1. Background

This DVD aims to support skilled trainers to respond to commonly asked questions about domestic abuse and violence against women in a learning setting. The DVD is:

- A training resource for pre, during and post training on violence against women and as background information for training for trainers courses on violence against women
- An information resource which highlights key aspects of violence against women
- Consistent with the national violence against women training strategy, for use as a training/awareness raising resource to support the strategy’s objective of encouraging workforce development to improve staff skills, knowledge and understanding of violence against women

It highlights core messages about domestic abuse developed through the Scottish Government Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for Children and Young People and explores the links between gender and violence against women.

It should be used in conjunction with the core messages (see below) and the Scottish Government paper *What does gender have to do with violence against women?*

The DVD has been designed to prompt discussion within the context of training on violence against women rather than as a stand-alone resource.

It has two main parts. The first focuses on domestic abuse. The second explores violence against women more broadly. It does not explain what ‘domestic abuse’ or ‘gender’ is, but aims to stimulate discussion for those who are exploring these issues in a training/learning setting.

It is expected that trainers will have already introduced the concepts of ‘gender’ and ‘domestic abuse’ before showing the DVD. A selection of other training resources to support this are at [www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining](http://www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining)

The notes for trainers are intended as a background to the DVD. They are not exhaustive guidance notes about violence against women/domestic abuse training. They give suggestions about issues to raise with trainees, the questions
they are likely to ask and points they may raise. You can select the questions you want to use to stimulate discussion or make up your own.

The notes also provide brief background to various concepts raised within the discussions and give suggestions for further reading.

**Useful links**

Websites listed in the DVD for further information are:

- [www.scotland.gov.uk/vaw](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/vaw)
- [www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining](http://www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining)
- [www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk/](http://www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk/)
- [www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland)

These websites all provide links to other useful and related sites.
2. Practicalities

Running time

The DVD runs for 23 minutes.

Programme description

Six practitioners from the field of violence against women or gender-based violence discuss frequently raised questions.

Information about the six panellists is given in the introduction to the DVD and below. Before you show the DVD, it may be useful to say who the panellists are and where they work to provide the context for what they say.

Contents

The DVD is in 8 sections:

- Introduction (1m 19sec)
- Domestic abuse: why do women stay? (4m 25sec)
- Domestic abuse: what about men? (2m 7sec)
- Domestic abuse: what about same sex relationships? (2m 11sec)
- Domestic abuse: do boys who experience it go on to perpetrate it? (3m 42sec)
- What is violence against women? (3min 43sec)
- What can we do to change things? (4min 47sec)
- Credits (44sec)

Total running time: 23 minutes

Playing the DVD

You can play the DVD through as a whole, but it’s recommended that you choose one or two sections to stimulate discussion after the subject has been introduced. You could also play the DVD section by section, and discuss the points raised at the end of each section.

This could take the form of facilitated discussion or by preparing worksheets for trainees to discuss in small groups.

Whichever method you use, make sure you leave enough time for trainees to discuss the issues raised and the implications for their work.

Before you start, suggest that trainees have pen and paper so they can note down any points and questions while they are watching.
3. Discussion: Domestic abuse: why do women stay?

Overview: This section discusses why women experiencing domestic abuse may stay with an abusive partner.

In facilitating discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:

- Evan Stark’s work on coercive control, a brief overview of this is at: [www.scribd.com/doc/38598536/Coercive-Control-Stark](www.scribd.com/doc/38598536/Coercive-Control-Stark)
- Respect’s guidelines on working with perpetrators of domestic abuse at: [www.respect.uk.net](www.respect.uk.net)
- Liz Kelly’s work on leaving as a six-stage process (see below) developed from the evaluation of the Domestic Matters Project, Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit: [http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors193.pdf](http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors193.pdf)

Six-stage process

Liz Kelly’s six-stage process provides a theoretical framework for understanding why women may stay in or leave a relationship. This framework can help practitioners understand how a woman might view her situation, at any given time, and how their intervention may help to move her to a different view of her situation. It shows that a woman may become clearer about the abuse and that a practitioner can help her to clarify this without expecting her to leave just because they have intervened.

The framework begins with a time when physical violence enters a relationship (although many woman can experience domestic abuse without it ever being physical).

**Stage 1: managing the situation**

The point at which physical violence is first experienced can be the ‘straw that breaks the camel’s back’ for some women and it is the point at which they leave an abusive partner. Many more women stay in the relationship. Why is this? And how can it be? Liz Kelly suggests that it is because they find, or accept, an explanation for the incident which allows for a future: it was a one-off, it was because he was stressed, it was the drink, it was because she provoked him. They develop strategies to manage the situation and incidents of violence. Part of developing strategies (on top of many physical actions and soothing approaches to the their abusive partner) is that the blame for the violence is placed somewhere else other than with the perpetrator.
**Stage 2: distortion of perspective/reality**

Gradually, more and more of a woman’s daily life is taken up with managing the violence and managing the anxiety that comes with it. Trying to make sense of ‘why?’ takes up more and more of her energy and attention. Increasingly, she takes responsibility for his behaviour or blames other things for causing it. Coping is increasingly focused on trying to do and not do certain things. Sometimes, she acts defiantly and does something knowing the consequences – this simply reinforces to her (and the perpetrator) that the violence she experiences is her fault. She becomes entrapped in the distorted perspectives that living with abuse creates.

**Stage 3: defining abuse**

Defining the abuse is not about using the words ‘domestic abuse’ or ‘domestic violence’ but about understanding that you are being victimised by another. Effectively, this is the time when, for the first time, the perpetrator becomes visible to the woman. It is the time when she is able to say to herself, ‘YOU are doing this to me’.

**Stage 4: re-evaluating the relationship**

Once the relationship is understood as one in which abuse/violence occurs, a re-evaluation process begins. This is not the same as saying the woman wants to end the relationship but the decisions she makes take place in a changed context of meaning. At this stage, she may consider leaving – permanently or temporarily – or embark on some other course of help-seeking. Factors such as stage of life, economic opportunities and so on shape whether the help she seeks takes the form of respite, safety advice or a move towards leaving. For example, if a woman is pregnant she is less likely to want to leave her partner but may wish to speak about safety. This stage can sometimes be confused, from the outside, with the next stage (ending the relationship) as a woman may leave temporarily and return many times before she gets to a stage where she wishes to end the relationship.

**Stage 5: ending the relationship**

Even when a woman has decided she wants to leave for good, she may return to the abusive partner. This occurs for many reasons: the absence of safe alternatives and pressure from others are among the most common. It is important to re-iterate that not all women want to leave the relationship and not all women come to this point within the framework. If a practitioner has spoken to the woman about the abuse and has discussed safety, then they have made a difference. They have not failed in their job nor has the woman failed to do what she should do.
Stage 6: ending the violence

Ending a relationship does not always lead to the end of the violence. Leaving can be a particularly dangerous time. It is when women are most likely to be killed by a partner/ex-partner. The woman has no control over whether the violence ends. That is entirely the perpetrator’s decision. Too much of a focus and too much pressure on a woman to leave, though often well intended, is misplaced.

Question – What key issues are raised by the panellists during this discussion?

- It is the wrong question to ask as it fails to put expectations on the perpetrator
- The question places responsibility/blame on the woman experiencing abuse rather than the perpetrator
- It misunderstands the dynamics of domestic abuse
- It overlooks structural issues which hinder women from leaving such as the legal system, immigration laws
- A perpetrator’s remorse (genuine or otherwise) may lead a woman to forgive
- Love makes the issue confusing
- Staying can seem like a rational decision for women who believe they will be in greater danger from the perpetrator if they leave
- Leaving is stepping into the unknown and losing networks of support, home and familiar people and places
- Women can be pressured to stay by family and communities. For some black, minority ethnic women, this can be linked to ‘shame’ and ‘honour’

Having identified the key points, trainers could ask whether trainees agree/disagree with the issues raised and why.

Certain points may be particularly contentious:

- That ‘it is the wrong question’. Highlight that this question makes the perpetrator invisible and places a level of responsibility on the woman experiencing the abuse. Stress the importance of keeping the perpetrator visible in any discussions about domestic abuse; if the perpetrator is not seen, then the potential risks he poses to his (ex) partner and children are also not seen
- That staying can be ‘a rational decision’ for the woman. Highlight that as domestic abuse is perpetrated to maintain a perpetrator’s sense of control over his partner, her act of leaving means he thinks he is losing control. As a result, leaving often triggers increased physical violence as the perpetrator tries to regain his lost control. It is also when she is most likely
to be killed. This is in addition to all the other losses, upheaval and uncertainty she and her children face in leaving. For some women, it is a conscious choice to stay because they want, above all else, to be with their partner, although ideally they would want the abuse to stop. Too much emphasis on leaving makes it seem like a failure if women don’t, and it avoids having to confront the reality that many women are prepared to endure the abuse because the relationship isn’t all bad and neither is their partner.

Related sub-question – **What messages does asking the question ‘Why doesn’t she leave?’ give?**

- That she has responsibility for the situation
- That leaving will make her safe
- That the perpetrator is ‘untouchable’
- That leaving is a one-off, simple and practical event

Related sub-questions – **What are the ‘dynamics of domestic abuse’ mentioned by the panellists? How does asking the question about staying/leaving misunderstand these?**

- Domestic abuse is not only physical violence but an ongoing pattern of controlling behaviour involving many tactics such as threats, degradation and micro-regulation of the woman’s life (Stark, 2007)
- It is a pattern of behaviour which aims to remove her liberty, freedom and choices
- It ignores the psychological pressure put on women by perpetrators, the ‘brainwashing’ which has often been compared to being taken hostage

Related sub-question – **How does ‘love’ confuse the issue?**

- Love for the perpetrator
- Remorse shown by the perpetrator
- Belief that the children need their father
- Views of ‘love’ can interpret/hide controlling behaviour as ‘taking care of’ or ‘looking after’
- Stalking behaviour may be seen as ‘romantic’
- Invisibility of LGBT love in the mainstream
Question – *Can you identify additional reasons why a woman may stay with a perpetrator of abuse?*

Ask trainees to draw on their professional experience to identify these.

**Practical barriers:**

- Lack of confidence in the confidentiality of services
- Not knowing what services are available
- Not knowing how to ask for help
- Services being reactive and waiting for the woman to disclose rather than picking up on indicators and asking

**Emotional barriers:**

- Fear that no-one will believe her
- Does not think anyone can help with her situation
- Does not want children to be without their father
- Fear of being seen as a bad mother
- Fear of having the children taken away
- Wants to stay and for the abuse to end?

**Additional barriers for black minority ethnic women:**

- Language barriers
- Immigration status
- Less likely to know about services/benefits systems
- Visibility – may stand out in predominantly white areas and be easier for a perpetrator to track down
- ‘Shame’ and ‘honour’
- Perceived or actual experiences of racism
- Fear of abduction
- Isolation (even greater)

**Additional barriers for LGBT people:**

- Their experiences are not recognised as domestic abuse by service providers
- Homophobic response from service providers
- Need to ‘out’ themselves or their partner to access services
- Isolated from other community members who do not wish to recognise LGBT domestic abuse
Question – *The panellists highlight that staying may be a rational decision for some women. Staying may seem safer or easier than leaving. In which ways is this so?*

Identify:

**Losses when leaving:**

- Networks and support
- Home
- Job
- Children’s school
- Pets
- All that is familiar
- Marriage/family life
- Possessions
- Financial security

**Perpetrator threats she believes he will carry out if she leaves:**

- I’ll harm you/children/pets
- I’ll kill you/children/myself/pets
- I’ll always find you
- Social work will remove the children
- Homelessness
- Posting intimate images on the www
- Telling workplace/friends/family/religious community a ‘secret’ about her
- No-one will believe her
- No-one else would ever want to be in a relationship with her

These threats are often translated into action.

**Related sub-question – Panellists identify ‘structural issues’ as a factor in a woman’s decision to stay or leave. Racism and discrimination are given as examples. What other structural or social issues may influence a woman’s decision to stay or leave?**

- Whether she can have safe and suitable housing
- Whether she can get legal aid and/or legal representation
- Whether she can claim welfare benefits/live on her earnings alone
- Availability of support services
Related sub-question – What role can concepts of ‘shame’ and ‘honour’ play in ensuring a woman stays with a perpetrator?

It is important to highlight that the notion of ‘honour’ has existed and, to some extent still exists, in white communities but is not overtly addressed as a potential dynamic in intimate partner violence. However, in the UK, the idea of ‘honour’ operates primarily in Middle Eastern and Asian communities (although also in sections of the Afro-Caribbean and Latin American population). It is distinctive and openly expressed as part of a person’s cultural and religious identity, and dictates what is considered appropriate behaviour for men and women. It is the behaviour of the woman which is seen as a threat to the group’s ‘honour’. Women’s actions either increase or decrease the ‘honour’ (izzat) of the group/family through, for example, modest dress, relations with the opposite sex, sexuality and so on.

Begin by explaining the concept of honour or izzat: a woman is seen, in some communities, as the honour of a family. Her actions reflect on the honour of her family, if not the whole community. If she does anything that goes against her culture or family, she will taint the honour of her family/community. The male members of the family define what is considered honourable behaviour. In the context of violence against women, it is a control mechanism which results in additional and distinctive pressures for women who are experiencing abuse. For example, it demands that women keep the family together at any cost and that they must stick with a husband whatever his behaviour.

- fleeing from the violent situation is perceived as an irresponsible act jeopardising the family honour and shaming the family and community
- given the expectations associated with upholding family honour, women carry the guilt of betraying the family culture and tradition and can be labelled as promiscuous or too ‘westernised’
- fear of being ostracised from the family, which is often the primary source of protection and support for women, and host community
- societal assumption that BME women have ‘higher levels of tolerance’

Further reading: Crimes of the Community: Honour-based violence in the UK, 2010, Centre for Social Cohesion:
www.socialcohesion.co.uk/files/1229624550_1.pdf
Question – Panellists identify child contact as a particular risk factor for women after separation. ‘Child contact issues’ are identified as a priority on many risk assessments such as SPECCS which Strathclyde Police uses. Why might child contact issues make women vulnerable to further abuse?

- Perpetrators use children to relay messages/threats to women
- Perpetrators use contact with children to gather information about the woman’s new life
- More difficult to keep new address and whereabouts secret
- Possibility of threats/violence at handover times
- Difficult to move on emotionally and rebuild a new life
- Perpetrators use child contact to undermine a woman’s mothering/authority/relationship with the children
- Fear that children will not be returned
- Context for stalking to occur
4. Discussion: Domestic abuse: what about men?

Overview: This section looks at how men are affected by domestic abuse and discusses whether men experience domestic abuse as often and in the same way as women. Participants discuss the fact that men’s involvement in domestic abuse is more likely to be as a perpetrator than a victim.

In facilitating this discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:


Question – What key issues do the panelists raise during this discussion?

- Men’s experiences of abuse are different to women’s
- Men are less likely to live in fear and feel controlled
- Men’s social situation tends to be different to women’s which leads to differing service needs
- Many men who are or claim to be victims of abuse are also perpetrators
- Statistics looking at the issue can be misleading

Having identified the key points, ask trainees whether they agree/disagree with the issues raised and why.

Certain aspects may be particularly contentious:

- That men’s and women’s experience of domestic abuse is different. Information about the differences can be found in the documents above
- That many men who are victims of violence are often also perpetrators. Information about the differences can be found in the documents above

When facilitating this discussion make it clear to trainees that because experiences of men are different to those of women, does not mean that men cannot experience violence from male or female partners or that the experiences of all women are the same. Emphasise that anyone experiencing violence and abuse should get appropriate services.
5. Discussion: Domestic abuse: what about same sex relationships?

Overview: This chapter focuses on the experiences of LGBT people, considering the similarities and specifics of domestic abuse in this context.

In facilitating this discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:

- Information from the Scottish LGBT domestic abuse project: [www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk](http://www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk)
- Information about transgender domestic abuse: [www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk](http://www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk)
- Information about gender theory and violence in same-sex relationships: [www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/publications/practitioners-briefings](http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/publications/practitioners-briefings)

Question – What key issues do panellists raise during this discussion?

- Domestic abuse in same-sex relationships has a similar dynamic to that in heterosexual relationships, although it is not exactly the same
- A perpetrator in a same-sex relationship has additional tools at their disposal such as the threat of ‘outing’
- Service providers may add to a LGBT person’s isolation through their response to disclosure

Question - The panellists identify the relative invisibility of LGBT relationships as something that is used by perpetrator in same-sex relationships. They mention ‘outing’ and the ‘myth of the fair fight’ as abusive tactics made possible by this invisibility. What other tactics might a perpetrator of domestic abuse use in this situation?

- Invisibility of LGBT relationships may allow an abuser to convince a partner that this is ‘normal’ behaviour and that (s)he does not understand gay/lesbian relationships
- Abuse can be increased and hidden by portraying the violence as mutual or consensual (the myth of the fair fight)
- Within gay relationships it can be portrayed not as domestic abuse but as a reflection of, or expression of, masculinity
- The control of a partner’s expression of their sexuality due to their own desire not to be ‘out’
- Stating that no-one will help the abused partner as the police, justice system and so on are homophobic
- Stating that the abuse is deserved because (s)he is homosexual
- Stating that (s)he is not a real homosexual because of the sex of previous partners or preference/dislike of certain sexual practices
- Using the incorrect pronoun against a trans person
Related sub-question: What are the barriers to an LGBT person accessing support around domestic abuse?

- The need to ‘out’ self or partner to get services
- Fear of a homophobic response from services
- Fear of being rejected by the community
- Person does not know what services are available
- Internalised homophobia which may lead an LGBT person to believe they deserve the abuse
6. Discussion: Domestic abuse: do boys who experience it grow up to perpetrate it?

Overview: this chapter considers the impact of living with domestic abuse on boys and whether this leads them to perpetrate it in adult life.

The view that children who live with domestic abuse learn that abuse is acceptable, and as they grow up, tend to become perpetrators of abuse is based on a social learning model. The social learning model (based on the work of Bandura, 1977) however, shows that social learning is a complex process, mediated and sometimes challenged by environment. The true picture about social learning and domestic abuse is much more complicated than a linear model of cause and effect. While experiencing or witnessing domestic violence can have a serious impact on children and young people, they respond in various ways depending on their age, race, sex, culture, stage of development, and individual personality. Some children who live with domestic abuse may go on to abuse but many do not.

In facilitating this discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:

- Overview of Bandura’s social learning theory: www.learning-theories.com/social-learning-theory-bandura.html
- The social ecology model which highlights a range of risk factors which may lead to perpetrating domestic abuse. It suggests that a complex range of issues combine to provide the context for abuse rather than a simple or linear cause: see World Report on Violence and Health at www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/
- Information about the impact of living with domestic abuse on children and young people: www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk/publications/practitioners-briefings

Question – What key issues do the panellists raise during this discussion?

- There is not a linear relationship between experiencing domestic abuse as a boy and then perpetrating it as an adult
- Protective factors around a child make the pathway to violence neither inevitable not automatic
- It is, however, a risk factor in adult perpetration. Many men who end up with the Domestic Violence Probation Project have experienced abuse as a child (NB: this is a very small sample of men and is not representative)
- Society offers mixed messages to boys about violence. Sometimes it is viewed as positive and sometimes as negative. The messages are conflicting and confusing
- Everyone has a role in preventing violence against women

Having identified the key points, ask trainees whether they agree/disagree with the issues raised and why.
Certain points may be particularly contentious:

- That experiencing domestic abuse as a child is not a ‘cause’ of adult perpetration
- Conversely, that it can be viewed as a risk factor. It is important to emphasise here that a risk factor does not in any way mean that something is inevitable

Related sub-question – *In what contexts is using violence seen as acceptable or even virtuous for boys?*

- Defending their mother from domestic abuse
- Defending themselves (in any context)
- In the military
- In the boxing ring and, to a certain extent, other sports
- When it is ‘virtual’ eg computer games

**Question – what are the protective factors to take into account which might help children to cope with experiences of domestic abuse?**

- Age – does this mean older young people?
- Relationship with either parent
- Positive relationships with other adults
- Friendships

Protective factors are dynamic rather than static and depend on the individual child.

Related sub-question – *In light of the protective factors which you have identified, how could your agency promote these?*

- Provide space for the child to talk about any concerns
- Provide support to the non-abusing parent
- Provide support and tools to help the non-abusing parent bond with the child again
- Provide space for the child to play and have fun
- Support the child to make friends
7. Discussion: What is violence against women?

Overview: This chapter moves from domestic abuse to wider forms of violence against women within the Scottish Government’s definition of violence against women as set out in Safer Lives: Changed Lives.

In facilitating this discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:


- Information about rape and sexual assault: [www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk](www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk)

- Information and resources about commercial sexual exploitation (this is a US based site and therefore some information contained upon it is specific to US law and culture): [www.stoppornculture.org](www.stoppornculture.org)

- More information about commercial sexual exploitation and the increasingly sexualised media world: [www.object.org.uk/](www.object.org.uk/)

- Information and resources about gender stereotypes in the media: [www.genderads.com/](www.genderads.com/)

- Facts and figures about gender inequality in the UK today: [www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/?PageID=981](www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/?PageID=981)

- Facts and figures about women’s lives in Scotland today and work being undertaken to challenge gender inequality: [www.engender.org.uk/](www.engender.org.uk/)


- Information about female genital mutilation: [www.forwarduk.org.uk/key-issues/fgm](www.forwarduk.org.uk/key-issues/fgm)
Question – *What key issues do panellists raise during this discussion?*

- Violence against women is an umbrella term which covers a range of violence primarily perpetrated by men towards women
- The different forms of violence are connected in different ways: women can experience it at different times in their lives and experience more than one form during a lifetime; one form may cause vulnerability to another later in life; one may be a context for another (e.g., rape in domestic abuse or prostitution during trafficking); and all forms are underpinned by the same attitudes and values
- Violence against women is a global issue
- It is connected with expectations of what it means to be a man or a woman, linked to gender stereotypes
- Increasingly sexualised images in the media contribute to violence against women

Having identified the key points, ask trainees whether they agree/disagree with the issues raised and why.

Certain points may prove particularly contentious:

- The definition – some aspects of the definition be questioned. For example, some may argue that female genital mutilation (FGM) is ‘traditional’ and ‘cultural’ and not violence against women
- Aspects of commercial sexual exploitation may also not be recognised as violence, but as ‘lifestyle choice’ or ‘harmless fun’
- Such violence also happens to men or can be perpetrated by women
- That gender stereotypes are stereotypes – it may be seen as ‘natural’ that women and men have different roles

**Question – What do the various forms of violence against women have in common?**

- All threaten and harm the safety and autonomy of individual women affected
- All limit the ‘space for action’, agency or capacity of individual women
- Physical harm, injury, disability, infection, illness, death
- Psychological harm – anxiety, depression, stress, trauma
- Betrayal and sometimes destruction of self-worth, esteem, ability to trust
- Dishonour, shame, disgrace, stigmatisation, ostracism (cultural, religious, social)
- Exclusion from sport, leisure, creativity, educational opportunity
• Impact on earning power, achievements, livelihood, ability to recognise or fulfil potential, place in society
• Unequal access to resources, status and freedom to live a decent and valuable life
• All impact not just on the individuals directly targeted but other women and girls, and men and boys through the messages they send out

**Question - What attitudes and values underpin and allow violence against women to take place?**

• That women are less important than men
• That women should serve men
• That women and girls are expendable
• That women and girls are (sex) objects
• That women are less worthy than men
• That women are less able than men

**Related sub-question – In what other spheres of public life do we see these attitudes acted upon/ do we see gender stereotypes enacted?**

• Aspects of religious life e.g. some faiths not ordaining women (e.g. Judaism, Catholicism, Islam and many others)
• The continuing gender pay gap
• The lack of representation of women on boards of FTSE100 companies
• The lack of women MPs
• Women continuing to take the majority of child-caring roles
• Music lyrics and pop videos
• Lack of women in certain job areas e.g. the military, fire-fighting, engineering

**Question – What ‘stories’ are told about what it means to be a ‘real man’ or ‘real women’ in society today? (What gender stereotypes continue to exist?)**

**Men/boys:**

• Boys like/are good at sport, are active
• Boys like/are good at the sciences
• Boys like cars
• Boys are active
• Boys need lots of sex
• Boys don’t cry
• Boys should be able to look after themselves and others
• Boys should be in control
• Real men are heterosexual
Women/girls:

- Girls like playing with dolls
- Girls like pink
- Girls want to be princesses
- Girls are very good at sport
- Girls like clothes
- Girls should be pretty
- Girls should be compliant not ‘stroppy’
- Real women want a man to look after them

Related sub-question – Where do gender stereotypes come from?

- We are drip fed them from a range of sources so much so that they come to seem ‘normal’ or ‘natural’
- We unconsciously enact them and perpetuate them ourselves in our own lives
- Received wisdom which is unquestioningly passed on amongst us
- The media
- The pop industry
- The toy industry
- The education system
- The sporting arena
- Jokes
- The pornography industry (though this is often invisible)
- Legislation
- Religious teachings

Related sub-question – How do these stereotypes related to violence against women?

- They create a conducive context in which violence against women can occur
- They teach little boys to objectify girls
- They teach little girls to objectify themselves
- They make sexual violence seem ‘normal’ or ‘natural’ or ‘ok’
- They teach little boys that violence is acceptable
- It normalises certain behaviour – ‘boys will be boys’
Related sub-question – *In what ways do gender stereotypes negatively impact on men and boys?* (In asking this question it is important to acknowledge that a disproportionate negative impact is experienced by women and girls but there is also a negative impact on boys and men.)

- They too may experience gender-based violence if they do not conform to society’s ideas about what it means to be a ‘real man’
- They may wish to take on more caring roles and find it hard so to do
- They may feel pressurised to do certain jobs or take on certain roles
- They may feel uncomfortable about sexist jokes but feel pressurised to confirm and fit in
- Living up to an (unreachable) ideal about masculinity can lead to risk taking behaviour
8. Discussion: What can we do to change things?

Overview: In this chapter, panellists discuss what individuals can do to change things in their personal lives and as practitioners. Some changes are structural, some societal and some individual.

In facilitating this discussion you may wish to draw on the following resources:


- Work being undertaken by health boards in Scotland: www.gbv.scot.nhs.uk

- Information about gender equality in Scotland, policy and the law: www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland/

- Prevention work undertaken by men in Scotland: www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk/

- Other prevention work in Scotland: www.vawpreventionscotland.org.uk/

- The UK campaigning work on commercial sexual exploitation: www.object.org.uk/

- For information and resources on challenging the demand for commercial sexual exploitation: www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/content/challengingdemand/180/

Question – What key issues do panellists raise during this discussion?

- Violence against women is not inevitable and is preventable
- All of us have a role to play in changing society
- It can be hard for men to stand up against violence against women – but it is worth the effort
- The changes we make don’t need to be huge – every little helps!
- There are policy documents we can use to lobby for change
- We can look for inspiration to other countries and the work they have done e.g. Iceland banning lap-dancing as its government believes it sends out the wrong message to society
- Messages can be turned around and reframed e.g. in Sweden it is not women involved in prostitution who are targeted by the law but the men who buy sex
• We can’t just sit back and expect future generations to make the change – we have a role to play in helping children and young people to ‘change the script’
• As service providers and service managers we can make a difference by understanding the issues and working effectively to support clients who have experienced violence
• Woman blaming in this context is not helpful – we need to hold the men who abuse to account

Having identified the key points, ask trainees whether they agree/disagree with the issues raised and why.

Trainees could then be asked either individually or in small groups to reflect on what they may do to affect change as:

Individuals:

• They may wish to sign the pledge of the White Ribbon Campaign or become more involved in it
• They may wish to get involved in some more of activism on some of the issues highlighted
• They may wish to think about the unconscious messages they give to their children (clothing or toys bought)
• They may wish to ask for ‘lads mags’ to be removed from the house/workplace

Practitioners:

• Consider how they work with those affected by aspects of violence against women – as managers or frontline service providers
• Improve knowledge or training on aspects of violence against women so they are well prepared if they receive a disclosure, are working with someone affected or are developing workplace policies or their workforce
• Find out more about their workplace polices on violence against women
• Put up posters in their workplace on the issue
Appendix 1

DVD participants

**Nasra Bibi, Lothian Violence Against Women Training Consortium**
[www.lvawtc.org.uk](http://www.lvawtc.org.uk)

Nasra has worked in the voluntary and statutory sector both in England and Scotland for over 20 years and is a founding member of a black women’s refuge in Scotland. She has worked in a range of local authority and community settings. Her focus has been on challenging the way in which discrimination impacts on women, young women and, in particular, BME women. Nasra has specialised in developing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory approaches to gender inequality. Currently, Nasra trains multi-agency and single sector staff in gender-based abuse.

**Beth Cumming, Training, Facilitation and Coaching**
[www.bethcumming.com](http://www.bethcumming.com)

Beth has run her own training, facilitation and coaching consultancy since 1995, working primarily in the not for profit sector. Prior to this she was one of the national training workers in Scottish Women’s Aid and worked in a local Women’s Aid group as well offering direct support.

**Ann Hayne, EVA Services**
[www.nhslanarkshire.co.uk/Services/EVA%20Services/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.nhslanarkshire.co.uk/Services/EVA%20Services/Pages/default.aspx)

Ann manages EVA Services in NHS Lanarkshire, a specialist service for women who have experienced violence and abuse across the lifespan. She is also the operational advisor for NHSL on violence against women, reporting to the director of public health. Ann is a qualified social worker, has previously worked in North Ayrshire in children and families and in Glasgow both in residential childcare and managing an ESF-funded project promoting social inclusion. She has also worked in Women’s Aid in East Renfrewshire developing services for women and promoting partnership work.

**Julian Heng, NHS Open Road**
[www.nhsopenroad.org](http://www.nhsopenroad.org)

Julian Heng is the service manager for NHS Open Road, Greater Glasgow & Clyde’s service for men involved in prostitution (MIIP). NHS Open Road functions both as the strategic lead for MIIP and as a direct service provider offering information and support. The service's work with clients is characterised by addiction, homelessness and childhood sexual abuse. Prior to this, Julian has experience of working in sexual health and learning disability.
Nel Whiting, Scottish Women’s Aid  
www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk

Nel Whiting is a learning and development worker with Scottish Women’s Aid, where she has worked since September 2003. Her role takes her throughout Scotland providing learning opportunities, which explore the dynamics of domestic abuse, to professionals in the voluntary and statutory sector. Nel is a regular lecturer at the Scottish Police College, the Scottish Prosecution College and Stirling University. She also teaches on the Queen Margaret University ‘Gender Justice’ module. Nel is particularly interested in exploring how an individual’s gender shapes their experiences of oppression, inequality and violation. She is author of “What Can Contemporary Gender Theory Contribute to An Understanding of Abuse in Same Sex Relationships?” which was published in the Scottish Journal of Criminal Justice Studies 2008.

Rory Macrae, Domestic Violence Probation Project/Working with Men  
www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1400/domestic_abuse/786/men_who_abuse/3

Rory has been a criminal justice social worker since 1988. Since 1992, he has worked in the Domestic Violence Probation Project in Edinburgh, a court-mandated service for men convicted of domestic violence offences. Currently, he job-shares two jobs (with Moira Andrew): senior social worker in DVPP and project manager with the Working with Men Project. WWM runs a non court-mandated programme for men in Edinburgh as well as offering training and consultancy on constructive engagement with abusing men to agencies encountering domestic abuse. In 1998, he spent six months working in a community health project in Melbourne Australia, in a non court-mandated programme for abusing men. Rory is a member of the Caledonian System working group which wrote the manuals which have recently been accredited for national roll-out. He was also a member of the group which produced the National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for children affected by domestic abuse.

Mark Ward, Men’s Health Forum Scotland  
www.mhfs.org.uk

Mark Ward has been working in health promotion since 1998. He has a broad range of experience, having worked in both the voluntary and public sectors. He has varied knowledge of training design and delivery and has developed close links with health-focused organisations throughout the UK.

He has provided freelance consultancy and training services to a wide range of voluntary and statutory organisations and has worked closely with a range of partners on various research projects. He has published several original research reports relating to HIV prevention and the inclusion of gay men with HIV.

During his time with Men’s Health Forum Scotland, he has managed the delivery of three national conferences on men’s health and developed the MHFS 10k for
Men from its initial conception. Other projects include the White Ribbon Campaign which involves men in challenging violence against women, implementation of the Gender Equality Duty and the ongoing development of Men's Health Forum Scotland as the leading men's health charity in Scotland.
Appendix 2

Scottish Government: Violence Against Women: A Definition

For the purposes of this approach, we define violence against women as actions which harm or cause suffering or indignity to women and children, where those carrying out the actions are mainly men and where women and children are predominantly the victims. The different forms of violence against women – including emotional, psychological, sexual and physical abuse, coercion and constraints – are interlinked. They have their roots in gender inequality and are therefore understood as gender-based violence.

Our approach is informed by the definition developed by the National Group to Address Violence Against Women based on the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) which follows:

Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It is men who predominantly carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as ‘gender based’ this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women’s and girl’s subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms, social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women’s vulnerability to violence.

Accordingly, violence against women encompasses but is not limited to:

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, within the general community or in institutions, including: domestic abuse, rape, incest and child sexual abuse;
Sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the public sphere; commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking;
Dowry related violence;
Female genital mutilation;
Forced and child marriages;
Honour crimes.

Activities such as pornography, prostitution, stripping, lap dancing, pole dancing and table dancing are forms of commercial sexual exploitation. These activities have been shown to be harmful for the individual women involved and have a negative impact on the position of all women through the objectification of women’s bodies. This happens irrespective of whether individual women claim
success or empowerment from the activity. It is essential to separate sexual activity from exploitative sexual activity. A sexual activity becomes sexual exploitation if it breaches a person’s human right to dignity, equality, respect and physical and mental wellbeing. It becomes commercial sexual exploitation when another person, or group of people, achieves financial gain or advancement through the activity.

In recognising this definition, there is no denying or minimising the fact that women may use violence, including violence against a male or female partner. Although less common, this is no less serious and requires to be addressed.

In using the term ‘violence against women’, it is recognised that this departs from the normal dictionary definition of ‘violence’, which generally requires some form of exertion of physical force. Inclusion of these behaviours or activities as part of the spectrum of violence against women, and indeed the use of this term itself, is accepted internationally as evidenced by a number of definitions developed by the UN and EU, and, where necessary, we will make clear the distinction between our definition and normal and legal usage of the term ‘violence’.
Appendix 3

National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for Children and Young People: Core Messages

Background

Domestic abuse is a widespread and serious problem. Everyone shares the responsibility to prevent it and reduce the damage it causes to the lives of thousands of women and children in Scotland.

Scotland has an international reputation for the way in which we tackle domestic abuse. The issue is high on the agenda of Government and of all service providers including; local authorities, the police, the voluntary sector, the courts and the NHS. Increasingly too, members of the general public, community groups, faith groups and private sector businesses, including the media, are taking action to raise awareness, to educate and to support victims.

In theory, all these activities should be informed by a shared understanding of domestic abuse; what causes it, how it affects families and communities and how best it can be prevented. A shared understanding is necessary to:

- Achieve the same high quality of delivery across all organisational, community and individual responses to domestic abuse.
- Enable everyone to work together effectively to respond to domestic abuse whether this is at strategic, service delivery or community level.
- Increase victims’ confidence that whoever they approach for help will be able to understand and respond to their situation.
- Ensure consistent and therefore strong public education messages about the causes and consequences of domestic abuse and about where responsibility lies for addressing it.

In reality, though, organisations and individuals have developed different and sometimes conflicting ways of tackling domestic abuse based on their own understanding of the issue. This creates barriers to families trying to access services, prevents people from developing joined-up responses to domestic abuse and greatly reduces the potential impact of public education initiatives.
What are the Delivery Plan core messages?

The Delivery Plan common core messages are a learning tool for agencies, practitioners and individual members of public. They have been identified through consultation with those who use services and those who commission, develop or provide them. The Core Messages aim to promote:

- A shared understanding of the needs, views and wishes of children, young people and families affected by domestic abuse.
- An appropriate and consistent response to children and young people affected by domestic abuse, their families and communities across all agencies and the general public.

They consist of a list of 8 headline messages covering the nature, impact and shared approach to tackling domestic abuse underpinned by *Getting it right for every child principles and values*. These messages should be clearly reflected in the way that agencies and individuals develop a response to domestic abuse for that response to be effective.

The messages are equally relevant to everyone seeking to improve the lives of children and families affected by domestic abuse. This includes:

- policy makers
- senior managers
- all practitioners who come in contact with children, adults and families
- the media
- children and young people affected by domestic abuse, their friends, families and
- the wider community

It is useful to note that:

1. The Core Messages are headline statements supported by a wealth of background material including research and practice tools. The depth to which an agency or individual chooses to explore each message and the way in which they will be put in practice clearly depends on the type of response that is planned.

2. Because of its generic nature, this list of messages is not exhaustive. Individuals and agencies can develop additional messages they feel are specifically relevant to their area of practice or involvement. The background material may help you undertake this work.
How can core messages be used?

Core messages can be used to shape:

- Training initiatives and practice standards
- Single-agency and multi-agency services and interventions
- National and local policy
- Public education campaigns
- School-based or community-based awareness raising initiatives
Delivery Plan  Core Messages

• **Impact:** Domestic abuse prevents everyone in Scotland from realising our economic potential.
  - Domestic abuse affects us all and we all have a responsibility to prevent and reduce its impact on children, families and communities in Scotland.
  - Tackling domestic abuse is necessary for us to achieve our National Outcomes.
  - The following policies cannot be implemented successfully if we fail to address domestic abuse:
    o Early Years Framework
    o Equally Well
    o Achieving our Potential
    o Getting it right for every child
    o Gender Equality Duty

  ▪ **Domestic Abuse:** Domestic abuse is when one person uses coercion, intimidation and fear to control their partner or ex partner in an intimate relationship.
    - Domestic abuse is not a one off event – it is a pattern of controlling behaviour which undermines the victim’s ability to take action, make choices and be independent.
    - Domestic abuse can include mental, physical, sexual and financial abuse.
    - Domestic abuse cuts across all levels of society and affects people of all ethnicities, faiths, sexuality and ages.
    - Domestic abuse should not be confused with other kinds of family violence such as elder abuse.

  ▪ **Gender Equality:** Domestic abuse is about inequality between men and women.
    - Most men are not abusive but domestic abuse is most often perpetrated by men.
    - Mostly women are the victims of the abuse.
    - Children and young people living in a household with domestic abuse are likely to be aware of the abuse and will be directly affected by it.
    - We cannot achieve equality between men and women in Scotland or fulfil the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty without addressing domestic abuse.
    - Domestic abuse is not inevitable - promoting gender equality and healthy relationships will contribute to preventing domestic abuse.

• **Responsibility:** Domestic abuse will be treated as a crime. Responsibility for the abuse lies with the perpetrator and no one else.
  - Victims of domestic abuse should not be blamed for the abuse or associated with failing to protect the child(ren) from abuse.
  - Perpetrators should be kept visible and accountable.
  - It is unhelpful to demonise perpetrators – it is more effective to make clear expectations of a man who is abusing rather than to solely condemn his behaviour.
  - Alcohol, drug misuse, stress and mental illness do not cause domestic abuse but, if present, also need to be addressed to reduce the level of harm.
• **Harm:** Domestic abuse is a major cause of harm to the mental, emotional and physical wellbeing of women and children.
  - Domestic abuse is a major cause of health inequalities, poverty and homelessness.
  - Domestic abuse damages the relationship between a mother and her child(ren).
  - Domestic abuse can impact on all aspects of a child’s development.
  - Domestic abuse affects a child’s ability to maximise their potential at school.
  - Children’s awareness of domestic abuse and the extent of the abuse they themselves experience is often greater than many parents or carers believe.
  - Experiences and understandings of domestic abuse can vary between age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. Even within the same family, siblings may have very different experiences and understanding of domestic abuse.

• **Protection:** Failing to deal appropriately with perpetrators can increase the risks for victims whether or not they are receiving appropriate support.
  - Safety planning with child and adult victims can help make them feel and be safe.
  - Separation can be one of the most dangerous times for victims of domestic abuse. It cannot be assumed that child and adult victims will be safe or feel safe when the relationship has ended and/or they have left the home.
  - Domestic abuse is not always a child protection issue. The best way to protect a child is by protecting the non abusing parent and by bringing the perpetrator to account.
  - Providing appropriate support to child and adult victims of domestic abuse can increase the likelihood that interventions with perpetrators will be successful in changing their abusive behaviour.

• **Support:** With good, joined-up support child and adult victims can rebuild their lives.
  - Domestic abuse is a hidden problem. Many victims may not identify themselves or want to identify themselves as experiencing domestic abuse. Many victims may have support needs in addition to those arising from their experience of domestic abuse.
  - Agencies will work to improve early identification of domestic abuse and remove any barriers to support. Some victims (for example, those with disabilities or from minority ethnic communities) may face specific additional barriers.
  - A coordinated multi-agency approach based on *Getting it right* principles and values which includes a range of relevant specialist services is necessary to protect and support victims of domestic abuse.
  - Particular emphasis should be placed, where possible, on strengthening the relationship between the child and its non abusing parent and other family members.
  - It is not the case that children affected by domestic abuse will become future victims or perpetrators but some men who abuse in their intimate relationships will have witnessed some form of abuse as children.

• **Participation:** Interventions will only be effective if those affected are able to secure their own outcomes.
  - Children, families and communities affected by domestic abuse will have a say in how services and responses are shaped to meet their needs.
  - Local communities will be skilled and empowered to contribute to preventing domestic abuse.