

EDV Youth Council and NUS Eliminate Domestic Violence Toolkit

NUS Women's Campaign

November 2014

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Introduction

Welcome

As Patron and Founder of EDV, it is my pleasure to introduce this first project for the EDV Youth Council. I firmly believe that engaging the leaders of tomorrow will be key in sustainably fighting the public health epidemic of domestic violence. As you will see, young people aged 16-24 are at high risk of experiencing domestic violence – students and universities have a responsibility to take action against abusive behaviour and help direct friends, colleagues and students to safety & support.

The Rt. Hon. Baroness Scotland of Asthal, QC

NUS Women's Campaign is very proud to be working with EDV Youth Council to tackle domestic violence. We're committed to campaigning for the safety and wellbeing of students experiencing and students who have experienced domestic violence. We hope that you use this toolkit on your campuses and work with us to end domestic violence.

Susuana Antubam NUS National Women's Officer

Domestic Violence and Domestic Abuse: What Are They?

Domestic Violence (DV), also known as Domestic Abuse (DA) is defined as "any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members".¹ This coercive control takes a variety of forms, including physical, psychological and financial. DV is an abuse of human rights and a crime.

It is an issue that crosses through the home, educational institutions and the workplace with far reaching implications on individuals in terms of their physical and mental well-being. Contrary to stereotype, DV affects men as well as women. This is supported by the shocking

statistic that in the UK alone, "DV currently affects 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men in their lifetimes".²

The epidemic and sheer scale of the issue is evidenced via the fact that DV related incidents are reported to the police every single minute.³ As summarised by the Global Foundation for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (EDV): "no country or community is untouched – everyone is affected and everyone is needed to fight this epidemic".

Purpose of this toolkit

We have a responsibility as individuals to work together to ensure that more action is taken in order to make any progress towards understanding and eliminating DV. NUS and the EDV Youth Council have developed this toolkit in order to expand the role of young people and students, specifically in the global effort to fight domestic violence. Student voices have traditionally been key in creating long-term change and the NUS and the Youth Council are keen to ensure that this tradition continues.

Aims

With this toolkit we want to:

- Educate you about Domestic Violence (DV);
- Motivate you to become part of the movement against domestic violence; and
- Provide the means for you to become a positive agent of change in society.

This toolkit will act as a guide on the issues surrounding domestic violence: what it is, how to recognise it and how young people aged 16-25 can combat it. The toolkit is comprised of several elements that will be informative, thought-provoking, interactive and a basis to start creating positive change.

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Domestic Violence: Practical Facts

- Signs, symptoms and forms
- What are the problems to confront?
- How to respond to a self-disclosure
- Where to seek help
- Young people can help

Domestic Violence: Practical facts

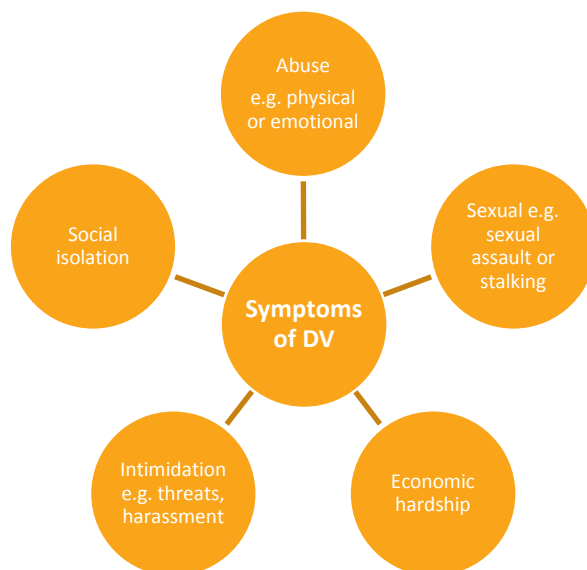
Signs Symptoms and Forms

Domestic violence is something we hear a great deal about – whether in the press or story lines of movies or TV shows. It is often something that happens to other people but not to us. We often do not realise the insidious ways it impacts and controls the lives of people who endure, witness or perpetrate DV.

Domestic Violence is escalatory in nature, and is seen as the power and control of one person over another. This can take the form of coercive control, dating violence, psychological manipulation, stalking, financial abuse, honour based violence and physical control and violence. Those who endure abuse talk of walking on eggshells – afraid of their current partner, former partner, or family members' behaviour. DV can cause entrapment in relationships of any sexual orientation, economic status, level of education, faith or race. The victim may be any gender, although statistics show that 89% of people who endure repeated abuse are women. DV does not simply refer to violence in the home, but to violence within a relationship anywhere. A significant proportion of victims are targeted at work, or at school, where a person can be found. It may be that students experiencing DV will be targeted during university hours.

Psychological control is the attempt of the abuser to undermine self-worth and self-esteem. This can take myriad potential forms.

The diagram below shows some of the common elements of domestic violence. Note that many of these signs can be synonymous with other life issues – such as accidents or perhaps stress. 68% of people who endure abuse present with clinical depression. The most noticeable indicator or is that there will be a sustained, long term change in patterns of behaviour and personal interactions.



These symptoms can be the result of a variety of behaviours:

Physical abuse can range from constant coercive physical control (pulling, pushing) through physical attacks all the way up to deadly assault – 50% of women murdered are killed by their current or ex male partners.⁵ Victims experiencing physical abuse may miss day(s) without warning or display outward signs of injury.

Psychological control is the attempt of the abuser to undermine self-worth and self-esteem. This can take myriad potential forms. Someone may be experiencing psychological assault if they withdraw socially or display symptoms of depression and self-loathing.

Financial abuse involves control across all aspects of finance. Abusing financially can mean controlling what another person purchases. It can also mean taking advantage of someone's funds by ruining their credit, racking up debt in their name, withholding child support or stealing their money.

Just as each person has a different fingerprint, so too are there different ways that people who endure and witness DV respond to the experience. It can be that there will be an increase in depression or isolation, extreme disruption to their personal and academic life. People who endure domestic abuse and violence often seek different coping mechanisms – perhaps including a reliance on drugs and alcohol. This does not mean that everyone who experiences DV will seek these out, rather we are pointing out the realities of how difficult life can be for those who endure.

In the student context, it is quite likely for the victim to achieve lower standards than they otherwise would – this may cause significant detriment in the person's academic life. Although an individual might outwardly appear to be a highly successful achiever, they could be suffering abuse in their personal life.

It is even possible the victim may drop out of university entirely. Studies show that women aged 20-24 reported the highest levels of domestic violence while domestic violence amongst men was also highest among 16-24 year olds⁵. This figure is high, but the services do exist to bring this number down and to save and improve lives.

What are the problems we have to confront?

In order to find a solution to any problem, it is necessary to identify the causes, and confront them. One of the main aims of this toolkit is to overview problems that require solutions: some of these problems are outlined below.

Taboo subject

There are also some who believe that DV is a taboo subject which must be approached with caution, especially if there is a likelihood of offending as a result of outside interference in what many view as an intrusion into family life. This may explain why only 12% of victims report their case of abuse to the police.

Stigmatisation

There may be a shame associated with being a victim which creates an "us" and "other" culture. Often the "other" are those who endure, as if it their fault for not "learning" or "putting up" with the emotional, psychological and demeaning abuse. You can help address this division by listening with empathy to people who have endured.

Lack of awareness

On the one hand, individuals who are not affected by DV may not be clear about the extent of DV. On the other hand, those who experience DV may not even be aware of the signs or even realise that they are being subjected to DV behaviours. Research shows around 40-45% of women may be raped by their partners⁶ thus it is essential they understand that domestic violence is not something to keep silent about and they should report their abuse to the police or seek help and safety support through specialist support services available, or your on-campus services, and the contact details for these should be easy to find and discreet to access.

Education

A priority for this toolkit is to address the knowledge gap about domestic violence and abuse. This is a direct consequence of the taboo and awareness problems indicated above – since people are often reluctant to talk about DV or even admit that it is one of the most dangerous public health problems we face today. Education about DV starts with understanding its widespread prevalence and multiple forms – you can help by disseminating this toolkit and the knowledge you gain from it.

Addressing DV starts with understanding its widespread prevalence and multiple forms – you can help by disseminating this toolkit and the knowledge you gain from it.

Attitude

DV is very common yet remains hidden and unresolved. Perhaps this is due to a lack of understanding the dynamics from those who are not seemingly affected by DV. This perspective has to change. DV does not only directly affect the immediate victims i.e. those suffering DV at the hands of their intimate partners or family members, but also their children who are effectively silent DV victims. The impact of DV is not isolated to the home.

Real Life DV Accounts

DV often devastates the lives it touches, however remember that there is help, support and safety planning available. Below are some real accounts by survivors about the true impact.

“It is never easy talking about domestic violence and abuse. Sometimes the only way of dealing with the impact is by putting all your feelings and experiences down on paper. Domestic violence affects 1 in 4 of all women: every woman thinks she won’t be that one but what life throws your way you never know...Your partners’ insecurities and possessiveness begins to shape your life. Their need to take complete control begins to affect you in ways you never dreamt about”.

“What starts off with a little bit of emotional abuse grows into something bigger that takes over your life.”

“Their need to control your actions, your sayings, and your appearance begins to take its toll slowly. They never cease to criticize everything about you, they destroy your confidence, the continuous whispering in your ear that you’re not good enough makes you believe you’re not. You begin to live your life to impress them. Everything you say is thought out. You worry that if you say the wrong thing you’ll have to deal with the consequences. But when your partner wants that control no matter how much you try it’s never good enough. They’ll always find a reason to put you down, destroy your confidence. They won’t be happy until they’ve reduced you to tears because they know that the fight you had in you is draining away and then comes the time when you look for even the smallest of compliments because you have no confidence, no self-worth, you’ve begun to hate everything about you because your partner thinks you’re not good enough.

“Once the tears fall, they’ve broken a little bit more of your resilience”

After the emotional abuse, comes the sexual abuse. Once you're broken, the power to say 'no' is gone. You take everything they throw your way because you're scared that if you hold back the situation will worsen, the taunts will get worse, the slaps will come hard and fast. You're at that stage when everything you do is to please him. You distance yourself from your family and friends because your partner does not like them, he does not want you to talk to them, [and] even a mention of their name will anger him. You have no one to talk to; no one to share your problems with and you push even the little bit of help away fearing the consequences.

Some people think the solution to DV is to report the partner and move on. However that's the easy part. Dealing with the impact it's had on your life is the most difficult situation. After suffering from DV, moving on is the biggest challenge. Whilst you go on and live your life, the verbal, emotional and sexual abuse remain with you forever. Your ability to trust and let someone else in is low. You're scared of suffering abuse at the hands of another man so you begin to harden your heart and switch your emotions off. There's a permanent mask you live with. You show the world you're in control, you've moved on, you've dealt with what you've been through and you're now living life the way you want to. However it's all a cover".

"The abuse stays with you forever."

"It doesn't take much to go into that dark place where you were and start to believe all the things your abusive partner said to you. You spend years building up the confidence he took from you but it doesn't take much to have it broken again. Unintentional words said here and there will send you back into that dark place again and you again have to work to build up your confidence and self-worth. It becomes a full time job to keep the smile on your face and act as if you have no care in the world. It's not easy and it isn't always possible but you can't ever let that mask slip. It's easy to leave a DV situation but very difficult to move on afterward".

- Sameera

"I thought [that] being in a domestic violence relationship was like Ike and Tina Turner: always physical. This is not the case.

Domestic violence can affect the victims differently".

"It is not about how big the scar is...it is about you feeling controlled by your partner."

- Shakira Martin

"For the longest time I never thought that I was suffering from domestic violence. It seemed like something that a man could never experience. My partner was constantly belittling me, taking advantage of my distaste for conflict to undermine my confidence, my self-esteem and any possibility I could have a healthier relationship. I didn't want to admit to my family or friends how I felt in case they lost respect for me – eventually I had the courage to admit to my family that I had to leave my partner and come to live with them. After a time I was able to move on with my life and regain some self-respect – but it is a constant process to remind myself that what my partner said was just a way to control me".

- Eric

How to respond to self-disclosure

Creating awareness of domestic violence and domestic abuse can be quite daunting. There is a great deal to think about when crafting your message on domestic violence and how you and your peer group are going to approach it during the 16 Days. However, you also need to think about how to address individuals who disclose to you.

Below are guidelines on how to approach this situation with sensitivity, discretion and practicality.

1. Remember the person who is speaking with you is speaking about their life

This most important thing to remember in dealing with disclosures is that no matter how difficult it is to listen to a disclosure, the person enduring is terrified about the conversation.

2. It is critical to establish trust – and to be truthful

People who endure violence are often convinced that they are the only ones enduring violence and it is their fault, which results in their belief in trust being destroyed as a result of their perpetrator. The fact they have gone to an employer or friend shows tremendous courage and presents an opportunity for the academic university/college to build trust, which is the first step to ensuring they are safe.

3. Be a resource and help to the person who speaks with you

Sometimes it is very difficult to hear what people have to say and can touch our hearts. It is important to say neutral and actively listen. What you will hear will help you to clarify the domestic violence direct service referrals that will need to be made.

4. Remember that confidentiality is key

This means both to the person disclosing, but also to the people around them and to the university. The university and people who act to help and listen to people who disclose must establish trust. However, there are limits to confidentiality. The safety of all people on campus is paramount, which may mean involving security or the police. It is important that necessary precautions to protect the safety of all members of the academic location are in place. Remember the time of greatest danger is often when someone leaves an abusive partner.

5. Link up with the experts who are front line providers of services

The person enduring violence may need time off from University or work to ensure their children are safe, to get medical attention or to contact legal help. Offering them this time and granting it when asked is a crucial step in helping anyone who had endured get back on track. You are not alone in this. There are many direct service organisations who can assist – which are referenced in this document.

6. Make sure the person who discloses has decision-making autonomy

It is their life and they are in charge of it. This may be the first time they have said anything to you, or anything about this in general. Do not attempt to persuade the person into doing anything-remember you are not the counsellor. Recommendations are fine, and this is where links to direct service providers are critical. If however during the discussions talk of weapons being used arises, or if the person is being contacted at work incessantly or if the perpetrator shows up at a dorm or class, it is critical that the university understand that they have a duty of care to protect their students and ensure all dynamic risk is mitigated.

Where to seek help

There are a range of organisations and resources that exist to help individuals who are affected by DV. We have only listed details of some below.

Broken Rainbow – for LGBT individuals. It provides assistance in several ways: free helpline, by email or an online chat.
www.brokenrainbow.org.uk/

Eaves - Eaves has specialisms in the areas of trafficking, exiting prostitution, and sexual violence. Eaves also offer housing and employment services.
www.eavesforwomen.org.uk

The Intervention Initiative - a free resource with an educational toolkit to be used by universities and colleges for the prevention of sexual coercion and domestic abuse in university settings.
www1.uwe.ac.uk/bl/research/interventioninitiative.aspx

National Centre for Domestic Violence – works in close partnership with the police, law firms and support agencies to help individuals obtain protection by way of providing a free, fast emergency injunction service.
www.ncdv.org.uk

ManKind Initiative – offers support for male victims of Domestic Abuse and Domestic Violence.
www.mankind.org.uk

Survivors UK – information, support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused.
www.survivorsuk.org

Women's Aid UK – Is a national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. They support a network of over 300 specialist domestic violence services across the UK - www.womensaid.org.uk

Refuge – Refuge is a UK charity providing a national network of specialist services for women and children including emergency refuge accommodation. www.refuge.org.uk

Respect - Respect is a UK membership organisation for work with domestic violence perpetrators, male victims and young people.
www.respect.uk.net

Imkaan - Imkaan is a UK-based, black feminist organisation dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls.
www.imkaan.org.uk



Young People Can Help

It is fundamental for the EDV YC and the NUS to advocate for provisions that will help DV victims and channel the difficulties they may be facing to appropriate help and support. It is vital the EDV YC pressure university institutions, through the NUS, to have some kind of action plan to aid victims of domestic violence. Individuals affected by DV must not feel as if they are alone and should have a support network for them to lean on during their time of need – we can create this support network in colleges and universities. Our call to action must be:

Together, We Can End Domestic Violence

EDV Global Foundation

EDV Global Foundation

EDV Global Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organisation (registered charity no. 1144078) based in the UK, which was founded in 2011 by The Rt. Hon. Baroness Patricia Scotland of Ashal, QC. It is a world-leading organisation that addresses domestic violence globally and works to see DV eliminated.

Why Are We Working with the NUS?

The EDV Youth Council was keen to launch a project in partnership with the National Union of Students. The NUS represents a key sector of society for organisations working against domestic violence – young people are statistically at risk of experiencing domestic violence but also a proactive sector capable of raising awareness and challenging negative attitudes that will create lasting and cultural change. We want to distribute this toolkit to universities around the UK so as to raise awareness of DV among young people, engage individuals in discussions and encourage those who have been affected by DV to come forward. We hope that the toolkit will form a foundation for bigger DV initiatives across universities so that individuals can seek support where required. The NUS provides the ideal partner to fulfil this goal.

Our vision

We understand that future leaders and policy makers will come from the youth of today. It is therefore important to involve and engage young people in constructive dialogue to empower them to actively orchestrate sustainable change. It is our goal that we develop creative solutions to tackle domestic violence not only in the UK but also across the globe.

We intend to raise awareness of DV among young people aged 16-24 through innovative initiatives in an accessible and relatable dialogue.

By engaging young people about DV and equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills, we will create a strong youth community. Together, we will work to make sure that DV is addressed particularly in schools, colleges and universities.

Our approach to eliminating DV

There are three distinct elements in EDV's approach to domestic violence (DV):

- Advocacy and Education to raise awareness of DV;
- Research and Policy Development to discover any gaps and best practices in tackling DV; and
- Programme Design and Implementation to demonstrate practical ways that research can be applied.

Through utilising research and implementing strategies, GFEDV seeks to influence policy makers and encourage a sustained and effective change to the legal and civil stance on DV. In doing so, it hopes to see organisations, states and governments across the world move toward a position where the elimination of DV is not only seen as a key issue worth addressing, but also a behaviour that is culturally unacceptable.

The EDV Youth Council: Why DV Affects Young People

As you will discover via this toolkit, DV affects all members of society regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic class, education or gender. Age is also not a limit to experiencing DV and often young people aged 16-24 are actually more at risk of domestic, dating and partner abuse than those in any other age group. This is reflected in the fact that in 2012/13, 7.5% of men and 11.3% of women aged 16-19 were victims of domestic abuse and 3.6% of men and 6.3% of women were victims of partner abuse. For 20-24 year old males, the figures were 6.9% and 5.1% for domestic and partner abuse - and for women they were 12.5% and 7.4% respectively. For partner abuse amongst those under 25, at least for every three victims, two will be female and one will be male.³ Moreover, interpersonal violence is the leading cause of death in adolescents and young people worldwide.⁴



It is often hard to read and absorb statistics that reflect so much of the population being affected by this epidemic. It is critical to remember that a person's life may never be touched by DV. However if an individual is affected by DV, there are many avenues of hope and help that concretely lead to safety and a life of peace.

EDV identified that there is a gap in DV response for young people and accordingly created the EDV Youth Council (EDV YC). The Council will provide a platform where young people can actively work together to eliminate DV and be the voice for change among the youth. The EDV YC comprises of 9 permanent executive members and four sub-council teams. We are a diverse group, aged 18-25, and we work together to research, help fund and implement new, innovative and effective youth-led projects.

Who are EDV's partners?

EDV currently works with over 300 partners in over 100 countries through the Peace One Day Reducing DV Coalition. Peace One Day focuses not only on reducing violence in civil and military conflicts, but also on reducing violence in the home. Other notable partners include UN Women; White Ribbon Campaign; The Council of Europe, The College of Policing; and the Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence.

For a full list, please go to <http://gfedv.org/reducing.php>.

How do I find out more about EDV?

Please visit the EDV website and keep updated with the NGO's developments via social media:

- Website: <http://gfedv.org/index.php>
- Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/GFEDV?fref=ts>
- Twitter: @gfedv, @EDVyouth
- Instagram: edvyouth
(<http://instagram.com/edvyouth>)

How Can You Help?

How Can You Help?

Spread the word...

- EDV online campaign – details to be provided!
- Social media has huge potential so please go crazy with the hashtags/tweets/shares on Twitter. You can start off with #EndDV
- Promote DV organisations

Talk about DV openly and engage in discussions with your peers

- Engage in active conversation, talk to people about domestic violence and make people aware of the seriousness of it.
- We are producing posters and leaflets that will be distributed across universities. We aim to raise awareness of DV through ALL universities, so getting your student body involved would be great!

Take part in our events

We are planning a live Twitter Q&A with highly esteemed DV professionals so keep an eye out on our social media accounts for more details.

Fundraise

Help support DV organisations e.g. organise a cake sale, do a sponsored run etc.

Please get in touch for our pack on fundraising ideas and our hints and tips.

Lobbying

Be the change with us

- Volunteer and gain a real insight into DV (see the opportunities section below for details)
- Think of innovative ideas to campaign and let us know
- Join us on marches/walks/make petitions

Some ideas include...

- Engage in discussions with politicians about making domestic violence itself a criminal offence in its own right
- Walks/marches to end DV
- Petitions to government/MPs
- DV societies and ambassadors
- Release info on EDV research, opportunities and work
- Organise movie nights and hold discussions
- Create support groups
- Fight the taboo

Other ways you can contribute

We know money is often tight for students, but if you hold a fundraising event or just want to give you can support the EDV Youth Council through the links below. Please note that these donations will not go to front line services but helps EDV reach communities impacted by DV. Donate via JustGiving

<https://www.justgiving.com/GFEDV/>

Just textgiving by texting "EDVG 22" to 70070 followed by the amount you would like to give e.g. £1, £5, £10 etc.

For full details, follow this link:

<http://gfedv.org/pages.php?sid=23&pid=25>

Opportunities

Volunteer with us and contribute to eliminating DV.

YC sub-delegate positions: Sub-delegates work with us on our projects during the year. We have limited vacancies in our four core council divisions.

Events

Assist the Events Officer in planning all YC events such as presentations and workshops.

Finance

Identify sources of finance for YC projects; assist the Treasurer and Finance Officer in drafting funding applications and conducting research on potential contacts.

Media and Communications

Work with the Media and Communications Officer to manage EDV YC's social profile, promote projects and create thought-provoking advertising campaigns.

Research

Work in research team to stay abreast of all developments in relation to DV nationally and globally e.g. new legislation, conferences and court cases. There will be opportunities to contribute to a research document.

If you would like further details please do not hesitate to email us. Please note that there will be overlap between the areas as we will be working closely together in every project. All those involved with the YC will be able to focus on certain skills for personal development.

EDV Ambassadors: we need enthusiastic and passionate individuals to help create a strong campus presence at universities.

If you are interested in the above, please send your CV and a short statement on why you want to get involved with the EDV YC in your chosen role i.e. YC Sub-Delegate or EDV Ambassador to youthcouncil@gfedv.org.

Other plans in store...

We are currently working on bringing you all:

- Online seminars
- Some information loaded presentations
- Jam packed workshop sessions at a university near you!
- Engaging twitter Q&A sessions
- An online forum to discuss DV issues
- Debate motions in collaboration with university debating societies
- And much more...

Please feel free to contact us by email, Twitter and Facebook to let us know your thoughts on our projects and plans.

Email: youthcouncil@gfedv.org

Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EDVYC/>

Twitter: @EdvYouth.

We really welcome your ideas and any support you can provide. If you are able to contribute, please get in contact with us!

Acknowledgements

A special mention to:

The University of Westminster, in particular Dr Frands Pedersen

Thank you for your support.

Endnotes

¹ UK Government, 2012. [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-definition-of-domestic-violence> (Accessed 08 November 2014)

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