

THE IMPACT OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE & ABUSE ON THE LIVES OF SURVIVORS

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Recap – Day 1

- What do you remember from the half day?
- Any questions that came out of that session?
- What do you hope to get from the full day of First Responder training?
- What have you noticed since you attended the half day training?

Defining “First Responder”

For the purpose of this training, “First Responder” will be the person, or persons employed by the University of Strathclyde, to whom the victim of an act, or acts of gender based violence discloses that the act has been perpetrated and that she or he needs support from the worker, from the University or is seeking support to report the incident to the police.

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The Role of the First Responder

- **Ensure physical health and wellbeing**
- **Ensure safety**
- **Listen and understand**
- **Support**
- **Record**
- **Check that safety can be maintained**
- **If necessary, refer to senior worker for any immediate decisions that needs to be made**
- **Refer to other support services where appropriate**

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NOT The Role of the First Responder

- **To interrogate**
- **To investigate**
- **To judge**
- **To tell the victim/survivor what to do**
- **To try to influence the victim/survivor's decisions**
- **To judge whether or not the assault is 'serious' or 'not serious'**

Always remember

**How we respond to a
disclosure of an act of sexual
violence depends on our
attitudes to that act and to the
behaviour and demeanour of
the person making that
disclosure.**



Public Perceptions of Sexual Crimes

Scottish Government Study ...

- 27% of people think a woman may be partly responsible if she is drunk at the time of the attack
- 26% thought a woman bore some responsibility if she wore revealing clothing
- 32% say there should be some burden of responsibility if a woman is flirting
- 18% think rape can be a woman's fault if she is known to have had many sexual partners

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Experiences of Sexual Violence and Abuse

- **Coercive and controlling behaviour**
- **Sexual harassment**
- **Sexual assault**
- **Attempted rape**
- **Rape**
- **Drug rape/drinks spiked/drugged**
- **Intimate partner sexual violence**
- **Intimate partner violence**
- **Childhood sexual abuse**



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Immediate or Short Term Impact

- Memory may be affected
- Denial
- Minimisation
- Hysteria
- Complete calm
- Detachment
- Shock
- Disbelief



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Trauma and the Brain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-tcKYx24aA>

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Longer Term

- Fear and anxiety
- Hyperalertness
- Hypervigilance
- Emotional/mood swings
- Intrusive memories of the trauma
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks

Longer Term

- Helplessness and panic
- Depression
- Lack of trust
- Suicidal thoughts
- Outbursts of anger or rage
- Self harming or risk taking behaviour
- Dissociation

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What makes trauma worse?

- Repeated incidences of violence and abuse
- Social isolation
- Fearing death or serious injury to self or others
- Having little or no control over events
- Experience of previous trauma, especially from childhood



Prevalence

Number of reported rapes committed by strangers?

Number of women who say they have been raped by partners or ex-partners?

Sexual violence in intimate relationships



Chart of Coercion

1. Isolation
2. Disability and Exhaustion
3. Humiliation and Degradation
4. Threats
5. Unreasonable Demands
6. Occasional Indulgences
7. Demonstrating Omnipotence
8. Distorted Perspectives

Albert Biderman (1961)



Coercive Control

- It's ongoing
- It's cumulative in its effect
- It's personal
- It extends through social space
- It's micro-management on a grand scale
- Results in lack of space for action
- Benefits to the perpetrator – service, sex, money, time and ego

Evan Stark: Coercive Control, 2009

Support in the aftermath of sexual violence



On Campus Support Service

- Wednesdays and Fridays
- Drop-in and appointments
- Full range of back up services at GCRC

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