

Newsletter

WINTER 2011

Inside: Partnership News, MARAC News, News from Home, South of the Border, England, Scotland and Wales, Health News, Resources, From the Archives, Quotes of Note and Noticeboard.

Calling all Students..... “Domestic Violence — Everyone’s Responsibility” A Conference for Students

In collaboration with Queens University the Belfast Domestic Violence Partnership is organising a Conference for students on the 27th January which aims to explore the nature and impact of domestic violence and abuse and the importance of partnership working to provide effective support and interventions.

Speakers with a wealth of experience in practice and research will contribute to the programme and workshops.

Bookings are welcome from students from a range of disciplines.



For further information see Noticeboard at page 15.

Belfast Domestic Violence Partnership and Unison promote Domestic Abuse Workplace policies

A Seminar for trade union representatives from a range of unions who are involved in negotiating at local level with members and employers was held at Unison Galway House York Rd on Tuesday 21st June 12-2.00 pm. The event was supported and sponsored by UNISON.

Speakers included; Orla Barron, Harriet Long, Noelle Collins and Geraldine Alexander



Harriet Long, Rainbow Project



Geraldine Alexander NIPSA



Customer Journey Mapping- NICTS

The NICTS completed a Domestic Violence Journey Mapping exercise in September 2011 using the Protection and Justice subgroup as a reference group.

The aim of the exercise was to ascertain in detail the experiences of victims of domestic violence throughout their involvement with the criminal (and civil and family) justice system.

28 women completed questionnaires on their experiences with the Criminal Justice System. The questions encompassed the victim's journey from the reporting of the initial incident to the PSNI through to the Criminal, Family and Civil Courts.

The authors of the report were extremely pleased with the level of response to the survey and the frankness of the comments. While many of the comments were critical of the processes and attitudes of those with whom they came into contact with, the average scores were well above neutral for much of the chart and the average score for all of the questions was 5.79.

The lowest scores related to the length of time spent waiting at court and the overall impression of the system. NICTS has developed an action plan to address some of the issues raised in the exercise.

**For a copy of the full report visit
www.belfastdvp.co.uk**



“Domestic Violence..... Working together to support Black and Minority Ethnic families”.

A partnership seminar at the Chinese Welfare association was attended by approximately 100 delegates on the 3rd October 2011.

The opening remarks were provided by Councillor Tim Attwood and speakers from a range of agencies working with minority ethnic groups contributed to the programme.

Support from the Belfast District Policing Partnership enabled delegates to enjoy lunch provided by the Chinese Welfare Association

The event highlighted and discussed:

- Relevant cultural issues
- Services and resources
- Partnership working.
- Challenges for staff

**Speaker presentations are available at
www.belfastdvp.co.uk**

What they said.....

“Alleged perpetrator came to my house - abusive and damaging property. PSNI responded quickly and removed him-and did a drive by a few times that evening.”

“Speed the whole system up... have you any idea how painful and lengthy this procedure is??? How can you move on with your life?”

“Always promote the benefits of Women's Aid and the Public Protection Unit.”

“I found the whole court system extremely complex— I have 2 degrees but I had to educate myself on the web.”

“I did not feel my solicitor understood the situation.”

“The police were courteous and respectful , prioritising my welfare.”

Partnership News.....

Message from the Chairperson



Happy New Year and welcome to the Winter 2011 Edition of the Belfast Area Domestic Violence Partnership Newsletter.

As you will see the Partnership has continued to be very proactive over the past 6 months in addressing the areas identified in its Action Plan. A number of very successful seminars have been held addressing areas such as Workplace Policies and Black Minority Ethnic issues. The three sub groups have continued to meet on a regular basis and have played a key role in promoting the work of the Partnership.

I hope you enjoy this Newsletter and find it informative both in terms of local news and further afield.

In Search of Excellence Guidance for Domestic Violence Partnerships published May 2011

Standing Together Against Domestic Violence is a charity that seeks to develop the best possible partnership response to domestic violence and violence against women. It was recently supported by the Home Office to write guidance for those partnerships. This guidance, In Search of Excellence, is available free on Standing Together's website (www.standingtogether.org.uk).

In order to further promote improved responses to these issues, and thanks to some Government funding, they are now able to offer a free half day of consultancy to any partnership in England and Wales.

A Big Lottery Project

Work has been completed by Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid and Belfast and South Eastern Trusts on the business plan and final application to the Big Lottery "Improving Futures" programme.

The plan involves establishing a new Women's Aid team to work alongside the 7 Social Services Gateway teams across the Belfast and South Eastern Health Trusts. A decision by the Big Lottery is expected in December/January and the partners involved are hopeful that their proposal will be accepted.

Patricia Lyness Management Coordinator Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid said

"This new and innovative project which includes a Health Visitor will add value to current work with Social Services with the focus on early intervention at all levels of risk and need".

Abbreviations/ Terms

DIANI	Diversity in Action N.Ireland
CJINI	Criminal Justice Inspection N.Ireland
DASO	Domestic abuse support officers
PETAL	Progressive equality training and learning
ACPO	Association of police officers
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
IRIS	Identification and Referral to Improve safety
CCR	Coordinated Community Response

Partnership News.....

“Making Ends Meet” Domestic Violence and Abuse – the financial and economic impacts

Financial abuse is a common weapon used by perpetrators resulting in victims and their children feeling trapped by a lack of financial support and independence. Financial pressures influence a victim's ability to make decisions around help seeking and or leaving an abusive situation.

This lunchtime event considered a number of issues contributing to the financial and economic lives of women and children experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse in N.Ireland including;

- The impact of the current economic environment
- The impact of the welfare reform agenda
- The pressures experienced by women with insecure immigration status and no recourse to public funds.

This event was attended by approximately 60 delegates from across the sectors and was positively evaluated.

Speakers included:

- **Noelle Collins BLWA**
- **Bronagh Hinds DEMOCRASHE**
- **Agnieszka Wlodarska NICEM**
- **Anna Morvern Law Centre N.I**

Presentations are available on the partnership website www.belfastdvp.co.uk

Our thanks to Partnership members Susan and Irene of Shankill Women's Centre who arranged use of their lovely newly refurbished building Small Wonders 2

Women on The Edge ?

This comprehensive analysis of the Impacts of the financial crisis published in July 2011 was commissioned by the Women's Resource and Development Agency and written by Bronagh Hinds democraShe.

The report examined the position of women in the economy and the recession. A full copy of the report and summary is available on www.wrda.net



Noelle Collins Chair Support Working Group
Congratulations to Noelle who recently celebrated 30 years working with Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid

Honour Based Violence

On 25th October 2011 the PSNI hosted a one day Conference "Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage" at Garnerville PSNI College. The Conference provided professionals with an opportunity to gain an overview of the concerns facing victims of Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage; the prevalence of these crimes in the UK; The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007; how professionals can encourage victims to report these crimes; the management of child protection issues and a survivors story.

Organisations that can help:

**Forced Marriage Unit tel. no 020700801511,
e-mail fmu@fco.gov.uk**

**Honour Based Violence network Helpline
08005999247**

www.karmanirvana.org.uk

***"At Karma Nirvana, we have one clear aim: to
stop the scandal of forced marriage and
honour-based violence. No apologies.
No excuses. No backing down."***

MARAC News.....

MARAC Operating Protocol

Designed to assist agencies by providing operational guidance this document is currently in draft and has been widely circulated for comments. For further information or to obtain a copy of the draft protocol contact the MARAC Coordinator Jackie Gaskin

MARAC Information Sharing Agreement (ISA)

The ISA has been further amended following consultation with relevant stakeholders in December and has been widely circulated. It is hoped that this latest version of the ISA will be signed off at the January 23rd meeting of The MARAC Operational group.

For a copy of the amended version of the ISA contact the MARAC Coordinator Jackie Gaskin
(jackie.gaskin@psni.pnn.police.uk)

MARAC Operational Group

This recently established regional group met for their inaugural meeting in September and a further meeting was held on the 24th October. It is envisaged that meetings will be held bi monthly and will be chaired by Carol Diffin Children's Services manager Belfast HSC Trust

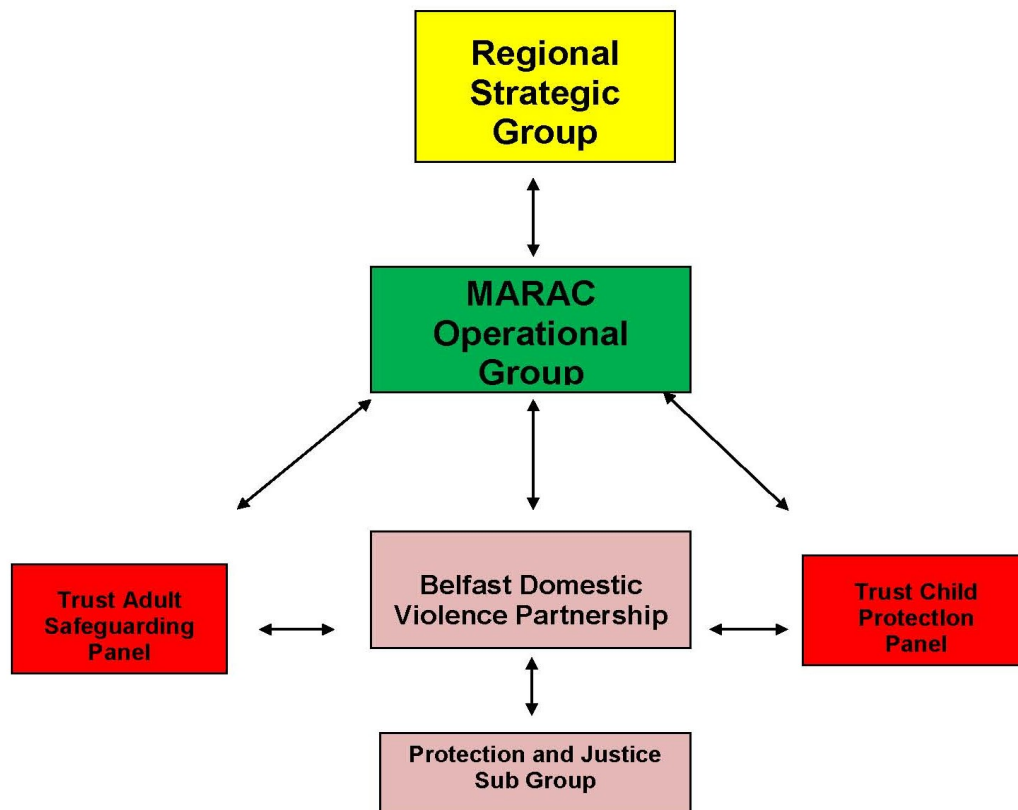
Draft terms of reference and an operational protocol for the group have been agreed. The Chairs of the 5 LDVPs will sit on the group alongside PSNI and nominated representatives from voluntary and statutory agencies.

MARAC issues from the Belfast LDVP will be passed to Carol Diffin Chair via the Protection and Justice Working Group.

Minutes of the meetings will be shared with Partnership members at their working group meetings.

Below is a flow chart outlining the MARAC communication process.

MARAC COMMUNICATION FLOW CHART



News from home....

Northern Ireland.....the facts

PSNI: Crimes with a Domestic Motivation

Number of PSNI Domestic Incidents

The number of domestic incidents reported to the PSNI in 2010/2011 was 22,685

There were a total of 9,546 crimes with a domestic motivation in 10/11

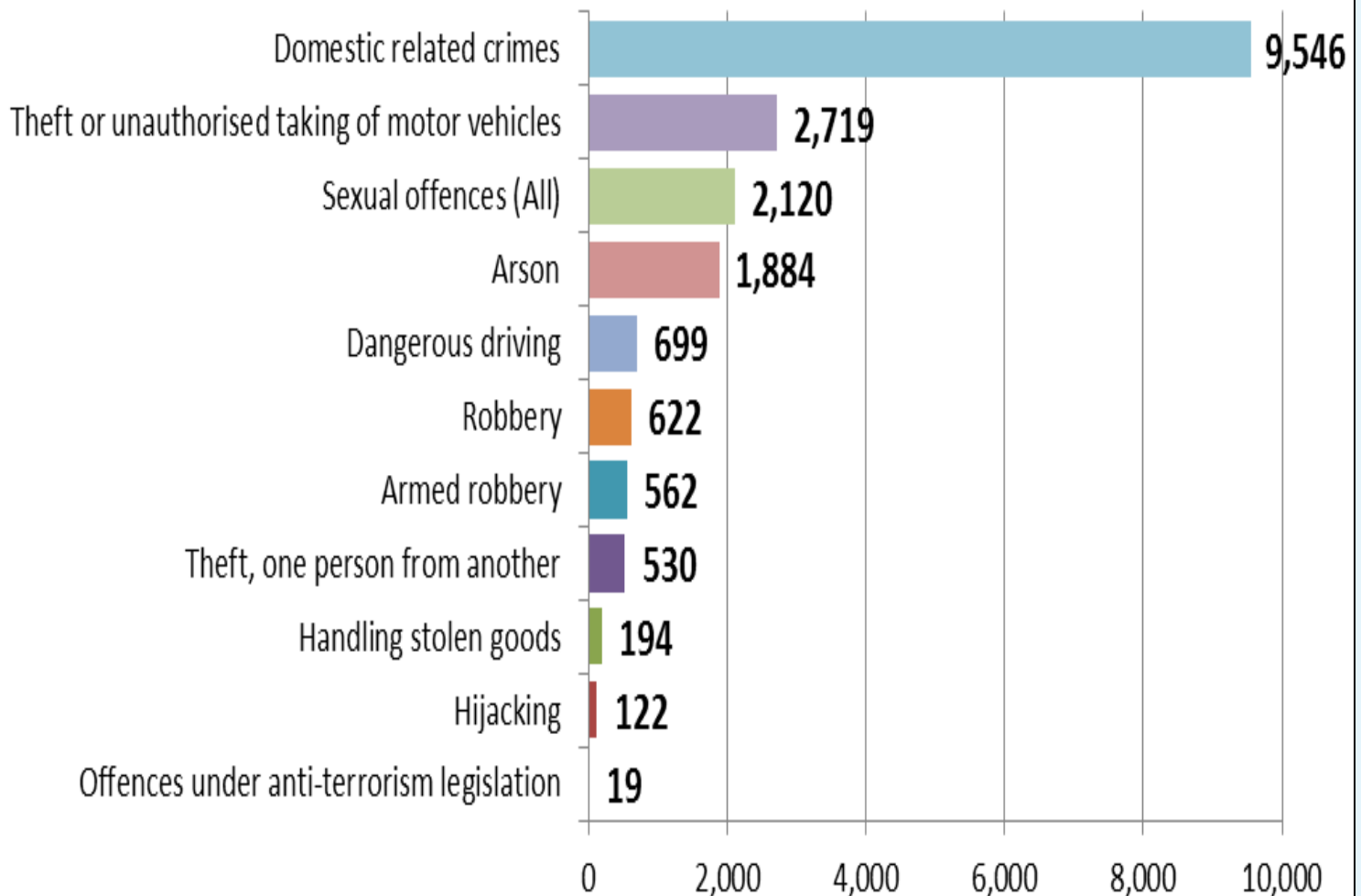
There were seven murders with Domestic motivation

That represents on average, approximately **1 domestic related crime every 60 minutes** in Northern Ireland.

PSNI Statistics for 10/11 indicate that they responded to a domestic incident **every 23 minutes of every day of the year.**

Where the gender of the victim was known, **76% of adult victims** of domestic crimes recorded by the PSNI in 2010/11 **were female.**

(Source WAFNI/PSNI Stats 2010/2011)



News from Home.....

South Eastern Trust Domestic Violence Partnership

South Eastern Domestic Violence Partnership in conjunction with Down District Community Safety Partnership held the Bad Romance seminar in The Saint Patrick's Centre, Downpatrick on Wednesday 23 November to explore the issue of abuse in young people's romantic relationships.

At the event, post primary school pupils across the district were given recognition for participating in the healthy relationships poster competition which aimed to raise awareness of the domestic violence issue.



**Don't Stamp out each other!
STAMP OUT ABUSE!**

Poster designed by Bronagh Fitzsimons from St Colmcilles, Crossgar

South of the border

Core funding cut for Domestic Violence support service in Ireland

Safe Ireland, the national body representing domestic violence refuges and services, has had its core funding cut by 100 per cent. Sharon O'Halloran, director of the organisation, confirmed that the HSE had notified the board "a few week's ago" that its core funding – €391,000 this year – would be cut in full from January 1st, 2012.

"They say they are going to use the money instead to commission a number of pieces of work towards the implementation of their action plan on domestic violence."

Safe Ireland represents and works with 20 refuges and 21 domestic violence support services. It does research, carries out an annual audit of how many women and children are using refuges, develops policy and provides an independent critical voice for the sector on policy and strategy issues. Its funding was cut from €500,000 in 2009, to €414,000 in 2010 and to €391,000 this year.

"Source <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2011/1126/1224308188197.html>

Minority Ethnic Women represented nearly a third (29%) of Women's Aid Support Service Users in Ireland in 2010

"37% of women accessing and leaving refuge identified themselves as Travellers, 6% as Black, and 2% as Asian. It is important not to draw conclusions about levels or severity of domestic violence amongst particular minority ethnic communities given some appear 'over-represented' in refuge provision. Instead it shows that minority women face additional barriers to obtaining long-term safety and lack other possible options than emergency accommodation.

Non-indigenous minority ethnic women only comprise approximately 5% of Ireland's population, but represented 13% of those seeking services from gender-based violence organisations. Traveller women make up 0.5% of population but represent 15% of service users.

Barriers to fulfilling minority ethnic women's needs identified by gender-based violence services and minority ethnic organisations included resources, absence of staff training, and the Habitual Residence Condition. Most GBV organisations identified language and the absence of interpretation services as barriers"

Source www.womensaid.ie/16days/blog

England

Pet cruelty 'warning sign' of domestic violence

Animal cruelty can be a "warning sign" of domestic abuse, Devon and Cornwall Police have said. The RSPCA and Against Domestic Violence and Abuse Devon (ADVA) have been working with police to highlight the issue in the South West. The force said cruelty to household pets was present in 20% of its high-risk assessments.

Source BBC News 21st November 2011

Claire's Law

Home secretary Teresa May has launched a consultation on how a Domestic Violence Disclosure scheme might work in practice. The scheme suggests the following options:

- Continuing with the status quo
- Giving people a "right to ask" about their partners
- Introducing a "right to know"

The proposal follows a campaign by the father of a woman killed by her boyfriend. Claire Appleton did not know that her partner had a history of violence against woman.

The consultation applies to England and Wales and ends on 16th January 2012.

The consultation document is available on the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/clare's-law-consultation-

"Meeting the needs of children living with domestic violence in London"

Children in London living in violent households are neglected by the services which are supposed to protect them, according to report by the domestic violence charity Refuge and children's charity the NSPCC who found that children living with an adult being abused needed more help. The full Research report by Lorraine Radford, Ruth Aitken, Pam Miller, Jane Ellis, Jill Roberts and Ana Firkic—and The Refuge/NSPCC research project was funded by the City Bridge Trust November 2011 The Report is available at www.nspcc.org.uk

CONFERENCE

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls: Reducing Risk through Prevention, Provision and Partnership

Tuesday 7th February 2012
10.15am - 4.30pm
Broadway House Central London

<http://publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events>

Crime Prosecution Service — Violence against Women and Girls Crime Report 2010 –2011

VAWG continues to be a top priority for the CPS, as part of the cross government commitment to tackling VAWG, overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Group, including the Solicitor General and the Attorney General representing the CPS. Since the introduction of the CPS VAWG strategy the volume of VAWG prosecutions have risen year on year, from 68,930 in 2006-07 to 95,257 this year, a rise of 38%. The CPS said "Not only are we prosecuting more cases, but we are prosecuting those cases successfully - the volume of convictions rising by 52%, from 44,836 to 68,154. The proportion of charged defendants convicted has risen from 65% to 72% during that time. In 2010-11 alone there has been an 11% rise in the volume of both prosecutions and convictions."

www.cps.gov.uk/publications

Scotland and Wales

On one Day in Scotland

On Tuesday 20 September 2011, Women's Aid groups across Scotland took part in a 24 hour census to identify how many women, children and young people were supported on that day, in refuge or through outreach and on-call support services.

374 women and 359 children & young people
were living in a Women's Aid refuge

839 women and 428 children & young people
were supported by a Women's Aid group

105 women and 49 children & young people
contacted Women's Aid for the very first

54 women and 51 children & young people
asked for refuge accommodation
but Women's Aid groups were unable to find suitable spaces for **20 women and 15 children and young people**

Domestic Abuse Court for Edinburgh

A dedicated domestic abuse court could be established in Edinburgh in 2012.

Public Health Minister Michael Matheson announced that a Lothian's Domestic Abuse Court could be set up in the mould of Glasgow's domestic abuse court which has been running since 2004.

Speaking during a debate on violence against women in Holyrood, Mr Matheson said the Glasgow court "has proven to be very effective over recent years". He added: "There is work being done at the moment to establish a similar court in the Lothians area, and there is also a tool which has been used to roll out across all the sheriffdoms of Scotland to ensure that sheriffs are more aware of the role that they can play, and be more sensitive to the needs of people who have been subjected to domestic violence".

Source

<http://news.stv.tv/scotland/286179-edinburgh-set-for-its-first-domestic-abuse-court/>

"The Right to be Safe"

In March 2010 the Welsh government launched 'The Right to be Safe' a six year integrated strategy for tackling all forms of violence against women and domestic abuse. A three year implementation plan was published to support the delivery of the strategy.

The first annual report by the Welsh government was published in July and in the ministerial foreword Carl Sargeant Minister for Local Government and Communities reports that:

"Delivering against the implementation plan has been achieved through cross departmental working in the Welsh Government and collaboration with key partners"

The report is available at;

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/safety/domesticabuse/publications>

Supporting GPs to deal with Domestic Violence

New RCGP e-Learning Course: Violence against Women and Children

The NHS taskforce on violence against women and children has highlighted the importance of training healthcare professionals in identifying women experiencing domestic violence, throughout all career stages. To support this aim, the RCGP has launched a new e-learning course on domestic violence, available **free** to all healthcare professionals in the RCGP Online Learning Environment (www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk).

It was written by Dr Fiona Duxbury, a working GP in Oxford, with input from Champions and other experts, and was funded by the Department of Health. The sessions include:

- **Recognising Violence** – helps practitioners to understand how to identify patients who may be suffering, or have suffered, from violence.
- **Asking about Violence** – considers the issues around asking about violence in the consultation, including when and how to approach it and the immediate response to disclosure.
- **Responding to Violence** – gives further detail on the problems facing women experiencing different forms of violence, the choices that they will face, and the support available to them.
- **Improving Your Practice** – explores how the practice organises and manages the issues relating to violence against women and children.

A self-assessment exercise at the end of the course enables the practitioner to test their knowledge, attitudes and decision-making skills. It also provides the opportunity to earn a certificate for CPD credits to use towards appraisal and revalidation.

(Source RCGP News Oct 2011)

NICE Guidance update

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is producing public health guidance on preventing domestic violence.

Consultation on the draft scope took place between October and November 2011.

The guidance is due to be completed by Feb 2014

For further details and information visit
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PHG/Wave20/60>

Female Genital Mutilation

Multi-agency practice guidelines on tackling and preventing female genital mutilation were published in February 2011 by HM Government.

“Awareness among healthcare practitioners across all sectors, but particularly in GP practices, and midwifery, gynaecology, neo-natal and anti-natal services, is crucial to creating the joined-up approach needed to safeguard girls and women from harm; and ensuring those affected receive the physical and mental health care they need”

The guidance is available to download at:
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/

Resources



The Care and Treatment of Victims and Witnesses in the Criminal Justice System in N.Ireland December 2011

The Criminal Justice Inspectorate report is available to download at www.cjini.org

Forced Marriage & Honour based Violence Screening toolkit

www.resolution.org.uk

“Standing on my own two feet”: disadvantaged teenagers, intimate partner violence and coercive control Sept 2011

A research report from the university of Bristol and the NSPCC which looks at intimate partner violence in the relationships of disadvantaged young people

The full report is available
www.nspcc.org.uk

Forced Marriage and Mental Health A Race Equality Foundation Briefing paper June 2011

www.better-health.org.uk

The Detail –Putting Violent Partners in the dock (Issue 29 06 October)

Abigail Lyle tells her story—this video clip is a very powerful story of a Bangor women’s experience of domestic violence at the hands of her partner.

www.thedetail.tv/issues/26/abigail/putting-violent-

Identification and Referral to Improve The Safety of women experiencing Domestic Violence with a primary care training and support programme.

The Lancet October 2011
www.the-lancet.com

“Not a world away” The sexual exploitation of children and young people in N.Ireland Oct 2011

This report outlines exploratory research undertaken by Barnardos N.Ireland into the issue of child sexual exploitation in N.Ireland between 2009 and 2011. The full report is available from the Barnardos N.Ireland website

www.barnardos.org.uk

GP e learning Training on Violence Against Women and Children

Developed to enable GPs and other professionals to improve their recognition of and response to patients suffering from violence. It has been developed with funding from the Department of Health.

The e learning tool can be accessed a RCGP website

www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk

Teenage Relationship Abuse

This Is Abuse website www.thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/
See Videos ‘Need Help’, ‘Spot the Signs’ and ‘Have your Say’.

From the Archives.....



The year?

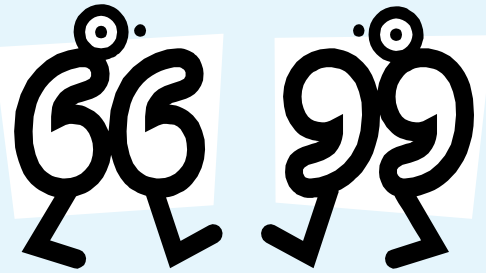
The occasion?



The names?



Quotes of note....



They stay because the fear of leaving is greater than the fear of staying. They will leave when the fear of staying is greater than the fear of leaving.

Rebecca J. Burns The Last Straw

"How many years can some people exist before they're allowed to be free..."

Bob Dylan

There is a commitment in the 2010/12 Domestic Violence Action Plan to consider the feasibility of introducing Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs) to Northern Ireland.

*Justice Minister Mr David Ford
Assembly Debate June 2011*

Domestic violence is a serious issue. Those who engage in it are guilty of cowardice; they cause huge damage to their families and should be stigmatized for their shameful actions.

Health Minister Mr. Edwin Poots 22/09/11

No one deserves to experience violence or abuse and there is no place for behaviour of this kind in any relationship.

Education Minister John O Dowd 23/11/11

Noticeboard ...



Student Conference on Domestic Violence ... Everyone's responsibility

Date: 27th January 2012 **Time:** 10am – 4pm

Cost: FREE

Venue: School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work,
Queen's University Belfast

Speakers: Carol Diffin, Chair Belfast Domestic Violence Partnership; Dr John Devaney, QUB; Dr Stephanie Holt, Trinity College Dublin; Geraldine O Hare, PBNI; Patricia Lyness, Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid; Susan Topping, PSNI; Dr Bronagh McKee, Stranmillis University College Belfast.

To book a place contact Margaret Kelly Partnership Coordinator.
margaret.kelly@belfastwomensaid.org.uk

Useful links and numbers

Useful sites:

Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid www.belfastwomensaid.org.uk

Housing Advice www.housingadviceNI.org

Law Centre N.I. www.lawcentreni.org

NSPCC N.I. www.nspcc.org.uk

Northern Ireland Policing Board www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People www.niccy.org

Age N.I. www.ageni.org

Victim Support N.I. www.victimsupportni.org.uk

Useful numbers:

24 hour Domestic Violence Helpline **0800 917 1414**

Action on Elder Abuse helpline **08088088141**

Childline **08001111**

Rainbow Project **90319030**

Articles and information for the next edition to:

Margaret Kelly
Belfast Area Domestic Violence Partnership Coordinator
30 Adelaide PK
Belfast BT9 6FY

Email: margaret.kelly@belfastwomensaid.org.uk T/N 02890 666049