

APPENDIX 4

Child Rights Impact Assessment – VAWDASV Strategy 2023-28

Stage 1 CRIA

1. What is the strategy/policy/programme/service?

Regional violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) strategy (2023-2028)

The strategy sets out how statutory and third sector partners will shape and deliver responses to all forms of VAWDASV across the region over the next five years. Its key aims are:

- 1. Prepare** - improve strategic planning and commissioning of VAWDASV services through a more coordinated partnership approach across the region.
- 2. Pursue** – address perpetrators of VAWDASV by improving intelligence sharing across services and the use of legal powers to disrupt and convict.
- 3. Prevent** – pro-actively address negative attitudes and behaviours that have the potential to result in VAWDASV, recognising this is everybody’s business.
- 4. Protect** – improve the multi-agency response and support to all victims and their children regardless of risk levels and needs
- 5. Support** – ensure that innovative, flexible and evidence-based services are available to meet the needs of victims experiencing any form of VAWDASV.

2. What aspects will affect children and young people up to the age of 18?

Most aspects of the VAWDASV strategy has:

- **Direct impact on children and young people** where the strategy shapes responses for children and young people who are survivors of VAWDASV. This includes children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse, child survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation, child survivors of so-called honour-based abuse including female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- **Direct impact on children and young people** where the strategy shapes responses for children and young people who use harmful behaviours in their relationships with peers and family members (parents, carers, grandparents).
- **Indirect impact on children and young people** where the strategy shapes responses to adult survivors and perpetrators of abuse who have children (either living with them or removed from them).

The strategy aligns with national and international legislation and policy drivers including:

- The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention)
- The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) 2015 Act and associated 2022-26 Welsh Government VAWDASV Strategy
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- The Welsh Government’s Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

3. Who will it affect? Which groups of children and young people?

There is an anticipated positive impact on children and young people (including unborn children) whose rights for protection and support are centred in the strategy. This includes:

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Early years aged 0-5

The strategy recognises VAWDASV as Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and highlights the need for action to prevent ACEs from happening in the first place and to provide strength-based and trauma-informed responses to those who have already experienced adversity.

Children and young people under 18 (and where appropriate under 25) in education

- The strategy recognises the need for developmentally appropriate Relationship and Sexuality Education to change the attitudes that underpin harmful and abusive behaviours.
- The strategy makes a commitment to encourage more schools to embrace the whole school approach to VAWDASV.
- The strategy makes a commitment to work with universities and colleges to strengthen their response to students experiencing VAWDASV.

Young people who have a precarious engagement with education

- The strategy recognises that children and young people need community-based interventions that improve their understanding of healthy relationships.
- The strategy names and acknowledges the importance of programmes such as Sexual Health Outreach Service (SHOT), the Safer Wales Inclusive Service (SWIS) and the Safeguarding from Sexual Exploitation (SAFE) project.

Children and young people subject to child protection registration

- The strategy promotes the need to reframe safeguarding responses through the further embedding of the Safe and Together model. The model prioritises the child(ren)'s wellbeing by making perpetrators of abuse visible and holding them to account and partnering with the non-abusive parent as the protective factor in the child's life.
- The strategy makes a commitment to continue to ensure that children subject to child protection registration are given specialist support to recover from the abuse and trauma they have suffered.
- The strategy makes a commitment to strengthen our safeguarding response to honour-based abuse and female genital mutilation by developing clear pathways of support.

Child survivors

The strategy makes a commitment to ensure that children and young people – survivors of abuse – continue to have access to age-appropriate specialist support.

Young people under 25 socialising in public spaces

The strategy prioritises women and girls' safety in public spaces.

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Stage 2 CRIA		
4. Which UNCRC Articles are relevant to the strategy/policy/service/programme?		
Article 1 – Definition of a child		
Civil Rights and Freedoms		
Article	Definition	Strategy Section
Civil Rights and Freedoms		
<i>Article 2 – non-discrimination</i>	through the recognition of children’s intersectional needs	Prepare & Support
<i>Article 30 – children from minority or indigenous groups</i>		
<i>Article 12 – respect for the views of the child</i>	the strategy is developed with input from children and young people	Prepare
<i>Article 17 Access to information</i>	educational and campaigning material and information about service provision available and accessible to children and young people	Prevention & Support
Violence against children		
<i>Article 6 – life, survival and development</i>	The strategy integrates regional safeguarding responses to ensure that children are protected from violence, survive and thrive. It reports to the regional safeguarding board.	Protect & Support
<i>Article 19 Protection from Violence</i>	Perpetrators of abuse are held to account and provided with opportunities to change behaviours.	Pursue
<i>Article 34 – sexual exploitation</i> <i>Article 35 – abduction, sale and trafficking</i>	the strategy acknowledges children and young people’s vulnerability to exploitation and places expectations for multi-agency responses to safeguard children and young people	Protect
Disability, basic health and welfare		
<i>Article 15 – freedom of association</i>	through children’s groups and play activities delivered by specialist VAWDASV services	Support
<i>Article 18 – Responsibility of parents</i>	non- abusive parents are provided with physical and emotional safety so that they are able to raise their children. Interventions for those using harmful behaviours and perpetrate abuse focus on parents’ accountability and impact of their behaviour on their children.	Pursue & Support
<i>Article 23 – Children with Disabilities</i>	Support for children is delivered in a bespoke way acknowledging their unique difficulties relating to their disabilities and the relevant impact of VAWDASV on their lives. Intersectionality is acknowledged throughout the strategy.	Support & Prepare

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<i>Article 26 – Every child has the right to social and economic health</i>	Families and young people are supported to access appropriate housing and financial resources.	Support
<i>Article 27 – adequate standard of living</i>	Through a pathway of housing provision tailored around individuals' needs and advocacy support.	
<i>Article 39 – recovery from trauma</i>	a range of age-appropriate, child-led and trauma-informed services are provided to children and young people including access to therapeutic interventions.	Support
Education and development		
<i>Article 28 – right to education</i>	Safeguarding is at the heart of education delivery.	Prevention, Protect

5. What is the likely/actual impact? Is it Positive, Negative or Neutral?

If a negative impact is assessed for any area of rights or any group of children and young people, you must list and recommend options to modify the proposal or mitigate the impact.

There is a likely positive impact on children and young people and their rights. The strategy was developed with a vision of ensuring that people who live, work, study and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan – including children and young people – have the opportunity to live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.

The strategy will have an impact on all children and young people living in the region through the development of universal responses and interventions such as the relationships and sexuality education (RSE) curriculum and campaigns in universities and colleges.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 identifies children as being direct victims in their own right and this is reflected in the strategy. Specific aspects of the strategy are designed to target those at risk of impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences, most notably domestic abuse and child sexual abuse. In acknowledgement of the intersectional needs of minoritized groups, the strategy makes commitment to engaging with minoritized communities in order to be responsive to their needs, including upskilling the workforce.

6. How will the strategy/policy/service/programme deliver, support and promote children's rights?

We will work with our Child Friendly City colleagues to identify engagement opportunities to promote the strategy and its delivery programme. We will continue to use every opportunity to promote healthy and safe relationships and ensure that we safeguard children and young people at all times.

Stage 3 CRIA

7. How do you know? What is your evidence?

Data recording and analysis from service delivery and through contract/performance monitoring enables the understanding of the prevalence and nature of VAWDASV in the region and impact on children and young people. For example, we routinely collect data relating to safeguarding, including Operation Encompass referrals, that is specific to VAWDASV. Further insights are gained through consultation with children and young

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people ensuring that the voices of marginalised groups, including young people with protected characteristics are also included within this.

The data is monitored by the Regional VAWDASV Executive Group that identifies any concerns and gaps in the populations reached.

8. Have you sourced and included the views and experiences of children and young people?

Careful consideration as to the timing of any such engagement must be of paramount importance. Children and young people subject to VAWDASV are experiencing trauma and a range of emotional difficulties, often through being displaced from support networks. Capturing the lived experience of victims/survivors is identified as a priority in the strategy. Children and young people will be specifically targeted during the implementation of the strategy but this can only be undertaken with the full support of service providers.

9. How do you plan to review the strategy/policy/service/programme to ensure it does respect, protect and fulfil children's rights?

The strategy and the CRIA are living documents and will be subject of ongoing and regular scrutiny from partners, providers and survivors. We will update the document as new issues are identified and appropriate action is required.

Suggested list of contents for a published CRIA

- **Description of the strategy/policy/service or programme**
- **Scope of the CRIA, identifying the children and young people affected, and summarising the evidence base for the assessment, including results from stakeholder consultation**
- **What you know about children and young people's views and experiences that are relevant to the proposal**
- **A list of UNCRC rights relevant to the proposal**
- **Your assessment of the impact of the proposal on children's rights**
- **Outline of the monitoring and review process for the implementation of the strategy/policy or delivery of the service/programme**