



**Men's
Development
Network**



From Harm to Hope

Youth Interventions Against Domestic Abuse

AUGUST 2022

Work With Perpetrators European Network



WWP || EUROPEAN NETWORK

Annual Conference 2022

at Dublin City University, Ireland

Introduction

The WWP EN Annual Conference 2022 entitled: **“From Harm to Hope – Youth Interventions against Domestic Abuse,”** took place in Dublin City University, Ireland from 17th – 19th August. The Conference had 127 people in attendance from 26 different countries. It was hosted by two Irish Member Organisations of WWP EN: Men’s Development Network and MOVE Ireland. Key elements were also streamed online, with 69 people joining on Day 1 and 51 on Day 2.

Why Youth Interventions?

Adolescence and early adulthood are formative periods where young people develop strategies for dealing with disputes, both in early relationships and within the family. It is, therefore, a critical stage to address early abusive or violent behaviour. Indeed, child/adolescent violence towards parents can later become violence in intimate partnerships.

As most perpetrator programmes target adult men, there is often a lack of specialised interventions for working on intimate partner violence with a younger age group. This leads to young men being referred to adult programmes that often cannot adequately respond to their particular needs. Likewise, youth interventions may not be specialised in dealing with violence committed toward the parents.



Roisín Clancy Davies

The Conference

Reaching young people early and breaking the cycle of violence was the focus of the Conference, specifically looking at young people up to age 25. Together it addressed two topics: working with young men who are using violence in early relationships, and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

Through keynote speeches, panel discussions, workshops, and welcome opportunities to network, the Conference explored the critical issues facing anti-violence youth interventions and explored methods for engaging and retaining young people in programmes. It looked at ways to work with youth more effectively by connecting to their realities, including the critical role of social media, dating behaviour and sexualised violence, the influence of peers, etc.

The Conference was moderated by Roisín Clancy Davies from Men’s Development Network. Roisín facilitated a well-timed

Conference which ran in a smooth and open manner and where participants felt free to share their insights and experience regarding the topic.



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DAY 1

Words of Welcome and Opening Remarks

Beginning with the moderator's introduction, an overview of the Conference schedule and topics and an important focus on "housekeeping" matters, the Conference moved into the formal Words of Welcome and Opening Speeches.

WWP EN Executive Director Alessandra Pauncz, Men's Development Network CEO Seán Cooke, and Pádraig O'Donovan from Move Ireland Board of Directors, welcomed all participants, both in person and online, to the Conference. Each gave a sense of their individual organisation's work and support for the Conference but specifically regarding the topic of youth interventions against domestic abuse.

The organisers were delighted to have Kirsten Leube of the Gender Equality Unit, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission, and Carmel Donnelly, Regional Manager Irish Probation Service, formally open the Conference.

Kirsten Leube's speech informed us that the European Commission is proud to have collaborated with and supported WWP EN's work since its origins. WWP EN truly is a European endeavor with its 66 members spread across 33 European countries. Not only does its cross-border nature reflect the fundamental values of the European Union, but WWP EN contributes to the realisation of the Union's fundamental values, namely achieving gender equality and freedom from gender-based violence.

The European Commission recognises and acknowledges the high quality and enormous importance of the network's work. Therefore, WWP EN has been selected as one of the framework partners under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV).

The importance of working with persons perpetrating violence is also reflected in the Commission's proposal for a directive on combatting violence against women and domestic violence adopted on 8 March 2022. The proposal contains specific provisions on intervention programs. The Commission is looking forward to further exchanges with WWP EN to improve and inform its policymaking.



Alessandra Pauncz



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Carmel Donnelly placed the Conference within the Irish context, where the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, launched by Minister for Justice Helen McEntee in June 2022, has the goal and guiding mission of Zero Tolerance for Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. The second stage of a review of domestic violence intervention programmes in Ireland also commenced recently, commissioned by the Department of Justice and to be delivered by WWP EN research team.

Carmel emphasised the importance of inter-agency cooperation in the response to domestic violence and abuse and referred to the protocol shared by Probation, Men’s Development Network and Move Ireland, and the good cooperation between programmes and women’s services in Ireland along with other NGOs and statutory organisations.

Following these Institutional Greetings, there was an introduction to the GREVIO Recommendation on the Digital dimension of Violence against Women presented by Iris Luarasi (CLWG, Albania and President of GREVIO). Iris began by outlining the situation within the context of GREVIO:

“The growing accessibility of the internet and the wide use of ICTs has created enormous opportunities for many of us. It has helped us to connect, to get through the COVID19 pandemic.

But we all know there are downsides to the Internet, too. One of them is the growing volume of violence against women perpetrated online or through technology. We as GREVO could not ignore the fact that as the internet use grows, so does violence against women and girls. The increasing need to address all forms of online and tech facilitated violence against women became even stronger recently: as internet usage exponentially increased during lockdown, online and technology facilitated violence has spread under the shadow pandemic of violence against women. Unsolicited pornographic videos were displayed during online social events – we have heard of “zombombing” – and threats of sexualised violence and harmful sexist content increased. Similarly, in France, doxxing-related sexual abuse has multiplied with the production of new types of Snapchat or Telegram accounts posting young women’s – sometimes underage – nudes, revealing both their identity and contact information, directing mobs of sexual abusers at them, in their local community.”

Iris presented the GREVIO Recommendation on the Digital Dimension of Violence against Women, focusing on the psychological impact of such violence and the response under the 4 Pillars of the Istanbul Convention, with particular reference to the Prevention, Protection and Prosecution Pillars.



Men’s Development Network CEO Seán Cooke (top) and (above) Padraig O’Donovan, MOVE Ireland Board member



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Following Iris's presentation and before our first keynote speech, an interactive session took place (below) facilitated by Olivier Malcor of Parteciparte, Italy.



An important and well received aspect of this year's in-person Conference were the playful, yet very effective interactive sessions facilitated by Olivier. Participants valued the opportunity to get to know each other in a less formal way and to learn creative ways to engage with young men to maximise engagement and support better outcomes regarding behaviour change.



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Keynote Speech by Professor Carolina Øverlien, Stockholm University, Sweden

Violence and Abuse in Young People's Romantic Relationships – A contextualised understanding of the violence, its consequences and perpetration through the eyes of the victimised

With Q&A



This presentation drew on a Norwegian research project called 'Drawing the line', which investigated young people's and professionals' understandings of what is a 'good' sexual experience, unjust/unwanted sex, and sexual abuse in a romantic/intimate relationship. As part of the study, this project interviewed young people who perpetrated such abuse and those who were victimised. Carolina shared a contextualised understanding of the violence the young people have been subjected to and the social consequences of victimisation. She also presented a picture of the person who committed the abuse through the eyes of the victimised young person. She demonstrated how vital it is to consider the contextual, situational, and relational aspects to understand violence and abuse in young people's relationships in our efforts to understand the impact of violence and abuse. It is essential to broaden such research to include health, social and bodily impacts. Finally, Carolina demonstrated that it is crucial to consider how victimised young people relate to and attempt to



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understand their abusive partners, as it dramatically affects how they experience their ability to leave harmful relationships.

Carolina Øverlien is professor of social work at Stockholm University and research leader at the Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS). Professor Øverlien has conducted research on Youth Intimate Partner Violence (YIPV) for many years and is currently leading a three-year research project on sexual YIPV at NKVTS, Oslo. The project 'Drawing the Line' focuses on young perpetrators and victims as well as the justice system and schools' understanding and handling of the violence.

Panel Discussion – with Q&A – Intimate Partner Violence in Early Relationships

Panelists:

- Lena Berg (MÄN, Sweden)
- Sylvia Fein (German Society for Prevention and Intervention of Child Abuse and Neglect/DGfPI, Germany)
- Iris Luarasi (Counselling Line for Women & Girls/CLWG, Albania)
- Sabrina Meechem (SafeLives, UK)

The panellists were given three questions to guide their inputs and open conversations between panellists and the participants.



Guiding Questions:

- 1) What are the specific challenges of working with young people who act abusively as opposed to adults?
- 2) What is working well now in engaging young people who act abusively as opposed to adults?
- 3) In what direction does this work need to develop?

The Conference was privileged to have a panel with a great deal of experience in working with young people. Some of the key points from this panel discussion were the importance of recognising the



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difference between violence in the intimate relationships of older adults and of younger adults. The context can be quite different. Young people often have shorter relationships, may still be living at home, may still be at school, may be surrounded by adults in their daily lives, and may have no children (a key motivator for change in the case of many older adults). Therefore, professionals need to recognise these differences and that referral pathways may not be the same as for adults. What really works well is having safe spaces where young people can speak openly about their relationships and not be afraid that they will be shamed about their uncertainty and struggles. A holistic approach needs to be taken that includes family context, cultural context, and the presence of positive adults in the community. The continuity of support was emphasised: when a trusting relationship has been built by a professional, it is important that it not end abruptly. Finally it is important to balance accountability/responsibility with support.

Interactive Session — with Oliver Malcor (Parteciparte, Italy)

Challenges in the Work with Young Perpetrators – Jointly creating a Theatre Performance



Inviting volunteers from the delegates to role play a worker and a young client, Olivier facilitated the group in setting up various scenarios where critical issues regarding young perpetrators could be explored. All present contributed and learned from each other. A most energetic and creative process unfolded with very practical lessons learned.



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DAY 2

After a short review of Day 1 sessions & discussions, Roisín introduced our second keynote speaker.

Keynote by Justine Dodds, Respect UK:

Child/Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse – Causes and Considerations

CAPVA – Child/ Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse is a phenomenon whereby parents or carers become frightened of their children and can begin to modify their behaviour. In CAPVA, just like intimate partner abuse, the whole spectrum of abuse can be used. This includes physical, emotional, financial, and sexual abuse, as well as coercive control. The aetiology of CAPVA can be described via an ecological model with many individual, family, community, and societal factors intersecting. An examination of some of these causes was given in more detail: for example, how trauma in the formative years can activate a heightened stress response leading to increased reactivity, and how domestic abuse can impact a family to create unequal power dynamics, which are difficult to restore. A brief outline of the Respect Young People’s Programme as an example of an evidence-based intervention for addressing CAPVA rounded up the discussion.



Justine Dodds

Justine Dodds is Practice Development Lead for Respect, a national domestic abuse organisation in the United Kingdom. She has been working with CAPVA since 2016, when she began delivering the Respect Young People’s Programmes (RYPP) to young people and their families as part of a Youth Justice prevention team. Her current role at Respect involves training and supervising professionals to deliver the RYPP and training professionals in relevant associated professions to recognise and respond appropriately to CAPVA. She also develops



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resources to help practitioners assess, manage, and intervene in teenage relationship abuse. Before working with Respect, Justine was a qualified Probation Officer with management experience in Youth Justice and Domestic Abuse. Her passion for facilitating positive change in others began some 18 years ago when she first began delivering accredited programmes for the Probation Service in 2004.

Panel Discussion – with Q&A – Child/Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA)

Panellists:

- Hanne Kristin Hop (Alternative to Violence/ATV, Norway)
- Kris Decraemer (Interactie Academie, Belgium)
- Dr Declan Coogan (National University of Ireland)

Again, the panellists were given three questions to guide their inputs and open conversations between panellists and the participants.

Guiding Questions:

- 1) What is your perspective on understanding this phenomenon?
- 2) What works in changing attitudes/behaviours? Could you give a case example
- 3) Is there any learning from this work that could inform the work with (young) adults who act abusively?



There were some interesting conversations regarding the so-called phenomenon of CAPVA. There was a sense that often this took place in a home where domestic violence/abuse was already present, yet one panellist said that this was not always the case.

Again, the gendered nature of the phenomenon was looked at and how workers in this space need to be sensitive to the role gender plays in the socialisation of young men and women. Delegates heard the need to be conscious of the role played by early childhood trauma in child to parent violence and the impact of the absent parent who may not be in the home but may be involved in access meetings etc. It was acknowledged that a one-size-fits all approach was not appropriate. On a positive note, the panellists, along with the keynote speaker, were able to point to very clear and moving success stories and how some of the creative approaches being used in this area can be of relevance to work with older perpetrators.



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Workshops – Day 2

The second half of the first conference day was dedicated to workshops provided by WWP EN member organisations and external experts.

Workshop 1: Child-to-parent Violence – A Trauma-Informed Approach

Colette Farrugia Bennett, Pauline Camilleri and Ilona Deguara (Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Malta)

An excellent, well-prepared and well-presented workshop was facilitated by Colette, Pauline, and Ilona from the Foundation for Social Welfare Services in Malta.

They began by giving an outline of the services provided by the Foundation, including Victim Services, Perpetrator Support Services and Child to Parent Violence Service and looked at some potential developments of the work into the future.



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They then gave an overview of their systemic perspective regarding Adolescent to Parent Violence, including the use of genograms, the importance of a multi-agency approach, and looked at systemic interventions in response to Adolescent to Parent Violence.

Then the workshop explored specifically a trauma-informed approach, which is a strengths-based framework grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma. It emphasises physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone, and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. Delegates watched an excellent video that focused on the impact of Adverse Childhood experiences, explored the stress response, and the Cycle of Anger.

The workshop ended with a roleplay of a case study and two courageous volunteers, Jasmin and Keith, who took on the roles of worker and young male client. Both gave us an excellent example of the creation of a safe and trusting relationship.

Workshop 2: You have to fix my son!

Hanne Kristin Hop (Alternative to Violence, Norway)

Scenario: A desperate mother begs for help with her hopeless gaming-obsessed son, who destroys tables and game controllers when she unplugs the internet to get him to quiet down and listen. Alternative to Violence in Norway met mother and son separately and together. They worked on how they could understand each other better, cooperate in daily life and respectfully listen to each other. They met a quiet and vulnerable son and an overworked and traumatised mother. This workshop discussed why it became important to focus on Nutella and emptying the dishwasher to stop the violence. In discussing this case and family, participants became aware of possible underlying mechanisms of adolescent-to-parent violence and how to listen to both parent and adolescent perspectives to understand how to help stop the violence.

Workshop 3: How to talk with young men who use violence in relationships?

Lena Berg & Johan Nikula (MÄN, Sweden)

Violence in young people's close relationships has received increasing attention in recent years in Sweden, which is about time considering the amount of violence that occurs (Korkmaz 2021). Support for young victims is well established, while work with young perpetrators, especially young men, needs further development. Considering this, the organisation MÄN has been researching, further developing, and adapting existing interventions for violent adult men to meet the needs of young men. This workshop focused on the components that should be included in an intervention for young men who use violence. What are the specific things young men need to talk about? Why do we need to address them? Finally, how the intervention is received by the young men who have participated in the intervention was presented. The workshop comprised both presentation and interactive elements.



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Workshop 4: Introducing the Safe Trails Programme for Responding to Domestic Violence and Abuse in Finland

Terhi Aulaskoski, Ville Uurtio, Veli-Matti Toikka (Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, Finland)

In its recommendations to Finland, GREVIO has called for nationally consistent practices in working with perpetrators, focusing on protecting victims of violence (Article 16). Similarly, the authorities are urged to make every effort to ensure that uniform practices are widely adopted. The Safe Trails project (2020-2023) links this by promoting work with the perpetrator with an emphasis on victim safety. The rehabilitation programme being developed in the project aims to reduce and prevent intimate partner violence and recidivism. This workshop presented the training programme developed for violence work experts nationwide to implement the comprehensive rehabilitation programme designed in the project.



Following the workshops on Day 2, the WWP EN Annual General Meeting was held, and in the evening, a social dinner (funded by the Irish Department of Justice) and networking took place in the Banquet Hall at DCU, pictured.



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DAY 3

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS DAYS AND OVERVIEW OF DAY 3

Conference Moderator Roisín took some time to encourage the delegates to discuss in twos some aspect of the work that they were particularly proud of in this last year. She emphasised that this work is very challenging and without appreciating what we have achieved we will not have the energy to sustain ourselves into the future. She then reflected on the previous two days together and gave an overview of the final day.

NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR WWP EN MEMBERS

For the first time, the European Commission's Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) provides the opportunity to its framework partners to re-grant funds. For WWP EN, this means that it may be able to directly fund members for specific projects to improve their practice. Alessandra Pauncz, Executive Director WWP EN, gave the conference participants background information on this new development, the framework for re-granting and the opportunities it holds.

≡ *NETWORKING ON SHARED AREAS OF INTEREST/FOCUS GROUP & SESSION ON WWP EN IMPACT TOOLKIT.*

Workshops – Day 3

Workshop 5: 'Dating violence': how do we prevent and respond to young men and boys' violence against young women and girls

Natalia Batenkova (Unizon) & Zandra Kanakaris (1000 Möjligheter/1000 Opportunities)

Addressing men's violence against women has been widely recognised as a key prerequisite for building a gender-equal society free from violence. At the same time, violence in young people's intimate relationships, or so-called dating violence, has not always been adequately prioritised. During this workshop, attendees talked about the importance of preventing and responding to dating violence by sharing one of the Swedish best practices in the area, namely the work of Unizon's member organisation 1000 Möjligheter (1000 Opportunities) that runs the first national helpline in Sweden aimed at helping young people and preventing dating violence.



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Workshop 6: Setting self-determined goals with youth participants attending intervention programs for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) perpetrators

Manuel Roldán Pardo & Cristina Expósito Álvarez (Programa Contexto, Spain)

Setting participants' self-determined goals is one motivational strategy facilitators use to adjust interventions for IPV perpetrators to individuals' specific needs. The beginning of the workshop explained the Individualised Motivational Plan, a good practice implemented in Programa Contexto and based on motivational strategies. Role-playing (two facilitators and one participant) was based on real cases of young participants to reproduce a motivational interview and co-construct self-determined goals. Afterwards, theoretical and practical implications were discussed.

Workshop 7: Using Theatre to Work with Young Perpetrators

Olivier Malcor (Parteciparte, Italy)

In this workshop, participants created their own scenes to use with their perpetrator groups. This form of theatre did not require any specific theatrical skill. It uses the human capacity to be theatre, to perform sexism and question it. If facilitators are open to using theatre in their programme, it can become an integral component of their work. This workshop gave an impression of what using theatre with perpetrator programmes can look like.

Workshop 8: From good intentions to safe practice – How to ensure child protection in addressing gender-based violence

Sandra Jovanović Belotić & Dimitra Mintsidis (WWP EN)

The safety and well-being of children and teens are values WWP EN member organisations all work for. However, ensuring that interventions are safe for minors is a highly demanding task that requires more than good intentions. This is relevant for organisations working directly with youngsters, but also for organisations not in direct contact with them. When working with adult perpetrators and survivors, an impact of interventions on children is inevitable. More and more professionals, organisations, and funders are aware that practices and projects on gender-based violence (GBV) must be oriented toward child safety. Having a child protection policy that is in line with international standards, and integrating that into practice, may help ensure child safeguarding in delegates' everyday work. This workshop highlighted the complexity of keeping children safe in the GBV field and provide guidance to child safeguarding. Participants were given a clear understanding the core child protection structures and features that need to be in place in the organisation and the relevance to their work and project management cycle. The workshop focused on understanding organisational risks for children and teens and introduced practical tools for assessing activities from a child-safety perspective.



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CONFERENCE CLOSING: Thank yous, presents to host countries and moderator, goodbyes.



NOTE OF APPRECIATION

The Conference hosts would like to thank the staff of DCU for all their support in the preparation of the Conference and during the event itself. Also, the contribution of Aoife from Aidona Photography who really captured the Conference atmosphere and the high level of participation is worthy of acknowledgement. Also, thanks to Lucy and Dave from DCU who ensured the smooth streaming and recording of the event.



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