



# ABUSE

Verb. To treat with cruelty or violence, especially regularly or repeatedly.

## TYPES OF ABUSE

- PHYSICAL
- SEXUAL
- EMOTIONAL
- PSYCHOLOGICAL
- ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL
- DISCRIMINATORY
- DOMESTIC ABUSE
- NEGLECT
- EXPLOITATION
- ORGANISATIONAL

## THE IMPOSSIBLE TO QUANTIFY COSTS



Estimating the cost of sexual abuse is almost impossible, as not only it is difficult to understand the many interwoven factors that lead to dysfunction in a person, but how that affects them, their work, those around them, including the vicarious trauma experienced by their family, partners, children, friends, even their therapists etc. Additionally a cost that will never figure in these calculation is the trauma experienced by the families and communities around the sex offenders.

## BILLIONS WORTH COSTS

A report in the UK for 2016/17 states that domestic abuse is estimated to have cost over £66 billion. This is the most comprehensive estimate of the economic and social costs of domestic abuse. While the £66 billion estimate of the costs of domestic abuse appear large, they are likely to be an under-estimate.

Any costs in relation to the impact of domestic abuse on children have been excluded. Due to insufficient data, in addition to not being able to include the costs of the impact of domestic abuse on children, the costs of domestic abuse-related suicides, and the costs of financial abuse and the emotional abuse (of controlling and coercive behaviour) to victims has not been included either.

The EU estimates that the annual cost of sexual assault – equates to €376bn for 2018, which is 2% of EU GDP. That vast sum is over €100bn more than expenditure on defence across the entire EU bloc, which stood at €226bn at last count.



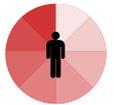
## THE PROBLEM IN SOCIETY

### BILLIONS WORTH, SOCIETY CRIPPLING ISSUE

**This document will outline the many aspects of abuse, its manifestation in different social structures and institutions, its impacts on individuals, communities and society, its cost to our economies and some of the ways and methods we have the power to utilise to eradicate it.**

The abuse of power and people is likely more pervasive than any of us want to realise. It includes child abuse, intimate partner violence, institutional abuse, and beyond. Its existence in every fabric of society from the family, religion, sports, workplace to whole communities is undeniable. Unfortunately up until recently we have paid scant attention to its manifestations in the film industry, education, health care, business, churches and religious institutions, the criminal justice system and government. But in the past few years more and more research is conducted into the topic, to enrich our understanding of this crippling crime.. Addressing the problem may be among the most challenging yet hugely important actions that we need to take. For this reason it is in our best interest to learn about it, manage its impacts, do our best to prevent it and ultimately change how we administer our social institutions, social structures, and how we relate to one another. It is time to address abuse, prevent it, change and grow as individuals, communities, society and nations.

## THE GRIM STATISTICS



### AT THE WORKPLACE

A BBC survey found that 40% of women and 18% of men had experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace (11/2017). Furthermore, a EU-wide research by the European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights sampled over 42 000 women across the EU and found that 32% of all victims in the EU said the perpetrator was a boss, colleague or customer and 75% of women in qualified professions or top management jobs have been sexually harassed.

### AT UNIVERSITIES

62% of students and graduates have experienced sexual violence as per the definition used by Rape Crisis. Report by Revolt Sexual Assault and The Student Room (2018)

### AT COLLEGES

75% of college students report having experienced sexual violence (harassment, assault, rape) NUS research reports. (June 2019)

### AT SCHOOLS

29% of 16-18 year old girls say they have experienced unwanted sexual touching at school; 71% of all 16-18 year old boys and girls say they hear terms such as "slut" or "slag" used towards girls at schools on a regular basis and; 59% of girls and young women aged 13-21 said in 2014 that they had faced some form of sexual harassment at school or college in the past year. - Report published by Parliament's Women & Equalities Committee, 09/2016

### CHILDHOOD

An estimated 1 in 20 children in the UK have been sexually abused (NSPCC, 2019) 7% of people aged between 16 and 59 reported that they were sexually abused as a child. Although this survey did not include young children or all forms of sexual abuse, this still equates to over two million victims and survivors in that age bracket across England and Wales – a substantial proportion of the population. (2015-16 Crime Survey for England and Wales)

## IMPACT

- Between 90 and 95 percent of women who reported being sexually harassed experienced some sort of physical or psychological consequences including headaches, nausea, stress, anxiety, depression and PTSD.
- An estimated 33 percent of rape victims have suicidal thoughts, and 13 percent will take their own lives.
- Around 80 percent of women who have been sexually harassed leave their job within two years, regardless of whether the incident happened in the workplace or not.
- University students victim of abuse are more likely to experience significant distress that impacts their academic performance, stop attending classes, and drop out of university.

# THE THINGS THAT SLIP AWAY...

When abuse is discussed a lot of attention is placed on the victims and the impact abuse has on them. However, abuse has a way broader impact on society as a whole, it will be fair to say that everyone is affected by it- directly or indirectly. Yet a lot is being missed out on in the discourse regarding abuse. Here are a few points.



## PERPETRATORS

Perpetrators that have been caught and investigated suffer consequences, these impact society as a whole too.

### Tax payers money go to:

- Policing and investigation costs
- Criminal prosecution
- Imprisonment - often longer sentences for sexual offenders, current cost per prisoner per year is £37,543
- Rehabilitation programs

### Their families and communities are impacted too.

- Their families are often traumatised by the events, often requiring more support from agencies, charities and for physical and mental health
- Their families may get in dept to support the perpetrator with legal costs
- Their status and reputation in the community are negatively impacted
- The community is often shaken and experience higher stress due to the proximity and relationship they may have with the perpetrator or their family.

## VICARIOUS TRAUMA

Vicarious trauma is the emotional residue of exposure to traumatising stories of other's experiences of hurt, pain, struggle, etc. that have an impact on those interacting and working with the traumatised individual.

### Experienced by professionals:

- First respondents - e.g. operators at 999, 112, 101, 111
- Police officers responding to and investigating abuse
- Physical health care professionals
- Mental health professionals, e.g. psychotherapists
- Support workers
- Social workers
- Volunteers at support lines, e.g. the Samaritans
- Church - vicars, priests who support victims
- Victim support organisations, e.g. women's shelters
- Lawyers
- Judges
- Probation officers and many more.

### Professionals often pass on traumatising experiences to their friends and families, by sharing and venting.

### Experienced by those around victims, professionals and perpetrators:

- Families, including parents, siblings, partners, relatives, extended families, children
- Friends, colleagues, good acquaintances, neighbours
- Communities are affected too, due to proximity, ability to relate, to identify with the victim or perpetrator

## OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Abuse has adverse affect on society, it is feared by men and women of all ages and genders. It is a crippling and harmful stress and fear to live with. It is even worse when life is impacted by abuse, but people do not see how or understand it.

Many who experience abuse never report it for various reasons, from not even recognising it as abuse to fearing the consequences

Many who share their lives with victims of abuse never learn about it, or understand the hurt, the rejection, the isolation, the acting out they are often subjected to by the victim of abuse.

Many who experience abuse are socially, economically and psychologically crippled by it and cannot build their lives as they wished.

Many suffer abuse they do not recognise as such, yet it profoundly impacts their quality of life and opportunities.

Many perpetuate abuse, not recognising their actions as such.

**"... you don't have to wait for someone to treat you bad repeatedly. All it takes is once, and if they get away with it that once, if they know they can treat you like that, then it sets the pattern for the future." — Jane Green, Bookends**

How are we better than perpetrators of abuse, when we turn a blind eye to it and fail to act to prevent it?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### ESTEEMED PROFESSIONALS

#### David Hughes, the chief executive of the Association of Colleges calls for Preventative Education

"Studying and training at a college is about more than just gaining a qualification - it is about learning the skills and behaviours needed to be good citizens to thrive in society. That means equipping every student with the knowledge and confidence to identify and safely report incidences of sexual violence and inappropriate behaviour."

#### Professor of Forensic Psychology Graham Towl (Durham University) states the importance of universities acting to prevent abuse

"Psychologists had done much to understand sex offenders, in terms of assessment and treatment, less focus had been directed towards preventing sexual violence. 'Sexual violence and misconduct is an area of growing concern, and university communities have much to contribute to prevention."

### AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

#### European Union Agency For Fundamental Rights

- Need for policy responses from different fields: Employment, health, education -working together
- To critically look at societal & state responses
- Review scope & implementation of existing laws & policies
- Need to target men and women -gender equality
- Specialist training and adequate resources for support organisations, healthcare, employers, police
- Internet / social media platforms -Proactively assist victims and address unwanted behaviour

#### National Center for Injury Prevention and Control recommends

- Promote Social Norms that Protect Against Violence
- Teach Skills to Prevent Sexual Violence
- Provide Opportunities to Empower and Support Girls and Women
- Create Protective Environments
- Support Victims/Survivors to Lessen Harms

