



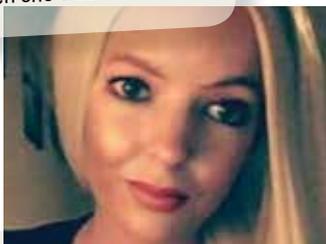
West Cork Whisper

It has not been an auspicious start to 2019

JAN 3

Jasmine McMonagle 27, murdered by her partner at their home in Donegal. Jasmine had called the Gardai in fear for herself and her two small children who were in the house when she was attacked.

JasmineMcMonagle



JAN 6

A woman in Kildare was stabbed four times in her own home and a man was arrested shortly afterwards. Reports describe her injuries as serious.



Elzbieta Piotrowska

JAN 8

Elzbieta Piotrowska was killed with an axe by her son in her own home in Ardee, Co Louth. Garda describe her injuries as 'horrific'.

These recent murders and attacks comply with the characteristics of femicide (murder of women) identified by Women's Aid in their Femicide Watch 2018 Report;

Women are more likely to be killed in their own home than any other location.

The most common method of killing is stabbing with knives or other sharp objects (31%)

87% of women know their killer.

In 20 cases where a woman has been killed by a male relative, 16 were killed by their sons (80%).

Had these attacks occurred in the context of gang-related crime, senior gardai, the Justice Minister, politicians and media would have been loud in their condemnations, calling for immediate resources to combat it and a strategy to address the scale of it. But this wasn't gangland crime, this was the constant slow and steady drip of murders resulting from domestic violence - the hidden epidemic in our society.

Open a newspaper any day and turn to the courts' coverage, 70% of the articles will be in relation to crimes against women and children, domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape and murder. Once you have seen the scale of it, it is hard to unsee it. Yet, there is no national outcry. There aren't even the jail sentences that reflect the extent of the damage done, indeed the sentencing of such crimes reflect how little value is placed on the lives of the victims, primarily women and often children.

Ironically, the new Domestic Violence legislation came into force (January 1) in the same week as two women were murdered, if this legislation is to have any real impact, it requires resourcing, training for the judiciary and An Garda Siochana and meaningful implementation by all the relevant parties. (see page 4)

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the game of cat & mouse

The cat has caught a mouse. He's going to eat it - right? He brings the mouse to the wall beside the front door and allows it to take refuge in the sparse crop of wallflowers and begonias growing up through the concrete. The cat sits alert and erect staring at the clump of flowers. The mouse doesn't move. When the cat decides, he stretches his paw forward to shake the leaves. This frightens the mouse and it leaves the safety of the clump. The mouse begins to run but the big white paw gathers him back in. the mouse makes another run and this time, it gets a little further before the cat flicks his paw and, dear god, he tosses the mouse in the air and watches him bounce off the ground. Surely now he eats the mouse? No. it's evening and the cat wants to catch the last few rays of sun. he moves off to a sunny spot on the grass. Ah well. This time he's decided not to kill and eat the mouse. So there's a happy ending then? The mouse will escape?

No. look at the mouse. He stays exactly where he is. He does not move. He does not attempt to leave.

Domestic abuse is a game of power and control; where a perpetrator uses the tactics of intimidation, threat, sometimes physical and sexual abuse, and mind games to humiliate, dominate, confuse and frighten a partner into getting what he wants. The majority, but not exclusively, of these perpetrators are male. A perpetrator, like the cat, decides how the game is played. They decide the tactics used to achieve this. What the outcome will be. They decide when the game ends. It is cold, calculated, ruthless and it can cause profound mental and physical injury.

Ideas about perpetrators and victims of domestic violence are common and untrue. Perpetrators may come from broken homes, had abusive childhoods and often have addiction problems but many do not. Some are unemployed or have anger issues or are unable to cope with stress, but many are not. Some women have abuse histories also and poor self esteem but many do not.

Domestic abuse crosses all classes, educational backgrounds, nationalities and ethnicities. Intelligence, high self esteem, education and wealth do not protect anyone from experiencing domestic abuse as many women have found to their cost. According to the latest UN survey on prevalence; 1 in 3 Irish women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.

In a healthy relationship, you will feel valued, respected and free to be yourself. You know what your partner loves about you. You are able to be honest and open with your partner. You can resolve conflicts and compromise. You're both able to admit to being wrong and to apologise and not repeat what caused the hurt. You are able to respect your partner's feelings, his/her opinions and his/her friends. You feel safe to say yes or no to a partner without experiencing a negative consequence. Intimacy including emotional/physical intimacy and mutual respect are the bedrock of healthy relationships.

The bedrock of an abusive relationship is to impose isolation and to subject a woman to ongoing daily verbal abuse. Over time these tactics wear down a woman's sense of self and often makes her doubt her own reality. Women say they often find it difficult to name the tactics of verbal abuse used in a relationship because they change so often. Review the list (below) to see if these are features in your relationship.

What can you do to prevent an abusive relationship? It is important to recognise the early warning signs before you have invested too much. Many of these indicators present in the first six months. Take heed of early warning signs and act on them. Later, like the mouse, your capacity to cope with the ongoing tactics of the abuser is diminished. By then, you have made bigger commitments, bought a home and may have had children together which may make it very difficult to act. By then you may be exhausted and ill from dealing with the continuous onslaught of tactics used to annihilate who you are.



Joan's story: *He was brilliant at the beginning. He loved the bones of me and couldn't do enough. He kept me busy all the time, wanted to be with me all the time. Texting when I wasn't with him to see what I was doing. He bombarded me with texts, constantly making plans even if it clashed with things I had already arranged with friends. I was swept off my feet literally. Everything happened very fast. He was very good at explaining himself. It took me a while to recognise that he lied about things. He was brilliant at it. I found myself making excuses for him with other people because he had serious mood swings - would just lose it with other people but not with me.*

He wouldn't wear condoms and he became pushy when it came to sex. He compared me to other partners in a negative way. He boasted about other women he had - I felt lucky to be chosen by him. He had such a sob story about his ex that I immediately thought I will never treat him like that. I wanted to fix it - I was going to make his life happy. I felt I couldn't possibly treat him like that or demand things from him like she did. He started to correct what I was saying in public - to 'help me out'. I was mortified. Then he would ignore me if he was with his friends and I would end up sitting on my own.

Rita's story: *He told me he loved me after about two weeks. He promised me the sun moon and stars. The table was covered in presents for me. Four months later I didn't even get a birthday card. When I asked him about it, he rubbished me for wanting one. If I cried, he cried. If I had a problem with his behaviour he turned it back so it ended up that he had a problem with me. He used foul language and he accused me of ridiculous things. I wasn't allowed be upset because it was too much for him. I wasn't allowed to be angry either, because he would get even angrier. He started to comment negatively on what I was wearing, what programmes I liked, places I'd like to go. He started to make all the decisions. He had no money and needed to borrow money from me but he told me he would inherit lots some day. I worked hard and I ended up paying for everything. My friends told me they didn't like him- he wasn't nice to them at the beginning even though he was brilliant to me. They stopped meeting up with us and I lost contact with them.*

tactics of verbal abuse	Belittling you	Sighing at you
	Intimidation	Shutting down
	Using vulgar words to shock you	Using intimidating hand gestures
	Lying to you	Interrogating you
	Spitting at you	Haranguing you
	Taunting you	Bombarding you with questions
	Namecalling	Making ridiculous accusations
	Criticising you	Making threats
	Speaking for you	Discounting what you have to say
	Silent treatment	Mimicking what you're saying
	Withdrawing	Forgetting
	Overtaking you	Using foul language to frighten & intimidate you
	Becoming very angry/shouting/screaming	Denying what he said or did
	Ordering	
Dismissing what you have to say		

Help is available from WCWAV 1800203136

lack of training re domestic violence act



Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris

- A new offense of coercive control has been created. This is deemed as psychological abuse in an intimate relationship that causes fear of violence, or serious alarm or distress that has a substantial adverse impact on a person's day-to-day activities.
- Being in an intimate relationship is now an aggravating factor in domestic violence cases.
- Courts must consider a list of factors prior to dealing with applications for domestic violence orders.
- Abusers will be prevented from communicating electronically which will support those who experience digital abuse and harassment.

Our project greatly welcomes these changes, but recognise that our clients have experienced an inconsistent response in the past from legal professionals, the Gardai and the courts. Women's Aid have campaigned for over a decade for judicial and legal professionals to have specialist training with the key aim to increase their understanding of women's experiences of domestic violence. Unfortunately, given the experiences of our clients, throughout the years very little changed in regard to the delivery of targeted training, leaving domestic violence support services like ours concerned as to how these new laws will be implemented and enforced.

We were alarmed but not surprised to hear of the recent press statement by the National Executive of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors. They expressed deep concern around the enforcement of the new legislation saying that, *"none of their members have received formal training on this new legislation."* They are calling on the Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris to; *"prioritise training in this area as a matter of urgency to ensure the public receives the best possible policing service."*

It is a sad reflection of our government's short-term thinking to introduce far-reaching legislation but with none of the supports, training or resources to ensure that those responsible for the protection of victims are able to effectively understand and implement it. It is disheartening that now enhanced legislation has been legalised, the professional voices calling for judicial training on the ground are still being ignored by those in government despite the years of campaigning. Discussions on the DV Act 2018 have taken place since early last year, but it would seem without talk of formal training for those at the coal face. Similar domestic abuse legislation was passed in 2015 in the UK and our sister organisations there tell us that it is only most recently that they have witnessed the effective prosecution of coercive control cases because their law was rolled out without adequate training also. The fear of domestic violence services in Ireland, is that women in a traumatic situation shall present to frontline legal and judicial services but continue to receive an inconsistent and more worryingly an untrained response for some time yet to come.



Margaret Martin Women's Aid

The Domestic Violence Act 1996 enhanced protection and recourse to the law for cohabitants, parents and children but had enormous restrictions. The new Domestic Violence Act 2018 which came into effect on 1st January 2019 covers previous significant gaps in both civil and criminal law in Ireland for those experiencing domestic abuse. Some of the new provisions include:

- Safety orders can now be applied for where someone has not lived with the person enabling those experiencing dating abuse to have legal protection.
- An emergency barring order has been created which lasts for eight working days, where there is an immediate risk of significant harm and is eligible for those who do not have any share in a property together.



Stephanie Holt Seminar

During the **16 Days of Action** for 2018, WCWAV invited **Stephanie Holt, PhD** (School of Social Work and Social Policy Trinity College Dublin) back to West Cork to give a seminar, presenting her work and research on **Post Separation Conflict and Children**.

Stephanie critiqued existing criteria used to court order access of fathers who have abused their children's mothers. She argued for Safe (r) Contact Post- Separation where there is more specific and relevant evidence for access based on; the quality of the contact with fathers, their fathering capacity and the knowledge that a father has of his children- the quality of his relationship with his children. She also urges that children be asked what the contact is like for them.

Despite the weather, WCWAV were delighted with the turnout of almost 50 attendees from many different sectors including social workers, Gardai, other DV organisations, resource centres, counsellors and therapists.

The seminar concluded with a lively, open floor discussion. Copies of the presentation are available on request.

Third of counties unable to provide refuge for abuse victims



Domestic abuse charities have said that women are fleeing violence, only to be told there is no space for them in a refuge.
GETTY IMAGES

Ten counties in Ireland had no emergency accommodation available for women and children fleeing domestic abuse last year.

Essentially, this would involve the Council allocating a house in a West Cork location where services and most importantly a Garda Siochana presence could be accessed. WCWAV would equip, furnish, and provide the security installations required while maintaining the house in good order. WCWAV would be responsible for the tenancy with clients who require emergency refuge accommodation identified by WCWAV entering into an occupancy agreement with WCWAV. A WCWAV worker would be assigned to the house to support women/families in identifying next steps and the services they need to move on to a more secure and stable future.

{a safe house}

for west cork

IN 2016 WEST CORK WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE published an evaluation of its services in the report entitled, Someone to Talk to, Somewhere to Go. One of the most common issues the report identified was the need for a Safe House/refuge in West Cork. Consequently in its 3 year Strategic plan 2017-2020 WCWAV made the development of a Safe House one of its 5 key priorities.

A small working group comprised of several WCWAV Board members, co-ordinator Marie Mulholland and Patrick Healy of Novas Initiatives (West Cork), a homelessness and tenancy support organisation, met a number of times to look at how best to progress the issue.

Most recently, a few weeks before Christmas 2018, Marie Mulholland gave a presentation to the West Cork Homelessness Forum whose members include a number of key agency representatives including Cork County Council, HSE and the Homeless Persons Unit. Marie explained that additional refuge accommodation is urgently required as currently there are only six refuge places in all of Cork and County for families escaping domestic abuse. In her presentation, she proposed a partnership between the County Council and WCWAV in identifying and setting up a Safe House for West Cork.

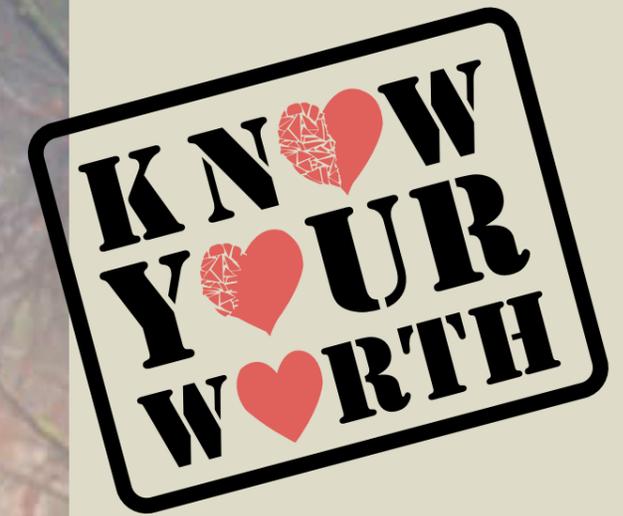
The presentation made to the Homelessness Forum was met with overwhelming support from all the agency representatives there. Cork County Council officer, Helen O'Donovan gave a commitment to take this issue forward to her superiors in the Housing Department of Cork County Council and to be on the look-out for a suitable premises in West Cork. HSE and Department of Social Protection representatives all agreed that the need for a Safe House in West Cork was a pressing need and confirmed their support for the initiative. There is enormous goodwill from all of the relevant agencies and services in making a safe house available and providing for its establishment. WCWAV is hopeful with such support that safe, emergency refuge accommodation in West Cork is a very real possibility in the not too distant future.

www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/ireland/third-of-counties-unable-to-provide-refuge-for-abuse-victims-8splqjd60?t=ie

the journey

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice -
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
“Mend my life!”
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voice behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do -
determined to save
the only life that you could save.

Mary Oliver, (1935 - January 2019)



Know Your Worth is a dating abuse program delivered by WCWAVP to secondary schools in the West Cork area.

The aim of our dating abuse program is to work with students in understanding their rights and responsibilities in dating relationships and allowing them a space to have an accurate, healthy discussion of dating abuse. The session is facilitated over a two-hour period allowing students to discuss topics relating to types of dating abuse, where ideas about dating abuse come from, healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and much more.

Our sessions are available free of charge and include an education pack for each student to take home. For any schools that may be interested please contact:

admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

we're here to help

If you - or someone you know - think we could help we're offering you this card to cut out and keep in your wallet for when you get the chance or courage to ring us. We've purposely made it discreet so only you will know what it is about. Trust us, Trust yourself

**Tell me,
what is it
you plan to do
with your one wild
and precious life?**

mary oliver

thank you

West Cork Women Against Violence are deeply grateful for the generous donations received throughout 2018. Many of these were from individuals and came in the days before Christmas in cards, through Paypal, paid into our account and even hand delivered.

Anna's Second Hand Shop in Bantry, paid a visit to our offices and presented us with a Christmas surprise gift of a cheque for €1000. Thank you also to Glengarriff Theatre Group who made us one of their three recipients from the proceeds of their Christmas Pantomime in 2018.

Your donations are used for emergency situations when women and children require immediate assistance in the form of transport costs, subsistence and overnight accommodation. We welcome your support and as always are humbled by the kindness shown by many of you. Thank you.



Ian and Anna with Marie WCWAV (centre)



Members of the Glengarriff Theatre Group with Julia, WCWAV (centre)

cork

West Cork Women Against Violence
Freephone 1800 203 136

Cuanlee Refuge, Cork
021 427 7698

Free Legal Aid Clinic
Locall 1890 350 259
Information and referral

IRD Duhallow Domestic Violence Support
Helpline 087 7733 337
from Monday to Saturday 10am - 10 pm or
office at 029 60633

Legal Aid Board, Cork
021 455 1686 / 021 427 5998

Mná Feasa (Domestic Violence Project)
021 421 1757

OSS, Cork Freephone 1800 497 497
(Domestic Violence Resource Centre for men
and women)

S.A.T.U. 021 492 6100

Sexual Violence Centre
Freephone 1800 496 496

Domestic Violence Social Work
021 492 1728

Y.A.N.A. North Cork
022 53915

kerry

Kerry's Women's refuge and Support
Services (Adapt) 066 712 9100

Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre
Freephone 1800 633 333

Legal Aid Board 066 712 6900

Tralee Women's Resource Centre
066 712 0622

national

Women's Aid Freephone 1800 341 900

West Cork Citizens' Information Service

West Cork Citizens' Information Service can provide you with information, advocacy and advice on all your rights and entitlements. The service is free, confidential and independent. Open daily, please call for times.

Bantry The Square, 076 107 8390
Daily from 10am - 5pm
(Fridays until 4pm, closed 1pm-2pm
Mon, Tues & Thurs)

Macroom South Square Macroom,
0761 078 430
Mon, Tues, Weds, Thursday (Closed Friday)

Bandon, c/o St Michael Centre,
South Main Street, Bandon
Every Thursday from
10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Dunmanway, Ross House, The Square,
Dunmanway Every Monday 10am-1pm

Clonakilty, c/o Employability Service,
16 Rossa Street, Clonakilty
Every Wednesday from
10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Free Legal Aid Clinic Monthly
on 1st Tuesday 6pm - 7pm

For an appointment please contact West
Cork Citizens' Information Service by either
dropping in or phoning 076 107 8390.

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www.westcorkwomensproject.ie email: admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

Bantry Office: 027 53847 Mon to Friday: 9.00 am to 5.30 pm

Helpline: 1800 203 136 during office hours

Skibbereen Outreach: 028 23607 Fridays 11.00 am - 2.00 pm

Clonakilty Outreach Thursdays by appointment

www.facebook.com/westcorkwomenagainstviolence



We're here to support you

FREEPHONE
1800 203 136

Office 027 53847
Mon to Fri: 9 am to 5.30 pm

CONFIDENTIALITY

West Cork Women's Project assures all women contacting us that four core values underpin our service:

- Confidentiality
- To be listened to
- To be believed
- Respect for her choice

Speaking to someone, perhaps for the first time, about experiencing violence or abuse in the home is never easy. Placing your trust in a stranger on the end of a phone or meeting someone for the first time face to face takes courage. These first stages of seeking support can be a time of stress and fear for women.

It is important that women understand that they have the right to remain anonymous when contacting the service. If a woman is comfortable with giving identifying details, these details are not passed on to any other agency except at her request.

There are two exceptions to confidentiality:

- If a disclosure raises concerns with regard to Child Protection issues
- If a woman discloses that she intends to harm another person.