gifts, letters, or items
- Using technology or GPS devices to track someone's whereabouts
- Persistently contacting someone after being asked to stop
- Involving friends, family members, or colleagues to gather information about the victim

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment can occur anywhere, including workplaces, educational settings, public spaces, social environments, and online platforms.

Examples include:

- Unwanted sexual comments, jokes, or remarks
- Catcalling or sexually suggestive behaviour
- Unwelcome flirting or advances
- Repeated requests for dates after refusal
- Sharing sexual images, messages, or content without consent
- Sexual rumours or comments about someone's appearance
- Unwanted physical contact
- Online sexual harassment through social media, messaging apps, or gaming platforms

Understanding Fixated Attention

A common feature of stalking is **fixated attention**, where an individual develops an unhealthy and persistent focus on another person. What may initially appear to be admiration, affection, or interest can become controlling, intrusive, and frightening when boundaries are not respected.

Healthy relationships are based on mutual respect and consent. Stalking occurs when someone prioritises their own desires over another person's right to privacy, safety, and autonomy.

Why It Matters

Both stalking and sexual harassment can have profound effects on victims, including:

- Fear and anxiety
- Sleep disturbance and hypervigilance
- Loss of confidence
- Social isolation
- Impacts on work, education, and daily life
- Reduced feelings of safety and freedom

Many victims alter their routines, avoid certain places, or restrict their activities because of the behaviour they are experiencing.

If someone's attention, behaviour, or contact is unwanted and continues after boundaries have been made clear, it is not romantic, flattering, or harmless. It may be stalking or harassment.

What Can We Do?

- Take reports seriously.
- Believe and support the person affected.
- Encourage the recording and retention of evidence where safe to do so.
- Challenge attitudes that minimise or excuse stalking and harassment.
- Report concerns and seek specialist support where appropriate.

Stalking and sexual harassment are not isolated incidents of unwanted behaviour. They are often part of a wider pattern of power, control, entitlement, and boundary violation that can significantly increase a victim's risk of harm

Honour-based Abuse and Forced Marriage

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) is a form of abuse committed to protect or defend the perceived "honour" of a family, community, or culture. It can affect women and girls disproportionately, although men and boys may also be victims. Honour-based abuse occurs when an individual is punished, threatened, controlled, or harmed for behaviour that is believed to have brought shame or dishonour on their family or community.

Examples may include:

- Restrictions on friendships, education, employment, or relationships
- Monitoring of movements, phone use, and social media activity
- Emotional abuse, intimidation, threats, or coercion
- Physical violence and assault
- Family or community pressure to comply with cultural expectations
- Forced marriage

Forced Marriage occurs when one or both people do not freely and fully consent to the marriage and pressure, threats, coercion, abuse, or deception are used. It is important to distinguish this from an arranged marriage, where both parties have the freedom to choose whether to accept the proposed match.

Warning Signs

- Sudden withdrawal from education, work, or social activities
- Excessive family control or surveillance
- Fear of family members or community repercussions
- Discussions about being taken abroad unexpectedly
- Anxiety about an upcoming trip or family event
- Self-harm, depression, or expressions of feeling trapped

Why It Matters

Honour-based abuse and forced marriage are serious forms of violence against women and girls that can have devastating physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. Victims may face abuse from multiple family members, making disclosure and escape particularly difficult.

Honour is never an excuse for abuse. Every person has the right to make their own choices about relationships, education, work, and lifestyle, free from coercion, threats, or violence.

If you are concerned about someone experiencing honour-based abuse or forced marriage, listen without judgement, take concerns seriously, do not approach family members directly, and seek specialist advice or safeguarding support immediately.

Sexual Abuse and Spiking

Sexual abuse is any sexual act, behaviour, or activity that occurs without a person's freely given and informed consent. It can happen within relationships, families, social settings, workplaces, or online. Sexual abuse is fundamentally about power, control, and the violation of a person's autonomy and boundaries.

Sexual abuse can include:

- Rape and attempted rape
- Sexual assault
- Unwanted sexual touching or contact
- Coercion, manipulation, or pressure to engage in sexual activity
- Sexual harassment
- Image-based abuse, including sharing intimate images without consent
- Online sexual exploitation and abuse

Consent must be voluntary, informed, ongoing, and can be withdrawn at any time. Someone cannot consent if they are asleep, unconscious, intimidated, threatened, heavily intoxicated, or otherwise unable to make a free choice.

Spiking

Spiking is a form of abuse and criminal behaviour where alcohol, drugs, or other substances are administered to a person without their knowledge or consent. Spiking can occur in drinks, food, cigarettes, vapes, and, more rarely, through injection.

The intention behind spiking may include:

- Sexual assault or rape
- Theft or robbery
- Humiliation or so-called "pranks"
- Exercising power and control over another person

Signs Someone May Have Been Spiked

- Sudden confusion or disorientation

- Feeling unusually drunk after consuming little or no alcohol
- Dizziness, loss of balance, or blurred vision
- Memory loss or blackouts
- Nausea or vomiting
- Unexplained injuries
- Loss of consciousness

Why It Matters

Sexual abuse and spiking can have profound and long-lasting impacts on physical health, emotional wellbeing, confidence, relationships, and feelings of safety. Many victims may blame themselves or be unsure whether a crime has occurred, which can delay reporting and access to support.

The responsibility for sexual abuse or spiking always lies with the perpetrator, never the victim. Consent cannot be assumed, pressured, or obtained from someone who lacks the capacity to give it.

If Someone Discloses

- Listen and believe them.
- Avoid blaming or questioning their actions.
- Prioritise their immediate safety and medical needs.
- Encourage them to seek specialist support and report if they feel able.
- Preserve evidence where possible, particularly if a sexual offence or spiking is suspected.

Online and Technology Facilitated Abuse

Online and Technology-Facilitated Abuse refers to the use of digital technologies, online platforms, mobile phones, social media, apps, and connected devices to harass, control, monitor, threaten, exploit, or abuse another person. While abuse may occur online, the impact is very real and can be as harmful as abuse experienced face-to-face.

Technology has created new opportunities for perpetrators to exert power and control, often extending abuse beyond physical spaces and making it difficult for victims to feel safe or escape.

Examples include:

- Cyberstalking and repeated unwanted online contact
- Sending threatening, intimidating, or abusive messages
- Online harassment and trolling
- Monitoring a person's location through apps or devices
- Excessive messaging or demands to share passwords
- Image-based abuse, including sharing intimate images without consent
- Creating fake social media profiles
- Doxxing (sharing personal information online to cause harm)
- Using smart devices, cameras, GPS tracking, or spyware to monitor someone
- Coercion or manipulation through digital communications

Technology is increasingly used to facilitate sexual abuse and exploitation, including:

- Pressuring someone to send intimate images
- Threatening to share private images or videos
- Sexual harassment through social media or messaging platforms
- Online grooming and exploitation
- Recording or sharing sexual content without consent
- Deepfake or AI-generated intimate imagery

Warning Signs

A person may be experiencing technology-facilitated abuse if they:

- Appear fearful when receiving messages or notifications
- Receive excessive calls, texts, or online contact from one individual
- Report their online accounts being accessed without permission
- Feel unable to disconnect or block someone safely

- Suddenly withdraw from social media or online activity
- Express concerns about being watched, tracked, or monitored

Why It Matters

Technology-facilitated abuse can create a sense that the perpetrator is "always present," leaving victims feeling constantly monitored and unable to escape. Online abuse frequently occurs alongside other forms of domestic abuse, stalking, sexual violence, and coercive control.

The anonymity and accessibility of digital spaces can also enable perpetrators to target victims repeatedly, amplify harassment through others, and spread harmful content quickly and widely.

Abuse is abuse, whether it happens in person or through a screen. Technology should be used to connect and support people, never to control, intimidate, exploit, or harm them.

If Someone Discloses

- Take reports of online abuse seriously.
- Encourage them to save screenshots, messages, and evidence where safe to do so.
- Support them to review privacy and security settings.
- Help them access specialist support and reporting mechanisms.
- Consider safeguarding risks, particularly where stalking, coercive control, sexual abuse, or threats are involved.

Bystander Action

If you witness online abuse:

- Challenge harmful comments where safe to do so.
- Report abusive content to the platform.
- Support the person being targeted.
- Avoid sharing, liking, or amplifying harmful content.
- Remember that silence and inaction can unintentionally contribute to a culture where abuse is normalised.

What happens online does not stay online. Digital behaviours can have profound real-world consequences for safety, wellbeing, mental health, and freedom.

Section 2: Key Topics for Further Learning

Understanding the Drivers of Violence Against Women and Girls

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality occurs when people experience different opportunities, treatment, power, or outcomes because of their gender. While society has made progress towards greater equality, significant inequalities remain in many aspects of life, including:

- Employment, pay, and career progression
- Leadership and decision-making roles
- Personal safety and freedom from violence
- Caring and domestic responsibilities
- Access to educational, social, and economic opportunities
- Representation in media, politics, and public life

Research consistently shows a strong link between gender inequality and higher levels of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Societies and environments where women have less power, status, or influence are associated with greater acceptance and prevalence of abusive behaviours.

Preventing violence against women and girls is therefore not only about responding to incidents of abuse. It also requires addressing the inequalities, attitudes, and systems that allow violence to occur and persist.

Gender equality is not simply an equality issue; it is a key violence prevention strategy.

Gender Norms, Masculinity and Social Expectations

Gender norms are the often unspoken expectations, beliefs, and stereotypes that society places on people based on their gender. These norms influence how individuals are expected to behave, express emotions, develop relationships, and view themselves and others.

Examples of common gender expectations include beliefs that:

- Men should be strong, tough, and self-reliant
- Men should be dominant, competitive, or in control
- Men should avoid showing vulnerability or seeking help
- Women should be nurturing, accommodating, and emotionally supportive
- Women should prioritise the needs of others above their own

While many aspects of masculinity can be healthy and positive, problems arise when masculinity becomes linked to ideas of:

- Power over others
- Control and dominance
- Aggression and intimidation
- Entitlement
- Emotional suppression
- Risk-taking and the rejection of help-seeking

These harmful expectations can contribute to unhealthy relationship dynamics, discourage emotional expression, and create environments where abusive behaviours are more likely to be tolerated or excused.

Importantly, harmful gender norms affect everyone. Restrictive expectations can place pressure on men and boys to conform to unrealistic ideas of masculinity, while limiting opportunities, freedom, and safety for women and girls.

Promoting Healthy Masculinities

Healthy and positive masculinities encourage:

- Respect for others
- Equality in relationships
- Accountability for behaviour

- Emotional awareness and expression
- Empathy and compassion
- Positive role modelling
- Active opposition to sexism, harassment, and violence

By challenging harmful stereotypes and promoting healthier attitudes towards gender, relationships, and identity, we can help create safer communities and reduce the risk factors associated with violence against women and girls.

The goal is not to criticise men or masculinity. The goal is to challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours while promoting respect, equality, and healthy relationships for everyone.

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.

Understanding Misogyny

Understanding and challenging misogyny is a key part of preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG). While not all misogynistic attitudes lead directly to violence, research shows that environments where women are routinely disrespected, devalued,

or treated as less equal can create the conditions in which harassment, abuse, and violence are more likely to be tolerated or excused.

What is Misogyny?

- **Misogyny** refers to prejudice, contempt, hostility, or discrimination directed towards women and girls because they are women and girls.
- Misogyny can be:
- **Overt** – obvious and openly expressed
- **Subtle** – disguised as humour, stereotypes, or "banter"
- **Online** – through social media, websites, gaming platforms, and messaging apps
- **Offline** – in workplaces, educational settings, public spaces, and relationships
- **Individual** – attitudes and behaviours displayed by a person
- **Cultural** – beliefs, norms, or practices that reinforce gender inequality
- Misogyny exists on a spectrum and can range from seemingly minor comments to serious forms of abuse and violence.

Examples of Misogyny

- Misogyny can take many forms, including:
- Victim blaming following incidents of abuse or violence
- Dismissing women's experiences or concerns
- Hostile attitudes towards women and girls
- Sexist jokes or comments
- Objectification and sexualisation of women
- Online abuse, trolling, and targeted harassment
- Degrading language directed at women
- Beliefs that women are less capable, credible, or deserving of leadership
- Opposition to gender equality initiatives
- Excusing or minimising harmful behaviour by men
- Double standards around behaviour, appearance, or sexuality
- While some of these behaviours may appear insignificant in isolation, repeated exposure can contribute to a culture where discrimination and abuse become normalised.

The Link to Violence Against Women and Girls

- Many experts describe violence against women and girls as existing on a continuum.
- At one end are attitudes and behaviours that may be viewed as socially acceptable or harmless, such as:
 - Sexist language
 - Stereotyping
 - Objectification
 - Dismissing concerns about inequality
- At the other end are serious forms of harm, including:
 - Sexual harassment
 - Stalking
 - Coercive control
 - Domestic abuse
 - Sexual violence
- This does not mean that everyone who makes a sexist joke will become abusive. However, when misogynistic attitudes go unchallenged, they can contribute to an environment in which disrespect towards women is normalised and harmful behaviours are less likely to be challenged.

Challenging Everyday Misogyny

- We all have a role to play in creating respectful and inclusive environments.
- This might include:
 - Challenging sexist jokes or comments
 - Questioning stereotypes about women and men
 - Listening to and believing women's experiences
 - Promoting equality and respect in conversations and workplaces
 - Supporting those who experience discrimination or harassment
 - Using bystander intervention techniques when safe to do so
- Often, small interventions can have a significant impact. Challenging disrespectful behaviour sends a clear message about what is and is not acceptable.

Misogyny is not always loud or obvious. It can be found in attitudes, language, stereotypes, and behaviours that devalue women and girls. Challenging misogyny, however subtle, helps create a culture of respect, equality, and safety, and is an important step in preventing violence against women and girls.

Trauma informed support

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

Experiences in relation to VAWG may include:

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

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

Further training can be accessed via CLEAR Training: Understanding Trauma: [Our Courses - CLEAR](#)

Section 3: 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

Being an active bystander does not mean putting yourself at risk. It means recognising harmful behaviour and choosing a safe and appropriate way to respond. Research shows that bystander intervention can help challenge harmful attitudes, prevent escalation, and demonstrate to victims that they are not alone.

One evidence-informed approach is **The 5 Ds of Bystander Intervention**:

1. Direct

Address the behaviour directly if it is safe to do so.

Sometimes a simple statement can interrupt harmful behaviour and make it clear that it is unacceptable. The focus should be on the behaviour, not on escalating conflict.

Examples:

- "That's not appropriate."
- "Please stop."
- "That comment isn't okay."
- "She has already said no."
- "I don't think that's funny."

Direct intervention can be particularly effective when challenging sexist jokes, harassment, unwanted touching, victim-blaming comments, or discriminatory language.

Remember: Only intervene directly if it feels safe to do so.

2. Distract

Create a distraction to interrupt the situation without confrontation.

Distraction can be useful when direct intervention feels unsafe or when tensions are high. The aim is to break the momentum of the behaviour and create an opportunity for the person being targeted to move away.

Examples:

- Start a different conversation.
- Ask the targeted person if they need help.
- Spill a drink (accidentally) or create another harmless interruption.
- Ask for directions or assistance.
- Suggest moving to another location.

A distraction does not have to address the behaviour directly to be effective.

3. Delegate

Seek support from someone else.

You do not have to intervene alone. Delegating means involving others who may be better placed to help.

Examples:

- Alert security staff, bar staff, managers, teachers, or event organisers.
- Ask a colleague or friend to intervene with you.
- Contact the police if someone is at immediate risk.
- Seek support from safeguarding leads or specialist services.

Remember: Collective action is often more effective than acting alone.

4. Delay

Check in with the person affected after the incident.

Even if you were unable to intervene at the time, you can still provide meaningful support afterwards.

Examples:

- "I saw what happened. Are you okay?"
- "Do you need any support?"
- "Would you like me to stay with you?"
- "Can I help you report what happened?"

Victims often remember who supported them after an incident. A simple check-in can reduce feelings of isolation and validate their experience.

5. Document

Record what happened if it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Documentation can help preserve evidence, particularly in cases of harassment, stalking, discrimination, or violence.

Examples:

- Note dates, times, locations, and details of what occurred.
- Save messages, emails, screenshots, or social media posts.
- Record video only if it can be done safely and legally.

Important: Any evidence collected should be shared only with the person affected and, where appropriate, the police or relevant authorities. Never post incidents on social media without the person's consent.

You do not need to be a hero to be an active bystander. Small actions can make a significant difference. Whether you choose to Direct, Distract, Delegate, Delay, or Document, taking action can help challenge harmful behaviour, support those affected, and contribute to creating safer communities.

Research consistently shows that when inappropriate behaviour is challenged, particularly by peers, it is less likely to be normalised or repeated. Every intervention, however small, helps create a culture where violence, harassment, and abuse are less likely to be tolerated.

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

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

The Women's Centre Cornwall 01208 76466

- Based in Bodmin and provide empowering support to women and girls across Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and HMP Eastwood Park through our wide range of project and services.

Adult Safeguarding – Cornwall Council 0300 1234 131 Option 3

Safer Futures (Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Integrated Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service) 0300 777 4777 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) www.saferfutures.org.uk

- Support, advice, safety planning and referrals.
- Works with local domestic abuse and sexual violence services across Cornwall

Cornwall Refuge Trust 01872 225629 (24-hour helpline)

- Emergency refuge accommodation.
- Support for women, men and children fleeing domestic abuse.
- Counselling and practical support.

National Support

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247 (24/7)

- Free, confidential support and advice.

Emergency

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

- If speaking is unsafe, dial **55** when prompted to let police know you need help

Further Support

Claire's Law: Clare's Law gives people the right to ask the police whether a current or former partner may have a history of violence or abuse. Friends, family members and professionals can also raise concerns on someone's behalf.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law>

Sexual Violence and Abuse

Emergency

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Immediate Support After Rape or Sexual Assault

Devon & Cornwall Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) 0300 303 4626 (24/7)

- Medical care and forensic examinations
- Emotional support
- Self-referral available
- No requirement to report to the police
- Support for all ages and genders

Specialist Support in Cornwall

The Oak Service www.oakservice.org.uk

- Counselling and trauma support for survivors of sexual violence and abuse
- Support for women, men and children across Cornwall

Women's Centre Cornwall 01208 76466

- Emotional and practical support for women affected by sexual violence
- Advice on reporting options and accessing services

National Support

24/7 Rape & Sexual Abuse Support 0808 500 2222

- Free, confidential support available 24 hours a day

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

Stalking and Sexual Harassment

- **Devon & Cornwall Police: 101** (or **999** in an emergency)
- Victim Support Devon and Cornwall: 0300 303 0554 Lines are open Monday – Friday 12pm to 6pm
Support line outside of opening hours 0808 168 9111
ISACs provide specialist support for anyone affected by stalking, including those who have not yet report to the police. www.victimsupport.org.uk/devon-cornwall/our-stalking-service/
- **National Stalking Helpline: 0808 8020 300**
- **Suzy Lamplugh Trust** [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](http://SuzyLamplughTrust.org)

Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage

Support and Advice

- **Police:** 999 in an emergency / 101 non-emergency
- **Karma Nirvana Honour Based Abuse Helpline:** 0800 5999 247
- **Forced Marriage Unit (Government):** Provides support and advice for those at risk of forced marriage
- **Safer Futures (Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Integrated Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service)** 0300 777 4777 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Exploitation and Spiking:

- **Police: 999 Emergency / 101 Non-Emergency**
- **NHS: 111**
- **Devon & Cornwall Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** 0300 303 4626 (24/7)
- **The Oak Service** (Cornwall sexual violence support) www.oakservice.org.uk

Online and Technology Facilitated Abuse

- **Devon & Cornwall Police:** 101 / 999 in an emergency
- **The Cyber Helpline for victims of online harm** www.thecyberhelpline.com
- **Revenge Porn Helpline for image-based abuse support** 0345 6000 459
- **Women's Centre Cornwall** 01208 76466

Children and Young People

Childline 0800 1111

Barnardo's Cornwall 01736 756655

Cornwall Council - The Multi-Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH)

- Brings together professionals from social care, health, education and police to respond to concerns about children and young people.

They provide:

- Safeguarding response for children at risk
- Help and Support (Family Help)
- Advice and guidance for professionals, families and the public

Getting advice and guidance :

If you are unsure what support is needed call 0300 123 1116 for advice.

- Outside of office hours you can call 01208 251300. The [Out Of Hours](#) team covers:

- week days from 5.15pm (4.45pm Fridays) until 8.45am
- weekends from 4.45pm on Friday until 8.45am the following Monday
- all public holidays

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

Educators and Organisations

There are many people talking about violence against women and girls online, below is a selection. This is for information and it is not an approved list.

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

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>
- Just Dont – There is no excuse: [#JustDont - There's no excuse](#)
- Enough:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVQ78xZSCG8&msockid=eb0cecb4c0bc11f1bcdcf74351384229>
- Do you see her: [Do You See Her](#)

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>

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

[Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)

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.

