

2016-17: A YEAR IN NUMBERS



710 women & **568** children stayed in refuge. **245** women couldn't access refuge as it was full.



7,030 women & **7,878** children accessed outreach support, allowing them to stay in their own homes



13 babies born to women in refuge



29,657 calls managed by the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline



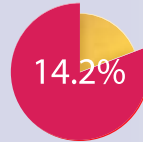
Pregnant women who accessed our support services:

Refuge: **38** women

Outreach: **179** women



Police responded to a domestic incident every **18 minutes** of every day



Domestic violence crime accounted for **14.2% of all crime** reported to the PSNI

A quarter of all murders in Northern Ireland had a domestic motivation

Women's Aid defines domestic violence as *"The intentional and persistent physical or emotional abuse of a woman, or of a woman and her children in a way that causes pain, distress or injury."*

“ Women's Aid held my hand in the beginning just to get me that bit stronger to see me through everything. Now I've started doing more stuff for myself and trying to look more to the future. ”

“ My one-to-one support from Women's Aid is the single most important thing in my life. ”

“ Women's Aid has helped my child see that there is light at the end of a dark tunnel and that other children have been through the same thing and have come out the other side. ”

Breaking Free: Support for all women

Anyone can experience domestic violence, regardless of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation or background. Women's Aid works to support all women.

Black & Minority Ethnic Women

- 167** women stayed in refuge
- 533** women received outreach support
- 50** women from the Travelling community supported in refuge
- 41** women & **49** children with no recourse to public funds supported in refuge

Disability & Complex Needs

32% of women in refuge and **23%** of women in our outreach services disclosed a mental health issue

Support at every stage of life

- 7%** of women in our services were over 55
- 17%** of women in our services were under 25

Who are the abusers?

Women in refuge

- 53%** male current partner
- 32%** male ex-partner
- <1%** same-sex partner
- 8%** family member
- 6%** other

Women in Outreach

- 35%** male current partner
- 57%** male ex-partner
- <1%** same-sex partner
- 7%** family member
- 1%** other

Children & Domestic Violence

Sometimes the biggest victims of domestic violence are the smallest. Exposure to domestic violence impacts on all aspects of children's lives, including their health, wellbeing, education, and development. Women's Aid is committed to giving children and young people the best start in life, where they are safe and protected from domestic and sexual violence, and able to thrive.

“ *My life was really horrible....now my life is so much better with all the help from Women's Aid.* ”

A young person in our services

In 2016-17...

- 568** children stayed in our refuges
- 7,878** children benefited from our outreach support
- We held **7,228** one-to-one support sessions with children in Women's Aid refuges, centres and in the community
- We ran **4225** childcare and play sessions for children, to support mothers in getting their lives back on track after abuse

- We delivered our Helping Hands programme to **1,253** children & young people in our refuges, centres and the community
- We delivered healthy relationships education to **1,073** young people
- We trained **890** external agency staff on the impact of domestic violence on children

Empowering Women, Rebuilding Lives

Domestic violence robs women of their liberty, self-esteem and control over their lives. Women's Aid supports women to recover from abuse through a wide range of personal development programmes, covering topics like self-care, mental health, trauma recovery, safety, parenting, and employment and life skills.

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

Journey to Freedom is a personal development group process for women who have experienced (or who continue to experience) domestic violence.

This year **673 women** took part in the programme.



YOU & ME, MUM

The You & Me Mum programme is designed to empower and support mothers to address the needs of their children who have lived with domestic violence.

This year, **59 women** took part in the programme.



1,779 women took part in 40 programmes run by Women's Aid across Northern Ireland

Giving Survivors a Voice

Policy, Campaigns & Lobbying

The needs and experiences of women are at the centre of everything we do. This year, we held focus groups and interviews with women in our services, asking them about their experience of domestic violence, and of getting support to rebuild their lives. The findings of our **Women's Consultation** will be published later in the year. Throughout the year our campaigns focused on key issues affecting women and children, including **coercive control**, **welfare reform** and **protecting specialist services**. As part of this work, we welcomed eminent coercive control expert Evan Stark to Belfast for a series of conferences and roundtables on the future of a coercive control law in Northern Ireland.

We continued our fight against welfare cuts, working in partnership with the Welfare Reform Group and Reclaim the Agenda. Our focus on the two-child cap and 'rape clause' has developed into a significant national campaign, supported by MLAs, MPs and Lords. We also continue to campaign for specialist services for victims of domestic violence and their children to be protected and funded. We joined the Step Up! Campaign spearheaded by Women Against Violence Europe to support this work and successfully campaigned to pass a law to bring the Istanbul Convention into effect in the UK. We also worked with the Women's Policy Group to bring the needs and views of women and domestic violence victims to all political parties and contributed to the Women's Manifesto.





24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline



Caller Case: Married for 25 years, she had experienced all forms of abuse during the marriage and is going through a difficult divorce. During the relationship she ended up in hospital on numerous occasions with physical injuries, she has problems with hearing due to the amount of injuries to her head. She also experienced internal injuries due to the sexual abuse. She is afraid still to sleep in the bedroom she shared with him and she sleeps downstairs because of the bad memories and trauma she has went through. She feels she has lost everything.

The 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline is open to all women and men affected by domestic or sexual violence. The Helpline is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and takes calls from anyone affected by domestic or sexual violence and abuse, concerned friends and family, professionals, and anyone with questions or concerns about domestic or sexual violence.

As well as the confidential freephone service, text and email support is also available. The Helpline can also support callers whose first language isn't English through interpretation service Language Line. The Helpline is managed by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland.

Callers with Additional Complex Needs: A significant number of callers to the Helpline inform us that they are having problems with poor mental health. Out of all our callers who identified as having additional or complex support needs on average over the year **63%** of our callers identified that this was an issue of concern.

Sexual Violence Calls: A total of **712 calls** were received in the last year where the caller identified the main issue as sexual violence and abuse. We are encouraged that more people are accessing the service and will be developing awareness campaigns over the next year.

Helpline Calls 2016-17

Total of **29,657** calls managed this year.

300 calls from BME and Traveller women

Of callers identifying as direct victims of domestic or sexual violence, **93%** were women and **7%** were men

Referred a total of **221** women and **135** children to Women's Aid refuge

Our volunteers

The Helpline is run by highly trained specialist staff and volunteers. This year volunteers contributed **1,050 hours** of work to the Helpline – this amounts to a **£13,209** contribution in kind – a huge thank you to all the volunteers who have supported women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence

Keeping Children & Young People Safe

Preventative Education

Our Preventative Education programme is a major success - this year we completed year seven of

Developing Social Guardians to Deliver Helping Hands teacher training!! Tackling domestic violence is about more than protecting those in danger – it's about stopping domestic violence from happening in the first place. Our innovative Helping Hands programme helps children learn how to understand the warning signs of abuse, know who to turn to if they need help and supports teachers to manage safeguarding issues. Through our capacity building programme for teachers we have trained a total of **1,282 teachers across 844 primary schools** over the last seven years across Northern Ireland.



This year we trained **154 teachers from 92 Primary Schools** to deliver Helping Hands in their classroom and great news we have a further 160 training places for teachers planned for 2017/18.



“ *Doing the Helping Hands programme has made me feel safe and more secure and I can talk about my feelings of hurt, upset and anger.* ”
A child supported by our services

Children must be Seen and Heard!



Our work in classrooms has been complemented this year thanks to funding from Children In Need. The project focuses on the impact of domestic violence on children and young people and we are working to ensure that children's voices are being heard by decision-makers.

This year we have consulted with **51 children and young people** between the age of 8 - 18, who told us about their needs and experiences. The resulting report, *Listen Up Government!* captures the voices of children and outlines their recommendations for the future of domestic violence support. Children told us:

- More needs to be done to support children's mental health
- Children who are struggling need help as early as possible
- There should be relationships education in schools
- Young people should be taught how to use the internet safely
- We need to make it easier for children to talk about domestic violence and how it impacts them
- Children's voices need to be heard in court proceedings
- There needs to be more focus on putting children's rights into action



Women's Aid has brought these findings to the All-Party Group on Children, and we continue to lobby with key partners including Children in Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People for these recommendations to be implemented.

“ *Before I never talked about my feelings but now I talk about them more.* ”
A child supported by our services



Women's Aid Training & Awareness

This year, we have continued to deliver high quality training to Women's Aid staff and volunteers, working across refuge and outreach services. We have also delivered training to external agencies and organisations ensuring that anyone working with those affected by domestic and sexual violence can access the training they need and continue to develop their skills and awareness of domestic and sexual violence. We have delivered training to PSNI recruits and continue to work with NIMDTA. We have also supported our counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales, and we have worked to update a number of our programmes. We will be launching a new suite of training later in the year.



Women's Aid Northern Ireland – Your local groups

Women's Aid has 9 local groups and one regional umbrella body covering the whole of Northern Ireland. Find a Women's Aid group in your area:

1. Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey Women's Aid	womensaidareaoffice@btconnect.com	028 2563 2136
2. Armaghdown Women's Aid	andrea@womensaidarmaghdown.org	028 3025 0765
3. Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid	admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk	028 9066 6049
4. Causeway Women's Aid	womensaidcoleraine@btinternet.com	028 7035 6573
5. Fermanagh Women's Aid	womensaidfermanagh@btopenworld.com	028 6632 8898
6. Foyle Women's Aid	info@foylewomensaid.org	028 7141 6800
7. Mid-Ulster Women's Aid	admin@midulsterwomensaid.org.uk	028 8676 9300
8. North Down & Ards Women's Aid	info@ndawomensaid.org	028 9127 3196
9. Omagh Women's Aid	info@omaghwomensaid.org	028 8224 1414
10. Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	info@womensaidni.org	028 9024 9041

Advice, Support & someone to talk to 24 hours a day

Call 0808 802 1414

Email 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

Text 07797 805839

Open to all women and men affected by domestic or sexual violence



With thanks to our funders: We appreciate your continued support for our work and support for women and children affected by domestic and sexual violence.

