

A woman with short, dark hair is shown in profile, looking out of a window. She is wearing a light-colored, textured sweater. The image has a strong purple tint. A white rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text.

Media Guidelines on Violence Against Women

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ZERO

TOLERANCE



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Why this is important

We know you're overworked,
under pressure, and very busy.
But we also know that what
you say matters.

With every story on violence against women there is an opportunity to stop it happening again. Responsible and sensitive writing on what violence against women is, what the warning signs are, and where people can seek help, is a key part of creating a world free from violence against women. It can save lives.

“To end men’s violence against women and children and to save their lives, the way we report this violence must change. In every report, there was speculation that the prospect of divorce ‘drove’ our father to murder. When stories try to find a ‘reason’ in this way they are complicit in a culture which perpetuates these crimes by excusing the perpetrator of blame. Men’s violence against women and children is caused by men’s choices. Reporting must reflect this.”

Luke and Ryan Hart,
Coercive Control Awareness Campaign, @CoCoAwareness

“How we frame stories about violence against women is so important. Violence against women is not caused by drink, drugs, provocative outfits, mental health issues, stress, money problems or infidelity. It is caused by men. That is the story that we need to tell.”

Anna Burnside,
Feature Writer, Daily Record

“It is not about dictating how a story should be written, but recognising that too often language is still being used to trivialise and sensationalise – when it can have the power to help change attitudes in society.”

Judith Duffy,
Political Editor, Sunday Post

“Responsible media reporting is vital in shaping people’s understanding of violence against women and challenging its place in our society.”

Jude Henderson,
Zero Tolerance, Chair of the Board

“Journalists play a crucial role in society – and never more so than when reporting on violence against women. What our members write matters. It has the ability to shape the narratives around violence against women. It helps those experiencing this violence realise what is happening to them – and where they can seek help. And it helps remind society in general that the blame for violence only ever lies with those who perpetrate it.”

John Toner,
National Organiser for Scotland, National Union of Journalists



Violence against women: facts

What is violence against women

Violence against women (VAW) is violence or abuse where the majority of victims-survivors are women and the majority of perpetrators are men.

It includes (but is not limited to):

- rape and sexual assault
- domestic abuse
- harmful traditional practices (including forced marriage and FGM)
- commercial sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution)
- harassment and online abuse

How Common is it?

59,541

incidents of domestic abuse were recorded by Police Scotland in 2017/18. In 82% of these cases the victim was a woman.¹

ZERO TOLERANCE

Research conducted by Zero Tolerance in 2017 found that over 70% of respondents had experienced or witnessed sexual harassment, teasing or innuendo in their workplace.⁵

2,255

rapes and attempted rapes were reported to the police in Scotland in 2017/2018.²

421

Following new 'revenge porn' legislation, 421 incidents of non-consensual sharing of, or threats to share, intimate images were reported to Police Scotland in a 12-month period (2017/18).⁶

1 in 10

women in Scotland have experienced rape.³

45-75%

of people (globally) who sell sex have experienced violence over their lifetime.⁷

1 in 5

women in Scotland have had someone try to make them have sex against their will.⁴

137,000

As many as 137,000 girls in the UK are affected by female genital mutilation (FGM) every year.⁸

This violence all has the same root cause: gender inequality. Men's violence against women is caused by gender inequality, and it helps this inequality to continue.

We keep these statistics up to date on our website.
www.zerotolerance.org.uk

The impact of other forms of inequality – intersectionality

Violence against women can affect any woman, anywhere; women of all ages, sexualities, and racial, cultural and economic backgrounds are affected.

Experiences of violence against women are informed not just by gender, but also by race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, and migrant status. The term “intersectionality” refers to the ways that different forms of discrimination interact.

For example, a white middle class woman will experience the world very differently from a BME woman who is visibly Muslim (wears a headscarf) and from a working-class background.

Some examples of how different inequalities affect women’s experiences of violence against women:

- disabled women are twice as likely to experience men’s violence as non-disabled women.⁹
- 83% of trans women have experienced hate crime at some point in their lives.¹⁰
- black and minority ethnic (BME) and migrant women face higher levels of domestic homicide, so called ‘honour’ killings, and abuse driven suicide.¹¹

What about violence against men?

Men experience significant and unacceptable amounts of violence in Scottish society.

We encourage journalists to uphold a victim-survivor's right to dignity and not compromise their safety or anonymity, regardless of their gender.

We suggest that when reporting on violence against men, journalists should be mindful that:

- the majority of violence experienced by boys and men is perpetrated by other men. Men perpetrate most of the violence in Scotland against women, children and other men.¹²
- women are twice as likely to experience psychological and/or physical abuse by a partner than men¹³
- by working to prevent violence against women we work to challenge gender stereotypes, e.g. the idea that men should always be strong. It is these stereotypes that may prevent men who experience violence from seeking help.

Summary – Best practice tips

1. Be Considerate

Report violence against women in a way that upholds the victim-survivor's right to dignity and does not compromise their safety or anonymity.

Don't sensationalise stories with graphic details about the crime, or personal details such as their transgender identity or their involvement in pornography or selling sex.

When covering any form of violence - including harmful traditional practices, like forced marriage or female genital mutilation - be clear that these are rooted in misogyny and avoid stigmatising any ethnic group or religion.

2. Don't blame the victim

Make the perpetrator the subject of the sentence and assign the verb to them. This is how police are encouraged to write their reports, i.e. *'The perpetrator forced the survivor to...'*

Never suggest that violence occurred because of what a woman was wearing, what they had drunk, if they had cheated, or any other reason. Perpetrators are responsible for their actions.

3. Name the crime

Use *sexual abuse, assault, harassment, rape, domestic abuse.*

Instead of *sex, sex scandal, affair, fondles, caress, domestic dispute, abusive relationship.*

[see page 12](#)

4. Describe the perpetrator

Use *man, perpetrator, offender, abusive partner, rapist, husband, father, son.*

Instead of *fiend, beast, monster, great dad, good guy, respected professional.*

[see page 13](#)

5. Victim or survivor?

Use *victim* when an attack has resulted in the murder of a woman, when discussing the crime or criminal justice system, or when a woman describes herself as a one. Use *survivor* when referring to the woman in all other instances. Or if you have permission, use her name.

[see page 13](#)

6. Get quotes from experts and survivors

Ask women's organisations for comment and source case studies through them.

[see page 28](#)

7. Use statistics to put the story in context

Individual stories of violence against women are part of a much larger problem.

[see page 7](#)

8. Images

Don't use images that contribute to harmful stereotypes or objectify women.

We have free to use stock images available.

[see page 17](#)

9. Include helplines – it can save lives

Your story might have an effect on women who have experienced or are experiencing the same violence. Providing sources of support can encourage women to seek help.

[see page 26](#)

Language Guide

Name the crime

| USE THIS | INSTEAD OF | WHY? |
|--|---|---|
| Language that accurately conveys the gravity of sexual assault: <i>sexual abuse, assault, harassment, rape</i> | <i>Sex, sex scandal, affair, fondle or caress to describe sexual violence.</i> | Using phrases like <i>sex scandal</i> makes it sound consensual; it both minimises and sensationalises the crime. |
| Words that make it clear that sexual assault is violent and non-consensual e.g. oral rape, sexual assault etc. | Gratuitous details of the assault e.g. forced mouth onto (<i>the victim-survivor's specific body part</i>). | Rape is an act of violence, there is no need to insert salacious details. |
| <i>Domestic abuse</i> <i>Men's violence against women</i> | <i>Domestic violence</i> | Most organisations working in this field use the term <i>domestic abuse</i> instead of <i>domestic violence</i> , as this conveys a much wider spectrum of abuse, which can be psychological as well as physical. |
| <i>Abusive partner, woman living with an abusive partner</i> | <i>Abusive relationship</i> | Placing blame on the relationship or relationship dynamics, rather than on the abuser, is suggesting that both people are equally at fault. |
| <i>Domestic abuse</i> | <i>A domestic/domestic dispute</i> | Domestic/domestic dispute frames the incident of violence as a private domestic or family problem and not a crime. |

Name the perpetrator

| USE THIS | INSTEAD OF | WHY? |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Husband, father, son etc. Man, perpetrator, offender, abuser, rapist etc.</i> | <i>Fiend, beast, pervert, monster, paedo, brute, criminal, thug, wife-beater, wom- an-basher.</i> | Men who rape, commit sexual violence or domestic abuse are ordinary men, usually someone's dad, brother, uncle, or friend. |
| <i>Man, perpetrator, offender, abuser, rapist etc.</i> | <i>Great father/devoted dad/ a good guy/respected member of the community/esteemed coach, profes- sional, community leader.</i> | These generate sympathy for the perpetrator, implying there is a 'reason' for their 'out of character' behaviour. |

Name the victim-survivor

| VICTIM OR SURVIVOR? | | WHY? |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Some people identify as <i>victims</i> and some identify as <i>survivors</i>. It is best to ask the individual which they would prefer. Where this is not possible use <i>victim</i> when an attack has resulted in the murder of a woman, when discussing the crime or criminal justice system.</p> <p>Use <i>survivor</i> when referring to the woman in all other instances.</p> <p>You can also use victim-survivor if you are not sure or if you are speaking in general terms.</p> <p>Or if you have permission, use her name.</p> | | Although victim is a legal definition which is necessary in the criminal justice system, some women prefer to use survivor as a term of empowerment to convey they have started a healing process. |
| USE THIS | INSTEAD OF | WHY? |
| <i>Woman who sells sex, Woman involved in pornography/ prostitution.</i> | <i>Prostitute, sex worker, porn actress/porn star.</i> | Prostitution and pornography are exploitation of women - not work. |
| <i>Woman who was murdered; use the woman's name where possible.</i> | <i>Murdered/dead prostitute</i> | Regardless of their past, women who were murdered, are women first. |
| <i>Abused child</i> | <i>Child prostitute, teenage prostitute, schoolgirl lover, underage lover.</i> | Sexual contact with a child is always abuse. |
| <i>Woman who has experienced domestic abuse A survivor of domestic abuse</i> | <i>Battered woman</i> | These alternatives better describe the survivors of domestic abuse. |

Things to Avoid

Violence is always a choice
by the perpetrator and
the perpetrator is the only
person to blame.

Passive coverage

Headlines like, 'Woman raped' can make it seem like violence is something that 'just happens' to women when in fact these crimes always have both a victim-survivor and a perpetrator.



Avoid words like 'tragedy' as these make it seem as if the violence was unavoidable instead of a conscious action from the perpetrator.

TIP: Make the perpetrator the subject of the sentence and assign the verb to them. This is also how police are encouraged to write their reports. e.g. 'The perpetrator forced the survivor to...'

Sympathy for the perpetrator

In 2017, one story about a man raping a woman while she slept focused on how apologetic and remorseful he was afterwards and noted that he had attended sex addiction meetings¹⁴

Framing it in this way prioritises the perpetrator's emotional turmoil over how his actions affected the victim-survivor.

Instead consider how she is feeling.

Inappropriate use of humour

A national charity included in its magazine an article on Indian women forced through economic circumstances into prostitution which was headed, 'Anybody fancy an Indian?' This is racist, trivialises gender inequality and poverty-driven prostitution, and dehumanises the women involved.

Excuses for violence

LED TO ...

Try to avoid the narrative of how one life event 'led to' any violence that occurred.

Don't Use: The loss of job and financial pressure led to murder; Husband murders wife after her affair.

Phrasing stories like this make it sound like violence is an obvious next step in response to these events. For most people this is not the case; lots of people lose their jobs or have an unfaithful partner and most do not turn to abuse and violence.

Job losses, financial pressures, and affairs are not the cause of violence against women - abusive men are.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Women can experience violence when they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol and when they are sober. Never make it sound like a woman's choice to drink or take drugs led to violence.

Use: He stalked the woman on her way home and assaulted her. Alcohol and drugs are not the cause of violence against women - abusive men are.

Don't use: She had several drinks then walked home alone and was assaulted.

JUST A ONE OFF

Be aware that seemingly one-off crimes may be part of a pattern of abuse, and that perpetrators may have engaged in a number of forms of violence against women.

Don't write about instances of violence as if they are standalone incidents. Instead, situate them using statistics [\(see page 7 - we keep these up to date on our website\)](#).

You don't have to turn your article into an academic report - when reporting an incident you can give it context with a single sentence. E.g. 'An incident of domestic abuse is reported to Police Scotland every 9 minutes'.¹⁵

Excuses for violence

Court reporting

Defence lawyers will use many of these excuses in court.

It is a journalist's responsibility to give a fair account of what happened in the court room, but it is important to avoid using the narrative of the defence as the narrative of your story.

Don't give it prominence in the story and phrase it accurately as 'defence claims'. Include quotes from expert agencies **(find on p. 28)** who can give context to these claims.

MENTAL HEALTH

One article suggested that a man murdered his ex-partner due to an 'abnormality of mental function'.

Blaming poor mental health stigmatises those with mental health issues, the vast majority of whom do not perpetrate violence against women.

Mental health conditions are not the cause of violence against women - abusive men are.

LINK WITH FOOTBALL

Although there is evidence suggesting a correlation between Old Firm matches and reports of domestic abuse, this should not be mistaken for causation. Football is not the cause of violence against women - abusive men are.¹⁶

CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

There is limited evidence that men who experience violence in their own childhoods may be more likely to go on to perpetrate violence.

Blaming current violence against women on experiences of violence in childhood stigmatises adults with adverse childhood experiences, most of whom do not turn to abuse and violence.

CRIME OF PASSION

Violence is a form of control, an assertion of dominance, not a loss of it. It is controlled, planned, and specific. It is often made to look like a loss of control, but it isn't.

SEX GAME GONE WRONG

Legally, no one can consent to injury or death. Consider that even if a woman has agreed to an act, she may have been coerced into it by an abusive partner. "Sex games" do not kill women, abusive/violent men do.

Images

Sexualised images of the victim-survivor dehumanise them and can be upsetting for them, friends, family members, and other victim-survivors of violence.

Stock images of beaten and bruised women are an inaccurate depiction of domestic abuse and other forms of violence and abuse. They reinforce outdated myths that domestic abuse is only physical.

Stock images of white, able bodied, young women reinforce myths that violence doesn't affect older women, BME women, or disabled women. When in fact violence can affect any woman, anywhere.

We have a bank of free to use, ethical, diverse and impactful stock images, created in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid, that illustrate domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women.

Download 'one thousand words' here or on our website: <http://bit.ly/1000wordsproject>. We know that when they are used, they have a real impact.

After we launched 'one thousand words' a woman sought support for the first time from Scottish Women's Aid after living with an emotionally abusive partner for many years. When asked, 'why now', she said that her friend had seen the pictures on Facebook and said: 'that woman looks just like you'.

The opportunity for a victim-survivor to recognise themselves in a story is a crucial way that they can identify that what they are enduring is abuse and be encouraged to seek help. Representation matters.



Reporting of different forms of violence against women

RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

What is it?

Rape is defined under the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 as the “penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth by the penis without consent”. There is a range of sexual assault and abuse which does not fit within the legal definition of rape, but can be just as distressing and have just as much of an impact.

Any sexual activity without consent is sexual assault or rape.

What is consent?

If you're not sure, you do not have consent.

Consent is active and ongoing – a person can always change their mind even during an activity.

Consent to one activity is not consent to all – just because a person has consented to sex before, does not mean they consent every time. Just because a person kisses someone does not mean they have consented to sex.

Consent must be freely given – a person has not consented if they are pestered, worn down, made to feel like they 'owe' something, or feel like they can't say no.

Consent cannot be given if a person is incapable because of the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or because they are asleep or unconscious.

Consent can be expressed verbally or non-verbally (known as body language). If someone does not "fight back" that does not mean they have consented. Freezing is a common reaction to fear, not just 'flight or fight'.¹⁷



Tips for reporting

Don't report rape or sexual assault as a crime of sexual desire or passion, e.g. "he couldn't resist her". This narrative is insulting to men as it suggests that if they didn't "control themselves", they too would commit these crimes. Men have control over their own actions, and violence is always a choice. Rape is a crime of violence, abuse and degradation, involving sexual behaviours but primarily motivated by violence, not desire.

Don't blame women for "leading a man on" by what they were wearing, by kissing him, or by going home with him. Sexual contact without consent is sexual assault or rape, and is a choice by the perpetrator.

If covering a story of a stranger rape, tell readers that this is an anomaly - 86% of serious sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the complainant and only five per cent of rapes reported to the police are committed by a stranger.¹⁸

It is highly uncommon for women to regret consensual sex then later claim it was rape. There are no more false reports of rape than of any other crime¹⁹. It is important to mention this when covering a story of false allegations

DOMESTIC ABUSE

What is it?

Domestic abuse is a pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violent behaviour, including sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner. Domestic abuse can happen even when partners are not living together. Domestic abuse does not always include physical violence.

‘Coercive control’ is a term used to describe abusive behaviour. It can take the form of psychological, financial or emotional abuse, including constantly criticising a woman, undermining her self-esteem, isolating her from her friends and family and other support networks and restricting her right to wear what she wants, see who she wants and enjoy leisure time as she pleases.

The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 created a specific offence of domestic abuse which includes these controlling behaviours – we have a briefing on this on our website.



Tips for reporting

Use “domestic abuse” instead of “domestic violence”. Not all domestic abuse includes physical violence.

Use “domestic abuse” instead of “a domestic” or “a domestic dispute”. These terms frame the incident of violence as a private domestic or family problem and not a crime.

Use “abusive partner” or “woman living with an abusive partner”, instead of “an abusive relationship”. Placing the blame on the relationship or relationship dynamics, rather than on the abuser, is suggesting that both people are equally at fault.

Use “woman who has experienced domestic abuse”, or “a survivor of domestic abuse” instead of “battered woman”.

When referring to children, use “exposed to” or “impacted by”. Don’t refer to children as “witnessing” domestic abuse. Children are not simply ‘witnesses’ to incidents of physical violence, but are impacted and harmed by a range of coercive behaviours.

HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

What are they?

Harmful traditional practices' is an umbrella term to describe forms of violence against women that have existed in communities for so long that they are considered, or presented by perpetrators, as part of accepted traditional practice.

They include:

- Forced or early marriage. Can be defined as a marriage in which at least one person does not consent to the marriage and duress is involved.
- So-called 'honour'-based violence. Any type of physical or psychological violence committed in the name of 'honour' predominantly against women for actual or perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have shamed their family or community.
- Female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM). Refers to procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons.



Tips for reporting

Be clear that these practices are rooted in misogyny and avoid stigmatising any ethnic, cultural, or religious group

Use the term 'honour' with caution – these practices have very little to do with honour - these are criminal acts.

Maintain the distinction between 'forced marriage' and 'arranged marriage'. Be clear that in forced marriage at least one party does not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved.

Affected communities may protect and support perpetrators, and victim-survivors themselves may be unaware they are experiencing violence against women.

The discrimination that faces some communities in the form islamophobia and racism can act as a barrier to seeking support or speaking out about any form of violence.

If you are covering a story where a victim-survivor would like to remain anonymous, ensure that you do not include any details which could lead to identification. Often the connections which minority communities have with each other are under-estimated, therefore by disclosing a detail which may seem innocuous may lead to the identification of an individual by their communities

The majority of honour-based violence is inter-familial. If interviewing, never use family members or children to interpret as any member of the family could be involved, including the mother of the victim.

Seek advice from specialist organisations when reporting

for details see page 28

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

What is it?

Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) describes a range of activities which (typically) men pay for or profit from, and which objectify and harm women.

These include:

- stripping, pole-dancing and lap-dancing, peep shows
- prostitution, via massage parlours / saunas, brothels and escort agencies
- phone sex lines and web cams
- pornography
- trafficking
- sex tourism



Tips for reporting

Don't use murdered/dead prostitute. Regardless of their past, women who were murdered are women first. Use 'woman who was murdered'; use the woman's name where possible.

Don't use child prostitute, teenage prostitute. Sexual contact with a child is always abuse. Use 'abused child'.

Focus on some men's choices to exploit women, not the women's 'choices' to be involved in prostitution.

Women involved in prostitution experience violence against women. Regardless of any financial transaction, they have a right to withdraw consent, and any activity after the withdrawal of consent is sexual assault or rape.



ONLINE ABUSE

What is it?

Online abuse is part of the continuum of men's violence against women rather than a unique phenomenon e.g. in domestic abuse situations, men have used email, text and social media to stalk, harass and threaten female partners.²⁰ It can include threatening to share intimate photographs without consent, or actually doing so. This is a criminal offence. Even in cases where perpetrators are not known to victim-survivors offline, online abuse causes real world fear, often exacerbated by abusers sharing details such as a victim-survivor's address, or information about family members.²¹



Tips for reporting

Don't trivialise it by suggesting she should ignore it or switch off her computer.

Don't reproduce abusive or malicious posts, tweets or images. Making it easy for readers to find the abusive material can cause further harm to the victim-survivor. It may also enhance the perpetrator's profile - and under current legislation, you may be at risk of breaking the law.

If an intimate image of someone is shared without their consent, it is not their fault for taking the image in the first place. It is the fault of the person who shared the image without consent.



Interviewing victim-survivors of violence against women

Victim-survivors of violence have experienced trauma, and this can make it very difficult to talk about.

These tips will help you work with victim-survivors respectfully and in a way that generates the best possible story for you and gives victim-survivors an opportunity for their story to be shared.

Talk to the experts:

Get in touch with local support organisations to make sure your interviewee will have support (**see p.26**). Give services plenty of notice if you want their help in finding a victim-survivor to interview.

Connect:

Help them feel comfortable; listen, get to know them, and build a rapport. If other people will be involved in the interview, such as a film crew, allow the victim-survivor time to meet everyone. Where survivors do not communicate in English, ensure an interpreter is present, and ensure the interpreter is a woman.

Provide support:

Explain the interview process and outline the areas you want to discuss in advance. Suggest that the interviewee bring along a friend, relative or support worker. Make arrangements for the support worker to be present or have numbers for support agencies on hand; you can find them on **pages 26**.

Respect confidentiality:

Ask the victim-survivor if they would like to remain anonymous. Let the woman know in advance if you want to record the interview and ask if this is OK. It is paramount to maintain the privacy of women's addresses and the location of women's refuges. Be mindful of this when using pictures.

Questions:

Ask open-ended, non-judgmental questions that allow victim-survivors to share their stories.

Some examples of good questions to ask include:

- What do you think is important for people to know?
- How has this experience impacted you?
- What services/resources/people helped you in your recovery?
- What were the barriers to you coming forward?
- What suggestions do you have to make it safer for victim-survivors to come forward?

Avoid questions about the victim-survivor's behaviour that imply they somehow provoked the incident.

Avoid questions which for example, make reference to a women's faith, immigration status and/or ethnicity. Often this type of information about victims/survivors and perpetrators, feeds into societal stereotypes about minority communities

Be prepared to stop and start, or simply just stop:

Let them share the amount of information that they're comfortable with in their own time, let them take a break if they need it.

Using the story

Let her check over the quotes you are planning to use to make sure she is happy with how she has expressed herself.

If the survivor wishes to remain anonymous, let her check how you have described her so that she is confident that she won't be identified.

Be clear how the interview will be used, where and when. If it will also be used online and on social media, make sure this is understood and consented to.

Be clear that news priorities can overtake the planned publication or broadcast dates and times, and make sure the victim-survivor is updated. In-house lawyers for media organisations can get anxious when there has been no conviction – it can be very disappointing for a victim-survivor to go through the emotions of giving an interview for it not to be used because lawyers weren't consulted first.

Looking after yourself:

Reporting on violence against women can be difficult and can impact on the health and wellbeing of journalists. You can get emotional support and help from **the list of helplines on page 26**.

Helplines



Your story will reach women
who have experienced
or are experiencing
the same violence.

Providing information on how to contact appropriate local and national sources of support can encourage women to seek help. It can save lives.

These helplines are available to copy and paste from our website.
www.zerotolerance.org.uk

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Police Scotland | 999 – Emergency 101 – Non-Emergency | |
| Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline | 0800 027 1234 24 hours a day, 7 days a week helpline@ndafmhs.org.uk (response within 2 days by email) | Free and confidential service for anyone of any gender who has experienced domestic abuse or forced marriage. |
| Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline | 08088 01 03 02 between 6pm and midnight every night or by email support@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk Full details of access to support for people who are deaf or hard of hearing can be found at www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/help-deaf-access-to-support/ We can arrange for language interpreters. | Free and confidential support and information for anyone, women and men, affected by sexual violence, no matter when or how it happened. |
| Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) helpline (run by NSPCC) | 0800 028 3550 24 hours a day, 7 days a week | Free and confidential help for anyone who is worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM. |
| Childline | 0800 11 11 24 hours a day, 7 days a week Email and online chat available www.childline.org.uk | Free and confidential service to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. |
| Respect Phonenumber | 0808 802 4040 9am-5pm - Monday-Friday | Free and confidential service for anyone who is concerned about their own behaviour towards their partner (male, female, in heterosexual or same-sex relationships). |
| Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre | 0808 801 0301 10am-4pm, Monday to Friday | Help for women in English, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi, Bangli and Swahili and, when required, using online interpreting |
| Shakti Women's Aid | 0131 475 2399 9.30am-4pm - Monday to Friday | Help for black and minority ethnic (BME) women, children and young people who are experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse. |

Expert organisations available for media comment

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| Zero Tolerance | 0131 5567365 info@zerotolerance.org.uk www.zerotolerance.org.uk Media contact: Jenny Lester, Communications & Events Officer jenny.lester@zerotolerance.org.uk | A national organisation campaigning to end men's violence against women in all its forms by tackling the root cause of this violence - gender inequality |
| Scottish Women's Aid | 0131 226 6606 info@womensaid.scot www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk Media contact: Megan Gordon Megan.Gordon@womensaid.scot | The lead organisation in Scotland working towards the prevention of domestic abuse and a lead provider of services for women including refuge accommodation. |
| Rape Crisis Scotland | 0141 331 4180 info@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk Media contact: Brenna Jessie, Press + Campaigns Officer 07936362932 Brenna.Jessie@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk | The national office for the rape crisis movement in Scotland, supporting service development and raising awareness of sexual violence, challenging attitudes and pressing for legal change. |
| Saheliya | 0131 556 9302 info@saheliya.co.uk www.saheliya.co.uk Media Contact: Alison Davis, Director alison@saheliya.co.uk | Specialist mental health and well-being support organisation for black, minority ethnic, asylum seeker, refugee and migrant women and girls (12+) in the Edinburgh and Glasgow area. |

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| The Equality Network | <p>0131 467 6039 en@equality-network.org www.equality-network.org Media Contact: Hannah Pearson, Policy Co-ordinator press@equality-network.org</p> | National charity working for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) equality and human rights in Scotland |
| Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) | <p>0141 276 7724 CommsafetyTARA@glasgow.gov.uk www.communitysafetyglasgow.org/what-we-do/supporting-victims-of-gender-based-violence</p> | Support service for trafficking survivors, to help identify and support women who may have been trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation |
| Inclusion Scotland | <p>0131 281 0860 info@inclusionscotland.org www.inclusionscotland.org</p> | Inclusion Scotland works to achieve positive changes to policy and practice, so that disabled people are fully included throughout all Scottish society as equal citizens. |
| Women's Support Project | <p>0141 418 0748 enquiries@womenssupportproject.org.uk www.womenssupportproject.co.uk</p> | A feminist voluntary organisation, which works to raise awareness of the extent, causes and effect of male violence against women, and for improved services for those affected by violence including prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. |
| Scottish Trans Alliance | <p>0131 467 6039 info@scottishtrans.org www.scottishtrans.org</p> | Equality Network project to improve gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion in Scotland |
| Amnesty International Scotland | <p>0131 357 8580 scotland@amnesty.org.uk www.amnesty.org.uk/ Media contact: Pauline Kelly 07818 453070 Pauline.kelly@amnesty.org.uk</p> | The Scottish office of Amnesty International, a global movement of more than 7 million people in over 150 countries and territories who campaign to end abuses of human rights. Amnesty in Scotland; human rights advocacy, campaigning, education, events and media. |
| White Ribbon Scotland | <p>07563 774525 info@whiteribbonscotland.org.uk www.whiteribbonscotland.org.uk</p> | A campaign for men in Scotland who want to end violence against women. |

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| Barnardo's Scotland | 0131 334 9893 info@barnardos.org.uk www.barnardos.org.uk/scotland Media contact: Katrina Slater, Media and Communications Manager katrina.slater@barnardos.org.uk | A children's charity whose purpose is to reach out to the most disadvantaged children, young people, families and communities to help ensure that every child has the best possible start in life. Barnardo's Scotland runs a number of projects on domestic abuse and sexual exploitation. |
| Engender | 0131 558 9596 info@engender.org.uk info@engender.org.uk www.engender.org.uk Media contact: Alys Mumford, Communications and Engagement Manager media@engender.org.uk | A membership organisation working on an anti-sexist agenda in Scotland and Europe to increase women's power and influence and make visible the impact |
| Gender Equal Media Scotland | info@genderequalmedia.scot www.genderequalmedia.scot Media contact: Karen Boyle, Professor of Feminist Media Studies karen.boyle.101@strath.ac.uk | Gender Equal Media Scotland brings together academics, journalists, campaign groups and organisations working for women's equality in Scottish media together to work toward a Scottish media which treats women equally – as employees, as contributors and as subjects of media attention. |

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Scottish Government
 Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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