

national traveller women's forum

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The National Traveller Women's Forum is the network of Traveller women and Traveller organisations from throughout Ireland. The NTWF, Using a Human Rights Based Approach, strives to empower Traveller Women, in working towards full (Gender) equality, supporting them to take leadership roles within their own and the wider community.

Aims & Objectives 2009 - 2012

NTWF aims to raise awareness of the issues effecting Traveller women, and to work towards ensuring these issues are recognised and reflected in policy development.

- Develop & document clear analysis of issues as they effect Traveller women from a gender perspective
- Support the participation and enhanced capacity of Traveller women at all levels of the policy
- Participate on and represent Traveller women's issues to all relevant policy fora including organisations

NTWF aims to develop and enhance the skills and capacity of Traveller Women to work collectively to challenge racism & sexism, all forms discrimination experienced by Traveller women.

- inequality for Traveller Woman.
 - Support Traveller women in their voluntary and paid roles as activists for their community
 - local projects and Traveller Women in leadership roles to respond to the issue of violence against women within their community / work.

NTWF aims to ensure that the organisation effectively implements the strategic plan, and that the structures reflect the Vision & Mission Statements of the organisation.

- Identify, document and respond to • Ensure the organisation has the he particular experience of appropriate systems, structures and resources to implement the strategic plan
- Develop and disseminate promotional material in relation to the strategic plan and the work of the organisation to raise the profile of the • Provide appropriate resources to NTWF as a National Traveller
 - Ensure good communication system with membership group, to further develop linkage between organisation & members

women's organisation

- Ensure Management & staff has skills to do the work and space for reflection & review of work.
- Ensure the organisations structures and staff reflect the vision of the organisation

The National Traveller Women's Forum is the national network of Traveller women's organisations. We currently have 65 member groups. The organisation employs 4 staff and is governed by the co-ordinating group which is appointed yearly at the AGM by members. Members participate in and drive the work of the organisation through strategic planning, through management and through thematic networking and regional events. We are recognised by our members and by the state as a national representative organisation - representing our members on a number of statutory committees.



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Groups who participated in the VAW regional Sessions

Le Cheile PHCP Cork Traveller Women's Network Clonmel Co. Resource Centre Cork City PHCP Cashel Primary Health Care Kerry Traveller Support Group Mayo Travellers Support Group Athy Travellers Club Laois Traveller Action Group Tullamore Traveller Movement Tullamore Primary Health Care Galway Primary Health Care Tullamore Travellers Movement Tullamore Traveller Training Centre Navan Primary Health Care Tallaght Travellers CDP Wicklow Travellers Group Wicklow Primary Health Care Exchange House Ballyfermot Travellers Action Project

Organisations that jointly facilitated regional sessions

Safe Ireland Rape Crisis Network Ireland





Role of Information & Resource Pack

This Information & Resource Pack is aimed at Traveller Organisations and local/ regional organisations working with Traveller Women.

The purpose of this resource is to ensure that local groups and organisations have appropriate information to give to Traveller Women experiencing violence.

This resource pack can be used in an organisational setting to:

- Inform the analysis and practice of community, youth workers primary health care workers and other development workers who are coming into contact with Traveller women who are seeking help in relation to violence
- Provide information for the referral of Traveller women to appropriate services
- o Inform the analysis of the organisation on the issue of violence against Traveller women.

The issue of violence against women is a difficult and sensitive issue for women and their families and society as a whole. It is important to provide non directive support and information when working with women on this issue.

Where did the Information & Resource Pack come from?

There is a significant lack of research and analysis relating to the experience of Traveller Women and violence which limits both the capacity of local Traveller organisations to lobby in relation to this issue and the ability of NGO and statutory service providers to provide appropriate services.

As a national organisation working with Traveller women one of our key objectives is to actively support Traveller women to come together, examine and analyse the issues affecting them and develop policies and strategies to address these issues in order to effect change. During our strategic planning process the issue of violence against women was raised in every membership meeting we held. Traveller women participating at those meetings articulated a wide variety of needs:

- o Safe space to discuss violence against women and Traveller women's particular experience of this.
- Support for local projects that are dealing with the impact of violence against women in their work.
- Leadership from the National Traveller Women's Forum in developing a strategy on how to respond at a local and national level
- Build relationships with service providers and key agencies and organisations who are working on the issue of violence against women.

Based on the identification of the issues for our Strategic Plan, the NTWF has responded to this issue in a number of ways:

- During the planning for our response to this issue we held a number of introduction and information gathering meetings with organisations who work on the area of violence against women in particular with the National Network of women's refuges and Support Services and the Rape Crisis Network Ireland and a number of Traveller women / Traveller projects who had expressed an interest in being part of the project. We adopted a partnership approach to the process as we believed from past experience that other organisations are more likely to take up our issues when they have been invited to participate from an early stage.
- We held 4 membership meetings in autumn 2006, one in each region (east, west, midlands and south). The first membership meeting focused on identifying the issues for Traveller women and the barriers they face in accessing services and also focused on possible actions (at a local and national level) to address these barriers. The membership meetings were held in Cork, Dublin, Castlebar and Tullamore.
- Facilitating a Policy Forum Event on the theme of VAW where national organisations working in the area of VAW could give inputs on what's happening at local level around the country and offering projects an opportunity to discuss their experiences and plan for the future.



So what did Traveller Women tell us?

Traveller Women as part of a Community

Whilst much of the support available from the extended family was viewed as a positive support to Traveller women, in cases where Traveller women experienced violence within the relationship the family was felt to be an impediment to the Traveller Woman's safety and ability to leave the relationship. In particular in Traveller families, the disclosure of VAW by a women has massive implications for the immediate and extended family especially where there is intermarrying between families or where the woman is living with her husbands extended family.

Within Traveller culture, family has a very significant role. Leaving the relationship can in many cases mean separating from the entire family. Traveller women who take the step of leaving a violent relationship are not just leaving their partner but also their family and their extended community. For Traveller women who are parents the fear of lone parenting and the loss of support from the extended family were felt to be significant barriers to leaving the family home and relationship. In addition the impact on children of rearing children outside of their ethnic community is of real concern to Traveller women. Women felt that pregnancy could be used as a way of controlling their actions, employment and training opportunities, with many participants citing pregnancy as a particular time when women were vulnerable. There was also a perceived lack of support for women from other Traveller women.

A few issues came up in this area, which could also be applicable to other communities of women; we name them here because they were very strongly expressed as impacting on Traveller women.

Traveller organisations

Whilst this issue is viewed as very important by local Traveller organisations, there are a number of factors which inhibit work taking place at local level. There are few if any trained staff in local Traveller projects to provide guidance and support specifically on violence against women. The lack of accurate and accessible information makes it difficult for Traveller organisations to ensure women have the information they need to make appropriate decisions for their future which in turn impacts on the level of discussion of the issue at local level.

Many projects cited fear as one of the primary reasons they had not got involved in addressing the issue at local level, fear of the response of the wider community, fear of giving out incorrect information and fear of opening the organisation up to work which they are neither resourced nor skilled to deliver on.

Access to services

In all our consultation sessions there was a lot of discussion about service provision at a local level. In the main when Traveller women were discussing services they were referring to refuges and related support structures (such as outreach counselling etc), we noted that Traveller women were not referring to rape crisis centres and feel that this reflects the lack of discussion and silence about sexual violence.

We know from anecdotal evidence that Traveller women are significant users of refuge services, yet there appears to be a lack of clarity on the role, availability and accessibility of these and other services.

In relation to Traveller women's experiences of services, while many women gave positive examples others felt that the services did not respond appropriately to their needs. When women described negative experiences they were talking about lack of culturally appropriate services or discrimination from staff.

Traveller Women identified three main barriers to accessing services:

Fear

Fear was the most significant barrier identified by Traveller women, fear of the repercussions of talking about the issue in case it comes back to your husband, fear of being open in groups as often other family members are present, fear that there might be an end to the support from other Traveller women or the extended family. In addition there was a sense that projects engaging in work at local level might be seen to be interfering or 'causing trouble within families'. The close knit family relationships also mean that Women are often afraid of the impact on their own family of starting to support other Traveller women to look at their options.

Insufficient Support

In general it is felt that whilst there are many supports available to women, there are a number of gaps, some of which impact more heavily on Traveller women than settled women. The lack of relationships in many areas between Traveller organisations and support services acts as a barrier to supporting Traveller women to seeing local agencies as a potential support and resource to them. The lack of specific tailored provision to meet the cultural and family needs of Traveller women also acts as a barrier.

The complexity of the legal system acts as a barrier to Traveller women who are intimidated and at times confused by the various actions they could take and there would appear to be a deficit of accessible information available to Traveller women and organisations on issues relating to violence against women.

Insufficient Resources

The lack of resources is a significant barrier, the lack of funding for projects to do work on the issue, the lack of local based skills, the lack of information and support means any work is harder to do. The financial limitations of Traveller women in many cases means they have no funds to leave the home and access alternative accommodation / seek support from law or other services.

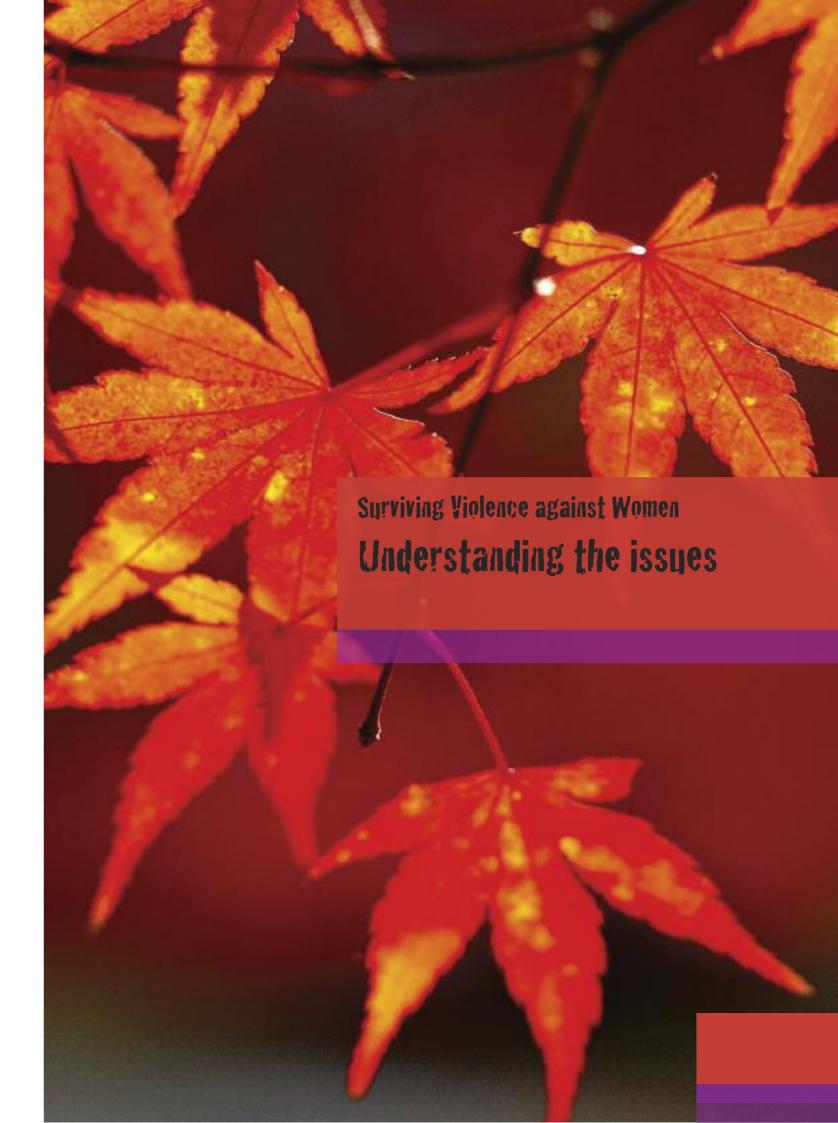
The lack of resources to access training at local level, the lack of trained local staff and the lack of readily available and accessible information means that it is very difficult for Traveller projects to provide support to individuals. In addition the lack of interest in and genuine support from the state in terms of funding, challenging the role and actions of the Gardaí, providing support for local refuges and challenging some local refuges on their practice in relation to the provision of service for Traveller women. The lack of awareness and understanding of violence against women as a systemic problem rather than a personal issue means that the issue is not really talked about at local level and in cases where it is; the onus is on the women or family to deal with it.

Statutory

The lack of access to financial resources is an impediment to Traveller women. In many cases the financial control of the family lies with the man; and this is particularly highlighted in the case of Traveller families in receipt of Social Welfare payments, where the man is the primary claimant.

Fear for the long-term implications in terms of accommodation, was another strong concern arising from all the workshops. We recognise that long term accommodation options and second stage housing are in short supply for all women but add to this the need for culturally appropriate provision for Traveller women and it becomes more complicated.

The relationship with the Gardaí is fraught with difficulty with many Traveller Women disclosing incidents where the Guards were not a support to them. Some of the woman knew of instance where the Gardaí did not come to the scene of a domestic violence crime and this was particularly the case where the Traveller women lived on an official or temporary halting site.



What is Violence against Women?

This list may help you recognise if you, or someone you know, are in an abusive relationship. Most women will experience a range of these abusive behaviours over a period of time i.e. repeated experiences rather than once off events.

Destructive criticism and verbal abuse: shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening.

Pressure tactics: sulking; threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, commit suicide, take the children away, report you to welfare agencies unless you comply with his demands regarding bringing up the children; lying to your friends and family about you; telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.

Disrespect: persistently putting you down in front of other people; not listening or responding when you talk; interrupting your telephone calls; taking money from your purse without asking; refusing to help with childcare or housework.

Breaking trust: lying to you; withholding information from you; being jealous; having other relationships; breaking promises and shared agreements.

Isolation: monitoring or blocking your telephone calls; telling you where you can and cannot go; preventing you from seeing friends and relatives.

Harassment: following you; checking up on you; opening your mail; repeatedly dialling 1471 to see who has telephoned you; embarrassing you in public.

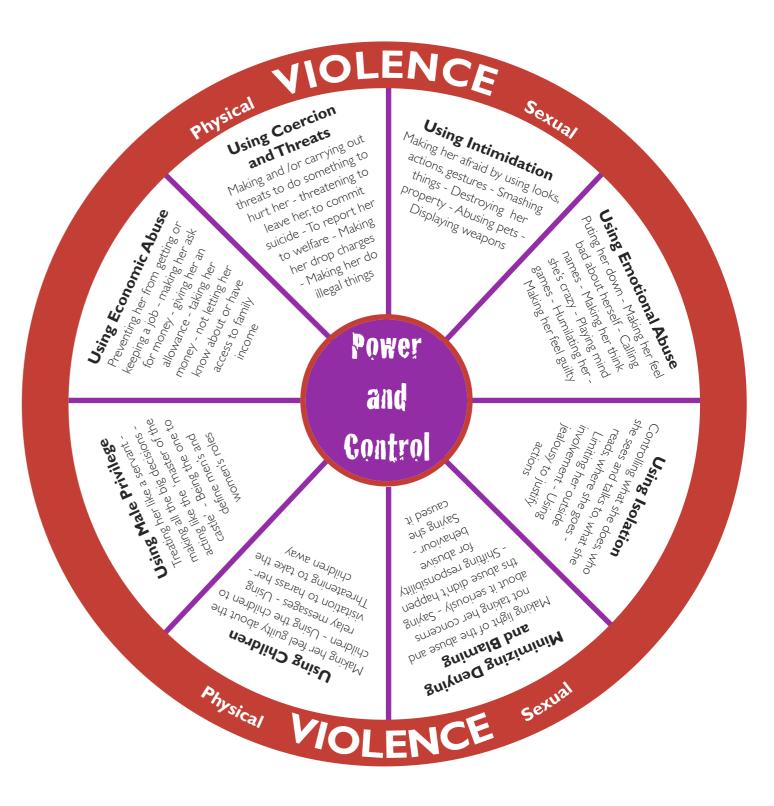
Threats: making angry gestures; using physical size to intimidate; shouting you down; destroying your possessions; breaking things; punching walls; wielding a knife or a gun.

Sexual violence: using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts; having sex with you when you don't want to have sex; any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation.

Physical violence: punching; slapping; hitting; biting; pinching; kicking; pulling hair out; pushing; shoving; burning; strangling; raping.

Denial: saying the abuse doesn't happen; saying you caused the abusive behaviour; being publicly gentle and patient; crying and begging for forgiveness; saying it will never happen again

Power & Control Wheel





The Cycle of Abuse

The Tension Building Phase

Walking on eggshells
Criticism – trying to do
everything right yet partner/
husband keeps getting mad.



Honeymoon Phase

Falling in love again

Getting back together

Passion

Abusive Incident/Explosion

The Big fight
The Explosion
The Break Up
The Conflict



Remorse/Conflict Resolution

Apology and explanations
Shared feelings
Spelling out the rules
Forcing the victim to admit
that she was partially to blame
Excuses and denials

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Myths about Domestic Violence

She must ask for it, she must deserve it

She must enjoy it or she would leave

Leaving home is bad of the children

Alcohol causes abuse

Domestic abuse only occurs in working class and Traveller families

Most men who abuse women are mentally ill

All men who abuse women come from violent backgrounds

Abused women abuse their children

There are many myths surrounding domestic abuse. Most blame women for the violence that is inflicted upon them. The effects of domestic abuse on women and children are often trivialised and ignored in our society. There are too many social stigmas surrounding domestic violence / abuse. All women have the right to an abuse free relationship. Leaving a violent relationship is not a sign of failure but the right choice for a woman to make for herself and her children.

There are many myths and much misinformation surrounding the issue of domestic violence. This not only causes great confusion, but also can make a difficult situation more impossible for those who are experiencing domestic violence. If we do not understand the reality of domestic violence, we will never be in a position to create a society which does not tolerate it. Below are listed a number of these myths as well as the reality for those women who are experiencing violence, which was developed by Womens Aid.

MYTH

Only a small number of women are battered or abused in their own homes.

REALITY

In Making the Links (1995), the first ever research conducted on the prevalence of domestic violence in Ireland, almost 1 in 5 Irish women (18%) reported that they had been subjected to mental cruelty, physical cruelty or sexual violence by a current or previous partner. Every year the Women's Aid National Free phone Helpline receives over 8,000 calls. The Rathmines Refuge deals with an average of 10 emergency calls every day. The Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Investigative Unit receives an average of 6,000 calls per year relating to "domestic violence" incidents in the Greater Dublin Area.

MYTH

it's just the odd domestic tiff

REALITY

Women who come to refuges have usually been severely beaten or threatened with violence on many occasions. Many battered women experience violence which includes rape, having their hair pulled out, being punched or hit in the face and body, choking/strangulation, or being so abused as to sustain serious injuries ranging from cuts and bruising to broken bones and internal damage.

Such physical abuse is usually accompanied by mental abuse in the form of continual harassment and humiliation such as being locked in the house, being denied sleep, being told that she is ugly, stupid and useless and being denied money. Mental abuse leaves no bruising but is as terrifying and damaging as physical violence. In Making the Links, many women reported they had experienced multiple forms of violence and/or sexual violence. In addition, women reported violence occurring while they were pregnant with resultant threatened or actual miscarriage.

MYTH

REALITY

Battered women batter their children Thousands of women and children have come to Women's Aid since it first opened. We have no evidence to suggest that the children of battered women receive any more violence than the children of other women. Indeed it is out of a sense of responsibility to their children that many women first come to refuges.

MYTH

REALITY

she must ask for it or deserve it Of all the myths about battered women this is possibly the most insensitive. No woman "deserves" the sort of treatment Women's Aid hears about from women seeking help, no matter what she has or has not done. So-called "provocation" often amounts to no more than asking for money for food, not having a meal ready on time or not wearing "decent clothes".

Research has shown that in many cases of assaults on women the injuries suffered as a result of the attack were in proportion to the resistance offered. In a situation of domestic violence where there are repeated attacks, women know that the more they resist the greater their suffering will be. This submission should in no way be confused with consent.

MYTH

REALITY

Leaving the home is bad for the children

Many women only leave their home when they realise the effects of the violence on their children or when the children themselves are threatened. In our experience children are more damaged by remaining in a violent situation than by leaving to go to the safe and secure environment provided by a refuge. Indeed we have seen the physical and mental/emotional health of many children actually improve and blossom during and after time spent in a refuge.

The prospect of poor housing, lack of day care facilities, poor employment opportunities and poverty are all other reasons why women stay.

MYTH

All men who
are violent
to women
come from
an abusive
family background

REALITY

Whilst it is true that some men who are violent to women do come from a violent background, the family is not the only formative influence on behaviour. Many men who abuse women do not come from violent backgrounds and other men who do come from an abusive background do not abuse women. They choose to deal with their problems in a non-violent and constructive way.

MYTH

Nobody has the right to interfere in the domestic affairs of a man and a woman

REALITY

Thousands of women have come forward to seek help from Women's Aid and they have been relieved to find that someone cares about what has been happening to them within their relationship. Both criminal and civil law in this country make it possible for the courts to intervene in cases of domestic violence. 25 per cent of reported violent crime is inflicted on women in the home. Domestic violence is a social problem, not a private affair. The abuse of any human being by another is everyone's business.

MYTH

Battering only occurs in working class or Traveller families

REALITY

It is mainly working class and traveller women who use refuges as these women have no access to money or other places to go. This does not mean that battering is confined to working class or traveller families. The Women's Aid National Free phone Helpline deals with thousands of phone calls and Advice Visits from middle class and affluent women every year.

Women's Aid regularly helps the wives or partners of judges, teachers, doctors, politicians and businessmen. It is clear that men from all social backgrounds beat and abuse their wives or partners and that battering can happen to women of any age, background or lifestyle.

There is no "type" of woman to whom domestic violence occurs, and there is no "type" of home in which it happens. For this reason, it is often called the most democratic of all crimes. Many myths and stereotypes exist about domestic violence, and about the women who experience battering and/or abuse in their own homes. Most of these myths trivialize the effects of the experience or seek to blame the victim for what they have been subjected to.

Many women who find themselves in a violent relationship are discouraged from taking action to protect themselves and/or their children. The violence they are experiencing is often compounded by feelings of shame, guilt, fear and embarrassment, and they can also be subjected to social criticism and exclusion.

An important part of freeing all women from the threat and/or the experience of violence involves challenging these myths and setting the record straight. Together with providing much needed services to women and children who are being abused, Women's Aid is committed to challenging these myths.

MYTH

REALITY

Alcohol causes battering

Alcohol does not and can not make a man abuse a woman, but it is frequently used as an excuse. Many men drink and do not abuse anyone as a result. On the other hand many men abuse women when they are sober. It can be easier for some men and for some women to believe that the violence would not have happened if drink had not been taken. The root cause of violence against women has nothing to do with alcohol, class, race or the behaviour of the woman. It is a widespread and serious social problem which has to do with social and cultural attitudes to women and women's place in society. It must be treated and combated as such.

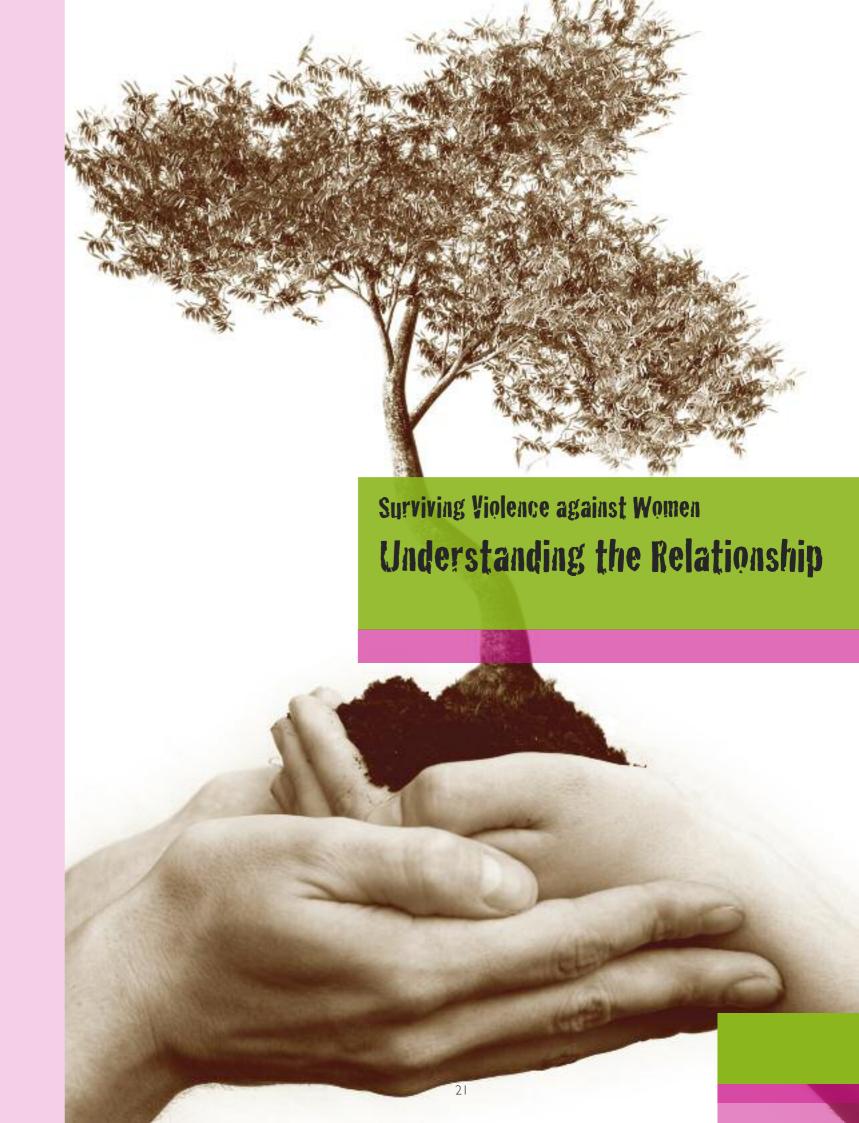
MYTH

REALITY

She must enjoy it or she'd leave Women stay with violent men because it is extremely difficult for them to leave. Until recently, there were no refuges and therefore women had nowhere they could go. Even now the numbers of women being turned away due to the lack of refuge space equals or exceeds the places provided.

Many women still do not know refuges exist. Women worry about how the disruption of leaving will affect their children, how they will provide for their children alone, how they will manage as parents on their own. Even if no move is involved, the change of status can equally worry a woman. Marriage is still seen as an achievement, separation as a failure.

Apart from having nowhere to go, many women are so terrified by their partner that they fear the consequences if they attempt to leave. Indeed, research has shown that leaving a violent man is the most dangerous time for a woman.



Profile of an Abuser

An abuser may show some of the following characteristics:

- Low Self Esteem
- o Trouble trusting others, especially you
- o Jealous and possessive
- Controlling
- o May come from a family where there was violence, but will usually deny this
- Mood swings or explosive temper
- Aggressive, dangerous driving
- Isolate their victim
- o Emotionally and verbally abusive
- Uses denial
- Tends to blame others
- o In a fight, they will blame outside stressors
- o Possible alcohol or drug user
- Playful wrestling or teasing that hurts or is not funny
- General negative and aggressive attitude

Abusers will display similar behaviours. These tend to escalate in frequency and severity over time. The following are some of the tactics used by an abuser.

Physical Abuse

Pinching, pushing, squeezing, kicking, slapping, choking, punching, cutting,

tripping, burning and pulling your hair

Holding you down

Threatening you with a weapon

Throwing objects at you

Refusing to help you when you are sick, injured or pregnant

Emotional Abuse

Blaming or accusing you

Shouting at you

Saying hurtful things to upset you

Forcing you to listen

Manipulating you with lies

Abusing pets or children

Destroying important belongings

Giving you the silent treatment

Isolating you from the outside world

When you try to explain, or give your side during an argument, your partner may shout,

don't talk back to me. It feels as though he or she is the boss.

Drives dangerously or aggressively to intimidate or frighten you

Emotional abuse chips away at your self esteem.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual name calling

Forcing you to dress or perform in a sexual way that you find unpleasant

Forcing pregnancy

Being exposed to pornographic material against your will

Rape or sexual assault.



Relationship Warning Signs

The following is a series of questions you should ask yourself about your own relationship:

- Are you afraid of your partner?
- O Does he emotionally abuse you (insults, belittling comments, ignoring you, acting sulky or angry when you initiate an action or idea)?
- Ones he tell you who to be friends with, how you should dress, or tries to control other elements of your life or relationship?
- O Does he get jealous when there is no reason?
- o Is he physically violent to you or others, even if it's just grabbing or pushing to get his own way?
- Ones he have extreme mood swings from being kind one minute to cruel the next?
- Is he angry and threatening to the extent that you have changed your life so as not to provoke him?
- Opes your partner make all the financial decisions without consulting you?
- Is it impossible for you to freely express your values and opinions?
- Does he assume the right to control how you live and behave?
- Have you given up important activities or people in your life in order to keep him happy?
- O Does he devalue your opinions, your feelings, and your accomplishments?
- Ones he shout, threaten, or withdraw into an angry silence when you displease him and do you walk on eggshells rehearsing what you will say so as not to set him off?
- Does he bewilder you by switching from charm to rage without warning?
- o Is he extremely jealous and possessive?
- O Does he blame you for everything that happens in the relationship?

If your answer is yes to most of these questions:

Ask yourself if your partners behaviour towards you sounds loving?

A man who uses any of the above behaviours in an intimate relationship uses his words and his moods as weapons on his partner. If he does not physically abuse the woman in his life, he systematically wears her down through physiological battering.

Physiological battering is every bit as emotionally devastating as physical violence. If you have said yes to two or more of the above you may be in an abusive relationship.

When a partner is not physically violent, a woman might think that her partner's behaviour towards her is not abusive.

Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

The following is a list of the characteristics of a healthy relationship:

- Respect
- Dignity
- Trust
- Consideration
- Intimacy
- Communication
- Good conflict resolution skills
- Emotional safety
- Consistency
- Honesty
- Shared responsibility
- o Joint decision making
- Supportive
- No physical violence

In a good relationship you will be able to:

- O Say no to physical closeness or sex without feeling guilty
- Change your mind
- Go out with or without your partner
- Have your own goals and interests
- Express your opinion
- Be listened to and understood
- Make decisions over work and money
- Be safe
- Be respected
- Be equal
- Have control over your life
- Choose friends and activities
- Feel safe to admit to and share fears and insecurities
- Break up without feeling afraid

A good relationship does not mean a conflict free relationship. Conflict is healthy and inevitable. Disagreements should be resolved without violence; each partner should feel safe enough to voice his or her complaints. Often people who have been involved with abusive partners think that a healthy relationship sounds boring. You should not be bored. There should be chemistry; generally a good relationship is constant. It should not have all the wild roller coaster ups and downs usually seen in an abusive relationship.



Characteristics of an Unhealthy Relationship

The following is a list of the characteristics of an unhealthy relationship:

- Controlling / Suspicion
- Mistrust
- Lack of Consideration
- Emotional manipulation
- Inconsistent
- Poor conflict resolution skills
- Poor communication skills
- Lack of respect
- Dishonesty
- Verbal, physical or sexual abuse
- Minimising abusive behaviour
- Street angel house devil
- Domination
- Name calling
- Mind games
- Isolation from family and friends
- Intimidation
- Economic control
- Jealousy

Think in terms of fair. If you find yourself thinking that your relationship is not fair, you've probably got trouble. In a poor relationship you'll often begin to feel unsure. Your partner will keep you guessing a lot and may encourage you to feel insecure. A good rule of thumb is that your partner should make you feel good about yourself. You should not always feel as though you have to try and please your partner. You should now always have to wonder about whether or not your partner will be in a good mood. You should never be afraid during an argument, and your partner should not do things to humiliate or embarrass you. Physical intimacy should never be forced, uncomfortable, or beyond whatever limits you have set.

Questions to ask about your partner or husband

The following are some guidelines for determining which people are potential abusers. The following questions are useful to ask yourself about your partner or husband.

- O Do your partner's parents argue a lot? Are they divorced? If so what happened?
- O Does your partner have a violent father or mother? An overly critical father or mother? While they may not come right out and tell you this, you can usually get a sense of whether or not anyone in the family is afraid of a parent. You should try to spend some time with your partner's family, certainly before a serious commitment is made. Domestic abuse can but does not always runs in families.
- How was your partner disciplined? Anything more then a light spanking by the age of six or so is a bad sign.
- Does your partner get into physical fights with siblings / others?
- Was your partner violent in other relationships, even if he or she contends it was not his her fault?
- How did you partners former relationship end and why?
- Is your partner disrespectful or demanding towards all women or all men?
- Is he overly interested in pornography?
- Is he sometimes pushy about sex?
- Does he abuse alcohol or drugs?
- Does he ever try and intimidate you to get his way? Emotionally, physically or sexually?
- o Is your partner sometimes rigid about how men and women should behave / for example, the way they dress or whether or not mothers should work?
- Does he have mood swings?
- Is your partner extremely possessive or jealous?
- Do you find yourself surprised by the seemingly innocent things that make him angry or upset?



Risk Assessment

It is important to identify the level of risk you may be exposed to in a relationship with the emphasis on identification before violence occurs.

- Has your partner become so jealous that you could describe him or her as paranoid?
- Do you often find yourself trying to convince him that you did nothing wrong?
- Has he ever kept you somewhere against your will (car or house)?
- Has he ever repeatedly commanded you to tell the truth even when you are not lying?
- O Does he say he will die if you leave him or cannot live without you?
- Has he ever talked about killing himself?
- O Has he ever threatened to kill you?
- Has he forced you to have sex when you did not want to?
- o Do you have to justify your actions, activities and time with your friends?
- O Do you want to end the relationship but feel afraid of what this person might do?

The effects of Domestic Abuse on Traveller Women

Living in an abusive relationship can have a devastating effect on the health of a woman.

- Physical injuries including broken bones
- Trying to find ways of hiding the abuse from friends and family
- May be embarrassed because of recurring injuries
- Exhaustion
- Confusion
- Confidence depleted
- Ability to cope affected
- No self worth / low self esteem
- Health affected
- May become dependent on alcohol / drugs / medication
- Depression
- Psychosomatic problems
- Trust and judgement affected
- Difficulty forming appropriate relationships with others
- May become isolated
- May overcompensate with children
- May become abusive towards children
- May become abusive towards self or self harm
- Suicidal / suicidal thoughts

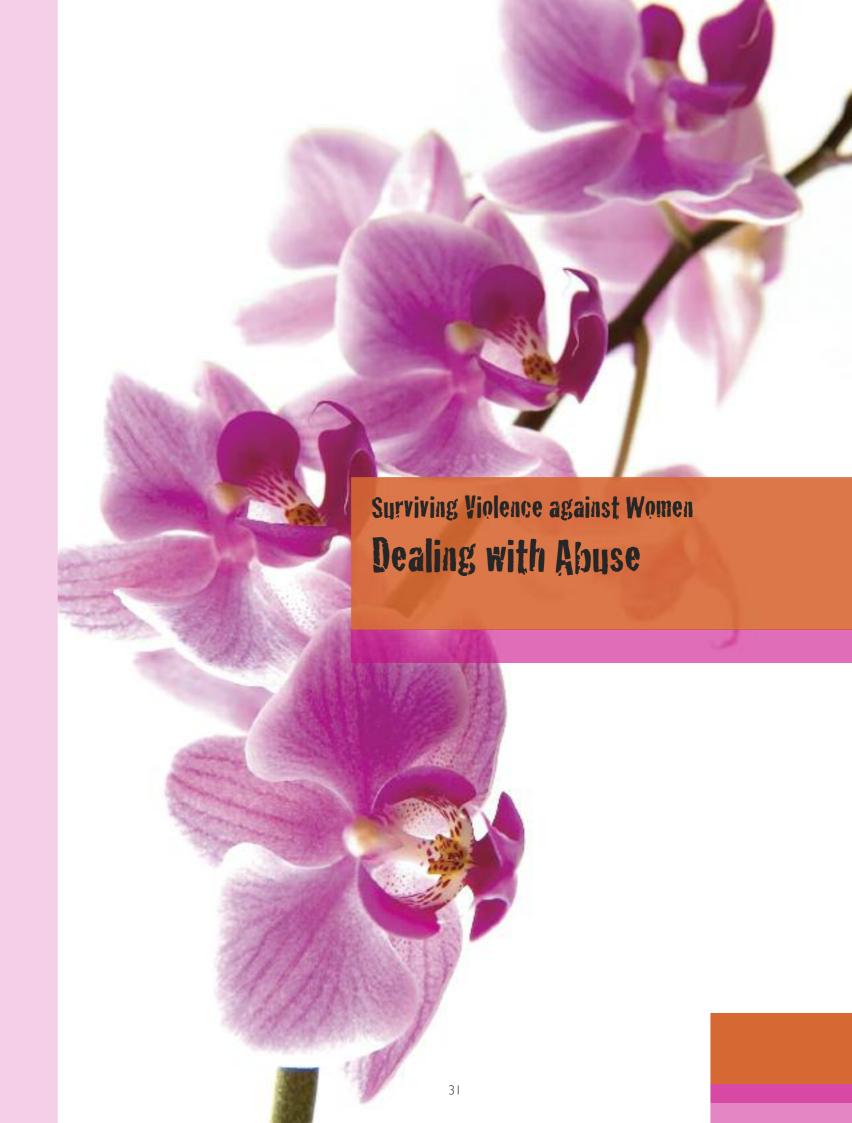
Why Traveller Women might stay in abusive relationships

Whilst much of the support available from the extended family was viewed as a positive support to Traveller women, in cases where Traveller women experienced violence within the relationship the family was felt to be an impediment to the Traveller Woman's safety and ability to leave the relationship. In particular in Traveller families, the disclosure of VAW by a women has massive implications for the immediate and extended family especially where there is intermarrying between families or where the woman is living with her husbands extended family.

Within Traveller culture, family has a very significant role. Leaving the relationship can in many cases mean separating from the entire family. Traveller women who take the step of leaving a violent relationship are not just leaving their partner but also their family and their extended community. For Traveller women who are parents the fear of lone parenting and the loss of support from the extended family were felt to be significant barriers to leaving the family home and relationship. In addition the impact on children of rearing children outside of their ethnic community is of real concern to Traveller women. Women felt that pregnancy could be used as a way of controlling their actions, employment and training opportunities, with many participants citing pregnancy as a particular time when women were vulnerable. There was also a perceived lack of support for women from other Traveller women.

There are also individual reasons why some Traveller women will stay in violent relationships.

- He has threatened to kill her if she leaves
- She is afraid of him
- He has promised to change and she believes him
- She thinks it is partially her fault
- She loves him
- She is afraid she will not find another partner
- She thinks he loves her
- When he is nice to her he is wonderful
- She doesn't want to be alone
- She believes she can help him change
- She has seen this type of abuse at home and accepts it as inevitable or normal
- O She feels that his extreme jealousy is a sign that he really loves her
- He has never really hurt her, just small bruises and she doesn't really think that low level of violence is abuse
- She feels sorry for him
- O She has low self esteem as a result of the abusive relationship
- o If she has children with him; she is hesitant to separate her children from their father.





What to do if you are being abused?

Seek Help

Talk to someone about your situation, a family member, friend or doctor. They can support and to some degree protect you. Telephone or drop in to your local information and support service or Traveller Support Project or Primary Health Care project. If your husband or partner has beaten you, he is likely to beat you again. Even though you may be afraid, you should begin to prepare now in case of another attack. Remember it is your right to be safe.

Safety Plan

A safety plan is a series of actions you can take when you feel afraid or threatened. Such a plan, prepared in advance, would maximise safety and prevent panic. You may wish to consider some of the following:

- O Where you can go to make a telephone call
- A safe place where you can stay in an emergency. This may be with a friend or relative, a woman's refuge, a hotel or a B&B
- The telephone number of the safe place
- How to get to the safe place. Decide how you will get there at different times of the day and night
- The number of a local taxi firm
- What to tell the children, and how to tell it to them, when you need to put the Safety Plan into action
- The Woman's Aid FREE National Helpline is 1800 341900
- Having a mobile phone which you can use in the case of an emergency
- Call the Gardaí if you have been assaulted or are in fear of an assault. They can advise and guide you on the legal aspects of domestic abuse
- Hiding emergency money, keys and important documents with a friend for easy access in an emergency. These would include marriage certificate, your own and children's birth certificates, photographs of previous injuries, your own and your children's medical cards, PPS Number and or social welfare card, child benefit book, bank and credit union account numbers or books.
- Begin to collect and keep these items all together so you won't have to return for them Having an answering machine, used to screen calls if abuser begins to harass you by telephone
- Contact your local support and information service as they can support you and help you to prepare for emergencies.

During an Attack

If your life is in immediate danger LEAVE, your safety and the safety of your children are important. If you suspect your husband or partner is going to attack, leave before the attack takes place for your personal safety. Your safety and the safety of your children may depend upon your readiness to act. Call the Gardaí and seek help from a neighbour, friend or family member.

- O During an attack Defend and protect yourself
- o Call for help, scream loudly and continuously
- You have nothing to be ashamed of, the perpetrator does
- O After the attack, get away if you can and seek medical help
- o Tell the medical staff who beat you and what happened exactly and have it recorded
- o Remember to get the name of the doctor who treated you.

Where can you go?

- You can run to a public place where your spouse / partner will be seen. You can run to neighbours, family or friends
- You may need to access a telephone
- o If you feel your children are not safe in the house, you need to take them with you
- O You can stay at a refuge. If you think your spouse / partner might look for you it will be safe to stay there.

Evidence

It is very important if you are going to apply to the courts for a protection / barring order or safety order. You can get friends, relatives or a female staff member at the support centre to take colour pictures of your injuries. These must be dated and signed by the person who takes them. You will need to save any torn or bloody clothing. If you need medical attention tell the doctor the name of the abuser so you can use the doctor's report in court. These are all necessary for a protection order while you are waiting to appear in court for a barring or safety order.



What is a refuge and how do I find one?

A refuge is a safe house where women who are experiencing domestic violence can live safely while they decide what to do next. There is no time limit for how long you can stay in a refuge. If you have children, you can take them with you and you can choose to stay in a refuge as close to or far away from your home as you wish. You may consider moving to a refuge near friends or family.

There are some refuges that have self-contained family units but most refuges will usually give you your own room for yourself to share with your children at the refuge and other spaces - the living room, TV room, kitchen, playroom and possibly the bathroom - will be shared with other refuge residents. You will be expected to cook for yourself and your children. Many refuges have disabled access and workers who can assist women and children who have special needs.

You can stay at the refuge for as long as you need, this can be anything from a few days to several months. The refuge will help you if you need to find somewhere permanent to stay. While you are staying in the refuge, you will be offered ongoing support and help from refuge workers, while most refuges also offer support and activities for children. Ongoing help and support is also available when you leave the refuge.

It is important to check with your local refuge on their policies in relation to:

- O Do they allow boys into the refuge?
- O Do they allow boys over 12 stay in the refuge?
- Are all facilities shared or is there separate units?

List of Refuges & Support Services by County

County	Name of Service	Helpline/ Telephone No.	Website
Carlow	Carlow Women's Aid	1800 444 944	
Clare	Clare Haven Services	065 682 2435	www.chaven.ie
Cork	Cuanlee Refuge	021 4277 698	
	West Cork Women against Violence Project	1800 203 136	
	Mna Feasa	021 4211757	
	OSS Cork	1800 497 497	www.osscork.ie
Donegal	Donegal Women's Domestic Violence Service	074 9126267	www.donegaldomestic violenceservice.ie
	Inishowen Women's Outreach	077 9373232	
Dublin	Aoibhneas Women's Refuge	01 867 0701	www.aoibhneas.org
	Rathmines Women's Refuge	01 4961002	
	Sonas Housing Association	01 830 9088	www.sonashousing.ie
	Women's Aid	1800 341 900	www.womensaid.ie
	Saoirse Women's Group	01 4522533	
	Dublin 12 Domestic Violence Service	01 456 3126	
	Blanchardstown Women's Refuge		
Galway	COPE – Waterside House Women's Refuge	091 565985	
Kerry	Adapt Kerry Ltd	066 712 9100	
Kildare	Teach Tearmainn	045 438461	
Kilkenny	AMBER, Kilkenny Women's Refuge	1850 424244	
Laois	Laois Housing Association	0502 21089	
Limerick	Adapt House	1800 200 200 504	
	Southill Domestic Abuse Project	061 313025	



County	Name of Service	Helpline/ Telephone No.	Website
Longford	Longford Women's Link	043 41511	
Louth	Drogheda Women's Refuge	041 9844550	
	Women's Aid Dundalk	042 9333244	
Mayo	Mayo Women's Support Service	094 9027519	www.mayowomens supportservices.com
Meath	Meath Women's Refuge & Support Service	046 9022393	
Monaghan	Tearmann Domestic Violence Services	047 72311	www.tearmann.net
Offaly	Offaly Women in Crisis	0506 51796	
Roscommon	Family Life Centre	071 9663000	www.familylifecentre.ie
Sligo	WAVES	071 9141515	
Tipperary	Ascend Women's Support Service	0505 23999	www.roscrea2000.ie
	Cuan Saor Women's Refuge & Support Service	1800 576757	
Waterford	Oasis House Refuge	1890 264 364	
Westmeath	Esker House Refuge	090 6474122	
	Mullingar Women in Crisis	1850 214 814	
Wexford	Wexford Women's Refuge	1800 220 444	
Wicklow	Bray Women's Refuge	01 286 6163	www.braywomens refuge.com

Questions about Leaving

Many victims of domestic violence ask these questions about leaving.

Can I take my children with me when I leave?

- O Yes. If you can do it safely, definitely take your children with you. It may be more difficult later.
- O Get legal custody of them within a few days. This is very important. Many of the groups listed in this book may help you find assistance.
- o If you do not have your children with you, it may be difficult filing for temporary custody of your children. The parent who has physical possession of the children may have an advantage getting temporary custody.
- O Your partner may try to kidnap, threaten or harm the children in order to get you to return. If you are in immediate danger and cannot take your children, contact the police immediately to arrange for temporary protective custody. (This does not mean you will lose custody. Permanent custody will be decided later by a judge.)

Where do I go?

- O Stay with a friend or relative.
- o If you are a woman, do not stay with a man unless he is a close relative. (Living with a man you are not married to could hurt your chances of getting custody of your children and spousal support. It could also cause conflict with your abuser.)
- O Go to a refuge or women's shelter with your children. The staff there can help you get legal and financial help as well as provide counselling and emotional support for you and your children.
- o Call the Gardaí
- O Your life and your safety are most important. Trying to bring your children with you is important. Everything else is secondary.



Options for Change

If you want changes in your relationship and your partner to stop abusing you, what can you do?

Before any of us can change a relationship, we have to understand what is occurring in it; but understanding is not enough. In order for your life and your relationship to change, you have to do something different, not just think about it differently.

Because abuse is about power and control, your partner is not going to want to lose his control over you. It is important to remember that when you are going to start changing the relationship your partner may become even more of a bully or a tyrant, he might withdraw, threaten to leave or punish you. Some abusive men respond to their partner's new strengths with a different kind of manipulation, tears, apologies and promises to change. All reactions have the same goal, to get his partner to give up her attempts to change the relationship. You must be aware at all times of your safety and the safety of your children and be clear as to what you will and can do if the abusive behaviour does turn violent.

Options For You

- Talk to someone about how you feel. You can telephone any of the support services and speak to a trained member of staff
- You can find out all your options if you do decide at any time you want to leave the relationship
- You can try counselling where you will have the chance to talk about your feelings and figure out a way forward.
- You can try group therapy where you will have the support of other women in similar circumstances. Most of the support services provide the option of confidential and safe group therapy.
- You can start reading books from the recommended reading list so that you can become more aware of how power and control works in relationships.

It is very important that you nurture and care for yourself when you are hurting. It is also important that you believe that you also deserve the same kind of loving attentions that you have being giving to others. Making changes in a destructive relationship is not easy. A destructive relationship is like an open wound – it just continues to fester without healing.

Personal Development

Personal development involves being aware of yourself, your interactions with others and your reactions to different situations. It is the development of you as an individual and finding out how you tick. It is through personal development that you will learn to love yourself and see that your own needs are as important as any one else's needs. You will learn to be a woman in your own right.

Assertiveness

The skills taught in a basis assertiveness course / class include making clear, specific requests, learning how to say no, handling criticism both on the receiving end and when you need to confront someone else, learning about body language, managing the expression of feelings especially anger, receiving compliments, taking the initiative, building your self esteem and improving your self presentation.

Parenting Courses

Parenting courses teach you parenting skills, which include:

- Looking at children's behaviour
- How to listen to children
- How to encourage children
- How to discipline your children
- How to solve problems that you may have with your children.

Counselling

Counselling is a two way relationship between a counsellor and a client in a secure, safe and confidential setting. Counselling is about change. It is a talking therapy where you will have the opportunity to explore your feelings and concerns freely with a trained counsellor. The counsellor supports the client to find their own answers. The client always has the power to change within, but the client must want change.

People have some hope that brings them into counselling. They want the future to be different from the present. In order for this to happen, they might need to start looking at their beliefs, values,



attitudes, behaviour and experiences. They might need to find out what their needs are, if they are being met, if not, how to have them met. You can talk to family and friends but how many times have you presented your problem to someone you know and ended up getting a run down of their problems in return.

When you talk with a counsellor, you will know you are talking to someone who is giving you full and genuine attention in a non judgmental way. The purpose of counselling is change and the counsellor is trained to empower the client to make changes in her life.

Traveller Specific Counselling Service

The Traveller Counselling Service is an independent, culturally appropriate counselling service which has been set up specifically for Travellers in the Greater Dublin Area. It is a one-year pilot project which will hopefully lead to a more long-term culturally appropriate counselling service for Travellers.

It is a free, confidential non-judgemental service which is free for Travellers over 18.

For more details contact:

Traveller Counselling Service 6 New Cabra Road Phibsboro Dublin 7

travcounselling@hotmail.com

T: 086 3081478

Can perpetrators change their violent behaviour?

In order for the perpetrator to change he must first acknowledge that he is the only person responsible for his behaviour. He must admit he is wrong and seek help to change. One of the characteristics of an abusive person is that they don't take responsibility for their actions, they always blame somebody else.

There is currently no Traveller only service in the country but there are a number of general groups including:

MOVE, Men Overcoming Violence, works in the area of domestic violence, with a primary aim of supporting the safety and wellbeing of women and their children who are experiencing, or have experienced violence/abuse in an intimate relationship. MOVE does this by facilitating men in a weekly group process that involves them taking responsibility for their violence and changing their attitude and behaviour. MOVE Ireland is a national voluntary organisation with charitable status that provides intervention programmes free of charge for perpetrators of domestic violence at a range of locations around Ireland, which are listed above. MOVE provides awareness of the issue of Domestic Violence to reinforce the concept that violent behaviour is unacceptable and works with a network of other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies as part of a coordinated community response to end violence against women. Men attending MOVE will experience a respectful, person centred environment, which is conducive to change. MOVE will ensure their conditions of confidentiality are communicated to clients, women partners and referring agents.

MOVE offer a weekly group session in which men can:

- Learn to stop the violence
- Learn to spot danger signs
- Learn to break out of isolation
- Learn other ways of expressing strong feelings safely
- Learn to build healthy relationships

If your partner is violent or you know someone who is, perhaps you could refer them to us and help someone to take the first step in changing their beliefs and their behaviour.

Contact MOVE:

National Office:

MOVE (Ireland)

Unit 2, First Floor, Clare Road Business Mall,

Clare Road, Ennis, County Clare.

Tel: 065 684 8689 Fax: 065 684 3010

Email: move@moveireland.ie Web: www.moveireland.ie

Regional Offices

MOVE Cork

Grattan House, Grattan Street Cork

Tel: 086 069 1834 Mob: 086 172 1593

MOVE Limerick

P.O. Box 530, Ennis County Clare Tel: 061 367 881 Fax: 086 172 2043 Email: sustain@ireland.net

MOVE Galway

Gerard Flanagan Galway City Council College Road Galway Tel: 09 I 536 400

MOVE Wicklow

Wicklow Community Services Bridge Street, Wicklow Town Tel: 086 821 7253 Mob: 086 172 6138

MOVE Midland

c/o Community Services Council North Gate Street, Athlone Tel: 090 647 2174 Mob: 086 172 1564

MOVE North Tipperary

c/o Loreto House, Kenyon Street Nenagh, Co.Tipperary Tel: 067 27882 Mob: 087 753 5212 Email: angelamoventhtipp@eircom.net

MOVE Dublin

Carmichael House North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7 Tel: 01 872 4357 Email: moveireland@eircom.net

MOVE Kildare

c/o Health Centre Henry Street Newbridge Co. Kildare Tel: 086 172 1938





Right Away

On a practical level, there are several things you should consider doing. Ideally, you should first contact a friend or family member you can trust, who can be with you indefinitely, immediately. Having someone with you for emotional support can be a real lifesaver. No matter what your initial emotional response is -- and it differs a lot among people -- you will likely want someone you can trust and who you know cares for you to come and give you aid.

Next, you should consider calling the Gardaí, once that person is present, or go to the station to report a rape. When and if you do, you should state as soon as possible, that you wish to prosecute: even if you're not sure if you'll want to right away. Filing a report, hard as it can be, is wise to do so that pressing charges is an option for you if you want to exercise that option. Without that report and evidence, pressing charges later is very difficult. You can change your mind later if need be, but saying such as early as you can will initiate testing you will need, and better reporting of the incident. Do NOT at any point; appear to waver on your desire to prosecute, even if you are unsure. When at the station, or at the scene at which you have reported, ask for a rape crisis counselor or advocate. That person will help and support you and your needs during this process.

If you were vaginally raped, and thus, have a risk of pregnancy, you should be offered emergency contraception when you are reporting your rape. If you choose not to report, you can obtain EC over-the-counter at your pharmacy if you are over 18 (and in many countries, if you are any age), and if you are a minor, can get a prescription for it from any doctor, clinic or emergency room. You can also ask a friend to go get it for you if they are of legal age to do so. You'll want to also be sure to schedule an Sexually Transmitted Infection screening within the month. It's sometimes hard to have a gynecological exam shortly after rape, but if you did contract an infection, you'll want to know so that you can treat it or deal with it.

As much as you may want to take a shower or bath, it is ideal not to do so until after you make a report and are tested. Showering can remove important evidence like semen, skin and hair, and clothing fibers or fingerprints. Wait until after your examination for bathing: even if you're not sure yet if you will want to press charges, it's best to do everything you can to leave that option open, and provide all the evidence of the assault you can in case you do want to do so later. As well, write down all you can recall about the incident, and keep a copy of what you have written for your own records, and give another copy to both the Garda and a lawyer.

As far as deciding to prosecute, there are several factors you should consider (and you can ask for a rape advocate at the Garda station to help you make these choices). Rape trials are still not made easy on the victim, and they are often a long and arduous process. Many people still hold the outdated and ignorant notion that in some way, it is the victim's fault. You may hear much of

this, if you go to trial, from the perpetrators defense. You may also encounter it at the Garda station. Rape trials take time, as well. However, for yourself, and other victims, bear in mind that the only way to continue to smash the myths surrounding rape, and make clear it is a serious crime, is to prosecute. You may also have medical expenses you will have to pay, including further testing, STI treatment, abortion, and psychological treatment. You may lose money by taking the time from work or school you need to heal yourself -- all of these expenses are damages, which you are owed compensation for. Above all else, rape is a crime, and persecuting a criminal helps to keep that

Generally, you do not have to make up your mind right away, when you report your rape: if you need more time to decide what to do, then ask for that time.

criminal from committing the same crime, both to you, and to others.

Healing Yourself Body & Soul

After a rape, sexual abuse or attempted rape, a person who has been victimized often experiences what Ann Burgess and Lynda Holmstrom coined Rape Trauma Syndrome in 1974. RAINN outlines those three phases and their effects as follows, and you should take a look at them both so you can understand what you may already be feeling, and so you can have an idea of what you might be dealing with from here on in.

The Acute Phase: This phase occurs immediately after the assault and usually lasts a few days to several weeks. In this phase individuals can have many reactions but they typically fall into three categories of reactions:

- o **Expressed**-This is when the survivor is openly emotional. He or she may appear agitated or hysterical; he or she may suffer from crying spells or anxiety attacks.
- O **Controlled**-This is when the survivor appears to be without emotion and acts as if "nothing happened" and "everything is fine". This appearance of calm may be shock.
- **Shocked Disbelief**-This is when the survivor reacts with a strong sense of disorientation. He or she may have difficulty concentrating, making decisions, or doing everyday tasks. He or she may also have poor recall of the assault.

The Outward Adjustment Phase: During this phase the individual resumes what appears to be his or her "normal" life but inside is suffering from considerable turmoil. In this phase there are five primary coping techniques:

- **Minimization** Pretends that "everything is fine" or that "it could have been worse".
- **Dramatization** Cannot stop talking about the assault and it is what dominates their life and identity.
- **Suppression** Refuses to discuss acts as if it did not happen.

- **Explanation** Analyzes what happened- what the individual did, what the rapist was thinking/feeling.
- **Flight**-Tries to escape the pain (moving, changing jobs, changing appearance, changing relationships, etc.).

There are many symptoms or behaviors that appear during this phase including: Continuing anxiety, severe mood swings, a sense of helplessness, persistent fears or phobias, depression, rage, difficulty sleeping (nightmares, insomnia, etc), eating difficulties (nausea, vomiting, compulsive eating, etc), denial, withdrawal from friends, family, activities, hyper vigilance, reluctance to leave house and/or go places that remind the individual of the assault, sexual problems, difficulty concentrating and/or flashbacks.

The Resolution Phase: During this phase the assault is no longer the central focus of the individual's life. While he or she may recognize that he or she will never forget the assault; the pain and negative outcomes lessen over time. Often the individual will begin to accept the rape as part of his or her life and chooses to move on.

What you need to heal will tend to be very individual, and you're the one who is likely to know best what it is you need. By all means, give yourself the time that you need to grieve, and try not to get caught up in feeling like time for grieving is about being weak or pathetic. It's not: grieving after any kind of assault is healthy and important. In terms of your support people, you get to make the rules. If you want to talk about it, talk about it. If you don't, even if people around you will say you should, you get to decline and wait until that's what feels right. You need to work through the feelings of sorrow and anger you have to heal, and to reclaim your life and your body. Support is a big deal, but largely, you will have to do your own healing in your own way. Accept that, and aim for being a survivor, not a perpetual victim.

There are many support groups for survivors to help you get through these phases and to that resolution in time and you will most likely find your own personal support circle invaluable. In time, try to work towards speaking up and speaking out -- do not let abuse silence you. It's not your fault that you were raped, but whether you do what you can to heal from it and work through it is a choice you get to make.

Rape Crisis Centres

RCCs provide a safe environment where the survivors of sexual violence come first. All staff and volunteers deeply understand both the realities of sexual violence and the impact of all forms of sexual violence. Survivors' reactions are viewed as normal responses to trauma and to coping with the aftermath of trauma.

All staff and volunteers are trained in the reality and extent of sexual violence. In supporting survivors through help lines, advocacy, counselling, medical or legal processes, RCCs understand the need to maintain confidentiality.

The intention of RCCs is to return the control that was taken during any experience of sexual violence. This has been described as the survivor/recovery model. RCCs provide real choice to medical or diagnostic models often favoured by state agencies. In the RCC response the emphasis is on promoting well-being, the focus is growth rather then symptoms and defects. The survivors coping strategies are explored in terms of their usefulness.

The Survivor/Recovery Model

The returning of power and control informs our responses to those needing support. The women and men who have experienced crimes of sexual violence are not perceived as victims, they are survivors. The survivor is an active agent in their own recovery. They are not viewed as a passive recipient of treatment. They are the experts in their recovery, they must have control and recovery must take place at their pace.

The survivor/recovery model sees traumatic systems as creative responses and adaptations to horrific events. The survivor/recovery model explores how the survivor survived creatively during trauma, or during repeated trauma, how s/he creatively survived afterwards given their life situation. It emphasizes the survivors' resources and positive strengths.

The RCC approach emphasizes that support can only be effective within a relationship of safety, trust and collaboration. Collaboration can be seen to involve trusting in the survivors' ability to heal him or herself.

Attention is given to issues of power throughout our work, including within support and counselling relationships. Empowering the survivor involves both the personal empowerment of the survivor in any contact s/he may have with the RCC and also the empowerment if the survivor within society. RCC response includes changing society towards greater equality.



Rape Crisis Centres County by County

Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre (NI)

29 Donegal Street, Belfast BT1 2FG. Helpline: 04890 329001/2 Helpline(ROI): 04890 249696 Business: 04890 329001/2 Fax: 04890 329001 Fax(ROI): 04890 321830

Email: eileencalder@hotmail.com

Carlow & South Leinster Rape Crisis & Counselling Centre

72 Tullow Street, Carlow. Helpline: 1800 727737 Business:05991 33344 Fax: 05991 33344

Email: southleinsterrapecc@eircom.net

The South Leinster Rape Crisis Centre operates Mon to Fri - 9.30am to 5.00pm

Cork Sexual Violence Centre Cork

5 Camden Place, Cork Free phone: 1800 496 496 Email: info@sexualviolence.ie Website: www.sexualviolence.ie

The Sexual Violence Centre Cork operates Mon to Fri - 9:00am to 5.00pm

Donegal Sexual Abuse & RCC

13 St. Eunans Close, Convent Rd, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. Helpline: 1800-448844 Business: 074-9128211 Fax: 074-9120642 Email: rapecrisis@eircom.net

The Donegal Rape Crisis Centre operates Monday-Thursday-9.30am to 1:00 pm and Friday-9.30am to 5.00pm

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

70 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2. Helpline: 1800-778888 Business: 01 6614911

Fax: 01 6610873 Email: rcc@indigo.ie Website: www.drcc.ie

The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre operates a 24 Hour Crisis Helpline, 7 days per week, 365 days a year. We will reply to your email within 24 Hours during the business week. Please direct all counselling-related quires to our free phone line

Galway Rape Crisis Centre

7 Claddagh Quay, Galway.

Helpline: 1850 355355/091 589495

Business: 091 583149 Fax: 091 583148

Email: galwayrcc@eircom.net Website: www.galwayrcc.org

The Galway Rape Crisis Centre operates: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri: 10.00am to 1.00pm and 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

Tues: 10.00am to 12.00noon and 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

Sat 11.00am to 1.00pm.

Kilkenny Rape Crisis & Counselling Centre

I Golf View Terrace.

Kilkenny.
Helpline:
1800 478478
Business:
056 7751555
Fax: 056 7751538

Email:

kkrcc@eircom.net

The Kilkenny Rape Crisis & Counselling Centre operates Mon to Fri - 9.00am to 5.00pm. Late appointment by arrangement.

Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre

Green view Terrace, Princes Quay,

Tralee, Kerry.

Helpline: 1800 633333
Business: 066 7123122
Fax: 066 7120247
Email: krcc@eircom.net
Website: www.krsac.com

The Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse

Centre operates:

Mon to Fri - 9.00am to 5.00pm

Outreaches Killarney, Dingle

Limerick Rape Crisis Centre

Rochville House, Punch's Cross,

Limerick.
Helpline:
1800 311511
Business:
061 311511
Fax: 061 312682

Email:

limerickrcc@oceanfree.net

The Limerick Rape Crisis Centre operates Mon

to Sat - 9.30am to 5.00pm



Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre (N.E)

PO Box 72, Dundalk, Co Louth. Helpline: 1800 212122 Business: 042 9339491 Fax: 042 9381968

Email: rcsacne@eircom.net Website: www.dundalkrcc.com

The Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre (N.E) operates Mon to Thurs 9.00am to 5.00pm.
Outreaches
Drogheda, Monaghan Town, Cavan Town

Tullamore Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Counselling Service

4 Harbour View, Store Street Tullamore, Co Offaly. Helpline: 1800 323232 Business: 05793 22500/01

Fax: 05793 22501

Email: tullamorerapecrisiscentre@eircom.net

The Tullamore Rape Crisis Centre operates: Mon to Fri - 10.00am to 2.00pm Mon Evening - 8.00pm - 10.30pm

Sligo Rape Crisis Centre

42 Castle Street, Sligo. Helpline: 1800 750780 Business: 071 91 71188 Fax: 07191 71268 Email: info@srcc.ie

The Sligo Rape Crisis Centre operates: Mon to Fri 10.30am to 12.00 noon Counselling appointments available during and outside office hours.

Mayo Rape Crisis Centre

Newtown, Castlebar, Co Mayo. Helpline: 1800 234900 Business: 094 9025657 Fax: 094 9027188

Email: mayorcc@eircom.net

The Mayo Rape Crisis Centre operates: Mon to Thurs - 9.00am to 5.00pm Fri - 9.00am to 1.00pm

Tipperary Rape Crisis Centre

20 Mary Street, Clonmel, Co Tipperary. Helpline: 1800 340340

Business: 052 27676
Fax: 052 29171
Email: trcc@eircom.net

The Tipperary Rape Crisis Centre operates: Mon to Fri - 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Thurs - 3.00pm to 9.00pm.

Athlone Midlands Rape Crisis Centre

2 Fairview, Garden Vale, Athlone, Co Westmeath. Helpline: 1800 306 600 Business: 09064 73815 Fax: 09064 91888

Email:

The Athlone Rape Crisis Centre operates Mon to Fri - 10.00am to 5.00pm. By appointment. The Helpline operates 10.00am to 1.00pm Mon to Fri.

Waterford Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre

2A Waterside, Waterford. Helpline: 1800 296296 Business: 051 873362 Fax: 051 850717 Email: wrcc@indigo.ie

The Waterford Rape Crisis Centre operates:

Mon to Fri - 9.30am to 5.30pm

Outreach: Dungarvan

Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Service

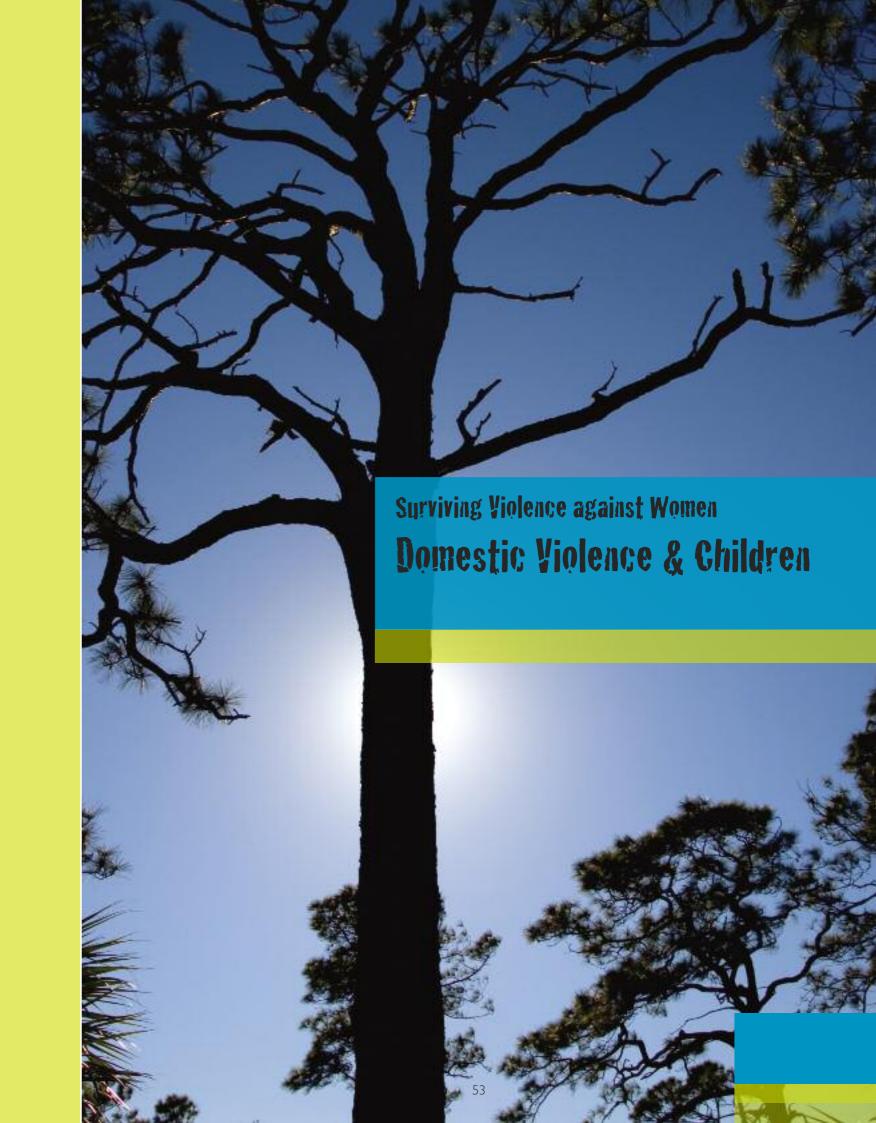
Clifford St, Wexford. Helpline: 1800 330033 Business: 053 9122722 Fax: 053 9152853

Email: wexrapecrisis@eircom.net
Website: www.wexfordrapecrisis.com

The Wexford Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Services Centre operates:

Mon - Fri 9.30am to 5.00pm.

Limited service at weekends. Outreaches Gorey, Enniscorthy, New Ross



The effects of Domestic Abuse on Children

Children are also the victims of domestic abuse both directly and indirectly. Children's experiences, reactions and responses vary, with some children being affected far more than others, and children within the same family can be affected differently. The negative effects on children of witnessing or overhearing violence are similar to the symptoms experienced by children who themselves have been abused. These can include any of the following behavioural, physical and psychological effects, which may be short or long term.

- Physical injuries, including bruises and broken bones
- o Being protective of mother and / or siblings by physically intervening
- o Low self esteem, lack of confidence
- Using violence to solve conflict
- Confusion
- Embarrassment
- Isolation
- Poor social skills
- Aggression, acting out, disruptive behaviour
- Advanced in maturity and sense of responsibility
- Difficulties at school, schooling performance
- Developmental delays in young children
- Psychosomatic problems e.g. asthma
- Self destructive behaviour e.g. self mutilation
- O Difficulty trusting others and forming appropriate relationships
- Fear of intimacy
- Emotional confusion in relation to parents
- Bed wetting / soiling
- Nightmares / sleeping problems
- Depression / suicidal feelings
- Eating disorders
- o Introversion / withdrawal, clingy / over dependent, feeling helpless, feeling insecure, feeling fearful, feeling sad, feeling guilty, blaming self and others, feeling anxious and nervous.

Child Abuse

The abuse of children is no longer a distant nightmare associated with a certain class in society. The ever increasing problem of abuse affects children of every age, race, religion and economic background. Most children are abused by someone they love and trust in most cases by a family member. Child abuse can take many forms, but usually consists of one or more of the following: neglect, emotional abuse, physical and sexual abuse.

Neglect: Where a child's need for food, warmth, shelter, nurturing and safety are not provided, to the extent that the child suffers significant harm.

Emotional Abuse: Where a child's need for affection, approval and security are not being met and has not been met for some time by their parent / carer

Physical Abuse: When a child is assaulted or injured in some way that is deliberate.

Sexual Abuse: Where the child is used for the sexual gratification of another.

Dealing with Abuse

The statutory responsibility for dealing with child abuse rests with the director of community care in the HSE and with his / her social workers, or alternatively with the Gardaí. If you think that a child is being abused or is at risk from someone inside or outside the family, get in touch with the duty social worker or other professionals in your local health centre. If it is an emergency outside community care hours you should report it to the Gardaí.



Role of the Gardaí

Garda response to domestic abuse incident is governed by their domestic violence policy which dictates that they should:

- Respond as quickly as possible to a domestic violence incident
- o Try to ensure that two members attend (not always possible in rural areas)
- O Separate both parties involved primary focus is the protection of life and property.
- Seek medical attention where necessary
- o Interview each party separately as part of the investigation
- Collection of evidence
 - o Torn or bloodied clothing from victim or abuser
 - Condition of scene
 - Damage to property
 - Excited utterances made by parties involved
 - And if possible take photographs
- o Power of arrest, if exists bearing in mind the forces pro arrest policy, particularly to enforce a court order
- o Remove to the Garda station where the abuser is
 - Obetained, charged and later released on bail, or where necessary detained in custody and brought before the next available District Court or arrange doe a special sitting of the court.
- Information given to the victim
 - Legal options
 - Support services available in the area
- o If children are involved or witness the incident, refer to the appropriate community care personnel on the grounds of physical / emotional abuse
- Continual liaison with the victim

If you are assaulted or in fear of being assaulted call the Gardaí as they can offer advice and guidance on the legal aspects of domestic abuse.

Court - What Happens in Court?

All court cases are based on you giving evidence and your spouse / partner disputing that evidence. It is important that you have clear and relevant evidence to support you in your application. In the courtroom your solicitor will guide you into giving the right evidence by asking you appropriate questions. It is important that you listen to your solicitor and that you answer the questions that your solicitor puts to you clearly. If you don't understand anything that is going on in court you can ask the judge to explain what is going on before you agree to anything. It is always recommended that you have legal representation when you go to court.

The evidence that you will be required to produce in court is of:

Physical Violence / Abuse:	medical evidence, photos, evidence from social workers and friends
Verbal / Emotional Abuse:	you will need medical evidence of any nervous sufferings that you endured and that of your children. Evidence from GP's, social workers, friends and school teachers could be helpful to support you case.

The Court System

District Court

The district court deals with all types of orders, barring / safety / protection, access, custody and maintenance orders. Family law cases are held in private. If your spouse / partner break a barring / safety / protection order you should inform the Gardaí immediately, the court takes any breach of these orders very seriously and your spouse / partner will be brought up in front of the criminal court. The district court does not deal with judicial separation; this is dealt with in the circuit court.

Circuit Court

The circuit court deals with judicial separations. Alterations to your judicial separation, for example, your maintenance, can always be made in the circuit court. Appeals can be made to the high court in regard to judicial separations.

High Court

The high court has jurisdiction, concurrent with the circuit court, to hear and determine proceedings for judicial separation.

Solicitor

Solicitors have a very wide range of different functions:

- A solicitor may give legal advice about non-contentious matters, such as buying a house or flat or drafting a will
- A solicitor may act as your agent or representative in commercial transactions
- Your solicitor may also give you legal advice and represent you in relation to a dispute or disagreement that you have with another party, for example, a family dispute or a dispute with your employer or your neighbor.
- A solicitor may give you legal advice about taking or defending a case. If you have been involved in an accident, for example, a road traffic accident or an accident at work.
- o If you are involved in a court case, your solicitor will manage the case and represent you

- when dealing with the other party. For example, your solicitor will send letters to the other side on your behalf. Your solicitor will file all of the necessary court documents and contact the witnesses for the case.
- o If it is necessary to involve a barrister in the case, your solicitor will "brief" the barrister by sending him/her all of the necessary documents and information
- Your solicitor may also actually represent you in court, although in the High Court and the Supreme Court, a barrister will usually be engaged.

Unlike barristers, solicitors are allowed to join together to form partnerships or companies and they are allowed to advertise their services.

Barrister

- o Barristers draft legal opinions. For example, a barrister might give you a legal opinion on whether or not you have a good legal case against someone with whom you have had a dispute.
- The barrister will then write the legal documents (writs or pleadings) which must be filed in the case.
- When the case comes to trial, it is the barrister who will represent you in court, speak on your behalf and argue your case before the judge.
- Your barrister may also be the person who negotiates a settlement of your case instead of it going to trial.
- A barrister may only accept so much work as he or she can give adequate attention to within a reasonable time
- A barrister must ensure confidentiality concerning client matters
- A barrister has duties towards the courts he or she cannot mislead a court in any way
- A barrister may not tout or advertise his/her services

Court Orders

Protection Order

A protection order is a pre-summons for a safety order and a barring order. A protection order is given when a person is being abused by their spouse or partner. It is the interim order, which comes into effect immediately, and gives the Gardaí the power to arrest and charge the abuser, where the abuse or threats of abuse occur. Your partner may remain in the family home until the hearing for the barring / safety order. You will be given a copy of the protection order, as will your partner and to your local Garda station and a summons for a barring / safety order. Your partner will be notified of the court date by post. This order does not exclude the spouse from the family home, but orders that he shall not use or threaten to use violence, molest or put in fear the applicant spouse or child.

- A protection order cannot be applied for on its own. A protection order will only be granted while waiting for a court hearing for the barring order or safety order.
- A separation application is made for the safety order and a barring order. It is important that you are clear on which order you want the district clerk to apply for on your behalf.
- Apply for a maintenance order and a custody order at the same time you apply for the protection order, barring order, safety order.
- When you receive a copy of your protection order, bring it down to your local Garda station and get them to make a photocopy of it. This will cover the time it takes for the district court to post out a copy to the Gardaí
- o If you feel that your spouse / partner may become violent towards you when he learns of the protection order you may want to stay with family or friends or in a refuge.
- Apply for legal aid as soon as possible as there is a waiting list.
- It does not cost money to apply for a protection order at the district court and a solicitor is not necessary while applying. However it is advisable to get a solicitor for the court date for the barring / safety order.

Safety Order

A safety order is an order, which prohibits the abuser from further violence. It does not oblige that person to leave the family home. A safety order offers the same protection as a protection order; it is renewable and can be issued for up to 5 years in the district court.

Who can apply for a safety order?

- A spouse
- o If you have been living with the abuser as husband and wife for six months of the twelve month period immediately prior to the application for the safety order. (co-habiting couples)
- If you are the parent of the abuser and the abuser is over 18 years of age and is not a dependent
- o If you are over 18 years of age and you live with the abuser in a relationship which is not contractual, or two relatives living together.
- o Your health board / HSE are can apply for a safety order on your behalf. When you apply for a safety order you will be given a protection order which comes into effect immediately and it will protect you until your court hearing for a safety order.

You will be required to provide evidence of abuse in court so take note of the checklist for application for a barring order. Once the court is satisfied that your safety or welfare is in jeopardy, the courts will instruct the abuser:

- O Not to threaten to use violence, molest or put fear into you or the children
- Not to watch or beset where you or the children are living, if you are living away from the abuser.

A safety order lasts five years unless previously stated otherwise in court, it is also renewable. Other key issues about a safety order:

- A safety order is useful for a woman who wants protection but is not necessarily ready to have her spouse / partner barred from the home.
- Evidence is very important (see barring orders)
- o In the case of two relatives living together, a barring order is not available to them

Barring Order

A barring order is granted where the court are of the opinion that there are grounds for believing that the safety and welfare of the applicant or any dependent person is in question. A barring order prohibits the abuser from further violence or threats of violence. The abuser is ordered to leave the family home.

Who can apply for a safety order?

- A spouse
- o If you have been living with the abuser as husband and wife for six months of the nine month period immediately prior to the application for the safety order. (co-habiting couples)
- o If you are the parent of the abuser and the abuser is over 18 years of age and is not a dependent. Also you must own the home or pay the rent.
- A parent may apply for a barring order because of violence towards their child or a child they're looking after.
- Your health board / HSE may in special circumstances apply for protection on behalf of the woman.

Barring order cases are held "in camera", this means that only the woman, her partner and the court officials are present in the court. Witnesses are called in one at a time and are there only to give evidence. You should employ a solicitor and bring all evidence of abuse and witnesses of the abuse to the court hearing. Your partner can be ordered out of the family home for up to 3 years in the district court. You can obtain a longer barring order or a lifetime barring order in the circuit court. If the abuser breaks the barring order he will be arrested and charged. It is important to note that it is not necessary for the women to be living in the family home when she applies for a barring order i.e. a woman can apply from a refuge.

Checklist for an application for a barring order / safety order

- Full names of both you and your partner. The address at which you, abusive spouse will be living after the barring order. The address of your home which is the place where your spouse will be barred from.
- The names and dates of birth of all your children and whether any of your children suffer any mental or physical disability.
- List the incidents of recent violence and if possible list the incidents of violence over the previous years
- Try to establish dates of the most serious incidents of violence. Gardaí and hospital reports

- may be needed and dates are essential. If you can't remember when these acts of violence occurred, think whether it was near a birthday, birth, summer, etc.
- A physical description of the abuser
- o If your injuries are still visible, photographs are recommended. These photographs should be dated and have the name of the person who took them.
- o If you haven't been to a doctor and you still have injuries you should visit a doctor and get the doctor to record the full list of your injuries.
- The names and addresses of all the witnesses
- Were there any previous orders or safety orders? If there has been a history of barring orders during which the man was allowed back into the house, the judge may refuse to grant another.

Evidence for your court hearing is very important, so make sure you bring all the evidence to court, e.g. doctor's reports, letters from social workers, Polaroid photos or reliable witnesses.

- O A doctors report can include stress related illnesses resulting from the abuse you suffer
- Witnesses can be your family, friends and neighbours who have witnessed your spouse's
 abusive behaviour towards you. Gardaí have to be summoned to attend as a witness.
 Neighbours may be afraid to testify, it may help to assure them that the abuser will be told
 that they co-operated only because they were summonsed.

Criminal Assault

It may be a possibility that a wife wants to have her husband prosecuted for criminal assault and this can be done by getting the Gardaí to prosecute him. A criminal prosecution in a family situation will be heard in open court and may have the press present. A husband may be sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

Maintenance Order

A maintenance order can be got to obtain financial support for you and your children. In order to get maintenance you must prove that your spouse / partner has not been giving you enough money to support you and your children. You and your spouse / partner will both be asked to give evidence on your incomes. You do not have to be living apart and you do not have to be intending to separate. The judge will make an order of maintenance.

If your partner fails to pay your maintenance, the court can make an attachment of earnings which means that the money due to you will be paid by your spouse / partners employer straight out of his earnings. If your spouse / partner is unemployed, it is important that you apply for maintenance. This maintenance order, even if it is a nil maintenance order, is vital when you apply for social welfare.

Note:

- o If your maintenance is not paid you go to your community welfare officer at your local health centre. Also, bring along your maintenance order with you.
- You should always inform the courts if your order has been broken.
- After 3 months, if you have not received any maintenance you are entitled to apply for the One Parent Family Payment.
- o If you have a maintenance order and you are claiming social welfare you are obliged to sign over your maintenance to the social welfare department, if your maintenance is less that on he social welfare you will receive the full amount of your social welfare.
- o If you are co-habiting you are not entitled to claim maintenance for yourself but you can claim for your children by that relationship.

Custody Order

A custody order may be taken out so you can get custody of your children. Access to the other parent is decided by the judge. Sometimes the judge may appoint a probation officer, or social worker or a psychologist to do a report over a period of months. In this case an interim custody order is made and access will be arranged but the final decision will not be made until the report is made. If one parent has abused the child only supervised access will be given. The rights of the parents are only secondary to the rights of the child, the conduct of the mother and father are only taken into account when it affects the interest of the child.

Note:

- O Custody is the day to day care and control of the child
- You should apply for a custody order when you apply for a protection order
- If you are not married to the father of your child it is important to note that an unmarried father does not have any automatic guardianship rights, he must apply to the court to get these rights (Guardianship of Infants Act 1964)
- When older children voice a preference, the court will sometimes have regard for their wishes if it is in the best interest of the child
- When you have custody of your child, your spouse / partner will usually be given access, unless there has been sexual abuse then access may be denied.
- Access is the right to see and communicate with the child.
- Access can be arranged in different ways, e.g. weekly, fortnightly, during summer holidays etc.
- A couple do not have to be married to apply for this order.

Separation & Divorce

Legal Separation Agreement

Where a couple agree to separate, the details can be worked out through a deed of separation which is acceptable to both sides.

It is a legal written contract between a husband and a wife to separate. It covers maintenance, custody of children, ownership and occupation of family home. The difference between a legal separation agreement and a judicial separation is the spouses decide the terms of separation rather than have the terms imposed by the court; the courts need not be involved. It will only involve two solicitors, one representing the wife and the other representing the husband. Costs will vary depending on solicitor's fees.

Mediation

Mediation is a free service for married and non married couples who have decided to separate, or who have already separated, to negotiate their own separation terms. It is not a marriage counselling or legal advice service. How can it help: This service encourages the separating couple to co- operate with each other in working out mutually acceptable arrangements on all or nay of the following:

- Parenting the children
- Maintenance
- Family home
- Any other problems relating to the separation
- Service is confidential and both spouses are required to attend
- The service will be assisted by a professionally qualified mediator.

Judicial Separation

Judicial separation frees both partners in a marriage from their obligation to live together; it does not allow the separated spouses to remarry. The Grounds for a judicial separation are:

- o If the spouse has committed adultery
- The other spouse has behaved in such a way that you cannot reasonably be expected to live with them
- o If you have been deserted by your spouse for a continuous period of one year immediately

- prior to the date of application for a separation. (desertion also includes conduct on behalf of the spouse which caused you to leave)
- That you and your spouse have lived apart for a continuous period of three years immediately prior to the date of application.
- The marriage has broken down to the extent that a normal marital relationship has not existed between the spouses for a period of at least one year immediately prior to the date of your application for a judicial separation. On average it takes two years to get a judicial separation.

Divorce

A Decree of Divorce allows both parties to a marriage to remarry. Before a court can grant a divorce, the flowing conditions must be met:

Grounds for a Divorce

- The parties must have been living apart from one another for a period amounting to four out of the previous five years before the application is made.
- There must be no reasonable prospect of reconciliation
- Proper arrangements must have been made or will be made for spouse and any dependent members of the family such as children of either party or other relatives.

If these conditions are met, either party to a marriage may apply to court for a Decree of Divorce. If it is satisfied that the grounds are met, the court will grant the Decree of Divorce. When it grants the Decree of Divorce dissolving the marriage, the court may also make orders in relation to custody and access to children, the payment of maintenance and lump sums, the transfer of property, the extinguishment of succession rights, pension rights, etc.

The fact that the parties must have been living separate lives for four out of the five years before an application for a divorce means that many separating couples obtain a separation agreement or a judicial separation to regulate matters between them before they seek a divorce.

In any application for a Decree of Divorce, the court may review any previous arrangement made by the parties such as a separation agreement, particularly if the circumstances of either party has changed. When a Decree of Divorce is granted, it cannot be reversed. Either party can apply to the court to have any of the orders made under the Decree such as maintenance reviewed by the court.

Civil Legal Aid

Civil Legal Aid is a scheme making the service of solicitors and barristers available to people of limited means at very little cost. This service includes anything from writing a solicitors letter to representing you in court.

How can it help me?

If you need to talk to a solicitor about a legal separation, maintenance, barring orders, custody of children etc.

How do you qualify for civil legal aid?

If you are on social welfare, you will qualify. If you are working it will depend on your disposable income. This is what money you have left over after certain allowances have been taken out i.e. dependents, rent, mortgage, hire purchase payments, work travelling expenses, etc.

How much will it cost?

If you are on social welfare, it will const you a minimum of €10 for advice and €40 if you go to court, €50 in total for court application. If you are working the cost will depend on your disposable income. If you have capital resources / savings above a certain amount, you may have to pay extra.

Legal Aid Board Law Centres

The Legal Aid Board provides legal services in relation to civil law matters to eligible persons. These legal services include legal advice and legal aid. To qualify for services you must satisfy the Board's financial eligibility requirements. You must also satisfy the Board that your case has merit. All board services are governed by the Civil Legal Aid Act 1995 and the Civil Legal Aid Regulations. The Board does not provide aid or advice in criminal matters.

Legal advice

Legal advice is any oral or written advice given by a solicitor or a barrister in civil matters. It can include writing letters on your behalf and acting for you in negotiations with other persons. Legal advice is provided by solicitors in the Board's law centre network.

If you wish to seek legal advice in relation to any matter, you should contact your local law centre. Legal advice is available in relation to most civil matters. If you need further information about the service available from the Board you should consult your local law centre.

Legal aid

Legal aid means representation by a solicitor or barrister in civil proceedings in the District, Circuit, High and Supreme Courts. Legal aid is available also for representation before the Refugee Appeals Tribunal.

Legal aid is not granted automatically. If you require representation for a court case, the Board will consider if it is reasonable for to grant legal aid. This procedure is called the merits test. This test is applied to each individual case. If the Board considers that it is reasonable to grant legal aid, a legal aid certificate will be issued to you and you will have legal representation for your case.

Legal aid is provided by solicitors employed by the Board in its law centres. In certain family law and asylum cases, legal aid may be provided by solicitors in private practice who are contracted by the Board and placed on a panel for this purpose.

Legal aid is available in relation to most civil matters. A limited number of matters are excluded from the scope of civil legal aid, and you should consult with your local law centre solicitor if you need more information or clarification on this.

Questions you should ask when employing a solicitor

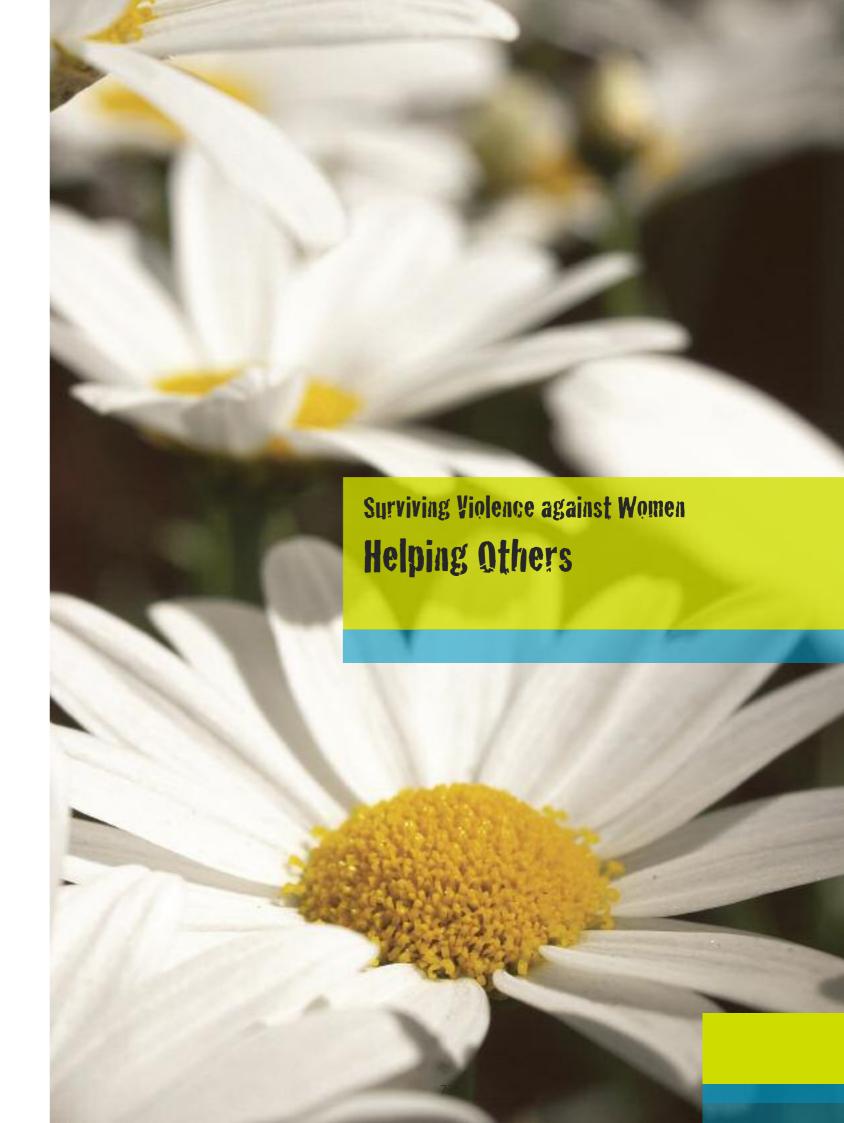
- How much do you charge by the hour?
- What is your minimum fee?
- What is covered in this fee?
- How many negotiations sessions are included?
- O How many court appearance s are included?
- What is your rate for appearance in court?
- o Make sure your solicitor has experience in family law, check with your local help line.

After telling your solicitors about all the facts of your case you should ask the following:

- O How much maintenance can I expect?
- Can I expect to remain in the family home?
- Can I expect to get custody of my children?
- What access rights can I expect my husband / partner to be granted by the courts?

Write down a list of questions you have and wish to know from your solicitors. Don't be afraid to bring these with you or to question your solicitor if he/she uses terminology that you don't understand.

In case of civil legal aid, even though you won't have the choice of solicitors you are still that solicitor's client and you are entitled to the same standard of representation as a paying client. You should not be afraid to question anything you do not understand or agree to anything you are not sure of.

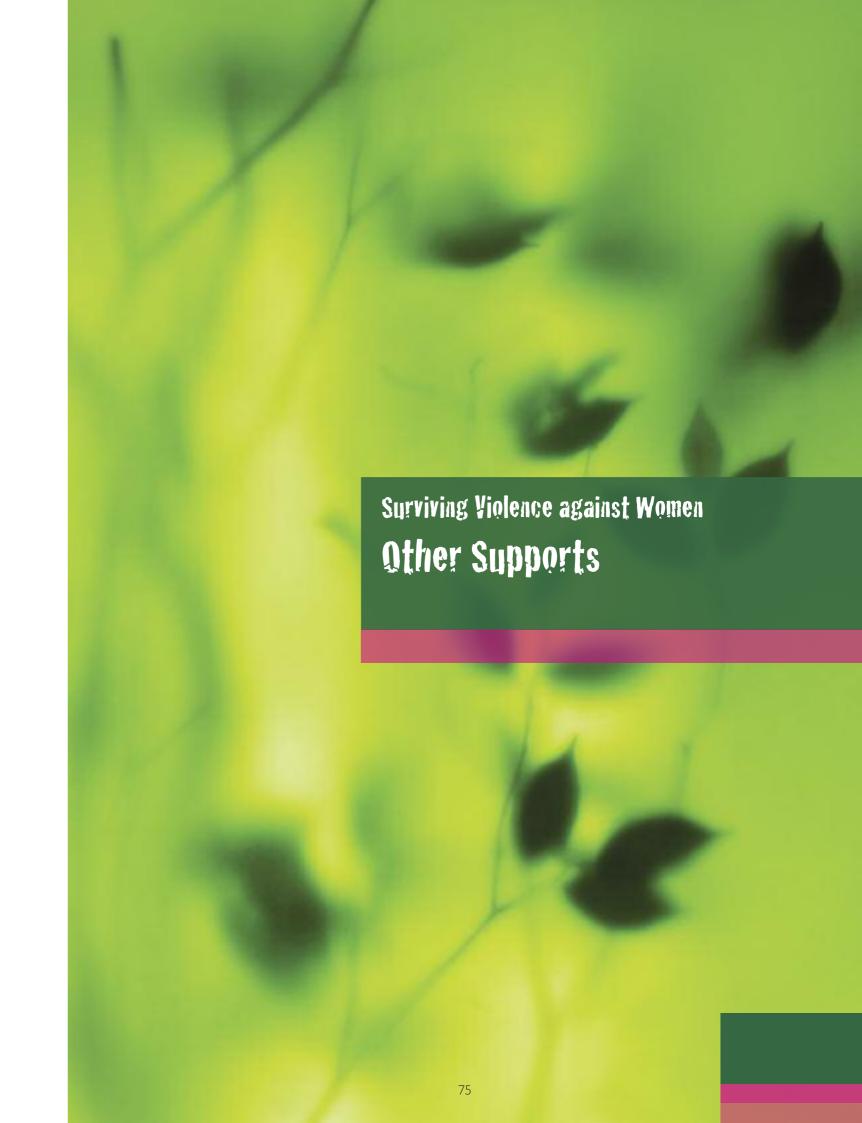


How can I help a friend or relative living with violence?

It can often be very difficult for a woman to even recognise she is in an abusive relationship, never mind disclose it or talk to someone else about it. However, if you suspect or know a friend, family member, colleague or neighbour is experiencing domestic violence, the following may be useful:

- O Approach her in an understanding, non-blaming way. Explain to her that she is not alone and that there are many women like her in the same situation. Acknowledge that it takes strength to trust someone enough to talk to them about experiencing abuse. Give her time to talk; don't push her to go into too much detail if she doesn't want to.
- Acknowledge that she is in a scary, difficult situation. Tell her that no-one deserves to be threatened or beaten, despite what her abuser has told her. Nothing she can do or say can justify the abuser's behaviour.
- Support her as a friend. Be a good listener. Encourage her to express her hurt and anger.
 Allow her to make her own decisions, even if it means she isn't ready to leave the relationship.
 This is her decision.
- Ask if she has suffered physical harm. Offer to go with her to the hospital if she needs to go. Help her to report the assault to the police if she chooses to do so.
- Be ready to provide information on the help available to abused women and their children.
 Explore the available options with her. Go with her to visit a solicitor if she is ready to take this step. Help her find her nearest refuge or support service and support her if she wants to contact them for support or consider going into a refuge.
- o If she has children, talk to her about their safety. Encourage her to seek support from a domestic violence service or social worker if she feels the children are being affected or are at risk from abuse.
- Plan safe strategies (see Safety Plan section above). Let her create the boundaries of what is safe and what is not safe; don't encourage her to follow any strategies that she is expressing doubt about.
- Offer the use of your address and/or telephone number for information and messages relating to her situation.

Look after yourself while you are supporting someone through such an emotional and difficult experience.





Money / Financial Support

Supplementary Welfare Payments

The Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA) Scheme was introduced for persons whose means are insufficient to meet their needs and those of their dependants. It can consist of a basic payment and/or a supplement in respect of certain expenses a person may not be able to meet. All SWA payments are means tested. This means that any extra income, in addition to your Social Welfare or SWA payment, either you or your spouse/partner have could affect how much you receive. The main purpose of the scheme is:

- o To provide immediate and flexible assistance for those in need who do not qualify for payment under other State schemes
- o To guarantee a standard basic minimum income
- To provide people with low incomes with a weekly supplement to meet certain special needs (e.g. rent and mortgage interest payments) or a payment to help with the cost of any exceptional needs they may have
- o To help those whose needs are inadequately met under the major schemes and those confronted with an emergency situation

The main types of payments available under the SWA scheme are:

- o Basic Weekly Payment
- Rent/Mortgage Supplements
- o Exceptional Needs Payments
- Urgent Needs Payments

Rent / Mortgage Supplement Allowance

You may qualify for a Rent Supplement if you live in private rented accommodation and are unable to meet the cost of your rent. You must be in receipt of either a Social Welfare payment or SWA payment in order to receive this Supplement.

Community Welfare Officers (CWO's) in local Health Centres have guidelines on what is considered reasonable accommodation for your family size and there are specific 'caps' or limits on the maximum amount of rent you are allowed to pay to a landlord in order to qualify for a Rent Supplement.

If your rent is above the maximum 'cap' or limit for your family size the Health Board can refuse to pay any rent supplement.

Each Health Board area has its own maximum rent levels and different levels apply to single people, couples and couples/lone parents with children. Contact the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (www.inou.ie) for more information on the different levels.

If you apply for a Rent Supplement you will be referred to your local authority for an 'assessment of housing needs'. You may not qualify for a rent supplement until a housing assessment has been completed by the local authority.

Some of the most common reasons that people do not qualify for a rent supplement are:

- o The rent is too high
- Your income is too high
- One member of the household is working full-time (over 30 hours per week or more)

There may be other reasons why a Rent Supplement can be refused, please contact the INOU for more information.

One Parent Family Payment

One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) is a payment for men and women who are bringing children up without the support of a partner. For example, it is payable to an unmarried person, a widowed person, prisoner's spouse, a separated or divorced person, or one whose marriage has been annulled.

To get this payment you must meet certain conditions and you must satisfy a means test. If you are divorced or unmarried, you must also have attempted to get maintenance from the child's other parent (father or mother). For more information check out www.citizeninformation.ie

Family Income Supplement

Family Income Supplement (FIS) a weekly tax-free payment available to married or unmarried employees with children. It gives extra financial support to people on low pay.

You must have at least one child who normally lives with you or is financially supported by you. Your child must be under 18 years of age or between 18 and 22 years of age and in full-time education.

To qualify for FIS, your net average weekly family income must be below a certain amount for your family size. The FIS you receive is 60% of the difference between your net family income and the income limit which applies to your family.



National Traveller MABS

National Traveller MABS is part of the national network of Money Advice and Budgeting Services around the country that offer free, confidential and independent services for people in debt or in danger of getting into debt.

National Traveller MABS was established in January 2005 to support these MABS services nationally on issues relating to the Traveller Community. It also supports the Traveller Community nationally in relation to money matters by linking them into their local service.

Contact Details

National Traveller MABS Unit 2, North Park, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11

E: nationaltraveller@mabs.ie

T: 01 864 8510 Helpline at 1980 283 438.

Housing / Accommodation

The family home is a dwelling in which the married couple live. It could be a flat, a house or a mobile home. The family home protection act 1976 covers only married couples. The act seeks to provide protection for the non earning spouse or the spouse who works in the home.

The Monitoring Committee for the 1995 Task Force Report highlighted in its first progress report in 2000.

The Monitoring Committee wish to highlight the fact that in reality one in every four Traveller families are currently living without access to water, toilets and refuse collection. The accommodation situation has disimproved over the past five years it is also particularly unsatisfactory that the numbers of Travellers on the roadside has increased.

Married Couples - Who owns the family home?

Ownership depends on the following:

- O The name under which the property is registered and / or
- Who paid for the property

Joint Owners: this is where the house is bought and registered in both spouses' names. In the case of separation it is possible to sell the home and divide the sales proceeds.

House in husbands name only: it may be his sole property but if the wife has contributed her own income or earnings from outside the home, she may have gained a beneficial interest in the property.

House owned by local authority or other body: most tenancies are granted jointly. Where the tenancy is in one name only, it is possible for the local authority to have it changed to joint names if they have a court order.

Can a husband sell the family home and leave the wife and children without a home: a husband or wife cannot sell the family home without the written consent of the other spouse regardless of whose name is on the deeds of the house. However, the spouses consent can be dispensed with by the court, if the court is satisfied that consent is being withheld unreasonably e.g. if the other spouse is willing to provide suitable alternative accommodation for the family.

Suitable Alternative Accommodation is the accommodation of the same standard as the previous family home, if the spouse can afford it.



Co-habiting couples refers to couples that live together as man and wife but are not legally married. The family home protection act 1976 does not legally apply to co habiting couples. There are two ways in which co-habiting couples can purchase a property

Joint Ownership – as joint owners, you own the whole property between you. If one of you dies, then the other inherits the property subject to tax liability.

Tenants in common – as tenants in common, you each own distinct shares in the property, which you may leave to someone in a will.

In the case of separating couples, if you separate and cannot agree about selling the house which you own jointly, you may make an application to court to divide the beneficial interest in the property. If it is one name only and that person decides to sell, the other partner may have no say in the matter. Legal action is expensive; however you may be entitled to civil legal aid. Professional legal advice is recommended on any legal matter.

Local Authority Housing

Traveller women are living in a range of accommodation types with their families, spouses and partners, from standard local authority housing, to Traveller specific accommodation such as group housing schemes and halting sites. The Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community published in 1995 recommended that 3,100 new units of both Traveller specific accommodation and standard housing would need to be provided by the year 2000. Of these 3,100 units, it was identified that 2,200 of these should be halting site bays and transient bays and the remaining 900 should be standard housing and group housing. This figure has been used since 1995 as a yardstick by which Traveller organisations have measured what needs to be provided.

If a person is in need of emergency or permanent accommodation and cannot afford to provide it themselves, they should contact the relevant local authority and complete an application form for re – housing

Application forms are available in your local housing authority. The application must be assessed by your local authority which will involve an interview. If a woman has to leave her home due to domestic abuse, it is important that she makes contact with the housing officer. An environmental housing officer will call to discuss housing circumstances and need. You will need to call into the housing department on a regular basis to discuss your application and its progress.

If you have to leave your home due to domestic violence, you may wish to seek accommodation in a women's refuge. There is a network of refuges throughout the country, and you should find the phone number for your nearest refuge in the emergency section of your local phone directory or refer to page 35.

In addition you could contact the Irish Traveller Movement which is the National Traveller Organisation with specific expertise on Accommodation.

Irish Traveller Movement 4/5 Eustace Street
Dublin 2

E: itmtrav@indigo.ie

T: 01 6796577 W: itmtrav.ie

Sonas Housing Association

Applications to Sonas Housing Association for supported transitional housing are by referral only. If you are interested in this option, you can ask your social worker, housing welfare officer, Women's Aid, or any other support agency that you may be working with to consider making an application on your behalf.

Sonas Housing Association
Unit 8 Liberty Corner,
Foley Street, Dublin I

E: info@sonashousing.ie

T: (01) 8349027 W: www.sonashousing.ie



Respond Housing Association

Respond was established in 1982 and is Ireland's largest non-profit Housing Association. Respond have built more than 4000 homes nationwide with a further 1500 under construction. Respond have provided homes for traditional families, lone-parent families, the elderly, the homeless and disabled people.

Respond aims to:

- o Establish and maintain vibrant, socially integrated communities rather than simply providing just shelter or accommodation
- o Advance education among residents of our estates
- o Promote other charitable purposes beneficial to the community
- o Prevent and relieve hardship and distress amongst those who are homeless and amongst those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions

Respond believes in providing housing for social investment rather than financial profit. Therefore, we provide housing for some of the most vulnerable groups in society including those who have lived for long periods in hostels, temporary and insecure accommodation

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Respond
High Park campus,
Grace Park Road,
Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

E: info@respond.ie

T: (0818) 357 901 W: www.respond.ie

Addiction

Exchange House Drugs Project

The project aims to develop a response to the needs of Travellers in the South Inner City who are at risk of becoming involved in drug misuse and addiction.

Exchange House Drugs Service aims to deliver a service that is client-centred, non-judgemental, collaborative, and governed by a code of practice to ensure transparency and accountability.

The project so far

Within the Traveller community, changes have taken place in the lifetime of the project. People are now more open to discussing the problem of drug misuse and willing to look at programmes and treatment options that are available. As in Irish society at large the problem of drug has become more visible and in some ways more socially acceptable within the Traveller community. In order to be effective, programmes have be targeted at specific groups and tailored to local needs.

A significant client base has built up with self referrals and referrals from other services increasing. Much of the time of the Addiction Counsellor, in addition to delivering an individual counselling service, involves linking clients to other services, introducing them to key people within services, and encouraging Travellers to avail of the many mainstream facilities available in the south inner city area.

Two education programmes have been delivered, one to parents in Labre Park and the second to boys in the Ballymunn area, in conjunction with Travellers Youth Services. Feedback from these programmes will inform future work in relation to the development of appropriate information materials.

The addiction counsellor will also visit Travellers in prison who may come into contact with drugs while inside and is available on their release to assist them to engage with services.

Lessons from the project so far

The issues faced by the Traveller community in this area are no different to those faced by the rest of Irish society. These issues include misuse of alcohol, polydrug misuse, the social acceptability of cocaine use.

It is impossible to separate the problem of drug misuse from the other issues facing Travellers, such as inadequate accommodation, discrimination, poor experience of education and consequent low self esteem among many young Travellers.



Working within a family support agency such as Exchange House means that issues other than drugs misuse can also be addressed, such as welfare rights entitles, debt management etc.

An outreach approach is proving effective in reaching people who may not be in touch with any health services.

Educational programmes targeted at Travellers have resulted in increased awareness of the possibility of addressing the drug problem among the Traveller community.

Ongoing networking, support and liaison among statutory, voluntary and community agencies is raising awareness of the needs of Traveller drug users.

Due to the concern among Travellers that mainstream agencies may not be able to address the needs of Traveller drug users, a holistic, integrated approach in addressing ill health among the Traveller community is needed.

Very often, once a person has participated in a comprehensive assessment interview at a treatment centre, they are then informed that there is a long waiting list. This is a significant deterrent and points to the need to increase the service provision for all drug users in the Dublin area.

The results from the Drugs project are positive so far in that the project succeeded in engaging Travellers in this sensitive area. The challenge is now to move on, in conjunction with other providers in the south inner city area, to develop an integrated approach with managed entry and exit points so that people who are ready to address their drug or alcohol problems will find a ready and accessible pathway to assist them.

Exchange House Travellers Service 61 Great Strand Street,
Dublin I, Ireland

E: info@exchangehouse.ie

T: (+ 353 1) 872 1094 W: www.exchangehouse.ie

How to find us

Office on the north guays, just off Jervis Street

Suicide Prevention - Gross care project

Travellers and Traveller organisations established the Traveller Suicide Working Group (TSWG) in September 2004 in response to their growing concern of the perceived increase in completed suicides within the Traveller Community.

The membership of the TSWG has grown and it reflects the growing incidences of suicide within the Traveller community around the country.

TSWG have led the way to ensure that Travellers are represented in National Suicide Prevention Intervention and Postvention strategies that may be developed. The TSWG is an important forum for the sharing of information on models of good practice, conferencing and identifying funding opportunities. It is also an important channel of communication to and from Traveller projects, so Traveller needs can be identified more readily and information communicated more effectively.

Crosscare
Traveller Inclusion Project
Clonliffe College,
Dublin 3.

E: info@crosscare.ie

T: 01 8300011

W: www.crosscare.ie

16 Days of Action against Violence against Women

What is the 16 Days Campaign?

The 16 Days of Action Opposing Violence against Women runs from the 25th November (International Day against Violence against Women) to 10th December (International Human Rights Day).

It is an international campaign that started in 1991 and now has over 2000 organizations from over 130 countries participating.

In 1999 the United Nations officially recognized 25th November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

To get more information on the campaign log onto www.womensaid.ie

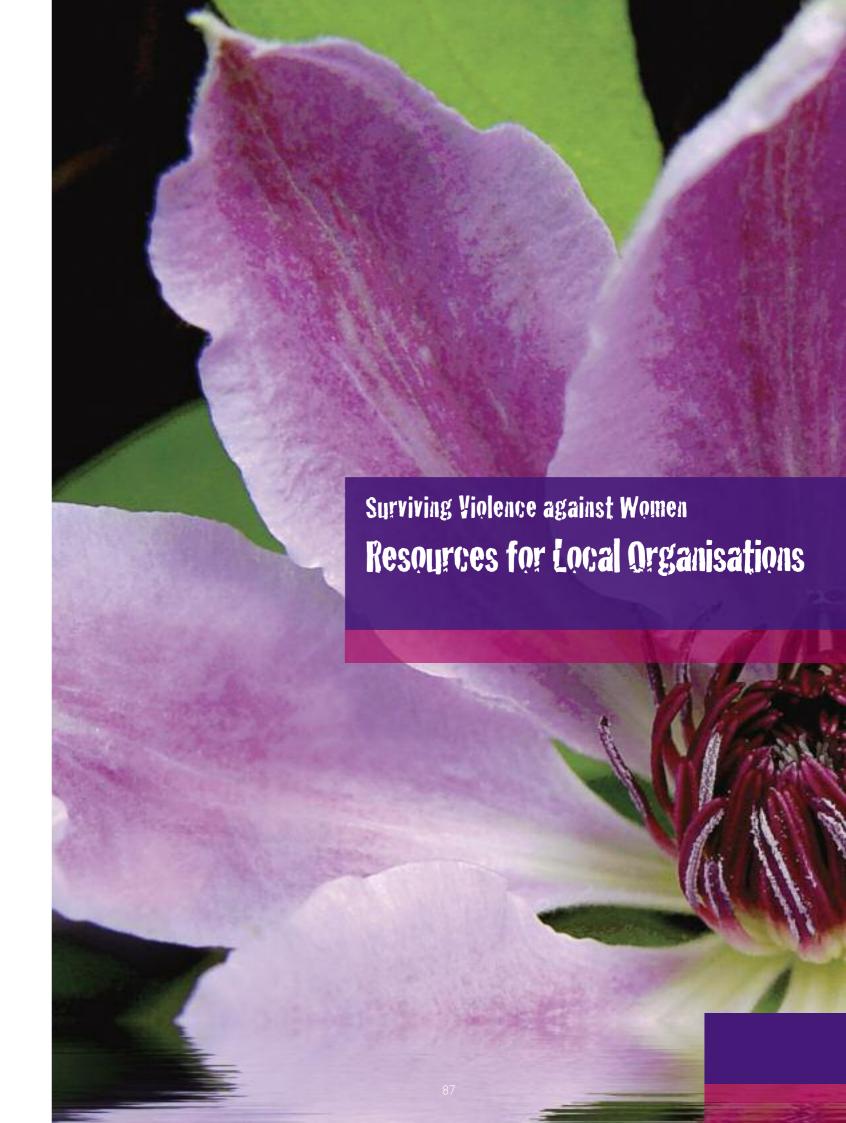
What are the Aims of the Campaign?

- o To highlight the prevalence of violence against women.
- To raise awareness of violence against women as a human rights issue at local, national and international level.
- o To show the solidarity of women around the world organising to challenge violence against women.
- To work towards the elimination of all forms of violence

Women's Aid 47 Old Cabra Road, Dublin 7.

E: info@womensaid.ie

T: 01 8684721 W: www.womensaid.ie Helpline 1800 341900





Sample Safety Plan

A safety plan is a series of actions you can take when you feel afraid or threatened. Such a plan, prepared in advance, would maximise safety and prevent panic. You may wish to consider some of the following:

KEYAREAS	NUMBER / CONTACT DETAILS
Where you can go to make a telephone call or have a mobile phone	
A safe place where you can stay in an emergency. This may be with a friend or relative, a woman's refuge, a hotel or a B&B	
The telephone number of the safe place Local Refuge or Support Service Number	The Woman's Aid FREE National Helpline is 1800 341900
How to get to the safe place. Decide how you will get t here at different times of the day and night	
The number of a local taxi firm	
List of things to do	Contact your local support and information service as they can support you and help you to prepare for emergencies. Call the Gardaí if you have been assaulted or are in fear of an assault. They can advise and guide you on the legal aspects of domestic abuse Hiding emergency money, keys and important documents with a friend for easy access in an emergency. These would include marriage certificate, your own and children's birth certificates, photographs of previous injuries, your own and your children's medical cards, PPS Number and or social welfare card, child benefit book, bank and credit union account numbers or books. Begin to collect and keep these items all together so you won't have to return for them

Local Contact Sheet

Please complete this form and update regularly

NAME	NUMBER / CONTACT DETAILS	CONTACT PERSON
GARDAI STATION		
REFUGE		
B & B		
SUPPORT SERVICE FOR WOMEN		
WOMENS AID HELPLNE	1800 341900	
SOCIAL WORKER HSE		
RAPE CRISIS CENTRE		
GP		
HOSPITAL		
LOCAL COUNSELLING SERVICE		
LOCAL MABS		
LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING		
COMMUNITY WELFARE OFFICER		



Exercises / Games for working with groups

Violence against Women means any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts or coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life:

- O Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.
- O Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual harassment and intimidation at work in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution.
- o Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetuated or condoned by the State

"VAW is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to the domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement" (the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995). VAW is used to keep the ideology of patriarchy alive.

- o Life Cycle Exercise
- Multi Media Exercise
- o Definition of Sexism
- o Violence in Public & private Spheres
- VAW Internal Barriers
- Mousetrap
- o Action for Change

EXERCISE Purpose	LIFE CYCLE EXERCISE To develop a time-line of the gender roles and responsibilities experienced, by Traveller women and men throughout the phases of their life cycle e.g. pre-birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and elderly. This exercise begins to highlight the issues of sexism, patriarchy and power and control.	
How to	Preparation: Draw the (handout) up on a flipchart pad, twice. Method: 1. Divide the group in two and give each group one of the pre-prepared flipchart pages. 2. Ask one group to fill it out from the perspective of a female and the other to do it from the perspective of a male. Get each group to feedback their conclusions to the large group. 3. From the feedback and discussion identify where there is agreement of differences of opinion. 4. Then ask the group to agree on five key observations on the experience of women in their life cycle and complete this task also in relation to men.	
Facilitator's Requirements	flipchart & markers,	
Time needed	I hour	

EXERCISE Purpose	MULTI MEDIA EXERCISE This exercise uses images to illustrate the representations of women and men in media and how these images/representations reinforce and legitimise the construction of Roles; what men and women do. Relations; how women and men relate to each other and Identify; how women and men perceive themselves.	
How to	Method: 1. Divide the group into two smaller groups and give them a selection of magazines newspapers, scissors and glue. 2. Get one group to do a collage to show how women and femininity are perceived and portrayed. Ask the other group to complete the same task but in relation to men and masculinity. 3. When the groups have completed this task get each group to present back their collages. In the large group agree the general terms you could use to describe the images portrayed in the collages. 4. Ask the group what this tells them as women about women's roles and men's roles in society. Address the following questions: Are women and men viewed the same? What messages do these images give? How do these messages affect the roles/relations and identity of men and women?	
Facilitator's Requirements	Flipchart & markers, magazines and newspapers, scissors and glue.	
Time needed	I hour	

EXERCISE Purpose	DEFINITION OF SEXISM To explore the concept and definition of sexism. It also introduces new terms and words and looks at ways of recognising and challenging sexism within society. 'Sexism is an ideology of patriarchy (belief that men are superior to women) and can be used to support men's use of violence and control over women'.
How to	Method: 1. Share and discuss the definition of sexism with the group. Spend time making sure that everyone understands the definition. 2. Get the group to work together to develop their own definition of sexism ensuring that it ties in with the key points of the definition above. Then discuss with the group different examples of sexism in action. Finally discuss the statement 'Sexism is part of Traveller culture or something that happens in our culture to justify men's superiority'
Facilitator's Requirements	Flipchart & markers,
Time needed	45 minutes

EXERCISE Purpose	VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC & PRIVATE SPHERES Violence is encountered by women at a number of levels in the home in wider society and by the state. Therefore, it is essential that these levels of violence be examined and challenged. This exercise also provides space for participants to identify levels of violence within society, explore societal attributes on violence and ways of challenging violence.
How to	 Break the group into two smaller groups. Get one group to discuss the various forms of violence that affect women in public. (By violence we mean any forms of negative power and control that is exercised over women.) Ask the other group to explore the types of violence that happen to women in the private sphere (at home or in the community). Discuss the findings in the large group
Facilitator's Requirements	Flipchart & markers,
Time needed	30 minutes

EXERCISE Purpose	VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: INTERNAL BARRIERS To explore the issue of violence against women and specifically to examine the internal barriers and obstacles.	
How to	 Show the video 'Pavee Beoirs – Breaking the Silence'. After the video talk the group through an overview of the issues. Then ask the group to address the following questions: Name some of the issues women face when they experience mental abuse? Do Traveller women experience rape and sexual abuse? If so why can't they talk or seek help because of it. Is sexism part of Traveller culture? Who do Traveller women tend to talk to? What happens when they tell someone? 	
Facilitator's Requirements	Video Flipchart & markers,	
Time needed	I hour	

EXERCISE Purpose	MOUSETRAP To illustrate the gaps, barriers and obstacles that Traveller women may face when seeking support from the various support structures.	
How to	Preparation: Handout 1. Place the cards with the names of service providers randomly on the ground. 2. Place the corresponding narrative pieces alongside the appropriate service provider (face down). 3. Ask for a volunteer to play the role of Margaret and ask the rest of the group to stand around silently and listen. 4. Ask Margaret to initiate the game by reading card one and role-play it to its completion. After Margaret has completed the exercise split the group into three or four small groups and address the following questions. What barriers do Traveller women face when seeking support? How are the gaps in current service provision for Traveller women? How will the groups/organisations address the above? List 5 key points to form an agenda on VAVV. Bring the group back for a plenary discussion and feedback.	
Facilitator's Requirements	All elements of the Mousetrap game, flipchart & markers	
Time needed	I hour	



EXERCISE Purpose	ACTION FOR CHANGE To look at the actions that need to be taken to ensure Traveller women's needs and experiences are included on the VAW agenda.
How to	Preparation: Pre-prepare a flipchart sheet with three columns and the following headings — Travellers/Traveller organisations/Service providers.
	Method: Break the group into smaller groups and ask them the make a list of the priority actions that need to be taken to address the issue of violence against women. Take feedback from the various groups and discuss under which of the three columns the priorities should be placed.
Facilitator's Requirements	flipchart & markers
Time needed	45 minutes

Life Cycle Exercise Handout

LIFE CYCLE	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MEN / WOMEN)
Pre-birth	
Infancy	
Boyhood	
Teenager	
Adulthood	
Older People	



Mousetrap Exercise Handout I

Margaret is hiding in the trailer covering up the marks from the beating her partner gave her earlier this morning. The beatings have been happening for quite a while now. She is worried about her children. Margaret thinks her arm may be broken. Margaret doesn't have much money – her partner only gave her money for shopping. But she needs to get to the A & E or the doctors surgery as she is in pain.

I. Go to GP

The GP prescribes painkillers but says she cannot keep seeing her as she has taken up too much of her valuable time in the past and refers her to the A & E at the local hospital. However Margaret has been away from the site now for four hours so she needs to get back as the children with her are tired and cranky now.

2. Go back home

The next day Margaret's arm is not getting any better. She remembers what the GP told her – so she decides to go to the hospital to get it checked out.

3. Go to the hospital A & E

At the A & E Margaret says the painkillers given to her by the doctor are not working. The nurse asks Margaret how she broke her arm. Margaret says she slipped and fell over getting out of her trailer this morning. The nurse fixes her broken arm but does not ask any further questions, but does remark how another Traveller woman had been in yesterday. Margaret goes back home. The nurse did not make a record of her visit.

4. Go back home.

It has been a month now since Margaret went to A & E. She now has to return to get her cast off. However before she leaves she is worried about the new bruises on her body.

5. Go to hospital A & E

At the hospital the nurse sees the bruises and asks what happened, again Margaret says she fell over. Margaret asks the nurse for some nerve tablets, the nurse tells her she should see a social worker. Margaret thinks of her children and says she needs to get back home and does not have enough time to talk.

6. Go back home

2 months later, Margaret is in the bay next to her sisters. Margaret has only been there for a short time. Her partner unexpectedly returns to her trailer, he calls her twice. Margaret appears. He says, 'I told you, you were not to visit your sister when I am not here, where is my dinner and who is looking after the children?'. This time he beats her kicks her and threatens to kill her. He leaves the trailer. Margaret phones the Gardaí. Two hours later the Gardaí comes to the site but fail to take the call out seriously as the partner is not in the trailer and say they cannot do anything for her

The next morning Margaret's husband promises her that he will stop beating her and says he will go to the Priest to get the pledge.

7. Go to the priest

The priest gives Margaret's partner the pledge and tells her that she should support him through this difficult period. The Priest notices Margaret's bruises but remarks that she needs to be a strong woman and that every marriage has its ups and downs.

8. Go home

It has been a year now since Margaret called the Gardaí out and visited the Priest. Since then Margaret has experienced 2 more beatings and has lived with the constant abuse in the way of name calling, yelling and threatening behaviour. The children have started showing signs of stress and are becoming afraid to go to sleep at night. Some of the women who live in the site know what Margaret is going through. They do not want to interfere, but one woman who is a Primary Healthcare Worker with the Traveller Support Group has brought a leaflet home. The leaflet has a phone number and an address of a local refuge. Her partner is threatening to hit the children. Margaret decides to go to the refuge. Margaret organises her five children ranging from 11 years to 4 years old and leaves the site.

9. Go to the refuge

Margaret has been in the refuge now for 2 weeks. The staff in the refuge told her that they can only have one Traveller family at a time and it was lucky for her that there were no other Traveller family staying. Although Margaret was glad to be in a safe space for a short amount of time she felt that the refuge staff kept on making the point of how often and how many Traveller women use the service, they also made remarks about the way Margaret was disciplining her children. Margaret felt that the staff treated her differently because she was a Traveller – but she was not sure.

The End

Mousetrap Exercise Handout 2

GP

PRIEST

COMMUNITY WELFARE OFFICER

PRIMARY
HEALTHCARE WORKER

TRAVELLER SUPPORT GROUP

TRAVELLER HEALTH UNIT

SOCIAL WORKER

LOCAL VAW ORGANISATION

HOSPITALA & E

FAMILY

COURTS

HOME/SITE

TRAVELLER HEALTH UNIT

REFUGE

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

HELPLINE

Sample Organisational Policy - One

Organisations / Groups / Companies wishing to develop an in-house domestic violence policy might want to take a look at this document provided by the Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence.

Introduction

(Company Name) seeks to provide a work environment free from violence or threats of violence against individuals, groups, or employees, or threats against company property-including partner violence that may occur on our property. This policy requires that all individuals on company premises or while representing the Company conduct themselves in a professional manner consistent with good business practices and in absolute conformity with non-violence principles and standards.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, workplace violence is defined as a single behaviour or series of behaviours which constitute actual or potential assault, battery, harassment, intimidation, threats or similar actions, attempted destruction, or threats to Company or personal property; which occur in a Company workplace, at a Company work location, or while an individual is engaged in Company business.

Company Response

(Company Name) strictly prohibits use of violence or threats of violence in the workplace and views such actions very seriously. The possession of weapons in the workplace, threats, threatening or menacing behaviour, stalking, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on (Company Name) property will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment and the involvement of appropriate law enforcement authorities as needed.

Any person who makes substantial threats, exhibits threatening behaviour, or engages in violent acts on (Company Name) premises shall be removed from the property as quickly as safety permits, and may be asked to remain away from (Company Name) premises pending the outcome of an investigation into the incident. People who commit these acts outside the workplace but which impact the workplace are also violating this policy and will be dealt with appropriately.

When threatening behaviour is exhibited or acts of violence are committed, (Company Name) will initiate an appropriate response. This response may include, but is not limited to, evaluation by

(Company Name) Employee Assistance Professionals and/or external professionals, suspension and/or termination of any business relationship, reassignment of job duties, suspension or termination of employment, and/or criminal prosecution of the person/persons involved. No existing (Company Name) policy, practice, or procedure should be interpreted to prohibit decisions designed to prevent a threat from being carried out, a violent act from occurring, or a life-threatening situation from developing.

Reporting Procedure

(Company Name) personnel are responsible for notifying the designated management representative of any threats which they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received-including those related to partner violence. Even without an actual threat, personnel should also report any behaviour they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent, when that behaviour is job related or might be carried out on a company controlled site or is connected to company employment. Employees are responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behaviour and the person or persons who were threatened or were the focus of the threatening behaviour. If the designated representative is not available, personnel should report the threat to their supervisor or another member of the management team.

(Company Name) understands the sensitivity of the information requested and has developed confidentiality procedures, which recognize and respect the privacy of the reporting employee(s). Consistent with the values of (Company Name), people should take action in ways that maintain respect and dignity for individuals while acting in an accountable and swift manner to address the situation.

Protective or Restraining Orders

All individuals who apply for and obtain a protective or restraining order which lists company locations as being protected areas, must provide to the designated management representative a copy of the petition and order.

Designated Management Representative

Name:

Title:

Department:

Telephone:

Location:

Partner Violence and the Workplace

(Company Name) recognizes impact of partner violence on the workplace. Partner violence is

defined by (Company Name) as abusive behaviour occurring between two people in an intimate relationship. It may include physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and economic control.

(Company Name) is committed to heightening awareness of partner violence and providing guidance for employees and management to address the occurrence of partner violence and its effects on the workplace.

(Company Name) intends to make assistance available to employees involved in partner violence. This assistance may include: confidential means for coming forward for help, resource and referral information, special considerations at the workplace for employee safety, work schedule adjustments, or leave necessary to obtain medical, counselling, or legal assistance, and workplace relocation (if available). In responding to partner violence, (Company Name) will maintain appropriate confidentiality and respect for the rights of the employee involved.

(Company Name) intends to publish, maintain, and post in locations of high visibility, a list of resources for survivors and perpetrators of partner violence.

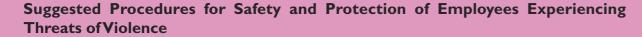
(Company Name) will not deny job benefits or other programs to employees based solely on partner violence related problems. When employees confide that a job performance or conduct problem is related to partner violence, in addition to appropriate corrective or disciplinary action consistent with company policy and procedure, a referral for appropriate assistance should be made to the employee.

Leave Options for Employees Experiencing Threats of Violence

(Company Name) will make every effort to assist an employee experiencing threats of violence. If an employee needs to be absent from work due to threats of violence, the length of the absence will be determined by the individual's situation through collaboration with the employee and (fill in appropriate title(s) for your company.) [Examples may include: supervisor/manager, Human Resources representative, union representative, etc.]

Employees, managers, and supervisors (or appropriate titles for your company) are encouraged to first explore paid leave options that can be arranged to help the employee cope with the situation without having to take a formal unpaid leave of absence. Depending on circumstances, this may include:

- Arranging flexible work hours so the employee can seek protection, go to court, look for new housing, enter counselling, arrange child care, etc.
- O Considering use of sick time, job sharing, compensatory time, paid leave, informal unpaid eave, etc., particularly if requests are for relatively short periods.



Employee

- o Encourage the employee to save any threatening e-mail or voice-mail messages. These can potentially be used for future legal action, or can serve as evidence that an existing restraining order was violated.
- The employee should obtain a restraining order that includes the workplace, and keep a copy on hand at all times. The employee may consider providing a copy to the police, his/her supervisor, security, or human resources [or appropriate individuals/departments within your company].
- The employee should provide a picture of the perpetrator to reception areas and/or security.
- The employee should identify an emergency contact person should the employer be unable to contact the victim.
- o If an absence is deemed appropriate, the employee should be clear about the plan to return to work. While absent, the employee should maintain contact with the appropriate Human Resources personnel

Employer

- Arrange the victim to have priority parking near the building.
- O Have calls screened, transferring harassing calls to security-or have the employee's name removed from automated phone directories.
- o Limit information about employees disclosed by phone. Information that would help locate a victim or indicates a time of return should not be provided.
- o Relocate the employee's workspace to a more secure area or another site.
- o The employer should have trained EAP professionals or external professionals assist the employee with development of a safety plan
- Work with local law enforcement personnel, and encourage employees to do so regarding situations outside the workplace.

Sample Organisational Policy - Two

Project Statement:

The Project condemns outright all violence. The Project is committed to working to prevent violence occurring at all and any levels, and recognises the experience for many Travellers of suffering from violence at the hands of the settled community.

While the Project recognises that both men and women are subjected to violence, in the vast majority of cases where violence occurs among persons who are known to one another, research has shown that women are injured and men carry out the assault.

In the majority of incidents of violence against women, the attacker is not a stranger but is known to the victim and is likely to have, or have had an intimate relationship with the woman. Whether it be sexual assault, rape, physical assault or emotional abuse, women are at greater risk from husbands, boyfriends, male relatives and acquaintances than from strangers. Violent attacks of this nature are rarely once off occurrences, but are likely to be persistent and frequent with the objective of instilling fear in victims.

The Project acknowledges, as research has shown that violence against women occurs in all social classes. However as recognised by the Task Force on Violence against Women "the effects of violence can be all the more traumatic for women living in geographically isolated areas, women living in poverty, women with physical or mental disabilities, women from different cultures and Traveller women. The cumulative effects of living in poverty, isolation and poor environmental conditions in themselves damage women's health. When these difficulties are combined with physical, mental and emotional abuse, the effects are enormous".

A Traveller woman's problems in accessing help and support may also be compounded by racist reactions and/or cultural barriers. Where this occurs, the Project is committed to challenging and working with such agencies and organisations in order to encourage and support them to develop responses appropriate to Traveller women and to recognise the right of Traveller women to be involved in identifying what appropriate responses are.

The Project recognises:

- o That violence against women is an abuse of Human Rights. IT should not be rationalised or minimised. There is never an acceptable or tolerable level of violence.
- O Where violence against women is disclosed or suspected, this should always be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

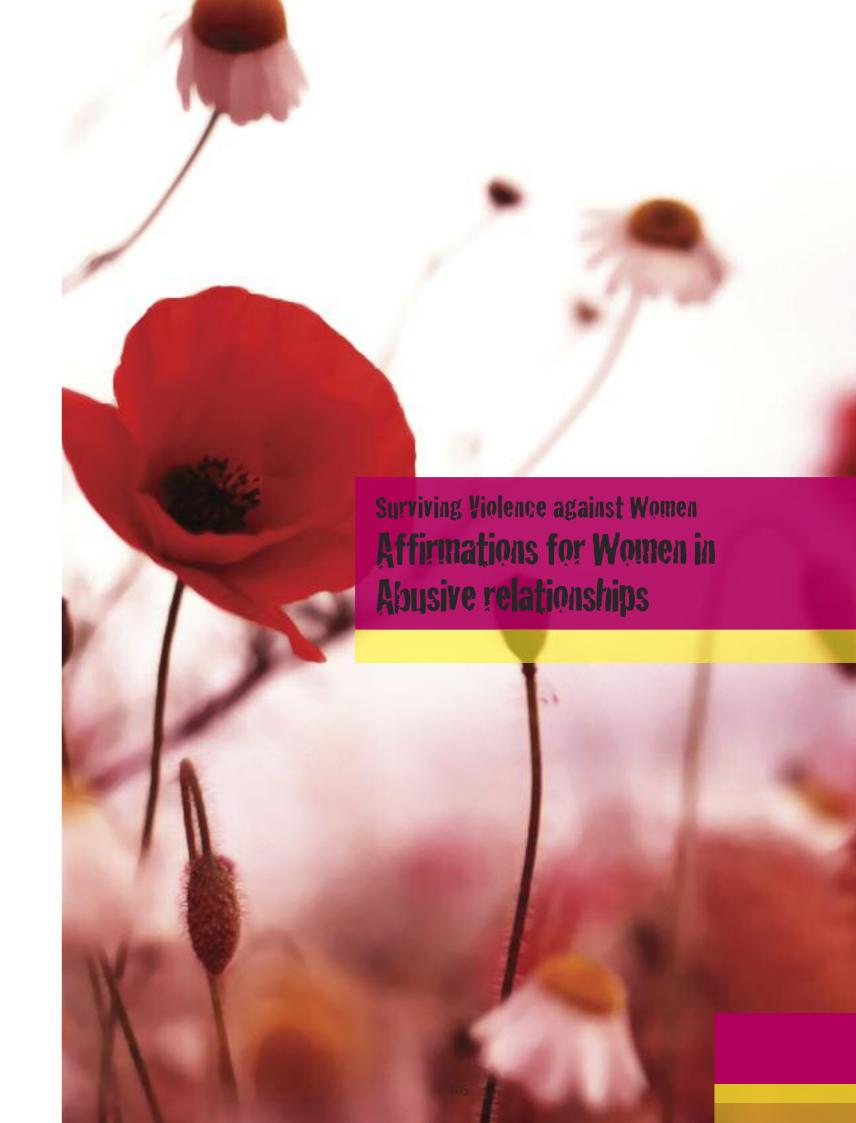
That violence against women covers a range of abuse, from physical to mental and sexual abuse and violence may not always be visible.

The Project's response to women experiencing violence:

- o The approach of the Project to women experiencing violence should be supportive, non judgmental and consistent.
- Our primary concern should always be the safety of women at risk and their children and any response should be based on their needs.
- O The Project will work towards creating a supportive environment where the issue of violence against women can be discussed and where women who are experiencing violence can feel safe, when disclosing abuse.
- Respect for the individual and safeguarding of the person's rights, freedom of choice, privacy and desire for confidentiality are fundamental to an effective response.
- O The project recognises the role it can play in supporting Traveller women experiencing violence to access the appropriate services and supports.
- O Posters and information on violence against women should be clearly visible in the office, to give information on the services available to women who are experiencing violence and to send a clear and unambiguous message that violence is not acceptable.
- O The staff of the Project are not in a position to mediate between a women and her abuser, as this may increase the risk to her/our safety.
- The Project is committed to developing an analysis of violence against women, seeing it as an issue of power and control and to communicate this understanding among project members and management.

This policy should only be a part of wider policy on gender equality

(Developed by Galway Traveller Movement).





Say Every Day & Believe

I am not the cause of another person's violent behaviour

I am not to blame for being beaten or abused

I do not like it

I do not want it

I do not have to take it

Lam an important human being

I am a worthwhile woman

I deserve to be treated with respect

I can decide for myself what is best for me

I can make changes in my life if I want to

I am worth changing for

I am not alone; I can ask others for help

I deserve to make my own life safe and happy

I have the power within to do this.

Bibliography

Violence against Women – an issue for community work – Community Workers Co-operative, 78 Prospect Hill, Galway

Information Booklet for women, Tearmann, 17 North Rd Monaghan, Co. Monaghan www.safeireland.ie

www.rcni.ie

www.womensaid.ie

www.itmtrav.com

www.paveepoint.ie

www.cosc.ie

www.citizensinformation.ie

www.inou.ie

www.exchangehouse.ie

www.crosscare.ie

www.nattravellermabs.org

www.respond.ie

www.sonashousing.ie