

# VAV Standards for Participation & 'Towards a Participatory Ethics' (Houghton 2015)



Adapting Mullender et al.'s (2002) three Cs and Ds to focus on children's agency; adding three E's for a more participatory ethics or more accurately - 'It's two sides of the same coin, safe and happy' (VAV)



Consent, Confidentiality, Child Protection:

Danger • Distress • Disclosure

Enjoyment • Empowerment • Emancipation

**Consent and information  
Confidentiality**

Young person is the central participant in the process and key decision-maker.  
Young person has control and choice over information sharing.  
Risks to anonymity requires involvement of non-abusing parent.

**Child [and adult] protection**

Young person is respected as an individual survivor, their own experiences and agency in their family's protection validated.

**Danger  
Distress  
Disclosure**

Young person's perceptions of risk are vital to assessment and safety planning, alongside others affected.  
Young people are capable of managing and minimising (inevitable) distress.  
Participation is an act of disclosure for young survivors, thereafter control/choice over personal stories needs maintained.

**Enjoyment  
Empowerment**

Fun while building trust is an essential component of participation and key to feeling able to speak out.  
An individual, equal voice (to each other and adults) and recognised status as experts and key decision-makers is crucial.

**Emancipation**

Real power within the political system that results in an impact on abused children's lives is a condition of involvement.



- Well-funded 2 yr pilot
- Integral to policy-making
- Impact -national budgets, priorities
- Competence of CYP –critical friendship with Cabinet
- Temporary??

- Absence of CYP in next GBV strategy Equally Safe
- Angry young adults!
- ESRC/Scottish Govt impact project – short term, ltd.
- Direct access to ES board & govt
- Redraft of strategy
- Embedding participation(CYPCS)

# Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill 2017

A **course of behaviour** abusive of a **partner or ex-partner (B)**.

'violent, threatening or intimidating' behaviour that is likely to cause physical **or psychological harm**.

2 or more occasions – course of conduct

Relevant effects include

- Making B dependent, or subordinate to, A
- Isolating B from friends, relatives, or other sources of support
- Controlling, regulating or monitoring B's day-to-day activities
- Depriving B of, or restricting B's freedom of action
- Frightening, humiliating, degrading or punishing B



## Challenged the absence of children

- **'That makes me feel like a non-person'** (Lola)
- **'Where are the children? It's only half the story'** (Declan)

# One Voice at a Time

Tackling Domestic Abuse Through the Voice of the Young



Our film and booklet are all about VAV's experience of domestic abuse and participating. We know that there is light at the end of the tunnel! Some of our stories may be upsetting to you (they could bring back memories or correspond with what's happening now) BUT by listening to us we hope you can see a brighter future around the corner.



<https://vimeo.com/46351903>

Event with national justice leads and Equally Safe Board

He was a control freak, we were all terrified, treading on eggshells, not allowed to speak (Raya)

If you don't understand that domestic abuse affects the whole family environment then you don't understand domestic abuse at all. (Lola)

[Part 1: You can get through it](#) (4 min 58 sec)

'Tell me this is not coercive control' (Lola/VAVIMPACT)

'Back to the drawing board' (Director for Justice, Scottish Govt)

# Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018

## VAV IMPACT evidence to Government then to the Scottish Parliament Criminal Justice Committee

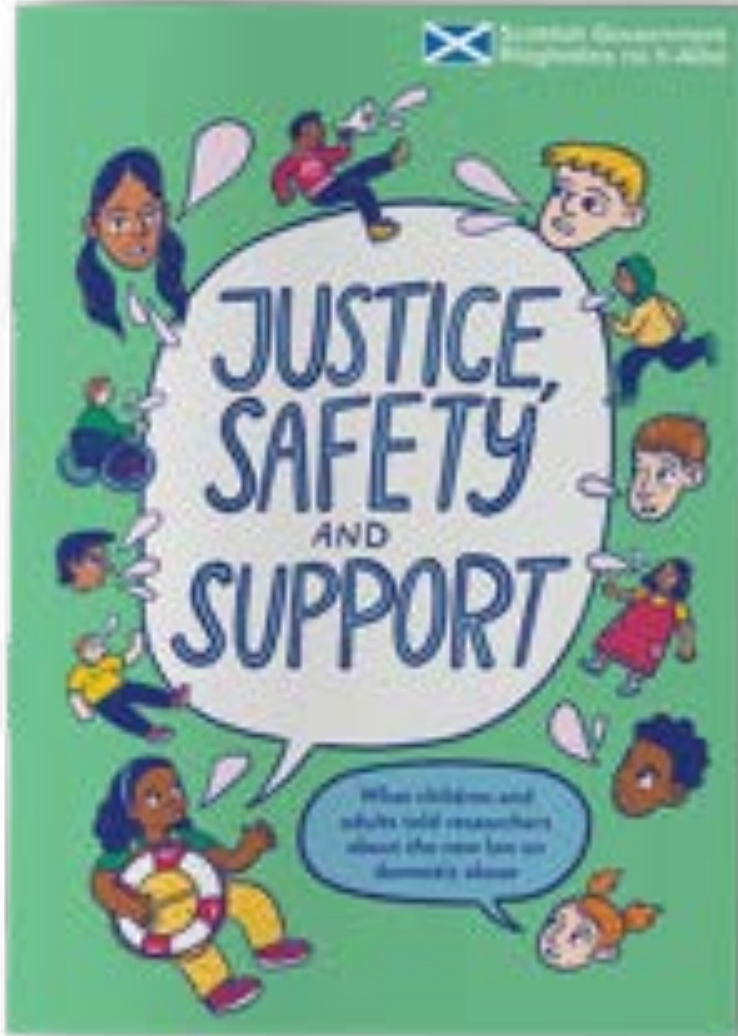
- ✓ The perpetrator uses the child as ammo [ammunition] that got lost before (Karen)
- ✓ It's a step towards is recognising the child does experience it, but see hear present? It doesn't matter where we are, we suffer the effects (Declan)
- ✓ It's got to recognise the climate of fear (Lola)
- We experience all of the abusive behaviour: dependence, isolation, monitoring, deprivation of liberty, restriction of freedom of action, fear, humiliation, degradation 'the treading on eggshells' (Raya) 'no freedom to be a kid' (Marc) 'no cuddling mum'
- Behaviours directed towards a kid recognised and that's not being dealt with? This isn't sorted.(Lola)
- if there is a child in that house **it IS a criminal act about that child...**(Karen)

## Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018: child aggravator (evidence single source)

A directs behaviour at a child; makes use of a child in directing behaviour at adult; a child sees, hears or is present during an incident

The course of behaviour or incident is likely to adversely affect a child – includes causing the child to suffer fear, alarm, distress

# Domestic Abuse Court Experiences: the perspectives of victims & witnesses in Scotland.



# EVERYDAY HEROES

125

Children and young people in engagement sessions

17

Organisations

439

Young survey participants

32

Local Authorities

71+

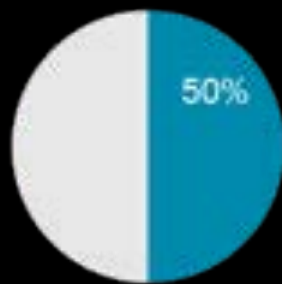
Young abuse survivors

5

Partners



Gender Based Violence



Domestic Abuse



Rape / Sexual Assault



Sexual Abuse



Forced Marriage





EVERYDAY HEROES



Barnardo's Scotland Cluaran Service, Falkirk  
LGBT Youth Scotland  
Glasgow Women's Aid  
Children 1<sup>st</sup>, Inverness and Borders, CEDAR.  
Rape Crisis Rosey project, Glasgow



ASSIST  
Shakti Women's Aid

Angus Women's Aid: Young Experts & Hear My voice groups  
Polmont Young Offenders Institute: 'Committed to Ending Abuse' project  
Perth & Kinross Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre



Young Saheliya  
Young Edinburgh Action  
93<sup>rd</sup> City of Edinburgh Brownies  
Deaf Express  
Rape Crisis Prevention groups:  
Perth & Kinross Youth Ambassadors;  
Lanarkshire STAMP project





## **The top priority for children and young people is urgent action to improve education**

Nurseries, schools, colleges and universities should be equal and safe places where:

1. There are no gender stereotypes, you're free to just be yourself
2. There's no such thing as 'girls subjects' and 'boys subjects', it's whatever they like best
3. Teachers are trained in gender equality and gender-based violence
4. Teachers are trained on how to talk to and help children and young people experiencing abuse and there's good support available
5. There are lessons on gender equality, relationships, domestic abuse, sex, consent and LGBT issues

**“Work with us to make our education better, with help from experts on these issues.”**



## Young survivors want action to improve services

1. Train education staff, police officers, health and social workers in how to best help and support children and young people who have experienced gender-based violence
2. Give children and young people clear information about gender-based violence services and how to get help from them. Make sure professionals know about these too
3. All services should have child and young person-friendly spaces that are safe, warm, comfortable and relaxed
4. More children and young people should get help from specialist support workers and advocacy workers who understand gender-based violence, who they trust and who can speak up for them when needed
5. Make sure children and young people's right to privacy is respected. Ask children and young people for their consent before sharing information about them

**“It’s important for us to be involved. You don’t know what survivors need until you ask them.”**