



Uned Atal Trais
Violence Prevention Unit

Preventing Violence through the Development of Active Bystander Approaches in Wales

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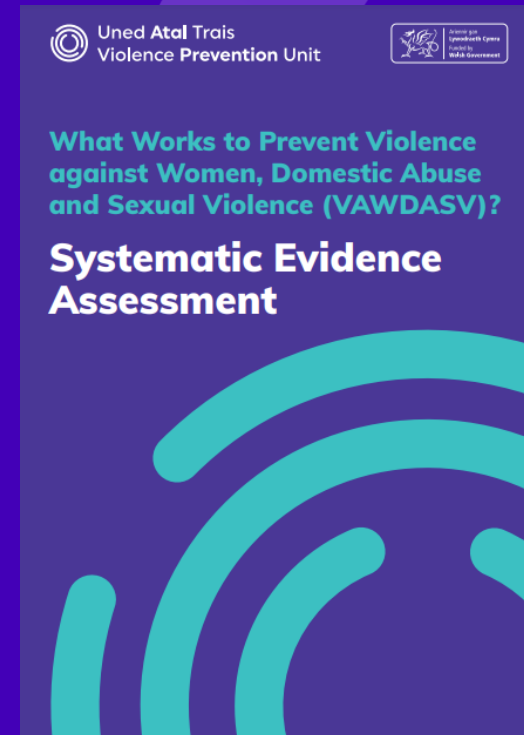
Wales Violence Prevention Unit

Introduction

1. **Why active bystanders?**
 2. **Bystander experiences of domestic abuse during COVID-19**
 3. **#SafeToSay**
 4. **Summary**
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VAWDASV is Prevalent, Serious, & Preventable

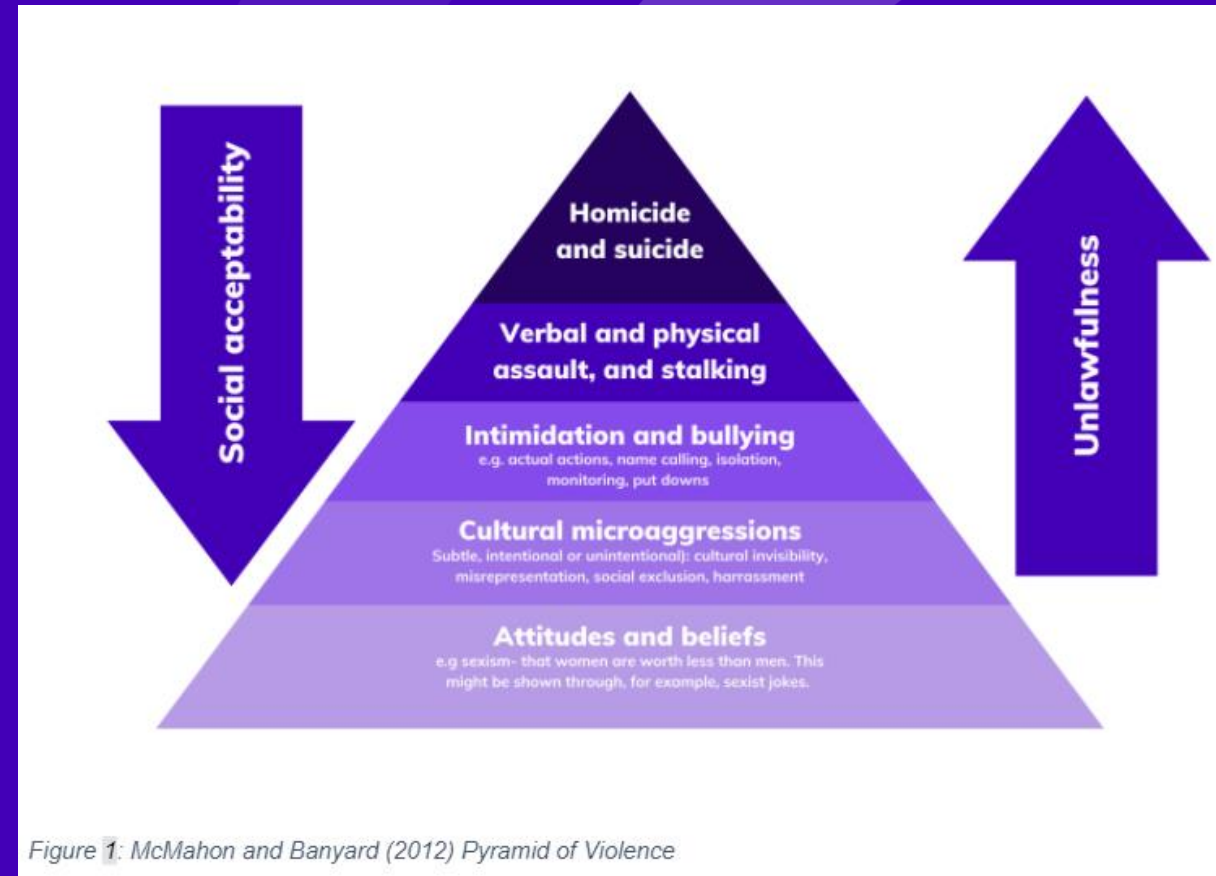
- VAWDASV is a major **public health problem**, a **criminal justice issue**, and a **violation of human rights**. Anyone can experience sexual violence and abuse. However, it is an issue that is strongly determined by **gender and intersected by age, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status and other factors**.
- **VAWDASV is highly prevalent:**
 - **97% of 18-24 year olds reported having experienced some form of harassment** (All Party Parliamentary Group for UN Women, 2021)
 - Estyn review of sexual harassment and abuse in schools in Wales found that sexual harassment and abuse is now so prevalent, that it is a **'normal' part of growing up**
- It is also preventable. We know some of **what works** and we are working to build the evidence base. Preventing sexual violence have a **wider positive impact for the economy and society**.



[Addis & Snowdon \(2021\)](#)
[What works to prevent VAWDASV? Systematic Evidence Assessment, Wales](#)
Violence Prevention Unit,
[Cardiff](#)

Pyramid of violence

- VAWDASV behaviours occur on a continuum, which includes micro-aggressions, through to unwanted sexual attention or harassment, rape and homicide.
- Figure 1 highlights how social norms including **attitudes and beliefs underpin violent behaviours and cultural micro-aggressions**, can escalate when left unchallenged.
- This continuum of abuse also represents the social acceptability of the behaviour.
- It also illustrates the prevalence of VAWDASV behaviours.



What is an Active Bystander?

- Bystanders are “witnesses to negative behaviour (an emergency, a crime, a rule violating behaviour) who, by their presence, have the opportunity to step in to provide help, contribute to the negative behaviour or encourage it in some way, or stand by and do nothing but observe” (Banyard, 2015, pp. 8)
- There are many factors that will influence why we decide to intervene or not. When we do decide to intervene, we are sending a clear message to the wrongdoer that their behaviour is socially unacceptable.

- The theory of change that influences active bystanders responses is:



1. Noticing the event



2. Recognising the situation as problematic



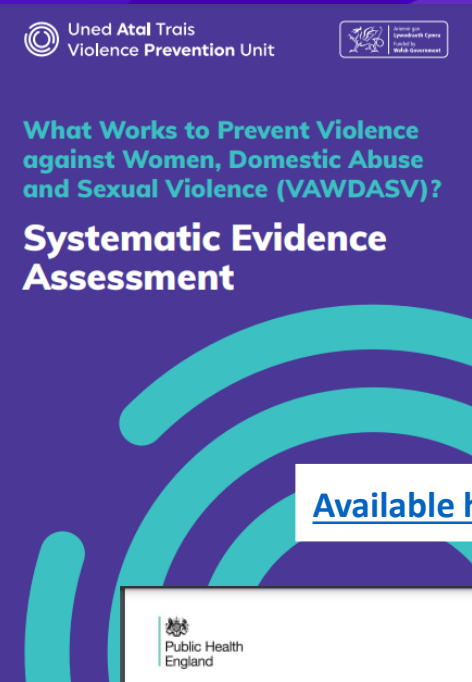
3. Feeling responsible to take action



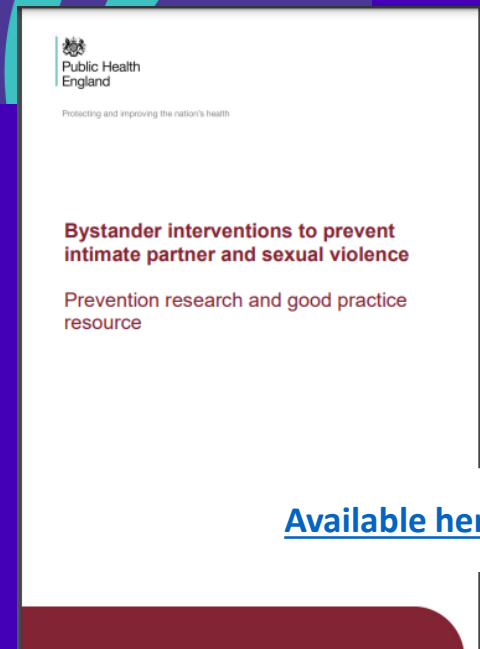
4. Possessing the right skills to take action

Active Bystander Interventions

- By their nature, bystander programmes are peer-led. They function through empowering community members to recognise and safely challenge harmful social norms and cultural micro-aggressions that underpin VAWDASV.
- Strong evidence base for bystander training programmes for the prevention of VAWDASV (and other forms of gender based violence) in schools, sports clubs and universities.
- Some limited evidence for stand-alone social marketing campaigns in universities. Promising evidence from the UK of the efficacy of social marketing campaigns when combined with bystander training programmes in universities and the night time economy.



[Available here](#)



[Available here](#)

Bystander experiences of domestic violence and abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic

Dr Alex Walker and **Lara Snowdon**
Public Health Wales

Research team:

Dr Alex Walker⁷, Lara Snowdon⁷, Dr Rachel Fenton², Emma Barton⁷, Bryony Parry⁷, Prof Catherine Donovan³ and Prof Mark Bellis⁴

¹Wales Violence Prevention Unit, ²University of Exeter, ³Durham University, and ⁴Bangor University

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Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Research Aims

Research questions:

- ① What are bystanders' experiences of DVA during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- ① What are the motivations and barriers for bystanders to DVA during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- ① What was the impact on bystanders and what support do they need?

Research aims:

- ① Improve knowledge of bystander opportunities and behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ① Inform policy and prevention strategies.
- ① Add to the evidence base for bystander programmes and how the prevention of DVA can be utilised during future pandemics.

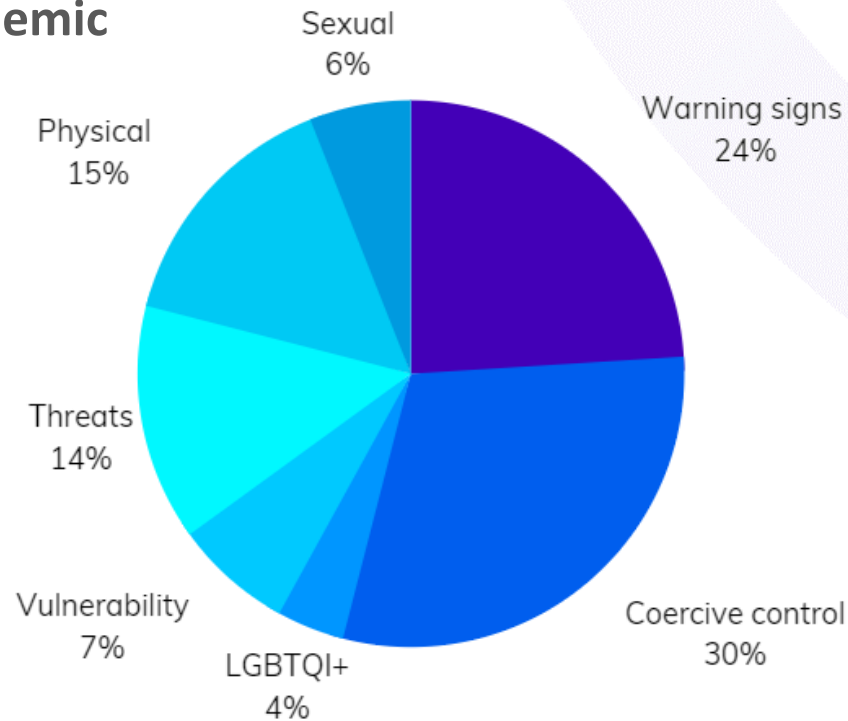
Methodology

- ⦿ A mixed methods pilot study using an online survey and semi-structured interviews with bystanders.
- ⦿ Participants had to be aged 18 or over, living or working in Wales, and had to have seen or become aware of domestic abuse since the pandemic began (March, 2020).
- ⦿ This study received NHS ethics approvals from HRA, HCRW and Public Health Wales (ref. 20/HCRW/0061).
- ⦿ Recruitment ran from 15th February 2021 to 8th March 2021, during a national lockdown in Wales.



Bystander Experiences

DVA Behaviours Witnessed by bystanders during the pandemic



44.8% indicated that they felt the pandemic had allowed them to become aware of the concerning behaviours.

164 out of 186 survey respondents took action in response to what they had become concerned about.



Bystander Experiences

Motivations

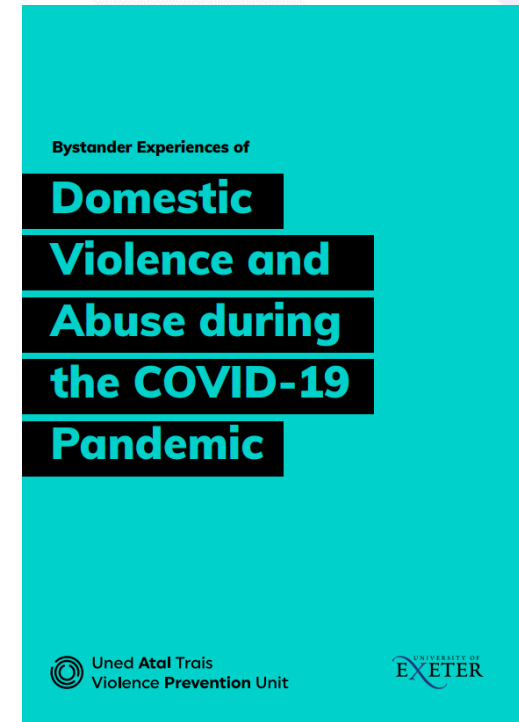
- ① Feeling responsible.
- ① Possessing the correct skills.
- ① Recognising the behaviour as problematic.
- ① Personal reasons.

Barriers

- ① Not recognising the behaviour as problematic.
- ① Not possessing the correct skills.

75% of respondents indicated that they thought having training on how to help in situations related to DVA would be useful.

91.9% of survey respondents indicated that the experience of witnessing domestic abuse had negatively impacted upon them.



[Available here](#)



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Preventing Sexual Violence In The Night Time Economy: Encouraging Active Bystanders Against Violence

#SafeToSay

Preventing Sexual Violence in the Night Time Economy

Empowering active bystanders against sexual harassment

<https://safetosay.wales/>



#SAFETOSAY
PHASE TWO
14 FEBRUARY – 26 MARCH

Stakeholder toolkit

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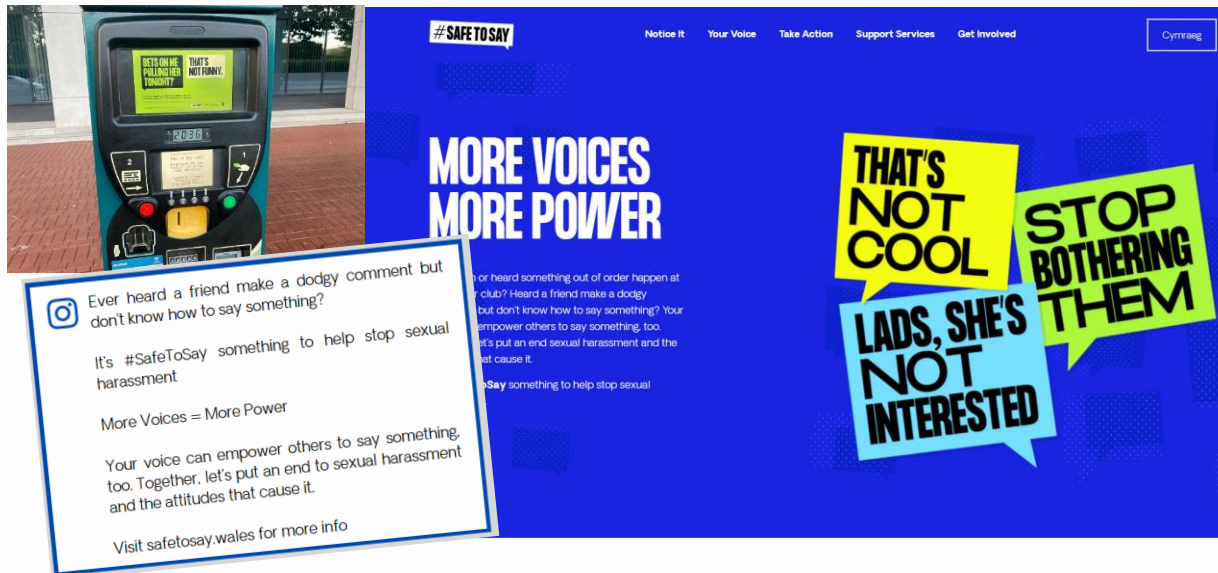
f We all have a role to play in ending sexual harassment. If you see it, say something. You can try to:

- Educate and inform:** If you witness your friends talking about someone in an inappropriate way, offer a different viewpoint.
- Conversate to deviate:** In some situations, saying nothing can be just as powerful as saying something. If your mate makes a sexist joke, don't laugh along.
- Safely expose it:** If you directly challenge your friend in front of the person they are harassing, remember to use a calm voice and neutral body language. When speaking, keep it short and clear.

!!REMEMBER: Avoid words or actions that could make it more dangerous for you or the person being targeted. If you see someone in immediate danger of physical or sexual violence, dial 999.

It's #SafeToSay something if you notice it.

Visit safetosay.wales for more info

#SAFE TO SAY

Notice It Your Voice Take Action Support Services Get Involved Cymraeg

MORE VOICES MORE POWER

THAT'S NOT COOL

LADS, SHE'S NOT INTERESTED

STOP BOTHERING THEM

Ever heard a friend make a dodgy comment but don't know how to say something?
It's #SafeToSay something to help stop sexual harassment

More Voices = More Power

Your voice can empower others to say something, too. Together, let's put an end to sexual harassment and the attitudes that cause it.

Visit safetosay.wales for more info



ACTIVE BYSTANDER TOOLKIT

Every day, people sexually harass others in our city. We can all help end sexual harassment and violence. **Let's take a stand safely and make a real difference.**

#SAFE TO SAY

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Violence Prevention Unit 

www.safetosay.wales

t Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature.

It can take different forms:

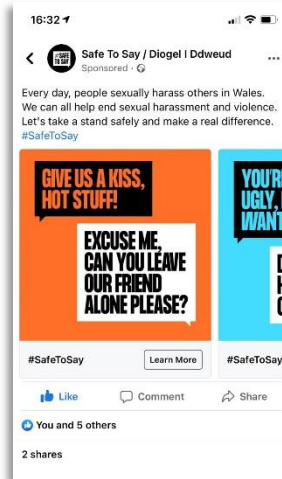
-  Visual
-  Verbal
-  Physical

It is always unacceptable.

It's #SafeToSay something if you see it.

Visit safetosay.wales for more info

#SafeToSay Phase One



#DIOGELIDDWEUD

Pecyn Cymorth i Wylwyr | Cymorth | Rhaglenni Hyfforddi i Wylwyr

English

A ALLAF HELPŲ? A OES RHYWUN Y GALLAF EICH GALW CHI?

DERE I YMLACIO GYDA NI OS HOFFET TI?

DYW E DDIM YN DDONIO!

ESGUSODWCH FI, BLE MAER PEIRIANT CODI ARIAN AGOSAF?

NA MET, SMO NA'N CŴL...

Mae'n ddiogel dweud bod y rhan fwyaf ohonon yn teimlo'n gyffrous i fod nôl gyda'n gilydd wrth i'w cyfyngiadau godi, ond nid oes esgus am aflonyddu rhywiol na' agweddau sy'n arwain ato.

PECYN CYMORTH I WYLWYR

SUPPORT

Live Free Free
If you're worried about sexual harassment or violence, please don't avoid it. You can help by speaking up. If you know or have concerns about someone's behaviour, let us know. We'll help you get support and advice. We'll also help you get support and advice.

Me
Make it the habit to get up for children and young people to the age of 25 in Wales. We want people you and help by giving you advice. We'll help you get support and advice. We'll also help you get support and advice.

BYSTANDER TRAINING PROGRAMMES

If you see someone being harassed or abused, you can help by speaking up. We'll help you get support and advice. We'll also help you get support and advice.



ACTIVE BYSTANDER TOOLKIT

Every day, people sexually harass others in our city. We can all help end sexual harassment and violence. Let's take a stand safely and make a real difference.

#SAFE TO SAY

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SHAPE UP

If you ignore this behaviour when the harasser is a friend, what message does this send?

If your mate is crossing the line, it's always worth checking in. If it doesn't feel possible to challenge them at the time, having a one-on-one conversation later can be just as important.

Try: naming the problem, the impact it's having, and what you think they could change.

In conversation, you can be an active bystander by not laughing along with harmful comments, and by sharing another perspective which shows that not everyone agrees.

WHY DOES HE TO SLAP HER BUM?

NAH MATE, THAT'S NOT COOL...

IT'S ON US

Think about your own words, ideas and actions. How do they make others feel?

Remember that the impact on others is more important than your intentions. If someone feels uncomfortable around you because of things you say or do, it's up to you to stop, think and change, even if you didn't mean to cause harm.

Be a role model!

Each of us will have different levels of confidence and comfort when it comes to challenging harassment, and it's important that we only help in ways that are safe for ourselves and everyone involved. We all have a role to play.

Here are some tips to help you be an active bystander:

SAFETY FIRST

Assess the scene. What's safe to intervene, or can you find support nearby to help?

Avoid words or actions that could make it more dangerous for the person being targeted.

If you see someone in immediate danger of physical or sexual violence, dial 999.

CHECK IN

It's easier and often safer to ignore the harasser and check in with the person they've targeted. If it's loud, you could try a thumbs up or making eye contact. Be neutral and friendly. You're showing that you're aware of the situation, not rushing in or taking over.

If they don't need help, then no harm done!

SUPPORTING OTHERS

When someone tells you they have experienced sexual harassment or gender-based violence, it means they trust you to believe and support them. Don't let them regret their decision to speak up. In 3 women have experienced abuse or violence in their lifetimes, so it's crucial that in our communities we give a helpful and non-blaming response to be part of the solution.

There is no normal or right way for someone to respond to experiencing sexual harassment, some people may be in shock or just want to leave the situation. Validate how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them and show support. Do not tell them what to do as they are the expert of their own experience.

Try: "Thank you for sharing that with me, I'm sorry that happened to you. That's not okay and I'll do what I can to help"

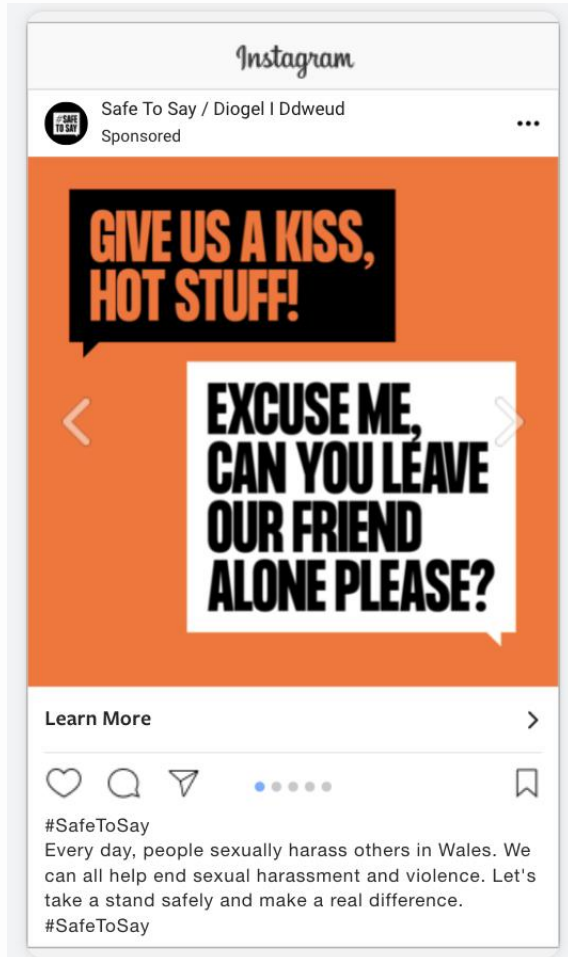
LET THEM KNOW ABOUT HELPFUL SERVICES

The Live Four Free Helpline is not only available for anyone who has experienced any form of gender-based violence including sexual harassment, but for people who are concerned about someone else. Call 24/7 for advice and support.

Webchat: gov.wales/live-four-free
Call: 0800 80 10 100
Text: 07860077333

If you suspect someone is in immediate danger of physical or sexual violence, please call 999.

#SafeToSay Phase One Evaluation



**PREVENTING SEXUAL
VIOLENCE IN THE NIGHT
TIME ECONOMY:
ENCOURAGING ACTIVE
BYSTANDERS AGAINST VIOLENCE**

Evaluation Report

[May 2022]

Authors

Dr Alex Walker¹, Emma R Barton¹, Bryony Parry¹ and Lara C Snowdon¹
Wales Violence Prevention Unit¹



**#SAFE
TO SAY**



[Available here](#)



#SafeToSay Phase Two



OI LUV, STOP IGNORING ME
SHOW US YOURRACK!
HAHA! SHALL WE GO OVER?
YEAH! GO ON, GRAB HER!
LADS, STOP.

#SAFE TO SAY



THAT'S
NOT
COOL



THAT'S
WRONG
STOP





DUDE
LEAVE
HER ALONE






Mae'n #DlogelDdwed rhywbeth er mwyn helpu i stopio affonyddu rhywiol. Gall eich llais rymuso pobl eraill. Sganiwch fi i gael gwybod sut.

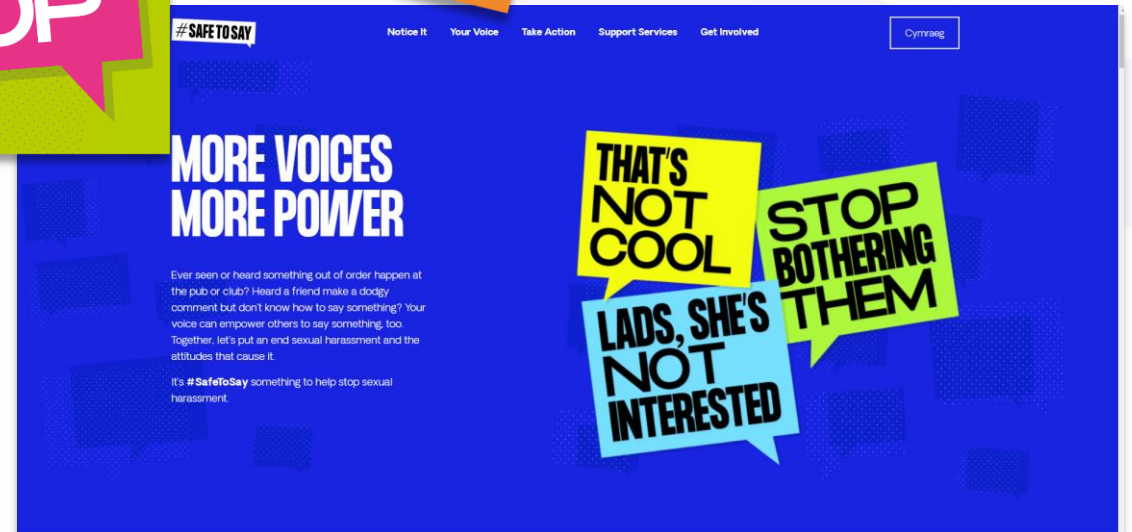
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Violence Prevention Unit  #DLOGEL DDWED





It's #SafeToSay something to help stop sexual harassment. Your voice can empower others. Scan me to find out how.

 Uned Atal Trais
Violence Prevention Unit  #SAFE TO SAY



#SAFE TO SAY

Notice It Your Voice Take Action Support Services Get Involved [Cymraeg](#)

**MORE VOICES
MORE POWER**

Ever seen or heard something out of order happen at the pub or club? Heard a friend make a dodgy comment but don't know how to say something? Your voice can empower others to say something, too. Together, let's put an end to sexual harassment and the attitudes that cause it.

It's #SafeToSay something to help stop sexual harassment.

THAT'S NOT COOL
STOP BOTHERING THEM
LADS, SHE'S NOT INTERESTED

#SafeToSay Phase Three?

Strictly Confidential

emotional logic 

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Sexual Harassment Prevention Personas

Source: Wales VPM Sexual Harassment Prevention Study 2022. 

- Building upon learning from evaluation(s)
- Integrating behavioural insights research into campaign development and refining messages for target audience
- Aligning with an active bystander training package
- Scale up and scoping opportunities with new target audiences and settings

Summary

- Development of the evidence base, research and evaluation into active bystander approaches.
- **Multi-faceted role of the VPU** through a public health approach: research, evaluation, development, piloting, evaluating, refining cycle ...
- Future – working with Welsh Government and other partners to develop this approach further and test in new settings and with different audiences.



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Diolch

Thank you

Stay in touch:

@walesvpu

violencepreventionwales.co.uk