



The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign running from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (Human Rights Day), aiming to raise awareness and inspire action to end violence against women and girls globally.

For 2025, the campaign theme is "UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls", highlighting the growing and pervasive threat of technology-facilitated violence, such as cyber-harassment, online stalking, and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. This theme calls for collective responsibility from governments, tech companies, individuals, and civil society to implement comprehensive measures to prevent, criminalize, and respond to digital abuse, ensuring online spaces are safe and rights-respecting for everyone.

Key messages:

- Gender-based violence is a global health, gender equality and human rights priority. It remains a systemic crisis, affecting 1 in 3 women worldwide. Risk increases during humanitarian emergencies or when women face greater curtailments of their essential rights, such as access to education, healthcare or freedom of movement.
- While violence affects women everywhere, women and girls in certain groups – such as those living with disability, adolescent girls and older women – often face even greater difficulty to have their voices heard and to access support.
- Too often people respond to violence by blaming or shaming the victim – for instance for what they wore or what they did, or because they belong to a particular group, or people hesitate to offer support because it takes place in 'private' or among people we know.
- We must change the story, challenge misogyny and violence, and make sure women are heard. Women and girls everywhere should be able to access the help they need, when they need it, so we can end violence.

Help comes in many forms – we can all play a role in preventing violence against women and girls.

If you are working with someone, or are concerned about someone experiencing violence there are some things you can do – starting with being willing to listen:

- Keep in touch with the person, ensuring that it is safe for them to be in touch with you. They might not be ready to talk but try to find quiet times when they can talk if they choose to.
- Provide information about local services for survivors of violence against women.
- If someone you know needs urgent help for whatever reason, be prepared to call emergency services.

Support Services:

- **Domestic Abuse Support** - Tower Hamlets Solace Advocacy and Support Service (THSASS) is a front-line service for victims/survivors of domestic abuse. Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) work with victims/survivors and this service includes Somali, Sylheti and Bengali speaking IDVAs. Clients can self-refer by calling [0203 795 5064](tel:02037955064) (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm) or email; towerhamlets@solacewomensaid.org. Professionals can complete the following forms: [TH SASS Referral](#) and [DASH Risk Assessment](#).
- **The Sanctuary Project:** a partnership to provide free tailor-made security for victims of domestic abuse at risk of homelessness (due to domestic abuse) to help keep them safe in their homes – for more information, [LBTH Sanctuary Project](#).
- **Perpetrator Programme:** [Positive Change Programme](#) is for fathers who are perpetrators of domestic abuse. In addition the Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) programme is a structured programme delivered on a 1:1 basis which is designed for non-fathers who have perpetrated abuse within their relationships, see here the [CIFA Referral Form](#). [DRIVE project](#) is for perpetrators of DA and is open to fathers and non-fathers.
- **Telephone advice for professionals:** The VAWG Team provides a telephone duty line ([0800 279 5434](tel:08002795434) or email domestic.violence@towerhamlets.gov.uk) Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm. Victims can call THSASS or outside of office hours [The Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge](#) on [0808 2000 247](tel:08082000247) for free, 24hr, confidential, non-judgmental support.
- **Beyond the Streets (BTS)** offers support to women involved in survival sex. Tel: [0800 1337 870](tel:08001337870) or email support@beyondthestreets.org.uk, for professionals [Women's Exploitation and Safety Panel \(WESP\) referral form](#)

Some key statistics:

- [One in seven men and one in four women](#) will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime.
- [21 per cent of male victims](#) fail to tell anyone they are subjected to partner abuse.
- [6.5 per cent of male victims and 2.8 per cent](#) of female victims have considered taking their life due to partner abuse.
- [LGBTQI+](#) and [disabled people](#) often experience disproportionately higher rates of severe and frequent incidents of domestic abuse.

Of callers to the [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) in the year ending March 2023, where the abuse type was recorded, figures indicate:

- 78.7 per cent experienced psychological or emotional abuse
- 50.6 per cent experienced controlling behaviour
- 53.1 per cent experienced threatening or intimidating behaviour.

The Offer/Get involved:

- **Support our Campaigns:** Domestic Abuse No Excuse Campaign, promotes reporting and local support. In addition, [Don't Cross the Line Campaign](#), the borough's first sexual harassment and anti-misogyny campaign.
- **Make leaflets and posters clearly visible** in your communal areas, staff rooms, and bathrooms. These simple resources can be a lifeline. If you need copies, contact us at Domestic.Violence@towerhamlets.gov.uk.
- **Encourage reporting:** Facilitate engagement/awareness sessions with your service users on VAWG/DA/WS by organising workshops, information stalls, reporting surgeries, training.
- **Training/Outreach:** the team delivers free multi-agency training on VAWG and provides briefing sessions, seminars, and events to develop staff skills and knowledge in responding to VAWG/DA -[VAWG training external application form](#). Some awareness sessions can be delivered in Sylheti/Bengali if requested and required.

- **Become a VAWG Champion:** This programme trains a staff member to lead on domestic abuse and VAWG awareness. To support colleagues, promote best practice, and help ensure disclosures are responded to safely and effectively. Email vawg@towerhamlets.gov.uk for training dates.
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- to sign the pledge to become a Tower Hamlet's Male Ally: signing the form details your promise to never excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women.
- **Bookmark key resources:** the [VAWG directory](#) sets out local services and referral pathways and the [Domestic Abuse Support Service Contact Details gives contact details](#).
- **Join the UN's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence:** Speak out, act, help end VAWG. To get involved contact serita.myers@towerhamlets.gov.uk and [sign up](#) to specialist VAWG training sessions organised for 16 days.