



One in Five

**16 Days of Action Opposing Violence Against Women
25th November – 10th December 2011**

Women's Aid 'One in Five Women' Campaign



Women's Aid is excited to launch the International 16 Days of Action Opposing Violence against Women for 2011. We are happy to offer your organisation support and practical resources as you prepare for this year's campaign.

As you will be aware, many organisations across Ireland, including local support services, women's networks, students, and community groups, have participated in previous 16 Days Campaigns through a range of powerful and creative actions. We hope that the actions of those organisations can inspire and encourage those of you who are thinking about participating for the first time or indeed building on the success of previous years. As you will see in this newsletter, there are many ways in which your organisation can take part. We hope this newsletter will provide your organisation with information and ideas for this year's campaign and that together we can see campaign's the momentum build.

This year we are inviting you to take part in a nationwide public action, the **One in Five National Balloon Action**, at 11am on Thursday 24 November 2011 (more information inside). We hope that by joining us in staging the action in your local community, together we will show the power of local actions throughout the country, making a strong statement that violence against women is not acceptable.

The 16 Days are also an opportunity to throw a spotlight on the work your organisation is doing throughout the year in responding to domestic violence in your community. Take a look overleaf at the article on our **16 Days Campaign Blog** where we can post information and images you send us so that everyone else can see what you are doing.

Women's Aid will continue our annual **'One in Five Women' 16 Days Campaign theme** into its second year in 2011. We hope that by raising awareness of the enduring prevalence of domestic violence in our society, and promoting services available for those affected, that we can reach out to women living with domestic violence.

By being active in our communities during the 16 Days Campaign through events, exhibitions, public actions, debates and by engaging with the media and local elected representatives, we hope to push for positive change to make women safer.

Most importantly, a woman who is currently isolated and living with domestic violence might find the support she needs as a consequence of your campaign actions.

Margaret Martin Director, Women's Aid

THE INTERNATIONAL 16 DAYS OF ACTION IN BRIEF



The international 16 Days of Action runs from 25th November, UN Day Opposing Violence

against Women, to 10th December, Human Rights Day. The campaign spans these 16 Days in order to highlight the link between violence against women and human rights.

The 16 Days of Action started in 1991. Since then, over 3,400 organizations in approximately 164 countries have taken part. The 16 Days also includes other significant dates: International Human Rights Defenders' Day on 29th November and World Aids Day on 1st December.

The 16 Days of Action is a time when all around the world, communities join voices to call for changes in attitudes and policies within society

that will put an end to violence against women. Some overall goals of the 16 Days which might be helpful to kick off your own campaign planning are to:

- Increase women's safety
- Strengthen and highlight local work to tackle violence against women
- Recognise violence against women as a human rights issue
- Show solidarity among and with women around the world
- Lobby government to increase protection for women.

ONE IN FIVE NATIONAL BALLOON ACTION

Join us in 2011 as we unite to raise awareness of the chilling reality that One in Five women in Ireland experiences domestic violence.

On November 24th, the eve of UN Day Opposing Violence Against Women, Women's Aid will be staging a Balloon Release outside Dáil Éireann at 11:00 am. Join us at this time or at another time during the 16 Days Campaign, November 25th-December 10th.

Women's Aid will provide you with all the necessary materials: groups of five balloons, four black and a single white balloon, which visually represent the percentage of women who experience domestic violence in Ireland, will be posted to your organisation. The One in Five Logo appears on each white balloon.

The National Balloon Action also highlights the important work of groups in local communities across the country to address domestic violence, and the services available to women. A fundamental element of the 16 Days of Action is solidarity-solidarity with women living with domestic violence, as well as solidarity between all those working to address and end Violence against Women.

The first National Balloon Action in 2010, coordinated by Women's Aid, successfully brought together over 100 groups across Ireland to show solidarity with the One in Five Women in Ireland who have experienced domestic violence, as shown in this photo collage of balloon releases in 2010.

The balloons serve as an arresting visual symbol of how many women across Ireland are directly affected by domestic violence, which can be used during the campaign in a variety of ways:

- Invite other local groups or service providers who may be able to support women, or who your organisation wants to strengthen links with, to the balloon action
- Invite community members who can learn more about your services and projects
- If you are having a permanent installation, information stand, exhibit, display, or other awareness raising project, use the balloon action to launch the campaign and encourage people to attend
- Get a local youth group or transition year class involved in staging the balloon release
- Display the balloons at all events on your premises during the 16 Days of Action
- Make a video highlighting the campaign and your organisation's work and services
- Stage a photograph for the local media.



THE 16 DAYS ONLINE

Online Resources: www.womensaid.ie/campaigns/16days

The 16 Days of Action campaign page on the Women's Aid website provides resources to inform your own campaign actions, and links you with all the information and actions you will need to get your campaign going.



Get Informed

- Statistics and research on domestic violence in Ireland and internationally
- Briefing cards for you to use when working with the media or on other aspects of the campaign
- Women's Aid Research and Policy documents
- Centre for Women's Global Leadership 2011 Campaign Toolkit

Get Connected

- Link with Women's Aid on **Facebook** and **Twitter**
- Submit your event details to the Women's Aid blog. Email 16days@womensaid.ie
- Use the Women's Aid 16 Days Web Banner, One in Five Logo, or International 16 Days logo in your materials or on your site to promote the campaign
- Submit your event details to the International Calendar of Events

Get Active

- Download the new Women's Aid 16 Days Political Briefing, and information on contacting local representatives
- More information and photos on how to take part in the National Balloon Action
- Sign up to receive the 16 Facts for 16 Days Email Awareness Campaign
- Take part in the online Solidarity Balloon Release
- Support the UNIFEM Say NO to violence against women campaign.

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT: LOCAL ACTION IN IRELAND



Women's Aid recently interviewed a number of groups involved in the 16 Days of Action about how they used the campaign to highlight the issue of violence against women in their local areas. You will find the full series on the 16 Days Blog. Read below how Donegal Domestic Violence Service helped young people get creative with the campaign, and how the Roscommon Women's Network launched their art installation in conjunction with the National Balloon Action.

Donegal Domestic Violence Service

Women's Aid (WA): What makes the 16 Days of Action an important priority for you?

Donegal Domestic Violence Services (DDVS): It highlights awareness around the dynamics of domestic violence, especially to teenagers taking part in the art and poetry exhibition.

WA: Describe your campaign actions for the 16 Days of Action in 2010. What did you hope to achieve from your actions?

DDVS: We put on an annual art and poetry exhibition by local secondary schools and youth groups which are exhibited in the foyer of local council offices throughout the 16 Days, beginning with a launch by Marian Harkin MEP which received newspaper and radio coverage. We also placed an advertisement promoting our services daily on local radio over the 16 Days.

WA: What did you hope to achieve from your actions e.g. raise awareness in the local community/ target a specific group in the community?

DDVS: We aimed to involve local secondary schools, youth groups, and community groups. The exhibition was open to all, but we focus on prevention of domestic violence in relationships by meeting with young people to discuss healthy relationships, choices and consequences.

WA: Who was involved in your actions? Did you partner with any other groups or individuals?

DDVS: The exhibition involved teachers, students, youth workers and youth groups. Members of the public attended the campaign launch.

WA: Thinking back to your 2010 campaign, what would you highlight as successful outcomes of the actions your organisation took?

DDVS: The commitment of the teachers and students and the awareness of the young participants in the work presented. We aimed to challenge the perception that domestic violence is purely physical. We highlighted and discussed the emotional, financial, sexual, and verbal aspects of domestic violence. Some of the art and poetry reflected on this.

WA: What lessons did you learn for carrying out future 16 Days of Action events?

DDVS: If you are aiming to involve young people, it is important to contact school and groups as early as possible (before summer holidays) to ensure time for meetings and discussion.

WA: What impacts have you found your 16 Days campaign has had for your organisation, service users, and/or the community?

DDVS: On the back of the campaign, we had an increase in calls to the service both in direct helpline calls and referrals from statutory and voluntary agencies. We also received requests from various services and groups for training in the dynamics of domestic violence.

WA: Would you have any advice for other organisations getting involved in the 16 Days of Action in 2011?

DDVS: To involve their local community as much as possible and find a way that will bring awareness of domestic violence to as many as possible. The DDVS have found that participant teachers and youth group facilitators stay involved year to year, each time with a different group of young people, so more awareness is created again.

Roscommon Women's Network

WA: What makes the 16 Days of Action an important priority for your organisation?

RWN: So many of the women that use the Roscommon Womens Network (RWN) have been affected in some way by domestic violence that it seems fitting to acknowledge their strength in overcoming this abuse. The campaign gives these women a platform to raise awareness for others that might still be affected by domestic violence.

WA: Please describe your campaign actions for the 16 Days of Action in 2010.

RWN: One of the women using the RWN centre made a Wicker Woman, a lifesize woman that would represent strength and hope of women, made from twigs in nearby fields. This wicker woman became the focus of our campaign and was installed in a prominent position in the RWN centre. The wicker woman was brought outside (in the snow) after a short presentation on domestic violence. Each woman in attendance released a balloon to commemorate those women that died as a result of domestic violence. Artwork produced by a local women's art group was displayed at the RWN centre portraying domestic violence.

WA: Who was involved in your actions? Did you partner with any other organisations or individuals?

RWN: Castlerea Womens Group, Women using the RWN centre.

WA: Please describe a particular challenge of your campaign actions in 2010.

RWN: When working with vulnerable groups and groups of women, giving sufficient time to each one is of utmost importance and can at times be challenging.

WA: What impacts have you found your 16 Days campaign has had for your organisation, service users, and/or the community?

RWN: By focusing on domestic violence in this campaign, those affected by domestic violence have been encouraged to open up and avail of supports.

WA: Would you have any advice for other organisations getting involved in the 16 Days of Action in 2010?

RWN: It's a great campaign that we at RWN always get involved in. It is a great opportunity to get the women who use the centre involved and taking lead roles, especially those that have been affected by domestic violence.



16 Facts for 16 Days Email Campaign

Women's Aid compiles the latest national and international statistics, examples of women's stories, and messages of support for the campaign into 16 emails on different aspects of violence against women each day of the campaign. Sign up to receive these emails at www.womensaid.ie or email 16days@womensaid.ie and

- Forward the facts to members of your community, supporters, politicians, and media to raise awareness about violence against women
- Post the 16 Facts emails on your premises or in your window
- Take part in the new '16 Actions' feature of the 16 Facts.



Join the online Women's Aid Solidarity Balloon Release

One simple click to show your support for women facing abuse: You can visit the Women's Aid website at www.womensaid.ie to digitally release balloons online. Forward this online feature so everyone can take part in the campaign.

16 Days Blog:

www.womensaid.ie/16daysblog/

The 16 Days blog provides a forum to interact with other groups and highlight the work of your organisation nationally and in your community. There were nearly 7,000 visits to the Women's Aid blog and website during the 16 Days in 2010.

The blog will have up to date information on events taking place nationwide and it will feature accounts from event organisers throughout the country as well as messages of support from well known figures from Irish public life.

On the blog, the menu down the left hand side allows you to look at all entries and events by support services, or allows you to look at events in your own county or on a certain date, and search blog posts by other categories like guest posts and national events or news.

Actions and updates by groups like yours around the country are what make the 16 Days Blog. Make sure all of your work is featured on the blog, and that you get the most out of it:

- Send photos from your actions in 2010, including of the National Balloon Action to 16days@womensaid.ie

- Send us all information on your upcoming 2011 events

- So that you can share more in-depth coverage of your action with other groups and we can all learn from one another's experiences, fill out the 2010 16 Days Questionnaire www.womensaid.ie/newsevents/2011/07/04/

- Check the blog regularly to see what ideas and opportunities for 2011 might suit your organisation.

ABOUT WOMEN'S AID

Women's Aid is a leading national organisation that has been working to address the issue of domestic violence in Ireland for more than 35 years. We provide support and information to women and their children who are being physically, emotionally, sexually and financially abused in their own homes. We operate the National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900, 12 hours a day, 7 days a week and we support hundreds of women annually on a one to one basis.

Women's Aid refers women to local domestic violence support services and refuges throughout Ireland. Women's Aid is Specialist Support Agency on the issue of violence against women to the Local Community Development Programme and Family Resource Centres throughout Ireland.

WOMEN'S AID POLITICAL BRIEFING

Women's Aid continuously works to bring these issues to the attention of members of the Oireachtas and onto the political agenda. We will be briefing politicians on the 16 Days of Action and these issues on November 23rd. We will also keep you informed of any developments in the legislative review throughout the coming year.

UPDATE: LEGAL PROTECTION FOR WOMEN EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Protection extended: Changes to the Domestic Violence Act

Women's Aid has been campaigning for years to improve eligibility for orders under the Domestic Violence Act, 1996. Some of this work was highlighted in our Election Manifesto circulated earlier this year. Domestic Violence Orders are a valuable tool to protect women experiencing domestic violence. The value of these Orders is that they are forward-looking, seeking to protect the victim from further violence. They are also a civil matter and, therefore, for many women more accessible and less intimidating than criminal court proceedings.

We are therefore delighted that the recently enacted Civil Law Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2011 has significantly improved eligibility for domestic violence orders as follows:

- Parents with a child in common are now eligible to apply for Safety Orders without any cohabitation requirement
- Cohabiting partners are now eligible to apply for Safety Orders without any specific duration of cohabitation required
- Eligibility criteria for Domestic Violence Orders are now the same for same sex cohabitants as for their opposite sex counterparts.

Our only concern is that the wording of these amendments will require a woman who is applying for a domestic violence order as a cohabitant to prove she lived with the respondent

in an "intimate and committed relationship" in order to establish eligibility. **Please let us know if women accessing your services are facing difficulties because of this wording, or if you would like to learn more about these legislative changes.**

Looking ahead: Government commits to reform domestic violence legislation

As recommended by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, Women's Aid believes that domestic violence legislation should apply to "individuals who are or have been in an intimate relationship, including marital, non-marital, same sex and non-cohabiting relationships; individuals with family relationships to one another; and members of the same household".

The government has included in its Programme for Government a welcome commitment to introduce consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation and we are hopeful that the protection of parties in dating relationships will be included in this process.

Young women, who are more likely to be in a dating relationship without cohabitation and therefore ineligible for domestic violence orders, are also at risk from violence and abuse from their boyfriends.

In a national survey on domestic violence, almost 60% of those who had experienced severe abuse in intimate relationships first experienced it when they were under the age of 25. More chilling data from resolved homicide cases show that of the 39 women aged between 18 and 25 years who were killed since 1996, 53% were murdered by a boyfriend or former boyfriend.

The figures reflect a recent statement from Keir Starmer, the DPP in the UK, that young women between 16 and 19 are at the highest risk of sexual assault, stalking and domestic abuse, creating a "risk of a whole new generation of domestic violence."

Find out more about young women and domestic violence at www.womensaid.ie/campaigns/2in2u

Violence Against Women and Human Rights

Today, in all countries of the world, women and girls are subjected to many forms of human rights violations on the basis of their gender. It is estimated that one in three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Violence against women has been called the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world.

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, recognises that: "Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of their full advancement, and that violence against women is one of the crucial mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men."

Domestic violence is a violation of a woman's right to protection from inhumane treatment, to safety, to freedom, and all too often, to her right to life itself. It can affect every woman regardless of age, marital status, class or cultural background. Such a pervasive human rights violation creates a barrier to development for the whole community. Learn more about what international human rights bodies say about violence against women at www.womensaid.ie

Are you affected by domestic violence?

If you have been affected by any issues covered in this newsletter or know someone who has, you can call the Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline **1800 341 900** (10am-10pm) for support and information or visit www.womensaid.ie.