

Women's Aid National Office –
The Importance of Engaging
Education in the Domestic Violence
Agenda

Thames Valley Partnership
25th March 2009

Women's Aid Federation of England

- ▶ National domestic violence charity
- ▶ Network of 370 local organisations running 500 community services (refuge, outreach, advocacy etc)
- ▶ Working to end domestic and sexual violence since 1974
- ▶ 320,000 women and children receive help and support each year, 50,000 in refuges (shelters)
- ▶ Wide range of national activities and services
- ▶ International projects

Women's Aid strategic aims (3 Ps)

- To work towards the **prevention** of domestic and sexual violence through public awareness and education
- To improve the **protection** available to women and children by ensuring their needs and experiences inform law, policy and practice
- To ensure the **provision** of high quality services for abused women and children

Meeting the needs of children and young people

- 3/4 million children directly affected (Department of Health, UK)
- Very few dedicated services
- Review and development of specialist resources and services
- Award-winning website
- Kidspeak: online consultation with children and young people (with MPs, judges and welfare workers)

- **3/4 million children are directly affected by domestic violence** (*Department of Health, UK*)
- **Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs.** (*Department of Health, 2002*).
- **70% of children living in UK refuges have been abused by their father.** (Bowker et al., 1998)
- **The link between child physical abuse and domestic violence is high, with estimates ranging between 30% to 66% depending upon the study.** (*Hester et al, 2000; Edleson, 1999; Humphreys & Thiara, 2002; Mullender and Morley, 1994; Radford and Hester, 2007.*)

- 45% of teenagers believe that, in some circumstances, it is acceptable for a boy to assault his girlfriend;
- One in five teenage girls has been hit by a boyfriend, and one third say cheating justifies violence;
- There is a clear link between girls experiencing domestic violence in the home and then later experiencing abuse by boyfriends;
- A small-scale local study found that all participants had knowledge of friends or other young people who had experienced emotional or physical harm from a partner.

Every Child Matters ?

- Impacts on Children - Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Economic, Isolation, Threats
- Cuts across outcomes - Stay safe, Be healthy, Enjoy & achieve, Make A positive contribution, Achieve economic well being.

What Schools might see...

- Attendance affected
- Homework affected
- Tiredness
- Difficulties in their cognitive performance
- Behavioural changes
- Withdrawn or disruptive
- Model pupil

Why focus preventative work in schools?

- Schools have a legal responsibility
- School is interactive
- Opportunities within existing frameworks - PSHE, Citizenship, SEAL
- Schools can help to tackle beliefs and attitudes
- School may be a safe haven for children

Schools are in a key position to...



- Challenge the myths that perpetuate domestic abuse;
- Support children to seek help and safety;
- Model and promote healthy, non-violent relationships.

So why don't they?



- There are a large number of domestic violence teaching resources available, but they can feel overwhelming and confusing
- Teachers don't have the confidence to teach a subject that is still considered taboo
- Schools are faced with many competing issues that they need to address within the curriculum and there is little time to address additional issues such as domestic violence
- Schools are not always aware of how teaching domestic violence is relevant to their responsibilities within the curriculum

Teachers said....

- Any attempts to address domestic violence must be part of a whole school approach, with key people promoting the scheme and appropriate policies and procedures in place
- New resources need to be simple to use in a short space of time, and appropriate for different age groups
- A national awareness raising campaign will encourage take up.

Women's Aid's response

- ✓ Creation of new resources to meet the range of needs within schools
- ✓ Creation of a central directory of resources on the Women's Aid website
- ✓ A package of training and support to encourage and enable schools and teachers to address the issue of domestic violence
- ✓ A campaign targeted at schools to encourage take up

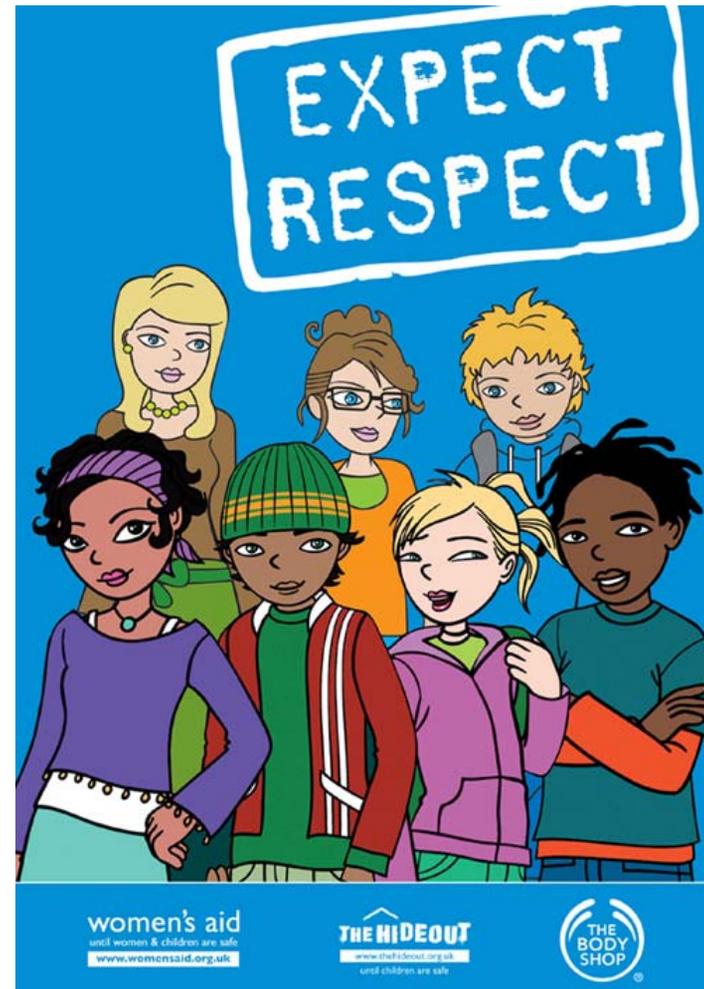
Prevention

- Expect Respect Campaign
- Educational Toolkit

Expect Respect Campaign



- New online information and downloadable resources about healthy relationships and how to get help with abuse
- Teen awareness campaign
- Educational toolkit for teachers and youth workers



Expect Respect



- Challenging assumptions about gender and power;
- Changing beliefs and attitudes about men and women;
- Managing feelings and accepting responsibility for one's own feelings and behaviour;
- Conflict resolution;
- Knowing the difference between abusive and non-abusive relationships;
- The consistent message that abuse is not acceptable;
- Understanding that domestic abuse is a crime;
- The role of peers in providing support;
- Where to get help.

Expect Respect Teen Awareness Campaign



Aims of the campaign:

- Raise awareness
- Promote healthy relationships
- Reduce future domestic violence

Launched on Wednesday 10th September 2008 through:

- www.thehideout.org.uk - the Women's Aid's website for children and young people
- Bliss magazine, a UK magazine for teenage girls

Campaign key targets:

- Young people in their first relationships

Campaign content:

- Asks Expect Respect and to give respect in their relationships.
- Survey of Bliss readers to find out how domestic violence affects their lives
- Video clips and written stories on the Hideout website of real life situations of teenagers affected by domestic violence

Expect Respect: Educational Toolkit

Year One

Friends, Secrets and People Who Can Help Us

Time: approximately 50 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson:

All children will be able to discuss their feelings about friends in a class group; to have some ideas about how to deal with negative behaviour and where to go for help;

Most children will be able to think about how their behaviour affects others and how other's behaviour affects them; to begin to be able to distinguish friendly and unfriendly behaviour or good and bad secrets and to be assertive enough to say no to unreasonable demands;

Some children will be able to distinguish healthy and unhealthy kinds of relationship for their own well being and to say no to unhealthy friendships or demands; to distinguish good and bad secrets and to know when and where to get help.

Resources

- Space to move around and to sit in a circle;
- Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for the 'agree/ disagree' game and the final say "No!" game;
- A big sheet of paper saying 'agree' and another saying 'disagree' (or you could draw a smile and a frown to represent these).

Warm up

Time: about 5 minutes

Mates/No Mates Game

First walk round room as if you have no friends and are surrounded by children you don't know. How do you feel? How do you move? Where do you look? Next, walk around as if you have just seen some friends – how do you feel/move, where do you look? If there's time, divide the class into two halves: first one half of the children watch the other half, who decide in their heads how they are moving (friends or no friends) and the observers guess which by their behaviour; then swap.

Main Activity

Time: about 40 minutes

1. Read a story about starting a new school (for instance 'I Am Too Absolutely Small for School' by Lauren Child, or 'Sumi's First Day of School Ever' by Soyung Pak). Get the children to imagine that they are starting in a new school and they have no friends. Have a brief whole class discussion about how they would choose their new friends – what would they look for in a friend? Collect ideas verbally for the class to consider (e.g. looks nice, is friendly, makes me feel happy, has good ideas and so on).

2. Then play the agree/disagree game with a selection of the statements in Appendix 1 (these are things that children might say to a new child to get them to be their friend). After you read out each statement, ask if the children think this might be someone who will be a good choice of friend. The children show their choices by moving to the 'agree' or 'disagree' parts of the room. Ask some children to explain their reasons. Discuss both sides of the arguments (if there are any). Encourage children to think critically and

Section 2: Year One: Friends, Secrets and People Who Can Help Us

- A resource for use within schools and youth clubs to help raise awareness of domestic abuse amongst children and young people
- To support children and young people who are currently living with domestic abuse in their own families
- An easy to use, 1 hour lesson plan for each year from 5 to 18 year olds
- Links with the national curriculum and citizenship targets
- Provides supporting information, resource and advice for teachers
- Available as an online, downloadable resource include interactive activities for children and young people

The Hideout website



THE HIDEOUT
UNTIL CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SAFE

you are in [act](#) | [home](#)

Say no to domestic violence
Womans Aid have created this space to help young people, to understand domestic abuse, and how to take positive action if it's happening to you.

Hide this page

Cover your tracks

Your Stories
[Go to your stories](#)

Need to Talk?
If you need to talk, you can call **CHILDLINE** - it is free and confidential.

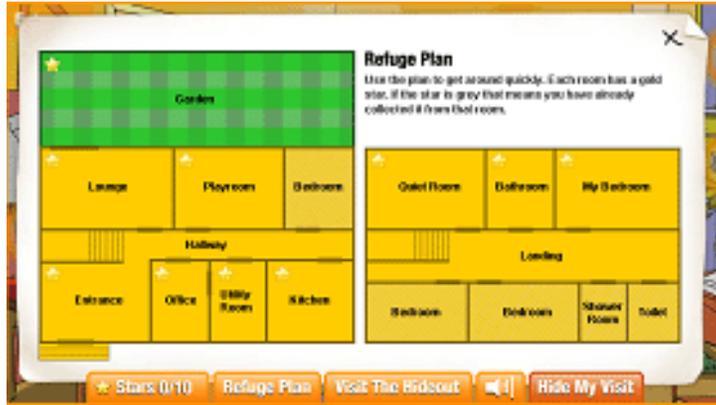
ChildLine
0800 1111

Have your say
“ I thought it was just happening to me... ”
Tom
[Go to message board](#)

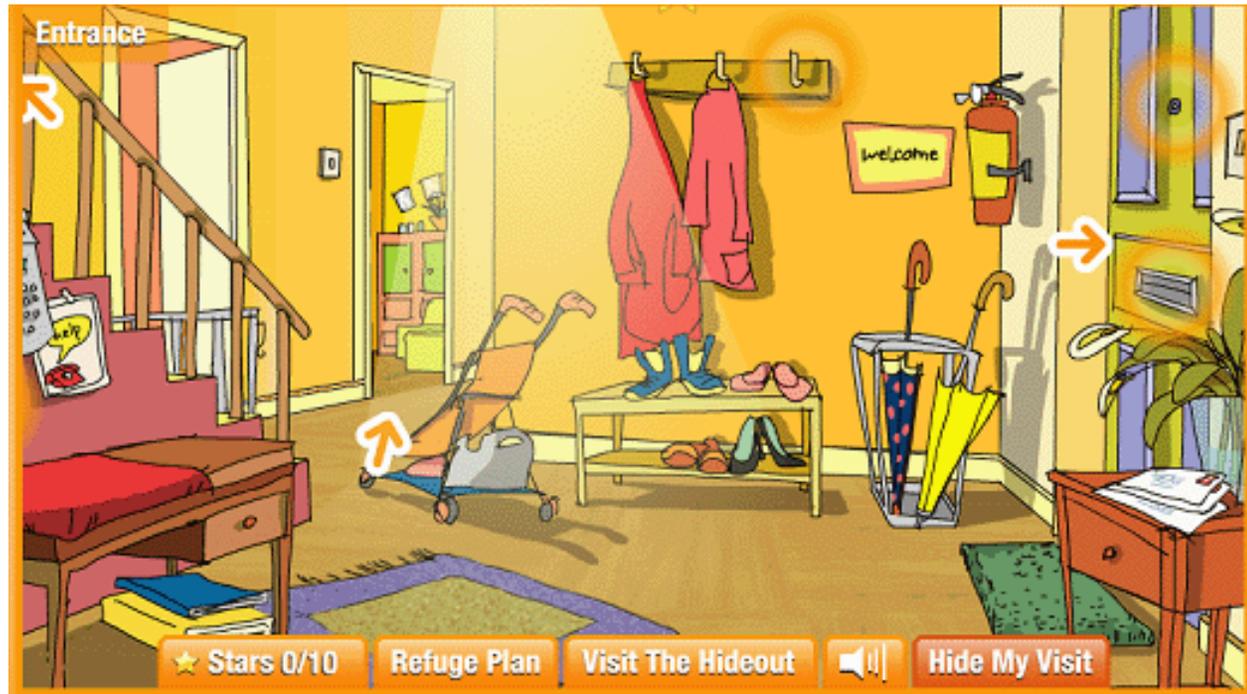
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- The Hideout is a Women's Aid website specifically aimed at children and young people experiencing domestic violence
- Also links to information for professionals and parents
- Redesign, more interactive, 3 separate areas - after consultation with children and young people

The Hideout: Virtual Refuge

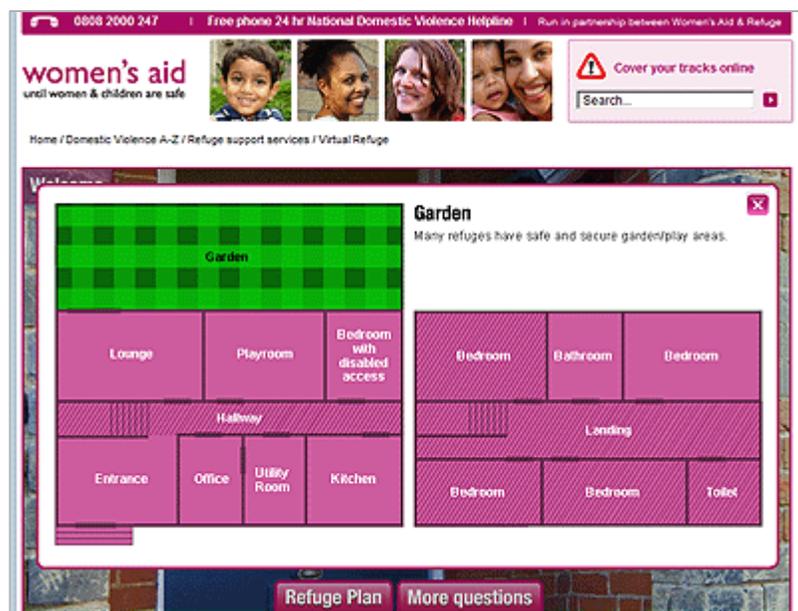


- Positive information about refuges to reassure children experiencing domestic violence
- Explore the rooms, speak to those living there and play with the virtual toys in the house



Virtual Refuge for adults

- Online visual presentation of a refuge
- Explore a refuge room by room
- Key questions answered



0800 2000 247 | Free phone 24 hr National Domestic Violence Helpline | Run in partnership between Women's Aid & Refuge

women's aid
until women & children are safe

Cover your tracks online

Home / Domestic Violence A-Z / Refuge support services / Virtual Refuge

Garden
Many refuges have safe and secure garden/play areas.

Garden				Bedroom with disabled access		
Lounge	Playroom	Hallway		Bedroom	Bathroom	Bedroom
Entrance	Office	Utility Room	Kitchen	Landing		
				Bedroom	Bedroom	Toilet

Refuge Plan More questions



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Playroom

What do children's workers do?

my teenage son with me?

Will my child/children change school?

Do refuges have a no sm...

Refuge Plan More questions

What next?

- **Regional seminars and training**
- **Continued promotion**
- **Continued development of supporting resources**
- **Embedding DV in PSHE curriculum**

Regional Seminars

- 9 free regional events
- Locations and dates
 - ✓ Newcastle - 29th April
 - ✓ Bristol - 6th May
 - ✓ Manchester - 19th May
 - ✓ Leeds - 20th May
 - ✓ Birmingham - 9th June
 - ✓ Nottingham - 10th June
 - ✓ Cambridge - 15th June
 - ✓ London - 16th June
 - ✓ Reading - 17th June

Contact information

Websites:

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

<http://www.thehideout.org.uk/>

<http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/>

Email / telephone:

info@womensaid.org.uk / 0117 944 4411

National Domestic Violence Helpline:

0808 2000 24-7

(run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge)