



SAFEGUARDING

OUR BI-MONTHLY SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

JANUARY FEBRUARY 2022 • SEXUAL ABUSE & VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK



WHAT'S INSIDE?

In our latest issue we will be covering Sexual Abuse & Violence, in aid of Sexual Abuse and Violence Awareness Week 2022.

If you require further support please see the links on the last page of the document.

WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE & VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK?

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week is the UK's national week to raise awareness of sexual abuse and violence and to provide an opportunity for any organisation or individual to engage in dialogue.

The Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week occurs on the first full week of February. For 2022 that will take place from the 7th to 13th of February, for 2023 that will take place from 6th to 12th February.

WHY DO WE NEED AN AWARENESS WEEK?

There are many voices that often go unheard or with little recognition. This week is an opportunity for anyone that wants to use their voice to join a conversation with thousands of others. Together we can amplify the voices that should be heard, we can spotlight support services and we can engage those outside of our sector, in the discussion.

A designated week where we could all join in one big conversation would help get more coverage of the subject and a greater breadth of conversation.





WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

The overall definition of sexual or indecent assault is an act of physical, psychological and emotional violation in the form of a sexual act, inflicted on someone without their consent. It can involve forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in any sexual acts.

Not all cases of sexual assault involve violence, cause physical injury or leave visible marks. Sexual assault can cause severe distress, emotional harm and injuries which can't be seen – all of which can take a long time to recover from. This is why we use the term 'assault', and treat reports just as seriously as those of violent, physical attacks.

INFORMATION FROM: WWW.MET.POLICE.UK/

WHAT DOES SEXUAL ASSAULT LOOK LIKE?

Sexual harassment includes when someone calls you names, talks about you in a sexual way that makes you feel uncomfortable (like commenting on your body), or spreads sexual rumours about you. This could be in person or online.

If someone grabs or touches you in a way you do not like, or you are forced to kiss someone or do something else sexual, this may be classed as sexual assault. If you are forced to have sex or someone has sex with you without your agreement, this is rape.

INFORMATION FROM: WWW.VICTIMSSUPPORT.ORG.UK/

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances. The harasser can identify with any gender and have any relationship to the victim, including being a direct manager, indirect supervisor, coworker, teacher, peer, or colleague. Some forms of sexual harassment include:

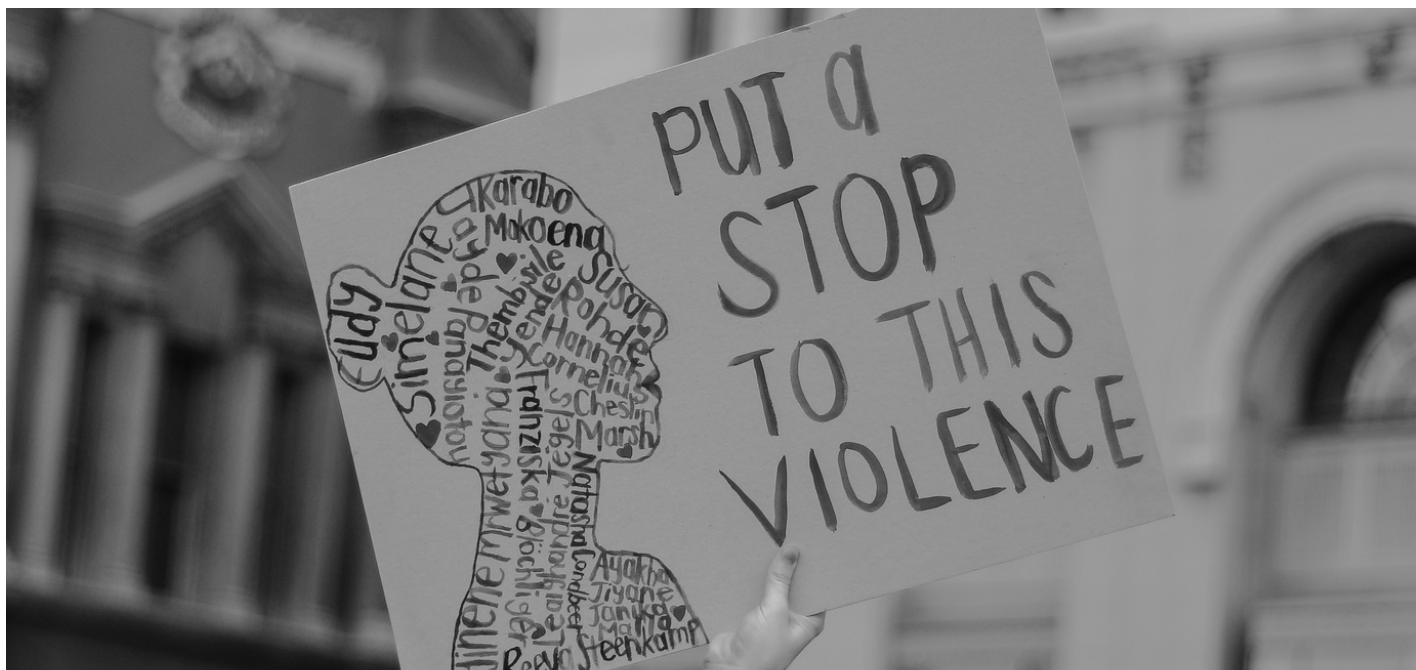
- Making conditions of employment or advancement dependent on sexual favors, either explicitly or implicitly.
- Physical acts of sexual assault.
- Requests for sexual favors.
- Verbal harassment of a sexual nature, including jokes referring to sexual acts or sexual orientation.
- Unwanted touching or physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual advances.
- Discussing sexual relations/stories/fantasies at work, school, or in other inappropriate places.
- Feeling pressured to engage with someone sexually.
- Exposing oneself or performing sexual acts on oneself.
- Unwanted sexually explicit photos, emails, or text messages.

Sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behaviour, often physical, that occurs without the consent of the victim. Some forms of sexual assault include:

- Penetration of the victim's body, also known as rape.
- Attempted rape.
- Forcing a victim to perform sexual acts, such as oral sex or penetration of the perpetrator's body.
- Fondling or unwanted sexual touching.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

It's widely thought that in most cases of rape, the offender is a stranger. The truth is the majority of people who commit rape know their victims and, in some cases, are relatives, friends or work colleagues.



Rape within marriage and relationships can also occur. Remember, sex is about consent. If your partner has forced you into having sex with them, this is rape. This is treated as seriously as any other rape or sexual assault.

Find out more about the [myths around rape](#) at Rape Crisis.

INFORMATION FROM: WWW.MET.POLICE.UK/

SHOCKING STATISTICS

A YouGov poll carried out in March 2020 found alarming statistics when it came to sexual abuse among women in the UK, and highlights the need for the problem to be addressed. As a society we shouldn't tolerate sexual harassment and change needs to be led by government, authorities and businesses, so victims feel more supported to be able to speak out.

- 71% of women of all ages in the UK have experienced some form of sexual harassment in a public space – this number rises to 86% among 18-24-year-olds.
- The two main reasons women of all ages cited for not reporting incidents are: "I didn't think the incident was serious enough to report" (55%) and "I didn't think reporting it would help" (45%)
- 44% of women agreed that having more confidence that reporting the incident would prevent it from happening again would encourage them to report.

However, it's not just women who are victim to sexual abuse. According to the ONS in the year ending March 2020, more than 750,000 adults aged 16-74 were victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. This accounted for 618,000 women and 155,000 men.

It is important to acknowledge that domestic and sexual violence are part of a social pattern of violence against women and are both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

In order to prevent sexual assault from continuing to happen we must promote a culture where sexual abuse & harassment is not acceptable and never tolerated.

Analysis of the risk factors that promote violence against women and girls suggests that social norms and attitudes that are supportive of traditional or unequal gender roles are in turn supportive of violence.

Some of these attitudes and social norms include;

- hyper-masculinity
- weak community sanctions against violence,
- hostility towards women,
- association with sexually aggressive peers,
- weak laws and policies relating to violence and gender equality

Being an Active Bystander

We are all bystanders, all the time. We witness events unfolding around us constantly. Sometimes we recognise events as being problematic. When this happens, we might decide to do or say something, becoming an active bystander (either in the moment or at a later stage), or to do nothing and remain a passive bystander.

There are many factors that will influence why we decide to intervene or not. When we do decide to intervene, we are sending a clear message to the wrongdoer that their behaviour is socially unacceptable. This will challenge the societal norms within communities and groups.

Before stepping in, try the ABC approach.

- **Assess for safety:** If you see someone in trouble, ask yourself if you can help safely in any way. Remember, your personal safety is a priority – never put yourself at risk.
- **Be in a group:** It's safer to call out behaviour or intervene in a group. If this is not an option, report it to others who can act.
- **Care for the victim.** Talk to the person who you think may need help. Ask them if they are OK.

In an emergency, **call the police on 999**. And remember, never put yourself in danger. Only intervene if safe to do so.

REPORT & SUPPORT

If you're the victim of rape or sexual assault, the police and other organisations are there to help.

Call 999 to report a rape or attempted sexual assault, as soon as possible after the crime.

If the offence has recently happened:

- keep the clothes you were wearing and don't wash them - the police may need them as evidence for the investigation
- try not to shower as there may be evidence which the police can use

If you're under 17, the Child Protection Unit of your local police station will deal with your case.

If you don't want to report it to the police some areas have Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) - use the [NHS Choices tool](#) to find one in your area. They can offer you medical support and collect evidence that can be used later.

You can also contact a support organisation:

- **Rape Crisis (for women).**
- **[Victim Support - information for women](#)**
- **[Victim Support - information for men](#)**

INFORMATION FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.GOV.UK/REPORT-RAPE-SEXUAL-ASSAULT/](https://www.gov.uk/report-rape-sexual-assault/)

REMEMBER, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

Sometimes people are afraid to speak to the police because they were voluntarily taking drugs or drinking alcohol before the offence happened. Sometimes they have little or no recollection of what has happened. They may have a criminal record, and worry that the authorities won't treat them fairly. They might be worried that no one will believe them.

Remember, no matter who you are, how long ago the assault happened or what took place, our prime concern is to give you the support you need. We'll listen, understand and guide you through the investigation process at a pace you're comfortable with, whilst respecting your wishes.

INFORMATION FROM: WWW.MET.POLICE.UK/



9 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

PREVENT DUTY

The Prevent Duty is part of the government strategy to reduce the risk of Extremism, Terrorism and Radicalisation.

[View our Prevent Leaflet](#)

Report possible terrorist activity online. If you are concerned about someone or see anything suspicious call the local police or the police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

BRITISH VALUES

British Values are defined as:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Contact Steadfast Training's Safeguarding team on 0845 223 2401 or email safe-guarding@steadfasttraining.co.uk

Our Safeguarding Officers

Robert Wright - 07985338185
Alison Law - 07720092609
Chloe Robinson - 07985338116

[Report a Safeguarding Issue](#)



For more information on anything covered in the newsletter, feedback or ideas for the next issue, please contact us on chloe.robinson@steadfasttraining.co.uk.