



Newsletter ~ June 2023

New offence of Non-Fatal Strangulation now operational in Northern Ireland



From Monday 26th June, a new offence of Non-Fatal Strangulation (NFS) is on the legal books in NI, that makes it a specific offence to strangle, smother or asphyxiate someone.

As research has shown, the **overwhelming majority of the victims of this crime are women, and the overwhelming majority of perpetrators are men**. This means that care must be given to the focus of the educational piece that accompanies this legislation, to ensure that first responders are aware of this phenomenon presenting in a very gendered way. It is also vital that the public is made aware that the practice of non-fatal strangulation is not an example of a person “snapping” under pressure, rather a very calculated means of exerting control on a victim. It is deeply tied to patriarchal notions of power balances in relationships, of who is “active” and who is “passive” in sexual encounters, and that this needs to be unpacked when doing preventative work around this issue. **Philosopher Kate Manne argues that “strangulation is torture...It is characterised as a demonstration of authority and domination. As such, together with its gendered nature, it is a type of action paradigmatic of misogyny.”**

Another real positive from the new legislation is that the sentencing options are better than those recently adopted in England and Wales, with sentences of up to 14 years available in Crown Court hearings. It remains to be seen what will happen in practice, and whether these cases are routinely sent to Crown Court (the alternative, Magistrates Court, has a maximum sentence of only two years). This points to the need for the whole of the public to become more aware of the nature of NFS, of how it presents in a survivor, of what it tells us about the dangers posed by the offender, and of what we can all do to spread awareness of this horrific practice – and this is why an educational piece will be essential. We are pleased to see that PSNI will be producing a visual guide as to the presentation of NFS for all officers to use.

Overall, the new offence is a really positive step for Northern Ireland and, if operated well, will save lives. We will be keeping a close eye on the courts to see that it is applied with the care it needs and deserves.

In This Issue

- New offence of non-fatal strangulation now operational in NI
- Women Breaking Barriers Programme launched
- “Questions Of A Man” in association with RYV
- Cervical Cancer Awareness

A Visible Force
for Change



@womensrda



@WRDA_team



@WomensResourceandDevelopmentAgency



WRDA led coalition of women's sector organizations launch Women Breaking Barriers programme



A coalition of women's sector organizations led by WRDA have been awarded funding through the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund to launch the Women Breaking Barriers (WBB) programme. WRDA will be in partnership with Reclaim the Agenda, Women's Support Network, Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network, and several women's centres.

WBB aims to target over 600 economically inactive women across Northern Ireland to provide wrap around support for the women who need it most. WBB seeks to provide the women in our community with the support and opportunity to seek further education and training, employment including self-employment, gain qualifications and skills, and improve their maths and English skills.



3 MAIN STRANDS

RESILIENCY & MOTIVATION

CUSTOMER SERVICE

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE



3 MINOR STRANDS

ESOL

LEVEL 2 SAGE, OR BOOKKEEPING, XERO ACCOUNTING

SOCIAL MEDIA & METRICS



Women joining the programme will have their choice between three main strands of participation: resiliency and motivation via the Goals UK course, customer service skills via the World Host course, or a bespoke Health and Social care course. In addition to the main strand, there are several other activities for participants to engage in. Women will get holistic support along the entirety of the programme; including a pre training needs assessment, one to one and group mentoring sessions, and signposting and referrals. There will be job search activities including job fairs, motivational talks, CV workshops, and industry events available as part of the participant journey. Women will also engage in numeracy skills activities, potentially including money management courses, cost of living workshops, benefits calculator workshops, and other potential activities to help women improve their maths skills in a practical manner.

You can find out more about the programme here www.womenbreakingbarriersni.com or contact Sarah Stack, Project Coordinator, on sarah.stack@wrda.net



Funded by UK Government

This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

“Questions Of A Man” in association with Raise Your Voice coming to the MAC Theatre, 28-29 September 2023



We are pleased to be partnering with Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre for an engaging programme of work for Post Primary school students; combining workshops and a unique professional dance theatre performance will be presented at the MAC Theatre, Belfast on 28th and 29th September 2023.

Through a carousel of workshops from Raise Your Voice, a performance of Questions of A Man and a post-show discussion, the programme seeks to actively engage young people to consider and question masculinity, stereotyping, sexual harassment, victim blaming, consent and explore bystander intervention.

Suitable for students aged 16+ the programme will also support pupils studying GCSE and A Level Drama, Dance and Performing Arts, as well as personal development through:

WORKSHOPS:

- Workshop 1 - What is Sexual Harassment? Bystander Intervention
- Workshop 2 - Digital Online Abuse – Bystander Intervention
- Workshop 3 - Marketplace with the Anti-Sexual Harassment Forum (Themes of allyship, victim-blaming and consent)

PERFORMANCE: Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre: Questions Of A Man

DISCUSSION: Post show Q&A

If you are interested in hosting an interactive stall as part of the marketplace, please get in touch!

Contact: Sarah Stack, RYV Coordinator
sarah.stack@wrda.net

Further details available soon

www.dylanquinndance.com and
www.raiseyourvoice.community



Raise Your Voice is supported by Belfast City Council's Capacity Building Grants.

Cervical Cancer Awareness



Cervical screening aims to prevent cervical cancers by detecting early precancerous changes in the cells that line the cervix. Women aged 25-49 should be called for a smear test every 3 years and women aged 50-64 should be called every 5 years. You can watch a short video of what happens at a cervical screening appointment [here](#).

Consider these ways of reducing your risk of cervical cancer:



Be aware of the symptoms associated with cervical cancer:



Be aware of the symptoms of cervical cancer and talk to your GP if you're concerned. Cervical cancer often has no symptoms in the early stages and so it is vitally important to attend for screening when invited.

Before taking part in WRDA's Cervical Screening Awareness programme only 69% of women surveyed understood what their cervical smear test result meant. This increased to 99% after the programme.



WRDA's ground breaking Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness programme was developed to tackle the low uptake of screening invitations by women living in some areas of NI. The programme is delivered by Community Facilitators who have completed our accredited Level 3 Certificate in Learning and Development. The programme consists of three sessions and aims to raise awareness of the screening available, encourage participants to attend for screening and explores and addresses any fears surrounding the screening process.

The programme can also be tailored to meet the requirements of groups with additional needs such as sight impairment, learning disability and speakers of other languages.

The programme is available free for community groups, if you would like to find out more call the office on 028 9023 0212.



The Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness Programme is supported by the PHA