



South Wales West Regional Committee

SWaWR (2)-03-06 (p.1)

Date: Friday 20 October 2006

Venue: Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea, Conference Room 1.

Title: Tackling Domestic Abuse: The Work Of The NSPCC To Prevent Domestic Abuse In Wales

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This paper gives a brief outline of the work relating to domestic abuse undertaken by the NSPCC in Wales. In addition, it seeks to identify the significant achievements and continuing challenges within Wales to address this important issue.

The extent of the problem

There were 27,000 domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in Wales in 2003.

The NSPCC Child Maltreatment Study in 2000 found that one in five child abuse cases dealt with by the NSPCC involves domestic abuse, and that in 90% of domestic abuse cases children are present in the same or adjacent room.

Direct Services provided by the NSPCC in Wales

The NSPCC South Wales Domestic Violence Prevention Service began work in 1996. It was the first service in Wales working systemically with children, their mothers and the perpetrators of domestic abuse. It remains the largest dedicated domestic violence service run by the NSPCC in the UK. Our work views the effective prevention of domestic abuse as being more likely when work is done to protect children, enable parents and challenge abuse systematically.

This service is currently working with 96 children, women and men. Last year we worked with 327 service users and provided consultation on 340 more.

The DVPS works in partnership with local authorities, Women's Aid and other organisations to provide services for children, women and men in 8 local authorities.

The NSPCC is also working in North Wales to pilot work with children and their mothers. This pilot is based on partnership with other agencies and is supported by staff from the South Wales Domestic Violence Partnership.

The NSPCC provides training and consultancy for professionals and agencies throughout Wales on effective work to prevent domestic abuse.

Significant Achievements

We have been pleased to participate in the development of the All-Wales Domestic Abuse Strategy and to continue to play a part in achieving the objectives set out in the strategy as a member of the Welsh Assembly Government Domestic Abuse Strategy Group.

In particular, the NSPCC would want to underline the importance of placing children clearly into the framework of domestic abuse. The definition of domestic abuse within the strategy clearly identifies children as significant victims of domestic abuse. In our view, this definition is the most comprehensive and useful one that exists within the UK and we are actively promoting the adoption of similar definitions throughout the UK whenever possible.

The NSPCC groupwork programmes for children and mothers have consistently been evaluated as successful by the participants and referrers.

The work with men has also been evaluated as successful with a 100% non-offending rate by men who have completed the programme.

Continuing Challenges

Service provision relating to domestic abuse remains patchy and limited by resource challenges. The integrated systemic approach has only been developed in specific areas within Wales.

Differential perspectives between criminal justice and child protection still remain.

Thresholds in relation to domestic abuse service provision remain high.

Crucially, the view that domestic abuse relates solely to adults abusing other adults remains a challenge. The majority of initiatives being developed do not recognise the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse and subsequently these needs are not universally addressed.