

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Date:**  12 May 2021

**\*\*\*EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY 14 MAY 00:01 am\*\*\***

**Campaign Launched to Urge Anyone Experiencing**

**Domestic Abuse to Seek Help and Support**

A powerful new campaign is being launched by the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit to encourage anyone experiencing domestic abuse to access help and support.

Using animation to tell the stories of eight South Yorkshire residents, the campaign highlights the abuse some people experience from those that they love and trust.

Each two-minute animation takes the viewer on a journey of the survivor’s experiences, explaining how things started well, but then became abusive. They then go on to explain how by accessing support, these survivors are now living a happy life away from harm.

The campaign includes eight animations that cover domestic abuse stories of male to female abuse, female to male abuse, a gay man’s story of abuse from his family, an example of economic/financial abuse, an honour based abuse scenario that also features forced marriage, a young person’s story growing up in an abusive family and one animation explaining what domestic abuse is and how it can happen to anyone.

Graham Jones, Head of the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit said: “This campaign is really aimed at those people that are experiencing abuse in their homes from partners and family members. This can be both emotional abuse and physical abuse. We are urging them to ask for help.

“There are support services here in South Yorkshire that will support them out of the abuse in a way that works for them. The animations tell the real life stories of people living in South Yorkshire.”

A suite of posters, leaflets and marketing materials support the campaign. These will be issued digitally to community groups working within South Yorkshire. All of the support services listed are located in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.

Dr Alan Billings, South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner said: “The South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit have been set up to work to prevent violence. One of these preventative measures is to limit young people being exposed to domestic abuse in their homes.

“We want to reach people who are experiencing similar harm to that shown in the animations and help them access support to make their lives better. The police are here to listen. When a person is ready to leave their abuser, the police can help in many ways. Police officers have the powers to prosecute, stop an offender contacting the victim and can also provide help such as forensic marking that can place a perpetrator at a location or prove that they have been in close contact.

“I would like to thank all of the brave people that have put their stories forward to help us produce this campaign.”

The stories are the real life experiences of people living in South Yorkshire. South Yorkshire volunteers have narrated the animations. One woman from Doncaster has narrated her own story.

Gwen said: “I really wanted to get involved in this campaign to highlight to others that they are not alone. I suffered for 12 years before I sought help and it took another six years to finally leave the abuse behind. Nobody should have to live a life of fear and harm. If anyone is watching these stories and can relate to what is happening, please ask for help and seek support. It really will change your life.”

The campaign is a collaborative piece of work with the four local authorities and South Yorkshire Police. The animations, posters and leaflets have been produced with the direct help of the domestic abuse leads from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Sheffield City Council and support from South Yorkshire Police. The campaign materials will be available for all of the partners and community groups to use and share.

All of the animations can be found on the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit website and the animations will be featuring on the social media accounts throughout the coming months - <https://southyorkshireviolencereductionunit.com/>

**Ends**

**For more information please contact:**

The media are invited to interview Graham Jones, Head of the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit and Dr Alan Billings, South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner about the campaign between 12 noon and 1pm on Friday, 14 May.

You can view the animations below on unlisted links.

1. A story of male on female domestic abuse - <https://youtu.be/mvwLZTIkYR0>
2. A story of financial abuse - <https://youtu.be/c9CeX2Czwho>
3. Types of domestic abuse - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2d3lc5_Mxr4>
4. A story of female on male domestic abuse - <https://youtu.be/zIL24bwgZ5o>
5. A story of abuse from a gay man - <https://youtu.be/Hxzm2j-45U8>
6. A story of honour based violence - <https://youtu.be/N4EKhBpxw0s>
7. A young person’s story of abuse – https://youtu.be/-wr6HzjCBvM
8. A story of male on female domestic abuse - <https://youtu.be/vdZpx2Y8nGI>

The interviews will be available on the Zoom digital platform. Please contact Samantha Mawson to book in a time slot.

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