



WHAT MEN CAN DO

White Ribbon UK **Allyship** Learning Resource

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MEN'S ROLE IN ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

To prevent violence against women and girls, we need all men to stand up as allies for women and girls.

The reality is that most violence against women and girls is committed by men. The root cause of this violence is harmful and dominant masculine norms. Violence can be found across our society; in our own attitudes and behaviours, systems and institutions, workplaces, in public and online. We can change this, but we need men to take a leading role as allies for women and girls to prevent violence from happening in the first place.

In this pack, you will find important information about what you can do to show your allyship.

Allyship

Allyship is the active support for the rights of a minority or marginalised group without being a member of it. In terms of preventing violence against women and girls, this means men taking action every day to challenge misogyny and sexism.

White Ribbon UK

White Ribbon UK is the leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls. Our mission is to prevent men's violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes – harmful and dominant masculine norms. Our work is preventative, we want to end violence before it starts.

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PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Violence against women and girls is a serious issue that occurs in all aspects of UK society.

IN PUBLIC SPACES 70% of women in the UK say they have experienced sexual harassment in public. (APPG for UN Women, 2021)

IN WORKPLACES 3 in 5 women have experienced sexual harassment, bullying or verbal abuse in the workplace. (Trade Unions Congress, 2023)

ONLINE 15% of women in England, and 17% of women in Wales have experienced online violence. (Professor Olga Jurasz, The Open University, 2024)

AT SCHOOL Nearly a quarter (24%) of girls in mixed sex schools said they had experiences of unwanted sexual touching in school. (EVAW, 2023)

AT HOME 1.4 million women experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2023. (March 2023, ONS)

Statistics like these are helpful for understanding the rates of violence against women and girls in our society, but they often frame this issue as a problem for women, not men, to address.

Violence against women and girls is not a women's issue -- and the majority of men agree. 63% of men agree that men in society aren't doing enough to ensure the safety of women and girls. (YouGov, 2021)



WHAT YOU CAN DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL

Even as an individual, you can use your voice and actions to foster positive culture change in society.

Why is it important for each one of us to engage in this issue?
It may seem like society has moved beyond gender inequality, 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?

CULTIVATE ACTIVE ALLYSHIP BY:

- Reflecting on your own attitudes and behaviours: consider the language that you use and the way that you interact with others.
- Listening to the lived experiences of women. It's crucial that you ensure the women you speak with want to discuss their experiences with you and that you approach it sensitively, actively listen and are non-judgemental.
- Calling out sexism and misogyny when you see it, if it is safe to do so. All it takes is a simple 'that's not ok.' Instead of calling it out in front of everyone, you might want to pull your friend to one side to speak to them one on one.
- Being open in showing that you are comfortable talking about these issues as if you were talking about the weather.



REMEMBER: *Unless you're an expert, you should not be offering advice to people experiencing violence.*



- Thinking about how you consume violence, this could be through media, like films and TV shows, even the video games that you play.
- Respecting personal space, keep at a respectable distance. You know that you mean no harm, but she doesn't. Cross the street to avoid walking behind a woman. The same goes for running or jogging, especially at night.
- Not striking up conversations with women where they may feel threatened or isolated, like an empty or very full train carriage or bus.
- By making the White Ribbon Promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women.
- Knowing where people can find help, there are helplines for people in England and Wales experiencing violence or those worried about their own behaviour on the White Ribbon UK website.
- Becoming a White Ribbon Ambassador or Champion to become part of a community of changemakers using their voices to help end violence against women.



IMPORTANT: *If someone is in immediate danger, or if you're unsure, call 999.*



WHAT YOU CAN DO AS PART OF YOUR ORGANISATION

On average, we spend a third of our lives at work. It is essential that everyone is able to thrive at work in a safe and supportive environment.

- Speak to your HR department about adopting policies which relate to gender equality and safety of women.
- Listen to and advocate for your female colleagues. Speak up about their achievements and representations in boards and groups.
- Call out and challenging gender stereotypes and inequality when you encounter them at work. It may be helpful to speak with your manager, HR department or Trade Union when you encounter this.
- Use and promote gender neutral and non-violent language yourself.
- Encourage your organisation to become a White Ribbon Accredited or Supporter Organisation to foster positive culture change in your organisation, and to show your community that you are committed to preventing men's violence against women.
- Suggest bespoke White Ribbon Training for your organisation that focuses on a range of issues including allyship, domestic abuse awareness and changing cultures in the workplace.
- Buy awareness raising materials from the White Ribbon Shop to display around your workplace. This could be 'Find Help' cards, or posters encouraging people to make the White Ribbon Promise.
- Take your allyship a step further and fundraise for White Ribbon UK. This could be through an office 'dress-down' day or through a charity run happening in your local area.

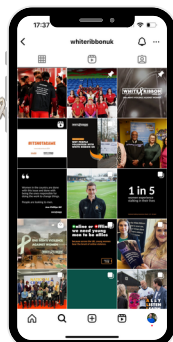


ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO GET INVOLVED

Now that you know how to show your allyship to prevent men's violence against women as an individual and as part of your organisation. To help create whole societal change, we need everyone to get involved!

Below, you can find ways you can encourage other people to become changemakers too:

- Use your voice! One of the most important tools you can use to encourage other people to make a positive difference is your voice. This could be at work, in your local venue, at home and even online.
- Let people know that you've joined a community of changemakers and encourage them to become a White Ribbon Ambassador or Champion.
- Tell your friends about the work that White Ribbon UK is doing to prevent and end men's violence against women and girls. You can also let your co-workers know about the work White Ribbon UK does through sharing our posts on LinkedIn.
- Wearing a White Ribbon every day to act as a conversation starter and as a signpost to White Ribbon UK.



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**If you have any questions,
please email our Policy Team at
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