



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

VAWDASV SCENARIOS

Discussion Toolkit



Llinell Gymorth Live Fear
Byw Heb Ofn Free Helpline
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newid sy'n para
change that lasts

Yasmin tells you her sister is getting married, but isn't very happy about it. She says there's a lot of shouting in the house and her sister isn't allowed to leave her bedroom or have her mobile phone.



What do you think is happening here?

What could Yasmin can do?

How do you think Yasmin might be feeling about what is going on at home?

Could it be impacting on her at school?

Where is the line between parents having your best interests at heart and abuse?

(Key words, Human Rights, culture, HBV, FM)

Forced marriage is a form of Violence Against Women and Girls. Some communities have strong ideas about autonomy and behaviour based on expectations of gender. Both females and males can be forced into marriage, however it tends to affect more females than males. Forced marriage is very different from an arranged marriage, where you are able to say 'no', without consequences. Consequences can include being imprisoned in your home, being unable to have access to social media, your phone, your friends, and in some cases, where females and males have refused marriage, they have been killed by their family. This is known as so called crimes of honour. Communities that practice so called honour based violence include some African, Asian, Romanian, Iraqi, and Albanian communities. It can be very confusing for young people who are being pressured into marrying, as they love their parents, and cannot understand why they are being forced to marry. Young people will then themselves feel like 'bad people' for going against their parents' wishes.

Sources of help can include: Dialling 999 in an immediate emergency, speaking to a teacher, or other trusted adult, call the Forced Marriage Unit Helpline on 020 7008 0151 (9-5pm) or if you need to speak to someone outside of those hours call 020 7008 1500 (ask for the Global Response Centre) In Wales, you can also call Bawso, 24/7, on 0800 731 8147. Forced marriage is against the law, even if you are forced abroad to marry. It is a complete violation of human rights. In 2021, the FMU gave advice and support in 337 cases in the UK.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.wales/live-fear-free/honour-based-violence-and-forced-marriage>

Your school has a rock climbing activity. One of the boys, lolo, freezes on the wall, calls for help to get down, and everyone laughs. lolo walks away looking very angry and red in the face. You notice he looks angry for the rest of the trip.



Do you think boys should always be brave, at all times?

What could you say to lolo to make him open up about his feelings.

Boys shouldn't have to be brave all the time. The pressure of being brave or being told to 'man up' can be detrimental to boy's mental health and wellbeing. Boy's may feel that they aren't able to speak up or reach out due to being stereotyped as 'weak', which is not true. Men don't always have to be brave or fix everything. Everyone is great the way they are.

You could ask lolo if he is okay. If he doesn't want to talk about what has upset him respect his boundaries. You could also compliment lolo by telling him how well he has done to try an activity that he may have feared. Additionally, letting him know you are there to talk if he would like to allow him to reach out to you when he is ready.

(Key words - gender stereotypes, impact on males, being ourselves, words for boys, words for girls)

Gender stereotypes do a disservice to everyone, females don't always like pink and to share their feelings, males aren't always aggressive, and sometimes they feel like crying. It is important to be yourself and share your feelings, and recognize when gender stereotypes are impacting on your ability to be yourself.



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Can you think of any words that are typically used for females and typically used for males?

What do you notice about the words?

How can these words shape our ideas about females and males?

What impact can they have on us and our belief in our roles in society?

How can gender stereotypes impact on our life chances?



Can you think of any other examples of gender stereotypes, and what the real life impact can be?

One example could be the gender pay gap. Because of expectations of gender, more women than men tend to work part time/zero hours contracts so they can provide child care/elderly relatives care. This means that typically women will earn less over their lifetime and have smaller pensions when they retire.

<https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2019/04/16/decoding-the-gender-pay-gap-how-a-bletchley-park-codebreaker-helped-explain-a-strange-paradox/>

Expectations of gender can lead to structural inequalities, for instance, fathers tend to spend less time with their children because the UK's parenting leave system is one of the most gender-unequal in the developed world. Its structure – followed by the vast majority of employers across the country – places responsibility for looking after babies, for the entire first year of their lives, firmly in the hands of mothers.

<http://www.fatherhoodinstitute.org/>

Abusers tend to exploit gender norms and relationship norms to abuse, for example, a male abuser could expect his female partner to wait on him hand and foot, even though she works too, or a female might expect her male partner to be the breadwinner and do all the DIY. In a trans relationship, abuse could happen by one partner telling the other they're not 'passing', ie, meeting the stereotype of what females and males are 'supposed' to look like. In this example, gender norms intersect with other discriminations, eg transphobia, and may stop a trans person seeking help. Intersecting issues happen in all sorts of relationships, eg, a female may experience misogyny from her partner, and then go on to experience misogyny from agencies when seeking help from them.

These are just a couple of examples about how gender stereotypes affect us all. If we don't notice stereotypes, it can lead to assumptions about people, and unconscious bias.

One of your male friends says that when girls say no, they often mean yes.



What does consent mean to you?

Could you design a poster that makes it very clear to girls and boys what consent is?

Consent is when two people agree on the same thing. But it's not just about romantic relationships. For example, if a person doesn't like to be touched, they may communicate this with you. By communicating this they are setting a boundary which needs to be respected. Saying 'no' means no, this communicates that the person doesn't want something to happen that would make them feel uncomfortable.

We all have the right to not want sex or any other kind of unwanted activity. We also have the right to change our mind at any time. Or to consent to doing one thing with someone but not another. If a person is intoxicated and is unable to communicate clearly, they can't consent.

Without consent, any kind of sexual activity is sexual violence. Many of the myths surrounding consent and sexual violence can make victims and survivors feel as though they are somehow to blame. It can also make them feel what happened to them wasn't a 'real' experience. If a person doesn't consent to sexual activity of any kind, then it is always sexual violence. And 100% of the blame lies with the perpetrator or perpetrators.



Your friend, Seth, keeps the passcodes to their boyfriend's phone, Gwion. You know that Seth tells Gwion not to speak to certain people, and have asked Gwion to come off some websites, such as Snapchat, etc. Seth also asks Gwion about time spent with other people after school. You know it's caused some arguments between them, and once Seth pushed Gwion so hard he fell over. Seth says he's just taking an interest and making sure Gwion's ok.



What do you think about this, is it ok? How do you think Gwion feels?

It's up to each individual to decide what is and isn't ok in our relationships. Gwion should be agreeing because he wants to, and not because he feels intimidated by Seth. Some of the behaviours described above could be called controlling, coercive behaviour. If you're concerned about controlling behaviour in your own relationships, a good test is to ask yourself, can I say 'no' without feeling afraid?



Your class was recently asked about career choices. Freddy wants to go into hair and beauty, and open their own salon one day, Emily wants to be a plasterer.



Do you think boys and girls can do these jobs?

Yes! Both boys and girls can do these jobs. Jobs shouldn't be based on gender but based on skills. Both Freddy and Emily can learn different skills to achieve their dreams.

Male and female experiences are important to bring to all industries. It's important that people have the freedom to choose a satisfying career that is not dependent on taking up what is considered a "gender appropriate" role.



Cae wears mascara to school, but he gets bullied on the way home



Should he stop wearing mascara?

How do you think Cae feels when he's bullied.

No Cae should not stop wearing mascara. He should continue to be himself and express this in whichever way he decides. Bullying can make anyone feel alone and isolated and has negative impacts on a person's mental health and wellbeing.



There's a new boy at school, he's recently come to this country as an asylum seeker from Syria.

The whole class has heard they were bombed out of their home in Syria, and had a really hazardous journey to reach this country, where they have relatives. You've noticed he's very jumpy and touchy, and often doesn't appear to be listening.

What do you think is going on for him?

What could you say?
Do you think there is one he can tell?

You have a friend who keeps playing truant. When they're in school, you've noticed they're not concentrating, and their grades are going down. Recently, you went to their house for tea, and there was a lot of shouting between your friend's parents. Your friend ignored it, and when you asked about it, they told you "this is nothing, sometimes it can turn violent". He then told you that when he plays truant, he goes home to see if his mum is ok.

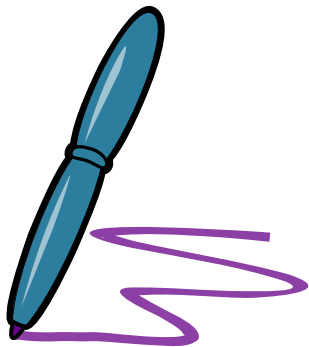
Your friend has told you that her boyfriend wants her to send him a nude. She says she's not keen but is worried he will split up with her.

What would you say?
You're both in school.

What would you do?

Your friend sends you a nude,

Words for males, words for females?

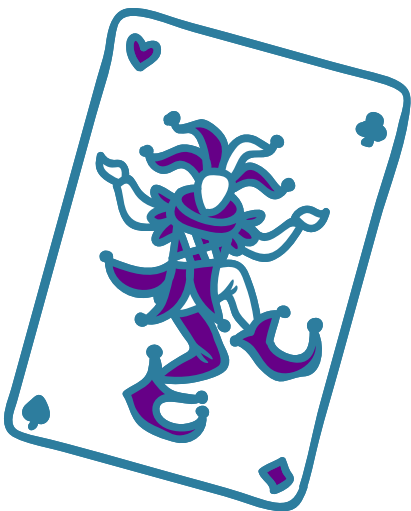


List some words for males and females – what do you notice about the words? Do you think any of the words seem worse than the others, and why.

Is it ok to use words like bird, babe, cow, nag, witch, bit of skirt, MILF? What do you notice the words do to that person? If we accept these sorts of words, does it open the door to other, worse language? Or what words do you use?

Is there a link between ‘banter’, ‘jokes’, inequality such as the gender pay gap, and violence against women? Link up attitudes, and beliefs with language, and sexual harassment and domestic abuse, could use a pyramid shape or a line to show the connection and progression, from language to harassment and assault, and make the point that violence and abuse doesn’t come from nowhere, beliefs underpin it.

Jokes



What do you think about jokes like...“Why did the woman cross the road? The question should be, what was she doing out of the kitchen?”

or “What two things make a perfect husband? A closed mouth and an open wallet.”

Discuss how the language above dehumanizes, sexualizes and stereotypes.

Discuss how sexist language can be harassing, degrading, feel hostile and intimidating.

What effect does this have on females, and what effect on males?

Who said it? (reframing men)



“I think ultimately feminism is thinking that men and women should be equal, right? People think that if you say ‘I’m a feminist,’ it means you think men should burn in hell and women should trample on their necks. No, you think women should be equal. That doesn’t feel like a crazy thing to me. I grew up with my mum and my sister — when you grow up around women, your female influence is just bigger. Of course men and women should be equal. I don’t want a lot of credit for being a feminist. It’s pretty simple. I think the ideals of feminism are pretty straightforward.”

(Harry Styles)

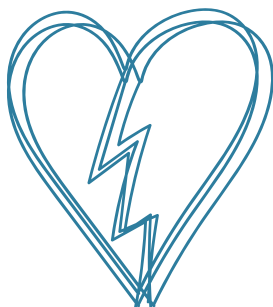


Brits, 2020, when accepting his award for best male, “To be the ‘best male’, I’ve got the most incredible females on my team,” he continued, before calling out all their names.

(Stormzy)

Images courtesy of Wikipedia

What is abuse?



Name the different forms. (physical, emotional, sexual, financial, controlling coercive behaviour, online, stalking)

Can you think of any examples of what this looks like in real life?

Who can you turn to for help and support.

Welsh Women's Aid

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Putting Women & Children First