

White Ribbon Campaign 2020 Closing Ceremony Address

I just wanted to thank everyone for their hard work to achieve yet another positive White Ribbon Campaign across the Island of St Helena, raising awareness of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse comes in many guises including physical, emotional, social, financial, coercion and control. The perpetrators of domestic abuse often isolate their victims in order to continue to manipulate and control their victims, hence why this form of abuse is often hidden.

Victims are often embarrassed, ashamed, or feel guilty of the abuse that they are subjected to from partners, husbands, wives and family members who profess to love them.

Domestic abuse is one of the main referral reasons for Children's Services worldwide as the impact of witnesses of such frightening and unpredictable behaviours from trusted adults is lifelong.

Children who have been witness to domestic abuse fail to achieve the outcomes of their peers who have not been witness to such harm achieve.

Children who witness domestic abuse often become victims of abuse in later life or indeed go onto to become perpetrators of domestic abuse through learnt behaviours.

Children who have been witness to domestic abuse are at higher risk of exploitation, which includes sexual, criminal or modern day slavery.

Children who have been witness to domestic abuse are at higher risk of alcohol and drug misuse.

Children who have been witness to domestic abuse are at higher risk of involvement in criminality in adolescence and adulthood.

The lifelong impact of domestic abuse on victims, which include any child who has to grow up witnessing such frightening adult behaviour is tangible and impacting society both on St Helena and worldwide. Collectively we will continue to stand up against domestic abuse and encourage any victim to engage with support services here on St Helena. We have an Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate who is available to support confidentially any victim or survivor of domestic abuse. We have refuge provision for victims and their families who require a place of safety.

Again I want to thank you all, and especially the Committee and those who have spoken on the radio for this year's White Ribbon Campaign.

Tracy Poole-Nandy
Director of Children & Adults Social Care
25 November 2020