



COPE Galway

Let's help together

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Waterside Domestic Violence Service



COPE Galway

COPE Galway's Vision is improved
Quality of Life, in a home of your own

for

Women and Children Experiencing Domestic Violence,
People affected by Homelessness and
Older People

Our mission is to contribute to Quality of Life in a home of your own, by

Supporting Home, Promoting Community, and Reducing Isolation

COPE Galway – Waterside House

- **Refuge** – *place of safety, accommodation*
 - 75 women and 62 children in 2017,
 - 94 admissions of which 81 were emergency
 - Unable to accommodate 258 women and 441 children
- **Outreach** – *meeting women in and from the community*
 - 210 women supported in 2017
 - 200 drop-ins
- **Children's Service** – *working with children and mothers*
 - 214 children
- Supports include Accompaniment, Advocacy, Group Work

Scale of the Issue

- 1 in 5 women in Ireland in a relationship have been abused
- 2014 study entitled '*Violence Against Women: An EU-wide Survey*' by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) reported
 - 14% of women in Ireland have experienced physical violence by a partner since age 15
 - 6% of Irish women have experienced sexual violence by a current or former partner
 - 31% of women have experienced psychological violence by a partner
 - 12% of Irish respondents had experienced stalking (including cyber stalking)
- National Research by the National Crime Council
 - 1 in 7 women have experienced severe abusive behaviour of a physical, sexual or emotional nature from a partner at some times in their lives
 - Estimates that 213,000 women in Ireland have been severely abused by a partner
- In 2016, 10,101 women and 3,685 children were accommodated and/or received support from a domestic violence service

What is Abuse?

- Domestic Abuse – more than violence?
- A pattern of controlling, intimidating, coercive, violent behaviour
- The subject of the abuse feels powerless, frightened, insecure, isolated, guilty, ashamed

Many Ways to Abuse

- Physical abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Harassment / Stalking
- Online / Digital Abuse
- Religious Abuse

Societal Context for Abuse of Women – how acceptable is it?

What we learn from Women

- No-one falls in love with a monster
- Abuse and control dressed up as love and romance
- Small steps to significant control
- Isolation
- Self-doubt, personal fears, private secrets
- Lack of trust, lack of options, feelings of not being believed, feelings of being trapped

No Way Out

The Experience of a Survivor of Abuse

- Isolated, not believed, doubting herself
- No access to independent means
- Often dependent on her abuser
- Fear of homelessness, extreme poverty, losing children
- Mixed experience with authorities – Tusla, An Garda Siochana, Courts

Courage – Dignity – Triumph

The Role of Faith

- Changing society – new communities, ethnic minorities, decline in influence of the Catholic Church
- Faith – the importance of marriage vows, the sanctity of marriage as a sacrament
- Forgiveness – the Christian duty to forgive, to turn the other cheek
- Empathy and Sympathy – pressure to understand the problems / bad experiences of the abuser, to accept this as an excuse
- Being ostracised from the faith community
- Faith as a weapon – *‘if you were a real Christian...’*

My faith or my safety?

Support at the Parochial Level

- Shift in thinking of Religious in recent years
- Acceptance that sometimes, the marriage has to end, the woman has to be released from her vows
- Questionable counselling – the role of the local priest
- The pledge – a solution to an abusive relationship?

Whose problem is it? He abuses, she has to fix it

Breaking the Silence: Dealing with Domestic Violence – Appropriate Pastoral Support

- Recognising that the woman has no fault
- Stating that the woman has no fault
- Re-stating that the woman has no fault
- Facilitating reconciliation between faith and personal safety, between marital duty and protection of children
- Boundaries Boundaries Boundaries – appropriate counselling, appropriate referrals, considering the value of the pledge
- Leading the discourse on women's rights



COPE Galway

2. Symbol
and name



COPE Galway is introduced along with an arc which symbolises protection, shelter, and serves to combine COPE Galway with the community and the individuals at risk in a strong, clear visual statement.



Let's Help Together
Thank you