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Hawliau Dynol

Equality and  
Human Rights  
Commission

**Break the silence on violence.**

**Torrwch y mudandod ar drais.**



**DOMESTIC ABUSE IS  
YOUR BUSINESS.**

**EICH BUSNES CHI  
YW CAMDRINIAETH  
DDOMESTIG.**

**Trade Union**

**Campaign pack**

**Pecyn ymgyrch**

**Undeb Lafur**

**[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)**

# Domestic abuse is your business

## Campaign pack

This campaign pack contains the following tools to raise awareness of domestic abuse:

- A **briefing paper** which you can customise for use in your newsletters or on your website
- **Campaign ideas** for the workplace
- **Myths and Facts** about domestic abuse
- A **quiz** to test your knowledge
- A **poster** for your workplace
- A **leaflet** on why employers should take action

You can also download from our website:

- A short three minute **digital story**
- **Bridget's story** – the business case for having a policy
- A **presentation** to customise

## Contacts

If you would like more information or help in planning your activities please contact:

Jennifer Dunne at the Equality and Human Rights Commission on 029 20447710 or at [jennifer.dunne@equalityhumanrights.com](mailto:jennifer.dunne@equalityhumanrights.com)

This guidance and supporting material is available online at [www.equalityhumanrights.com/yourbusiness](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/yourbusiness)



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## Briefing Paper

### About the campaign

'Who Do you See? Living together in Wales' found that 19% of the Welsh population believe that domestic abuse is best handled as a private matter. Yet, domestic abuse is not a private matter –domestic abuse is your business.

Our domestic abuse is your business campaign aims to raise awareness of domestic abuse in the workplace. We are encouraging employers to take action so that skilled and experienced staff are able to retain their jobs and feel safe and supported in the workplace.

### What are the campaign's key messages?

This campaign sees domestic abuse as a serious but preventable problem. The key messages for this campaign are:

- Many employees are affected by domestic abuse
- Domestic abuse impacts on productivity and performance
- Domestic abuse is a human rights and equality issue. It is also a health and safety concern
- You can make a difference
- Taking action works

### What is violence against women?

Violence against women is a cause and consequence of women's inequality. It encompasses, but is not limited to domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriage, crimes in the name of 'honour', human trafficking and sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and prostitution.

### Why focus on domestic abuse in the workplace?

Domestic abuse is one of the most prevalent forms of violence against women. While this campaign is set firmly within the context of violence against women, it focuses on domestic abuse and the workplace because of its prevalence and the clear links and crossover into the workplace.

Domestic abuse can follow women to work and affect the productivity, performance, attendance, emotional and physical health of employees. It can also lead to abuse in the workplace. Colleagues may be affected and fear for their own safety. Yet, for some the workplace can be a safe haven and offer routes to support and vital resources to help and support employees experiencing domestic abuse.

This is why domestic abuse is your business and why your involvement is crucial.

### **What is the evidence for needing action in the workplace?**

- Domestic abuse currently costs UK businesses over £2.7 billion a year.
- In the UK, in any one year, more than 20% of employed women take time off work because of domestic violence, and 2% lose their jobs as a direct result of the abuse.
- 75% of domestic violence victims are targeted at work – from harassing phone calls and abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced, to physical assaults.

We also know that that:

- Almost half of women have experienced some form of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking
- Two women each week are murdered by their partners or ex-partners in the UK
- 30% of case of domestic abuse start in pregnancy
- 85% of forced marriage cases involve female victims. The majority are under 24 years old and some are as young as ten years old.

### **What can I do?**

You **can** make a difference. This campaign pack includes ideas for action which you can take in the workplace to sit alongside a **domestic abuse workplace policy**. Please see our guidelines on what can be in an effective domestic abuse workplace policy.

# Domestic abuse is your business

## Campaign ideas for the workplace

### We are asking you to:

Make your workplace a safe place where colleagues can discuss, disclose and ask for help. You can do this by:

- Developing and implementing an effective domestic abuse workplace
- Raising awareness of domestic abuse in the workplace
- Providing training on domestic abuse

### You can make a difference

Domestic abuse is an important issue for all. It has no boundaries in terms of geography, wealth, race, religion, disability, age or sexuality. Statistically at least 10% of your employees are likely to be victims or survivors of domestic abuse every year.

Action needs to be taken at all levels of society – collectively and individually.

### The facts

- 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime
- Two women each week are murdered by their partners or ex-partners in the UK and a further ten women each week commit suicide as a means to escape an abusive relationship
- 42% of young people know girls who have been hit by a boyfriend and 40% of young people know girls who have been coerced or pressurised to have sex by a boyfriend
- Domestic abuse impacts on productivity and performance – 56% of abused women arrive late for work at least five times and 58% miss at least three days of work a month

## **Trade Union Representatives - What can you do?**

Putting domestic abuse on the bargaining agenda will benefit members and save lives.

Steps for trade union representatives could include:

### **Negotiating a policy and effective practice**

- Negotiate and implement a domestic abuse workplace policy to prevent domestic abuse, provide protection and ensure provision of services for those affected by domestic abuse
- Negotiate a staff training programme
- Promote domestic abuse as a health and safety issue
- Link the domestic abuse policy to other workplace policies e.g. dignity at work, sickness absence, pregnancy and maternity
- Promote the policy to all union members and ensure they know where to find it and carry out an annual awareness campaign
- In the public sector use the Gender Equality Duty and Human Rights Act as levers to effectively prioritise domestic abuse and make the link to the wider violence against women issues, such as stalking

### **Raising awareness and ensuring a supportive workplace**

- Encourage members to discuss, disclose and ask for help
- Talk about domestic abuse and the wider violence against women context to make the workplace a safer place
- In campaign publicity be clear that perpetrators should be held accountable for their behaviour and that those who experience domestic abuse should be supported
- Publicise the services offered by trade unions that are beneficial to women experiencing domestic abuse, e.g. legal advice helplines and provide information about local support services
- Write articles about the 'domestic abuse is your business' campaign in your union newsletters - provide links to the domestic abuse workplace policy
- Promote helpline numbers in union posters and leaflets about domestic abuse and via union emails to members
- Collaborate with local voluntary groups to run awareness raising days for members

# Domestic abuse is your business

## Myths and Facts

**Myth: violence against women only occurs in poor, urban areas**

**FACT:** Anyone can be abused, no matter where they live or how much income they have. Violence against women has no boundaries in terms of geography, wealth, race, religion, disability, age or sexuality. Abused women come from all walks of life and there are no exceptions.

**Myth: violence against women is the same as violence against men**

**FACT:** Statistics do demonstrate that men can be victims of violence at the hands of partners and ex-partners. Nevertheless, men's experiences of violence are different. Male victims are less likely to suffer sustained violence, be seriously injured and report feeling fearful.

**Myth: domestic abuse doesn't happen in same sex relationships**

**FACT:** Violence does occur in same sex relationships, and the issues of power and control are similar to those found in heterosexual relationships. These victims can be faced with additional barriers when seeking help and support.

**Myth: domestic abuse is often a one-off incident**

**FACT:** Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident. It is often part of abusive and controlling behaviour and tends to increase in velocity and extent over a period of time.

**Myth: alcohol causes men to assault their partners**

**FACT:** There is no justification for violence. Alcohol can be a contributing factor to violence, but it is not the cause of it. Blaming alcohol attempts to excuse the abuse and allows the abuser to not take responsibility for their actions.

**Myth: women often provoke assaults and therefore 'ask for it'**

**FACT:** There is no justification for violence. No one 'deserves' being beaten. Long-standing exposure to violence can have the effect of making the woman believe that she deserves to be hurt. It can lessen confidence and some women may start to rationalise their partner's behaviour.

**Myth: particular cultures and religions expect violence towards women**

**FACT:** There is no evidence to suggest that women from some ethnic or cultural communities are any more at risk than others. In some communities, however, the form the abuse takes may vary - violence may be perpetrated by extended family members and may include forced marriage or female genital mutilation.

**Myth: domestic abuse is a private matter, you shouldn't get involved**

**FACT:** Domestic abuse is not a private matter and is against the law. Domestic abuse is your business - not getting involved won't make domestic violence disappear. We all have a responsibility to speak out against it.

# Domestic abuse is your business?

## Domestic abuse and the workplace quiz

### 1. Domestic abuse includes

- (a) Physical abuse
- (b) Psychological abuse
- (c) Emotional abuse
- (d) Sexual abuse
- (e) Financial abuse
- (f) All of the above

### 2. What is the biggest killer of women aged 19-44 worldwide?

- (a) War
- (b) Cancer
- (c) Domestic abuse
- (d) Traffic accidents

### 3. How many women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lifetime?

- (a) 1 in 24
- (b) 1 in 14
- (c) 1 in 4

### 4. On average how many times will a woman be assaulted before seeking help?

- (a) Thirty-five times
- (b) Ten times
- (c) Twice

### 5. In pregnancy, domestic abuse

- (a) Starts or escalates
- (b) Stops completely
- (c) Stays the same

**6. Domestic abuse can have a negative impact on a women's health?**

- (a) True
- (b) False

**7. What percentage of women experiencing domestic abuse are targeted at work?**

- (a) 75%
- (b) 50%
- (c) 25%

**8. What percentage of women experience domestic abuse miss at least 3 days of work a month?**

- (a) 33%
- (b) 43%
- (c) 53%

**9. How much economic output is lost every year as a result of domestic abuse?**

- (a) £2.7 billion
- (b) £1.7 billion
- (c) £0.7 billion

**10. Possible indicators of domestic abuse can include**

- (a) Late or high absenteeism rate without explanation
- (b) Uncharacteristic depression, anxiety, distraction or problems with concentration
- (c) Changes in the quality of work for no apparent reason
- (d) Increased hours being worked for no apparent reasons
- (e) All of the above

**11. What steps can employers take to tackle domestic abuse?**

- (a) Have a domestic abuse workplace policy
- (b) Provide training on domestic abuse
- (c) Build awareness through a domestic abuse workplace campaign
- (d) All of the above

# Answers

1. f: all of these are forms of domestic abuse.
2. c: worldwide domestic abuse is the biggest killer of women aged 19-44.
3. c: 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their life.
4. a: on average a woman will be assaulted thirty five times before seeking help.
5. a: in pregnancy domestic abuse tends to start or escalate.
6. true: domestic abuse does have a negative impact on a woman's health.
7. a: 75% of domestic abuse victims are targeted at work.
8. c - 53% of women experiencing domestic abuse miss at least 3 days of work a month. Furthermore, we know that:
  - 56% of abused women arrive late for work at least 5 times a month
  - 28% leave early at least 5 days a month
9. a: every year domestic abuse accounts for around £2.7billion of lost economic output.
10. e: all of the above. This is by no means an exhaustive list and other appearances or behaviours may be present.
11. d: all of the above.