

16 Days Spotlight Webinars

Imagine a Scotland without violence
against women and girls



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Introduction

This series of national spotlight webinars took place during [16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence 2024](#), focusing on key topics identified by the National Violence Against Women Network as crucial to supporting the delivery of the [Equally Safe Strategy](#).

Each spotlight webinar provided a forum for participants to explore challenges and opportunities to improve outcomes for those affected by violence against women and girls (VAWG). The webinars also included presentations on examples of best practice, and interactive discussions about what actions are needed to foster collaboration across key sectors.

The sessions all centred around Scotland's national theme for the 16 Days campaign: **Imagine a Scotland without violence against women and girls**. Participants reflected on what this future would look and feel like, and explored the steps we can take within our systems and services to make this vision a reality.

Each webinar had between 50-150 attendees, coming from a range of public and third sector organisations and policy areas, particularly within local authorities. The webinars were run by the Improvement Service and the National Violence Against Women Network, with support from partners in COSLA, Scottish Government, and Public Health Scotland.

The spotlight topics were:

- Safe & Together in Scotland
- Engaging with young people around online misogyny
- Women's political representation
- Children's voices in court processes
- Honour-based Abuse

This document provides a summary of the key messages from the spotlight webinar series, and links to the recorded speakers' inputs for each event below.

Playlist of Speaker Presentations

You can find the full video of presentations from each event in [this playlist](#), or you can select from the lists below for specific presentations from each webinar.

Key Reflections from the Spotlight Webinars:

Imagine a Scotland without violence against women and girls...



Systems would focus on preventing violence, supporting women, and targeting harmful attitudes towards women.



People would be believed and supported, creating a safe, compassionate, and fair environment for all, especially women and children.



Women and children would feel empowered and confident, and able to focus on their futures and live without fear.



We would create a safer online and offline environment, where young people feel free from harassment, objectification, and misogyny.



Healthy relationships, self-worth, and education would be promoted from an early age, including information about safety, online behaviour, and the consequences of harmful actions.



Women would be visible in top decision-making positions at both local and national levels, supported by other women.



Services and systems would be designed with women in mind, addressing their needs effectively, rather than treating them as an afterthought.



Society would promote equality and cultural understanding, with less stigma and judgment, ensuring minority ethnic women feel valued and respected.



Women, children, and young people would be listened to and valued, with support readily available when needed. This includes better access to mental and physical health services.



Systems would be trauma-informed, person-centred and focused on prevention and long-term change.

A Scotland without violence against women and girls, would be a Scotland that is safer, kinder, more inclusive, and supportive, with less stigma around reporting violence.

Spotlight Summaries

Safe & Together in Scotland

This webinar aimed to explore learning from implementation of the Safe & Together Model in Scotland and the impact of domestic-abuse informed systems, services, and workforces in improving outcomes for children and families experiencing domestic abuse.

Presentations:

- [How Safe and Together helps create domestic-abuse informed systems, services, and workforces & developing a Scottish Safe and Together model](#) – Anna Mitchell, Subject Matter Lead, Safe & Together Institute
- [Implementing Safe and Together in Scotland – learning from the Year Three National Learning Report](#) – Jenny Smith-Littlejohn, Learning & Evaluation Project Manager, Improvement Service
- [Local Spotlight: Embedding survivor voice in Falkirk](#) – Nicolla Stewart, Partnership Manager, with Survivors from Equally Safe Falkirk
- [Local Spotlight: Using child protection data to inform Safe & Together development in Highland Council](#) – Mike Mawby, Safe & Together Programme Coordinator, Highland Child Protection Committee and Highland Violence Against Women Partnership

Key messages from discussion:

Imagine a Scotland with domestic-abuse informed systems, services and workforces: What actions would support this?



- Improving sustainability and collaboration around implementation of Safe & Together in Scotland, including increased accountability for systems and services to improve outcomes for victims and survivors of domestic abuse.
- Adopting a Scotland-wide approach to increase multi-agency rollout and uptake of Safe & Together CORE training, especially to professionals working with vulnerable individuals or families.
- Promoting the use of shared language when working with victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse, through the use of the Safe & Together Model.

Engaging with young people around online misogyny

This webinar aimed to explore approaches to understanding and addressing the risks of online misogyny and abuse for young people in Scotland.

Presentations:

- [Exploring work to understand and address the risks of online misogyny and abuse for young people in Scotland](#) - Ashlea Tulloch, Shetland Women's Aid
- [Overview of current approaches to technology facilitated VAWG and support for women and girls experiencing commercial sexual exploitation](#) – Emily McLean, Scottish Government VAWG Justice Team
- [Introduction to Many Good Men and engaging with young people around online misogyny](#) – Clare Duffy, Civic Digits

Key messages from discussion:

Imagine a Scotland where young people are safe from online misogyny and abuse: What actions would support this?



- More opportunities for networking and partnership working to support effective engagement with young people on this topic, including collaboration with the education sector, community groups, creative initiatives, sports groups, and youth organisations.
- Development of resources around the topic of online misogyny and abuse, co-produced with children, young people, and parents with a focus on effective communication and intervention.
- Engaging men and boys as part of the solution, with messages about preventing misogyny and abuse coming from male figures. This could be promoted through prevention work at local level as well as wider awareness raising campaigns.

Women's political representation

This webinar aimed to explore the barriers to political participation and representation for women and girls, and how this relates to tackling violence and abuse.

Presentations:

- [Opening and key messages on Equally Safe strategy and delivery plan](#) - Cllr Maureen Chalmers, COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson
- [Overview of work supporting women's participation and exploring equal representation in Scotland](#) - Hannah Stevens, Director - Elect Her
- [Exploring women's political representation and primary prevention of violence against women](#) - Hannah Brisbane, Policy Officer, Engender
- [Learning from the Young Women Lead project and focus on democratic wellbeing](#) - Rebecca Mason, Research and Policy Lead, Young Women's Movement
- [Elected MSYPs on ending gender-based violence and gender equality campaigns](#) – MSYPs, Scottish Youth Parliament
- [Exploring the emerging priorities from work to ensure women's voices are involved policy making](#) – Agnes Tolmie, Chair, Scottish Women's Convention
- [Highlighting work to improve workplace culture and practices as key to responding to inequality and VAWG](#) – Kelsey Smith, Head of Equally Safe at Work, Close the Gap

Key messages from discussion:

Imagine a Scotland where women have equal power and representation: What actions would support this?



- Tackling misogyny in political spaces, including the Scottish Parliament and councils, with transparent accountability mechanisms and consequences for misogynistic or abusive behaviours.
- Raising awareness of programmes which support women and girls in leadership and campaigning skills, as well as addressing the barriers women face in participating in leadership roles and politics.
- Building a collective approach to address misogyny, gender inequality, and gender-based violence in politics by linking up organisations to share ideas and work together to identify opportunities to create resources.

Children's voices in court processes

This webinar aimed to explore the link between embedding children's rights and tackling VAWG in Scotland, particularly in the context of court processes and justice responses.

Presentations:

- [UNCRC in Scotland](#) – Rebecca Spillane, UNCRC Project Manager, Improvement Service
- [Domestic Abuse and Children's Rights](#) – Marsha Scott, Chief Executive, Scottish Women's Aid
- [Children's Rights Officer Court Contact](#) – Dawn Ross, Children's Rights Officer, West Lothian Council
- [Children and Young Person Advocacy](#) – Linsey Younger, Service Manager Children and Young People, ASSIST

Key messages from discussion:

Imagine a Scotland where children and young people are protected from the risk and harm of VAWG: What actions would support this?



- Develop and implement the use of child-friendly language in courts which avoids jargon, ensuring children and young people can understand the processes. Ensuring children are informed of their rights and given appropriate support to have their voices heard in both criminal and civil courts.
- Improved communication and a common language around supporting families. Statutory links should be established between criminal and civil courts to improve information sharing about domestic abuse cases, especially how it affects children and family dynamics.
- Training for key professionals, such as sheriffs and procurator fiscals, on handling domestic abuse cases sensitively and appropriately, especially involving children and young people. This training should include understanding the barriers to justice, such as financial obstacles.

Honour-based abuse

This webinar aimed to explore the current work to raise awareness and improve responses to so-called 'Honour'-based abuse for women and girls in Scotland.

Presentations:

- [Honour-based Abuse in Scotland and AMINA Muslim Women's Resource Centre](#) – Mariam Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer, AMINA
- [Equally Safe Strategy and responses to minoritised ethnic women's experiences of VAWG](#) – Julia Ng, Policy Manager, Scottish Government
- [Honour-Based Abuse Research and Animation](#) – Elaine McLaughlin, Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid
- [Addressing FGM in Scotland: A soft systems approach](#) – Elizabeth Inyang, Postdoctoral Research Assistant, University of Glasgow

Key messages from discussion:

Imagine a Scotland where we understand and respond to minority ethnic women and girls' experiences and needs: What actions would support this?



- Ensuring collaborative training and workforce development, particularly around honour-based abuse and female genital mutilation, are included as part of mandatory training for social workers and key roles in public protection.
- Promoting national guidance and legislation locally to ensure that all sectors are aware of, and engaged with, the impact of VAWG. Raising awareness in schools and communities helps foster better partnership working to address harmful cultural practices.
- Consult victims and survivors safely about their experiences to improve services. The voices of minority ethnic women must inform decisions to ensure services are accessible, inclusive and free from discrimination.

Further information

- [Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy](#) and [delivery plan](#) for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- Subscribe to the [Equally Safe Bulletin](#) for regular news on preventing and eradicating VAWG in Scotland.
- Read more about support available from the [Improvement Service](#) around tackling VAWG.
- Follow [Improvement Service Protecting People on LinkedIn](#).

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