

National Assembly for Wales Cross Party Group on Violence Against Women and Children.

Date: 29 April 2013

Venue: Ty Hywel. Conference Room 21

Present: Jocelyn Davies AM (Chair), Julie Morgan AM, Professor Emma Renold (Cardiff University), Cathy Owens (Deryn / VAW Action Group), Hannah Wharf (Welsh Refuge Council), Shahien Taj (Henna Foundation), Craig Lawton (Researcher to Suzi Davies AM), Bernie Bowen-Thomas (Safer Wales), Simon Borja (Safer Wales), Liz Newton (Researcher to Peter Black AM), Colin Palfrey (Senior researcher to Lindsey Whittle AM), Naomi Williams (Positif Politics), Mike Wilkinson (New Pathways), Johanna Robinson (The Survivors Trust), Mwenya Chimba (BAWSO / VAW Action Group), Tina Reece (Welsh Women's Aid), Kate Carr (NSPCC), Angharad Lewis (Communications Officer to Jocelyn Davies AM), Rhayna Pritchard (Researcher to Jocelyn Davies AM). Jo Silver (CAADA).

1 Welcome

1.1 Welcome by Cathy Owens

2 Apologies

Aled Roberts AM, Simon Thomas AM, Phil Walker (The Survivors Trust), Naomi Brightmore (Port Talbot and Afan Women's Aid).

3 Election of Chair and Secretary.

3.1 Julie Morgan AM nominated Jocelyn Davies AM as Chair; this was agreed by the group.

4 Presentation from Professor Emma Renold, Cardiff University: *Boys and Girls Speak Out: a qualitative study of children's gender and sexual cultures (age10-12).*

4.1 Presentation on the aspect of coercion and control in young boyfriend-girlfriend cultures. Full report and policy recommendations can be found at:

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/boys-and-girls-speak-out_wda100425.html

4.2 Key recommendations: an age-appropriate, gender-sensitive, healthy relationships education needs to:

- begin in primary school;
- encompass a whole school approach;
- address the realities of children's own social worlds (i.e. 'experience near');
- be grounded in a gender equalities framework with an understanding of how gender norms directly impact upon practices of sexual harassment, and coercion and control.

4.3 During the question and answer session the following comments were made:

- Emma Renold – According to the qualitative research, some children didn't know how to deal with sexual harassment; there is a need for schools to address healthy relationships from a young age.

- There is no recognised outlet in schools where children can discuss domestic abuse and teachers do not receive training on this issue.
- Mike Wilkinson (New Pathways) and Emma Renold – Schools are generally welcoming to outside organisations who deal with sexual health / domestic abuse / healthy relationships etc. however some are not so welcoming. This highlights the need for statutory changes to the PSE curriculum.
- Shahien Taj (Henna Foundation) – The findings in Emma Renold’s research are echoed in the Muslim community also; religion is used as a tool for blackmail and taking money.

4.4 Jocelyn Davies AM proposed to write, as chair of the CPG, to Christine Chapman AM, Chair of the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee, requesting to submit Emma Renold’s research as evidence. This was agreed by the CPG.

5 **Debate: *The Gender Question.***

5.1 Simon Borja (Dyn Project Co-ordinator for Safer Wales) – Safer Wales strongly advocates specialist, proportionate gender informed approaches to working with victims of domestic and sexual violence. Violence against women can’t be dealt with in the same way as violence against men and there are complex differences between the two.

5.2 Simon Borja (Dyn Project co-ordinator for Safer Wales) would like to be included in the Bill advisory group to hit the gender debate head on.

5.3 It was agreed that Simon Borja (Safer Wales) and Mike Wilkinson (New Pathways) would liaise with Tina Reece (Welsh Women’s Aid) on information they have collated with regards to the gender question.

6 **Any other business.**

6.1 Rhayna Pritchard (researcher to Jocelyn Davies AM) will:

- share the research from Safer Wales, Welsh Women’s Aid and New Pathways with the CPG mailing list when appropriate;
- request that the research papers from Dyn, New Pathways and Welsh Women’s Aid, after being discussed with Tina Reece, be submitted to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee.

7 **Date of next meeting.**

7.1 It was agreed that the date of the next meeting should take place as soon as possible after June 9 2014.

CLOSE