

What men can do

All men can join the team to end violence against women and girls - that's #TheGoal Here are some ideas of what you can do to make a difference.

Firstly, start by understanding gender inequality and men's violence against women and girls.

It's important to engage with the issues and to educate yourself. We recommend beginning with the resources on the website. They should help you understand how expectations of 'how to behave like a man' and 'how to behave like a woman' are linked to gender inequality and how this creates an environment which can lead to violence against women and girls. To start reading, visit www.whiteribbon.org.uk/reports-publications

Next, here are some things for you to consider so you can make a difference. We have included some important factors to think about.

- Think about how you can nurture traits which disassociate violent and abusive behaviour. We have helped start this off, #TheGoal highlights 11 traits for you to nurture which are associated to behaviour and attitudes which provide a constructive basis to achieve gender equality.
- Keep engaging! Violence against women and girls is widely connected to other issues in society. Once you understand what it is, it's like uncovering a cobweb of interconnected problems and impact. It's important for men to understand the impact because it helps create solutions!

- You can make a difference in your workplace by making the environment safer and more comfortable for women, considering how culture may impact women, ensuring there are inclusive policies in place, and that the organisation is considering how it communicates.
- You can also be a part of the solution in your private life, at home, with family and with friends. Think about how the way you speak, your expectations, the value and recognition you provide towards women and girls in your family may be different towards the men and boys in your life.
- There is no correlation to value or virtue in women's lifestyle choices, how women choose to dress or wear make-up.
 - Remember, that the only people who cause violence and abuse are the people who perpetrate it. You should be non-judgemental and not engage in victim blaming.
- Listen to women in your life - family, friends and colleagues - about their experiences of sexism and men's violence and abuse.
 - It's crucial that you ensure the women you speak with want to discuss their experiences with you, that you approach it sensitively, that you actively listen and are non-judgemental, and that you do not allow your emotion or opinion override the conversation being had. Acknowledge and validate the emotion and impact they may express about the experience, and ensure you let them know that what they experienced was not their fault or their doing.

- A good way to test whether it is appropriate for you to engage in the conversation is by thinking about the power dynamic in your relationship and in the circumstances you are having the conversation. Women's safety is priority, this includes from being made to feel uncomfortable, or even having to relive an experience.
- Make sure you know where people can get help if they are seeking it.
 - Unless you have received comprehensive victim support training, you should not be offering advice. There are helpline numbers and organisations which women can call and to speak to experts. We have some saved on our website under 'Find Help'.
 - It's very important to share this information in a way that is safe for the person you are offering it to. Assess the situation and respect her wishes.
 - If someone is in immediate danger, always call 999.
- Talk to your male friends and family.
 - It may seem like a difficult conversation to have, but it doesn't need to be. There are two aspects to this, talking about behaviour and attitudes with your social groups, and calling out individuals.
 - Different people will approach this in different ways, perhaps for some it's easiest to call it out as soon as it happens, and for others it's easier one to one.
 - It could help to have the conversation one to one if you're wanting to discuss the persons behaviour or attitudes, remain respectful and be prepared with knowledge.

- It's important to discuss the issues sensitively and to remember that you're not an expert but talking to your social circle about it can have an incredibly positive impact on women and your friendship group and family.
- Please remember – no one wants to be told about what they experience – women are experts at this, listen to them and respect their opinion.
- You may want to be prepared by saving the Respect helpline number (0808 8024040) for friends or family who are concerned about their own behaviour towards women and girls.

- Call out inappropriate language and behaviours used by others.
 - One way you can influence this is by using and promoting language that is gender neutral yourself.
- Respect personal space, keep at a respectable distance. Cross the street to avoid walking behind a woman. The same goes for running or jogging, especially at night.
- Don't strike up conversations with women where they may feel threatened or isolated, like an empty or very full train carriage or bus. If a woman strikes up a conversation, fine, otherwise leave her alone.
 - If you're wanting to strike up a conversation as a distraction tactic because you think she may be being harassed by someone else, we would refer you to Stand Up Against Harassment training delivered by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust about bystander intervention. The Suzy Lamplugh Trust focuses on personal safety and the training has been developed to upskill members of the public to help others.
- It may seem like society has moved beyond gender inequality and stereotypes and sexist attitudes towards women, but you'd be surprised how normalised it still is. Ask yourself how the tasks are divided in your home – is it fair or are women carrying more of the household and caring tasks? Can you think of ways to change this?

A further step?

You can make the White Ribbon Promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women. Scan the QR code.



If you are worried about your own behaviour – you may want to consider talking to a specialist support provider about it. We recommend the Respect helpline, freephone 0808 8024040

If you'd like to find out more, visit our Allies webpage at www.whiteribbon.org.uk/allies

Here are some ideas of practical things you can adopt.

- In your workplace, speak to your HR department about adopting policies which relate to gender equality and safety of women. This could include a specific employee support domestic abuse policy.
- Advocate for your female colleagues at work, speak up about their achievements and representation in boards and groups.
 - Challenge the 'likeability penalty', this term helps reflect how women in the workplace are penalised when exhibiting qualities usually attributed to male colleagues. For example, women displaying leadership qualities can often be called 'bossy', instead of recognising the skill.
- Speak up! Challenge gender stereotypes and inequality if you encounter them at work. It may be helpful to discuss with your manager, HR department or Trade Union.