

Women's Aid

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Section 1 Welcome

Chair's Welcome

It is a great honour to welcome you to the 2024 Annual Report of Women's Aid. This has been a momentous and deeply meaningful year for our organisation. As we marked our 50th anniversary, we also responded to the growing and urgent needs of women and children across Ireland who are subjected to domestic violence and abuse.

Since 1974, Women's Aid has been at the forefront of efforts to end violence against women in Ireland. From our beginnings as a small, pioneering service, we have grown into a national organisation that combines direct support with advocacy, research, training, and public awareness. This year, we celebrated our legacy while also looking ahead, launching a new five-year strategy to guide our work from 2025 to 2029.

The figures in this report speak volumes. In 2024, we responded to a record number of contacts across our services. Each disclosure represents the lived experience of an adult or child survivor, targeted by someone who should be loving and respectful to their partner, to their child. These numbers are sobering. They reflect just a percentage of the scale of the crisis we face, but also the trust so many women place in us and the vital role we play in their journey to safety and recovery.

In Ireland, one in three women will be subjected to psychological, physical and/or sexual abuse by a partner or ex-partner. Domestic abuse is not just something that happens behind closed doors. It infiltrates every level of society — our communities, our schools and colleges, our workplaces. No one should ever feel afraid of, or less than, the person they are with. Every day women are being hurt and abused by the person who is supposed to love them. The person closest to them. Being subjected to coercive control can feel like a plant that has been denied all food, water and light, which is trapped in cracking soil unable to flourish or grow. The impact of intimate partner abuse cannot, and should not, be minimised or excused. It can have a devastating effect on women's emotional and physical well-being and in the most extreme cases, it can be fatal.

However, women manage to navigate coercion, control, trauma, grief, and pain to nonetheless achieve extraordinary things. That is worth reflecting on. Imagine what women could achieve in all walks of life if there was no male violence. If there was true equality in pay, political representation and in distribution of care responsibilities.



nany sources is critical to our knowledge and understanding of the issue.

Having data from many sources is critical to our knowledge and understanding of the issue. We will continue to learn from victim-survivors by always listening to their needs and developing responses that reflect the diversity of their experiences. We value opportunities to work collaboratively and cooperatively with peer organisations, survivors and others to identify and transform systems of power and privilege that oppress and marginalise.

I am immensely proud of our employees, volunteers, and Board of Trustees. Their dedication and professionalism are the foundation of everything we do. I also want to thank our partners in the statutory, community, and voluntary sectors, whose collaboration is essential to our shared mission. I extend my deepest thanks to our funders during 2024, Tusla, Pobal, and the newly established agency Cuan, the Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Agency, as well as to our many generous donors. Your support enables us to deliver vital services and push for the systemic change that is so urgently needed.

Women's Aid is committed to the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability. We are proud to be fully compliant with the Charities Governance Code and to hold the Triple Lock Standard from Charities Institute Ireland. As a Board, we work closely with the executive team to ensure that our organisation is effective, efficient, and survivor-centred.

As we look to the future, we do so with both hope and determination. Our new strategy sets out a bold vision for an equal Ireland with zero tolerance of domestic abuse. Achieving this vision will require sustained effort, deep collaboration, and a willingness to confront the root causes of gender-based violence, including inequality, misogyny, and harmful social norms.

We know we cannot do this alone but we also know that change is possible. Over the past 50 years, we have helped transform public understanding, influence legislation, and build a national framework of support. There is still much to do, but we are building on a strong foundation and moving forward with purpose.

To everyone who has walked with us on this journey, thank you. We invite you to continue walking with us as we work to create a safer, more equal Ireland for all.

Warm regards,

Ailbhe Smyth
Chairperson, Wome

Chairperson, Women's Aid June 2025



CEO's Introduction

As we reflect on 2024, a year of profound significance and continued challenge, I am filled with deep gratitude. Gratitude for the strength of the women and children we support, and for the unwavering commitment of our employees, volunteers, Board and partners and supporters who make our work possible.



This year marked a historic milestone: the 50th anniversary of Women's Aid. For five decades, we have stood with women subjected to domestic abuse; listening, believing, supporting, and empowering them to reclaim their lives. This legacy, built by generations of survivors and advocates, inspires us as we look to the future with renewed purpose.

In 2024, our services were contacted 32,144 times. The 24-hour National Freephone Helpline alone received 24,396 contacts, a 17% increase on the previous year. We heard 41,432 disclosures of abuse against women and 5,333 disclosures of abuse against children. These numbers reflect both the scale of the crisis and the increasing visibility of domestic abuse in public discourse.

Behind each number is a woman, a child, a family navigating fear and trauma. Our frontline teams, on the phones, in the courts, in maternity hospitals, and in communities, continue to provide life-saving, life-changing support. In 2024, we supported over 1,800 women through our regional face-to-face services, with 1,454 accessing our services for the first time.

We continued to lead with evidence. In 2024, we launched several key research reports that are already shaping national conversations and policy. These included a study on the role of pornography in violence against women and girls, a report on the experiences of disabled women subjected to intimate partner abuse, and an independent evaluation of our Maternity Project.

Our High-Risk Support Project expanded into the Southern Region, working with An Garda Síochána and local services to protect women at high risk of serious harm. Our Maternity Outreach team, now permanently funded, supported nearly 200 pregnant and post-partum women, a time when abuse can be especially dangerous.

We also invested in prevention and education. Our Too Into You project reached over 1.4 million people online, empowering young people to recognise and resist intimate relationship abuse. The campaign's success, including award-winning engagement and integration into school curricula, shows the power of early intervention.



Throughout the year, we remained a trusted voice in the national conversation on domestic abuse. Our media presence, public campaigns, and policy submissions helped ensure that the realities faced by women and children were not only heard but acted upon. We worked closely with government and civil society to influence the implementation of the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and to support the newly established agency, Cuan.

We also provided direct, practical support through our Internal and External Emergency Funds, distributing over €390,000 to women and children in urgent need. These funds helped cover essentials such as food, security measures, legal fees, and emergency accommodation, offering not just relief, but dignity and hope.

As we launched our new Strategy 2025–2029, we did so with clarity, ambition, and a deep sense of responsibility. This strategy builds on our legacy and sets out a bold vision: an Ireland with zero tolerance for domestic abuse. It is a vision rooted in equality, justice, and the belief that every woman has the right to live free from fear.

We know the path ahead is not easy. The housing crisis, delays in the legal system, and the rising cost of living continue to create barriers for women seeking safety and justice. There are global challenges and attacks on hard won gains towards a more equal and inclusive society. But we also see successes and steps even in the face of great adversity. We see it in the courage and resilience of survivors, in the dedication of our teams, and in the solidarity of our supporters.

As we look ahead, we are committed to deepening our impact, strengthening partnerships, and amplifying the voices of those we serve. We will continue to innovate, to advocate, and to lead, guided by the values that have shaped us for 50 years: courage, cooperation, inclusivity, empowerment, equality, and change.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support makes everything we do possible. Together, we are building a safer, more equal Ireland; one where every woman and child can live free from violence and abuse.

Sarah Benson

Chief Executive Officer, Women's Aid June 2025



Laura's* Story

"I was so frightened when I found out I was pregnant. I knew he would blame me for the pregnancy. We had 3 other kids, and he didn't want me to work. This meant that even though he had a good job, I had no access to my own money, except what he gave me, when he felt like it. He was always angry at me and the kids. He had hit me in the past and I knew he could do it again - or something worse. I felt so ashamed and just completely trapped. He blamed me for everything. I had never spoken to anyone about what was going on, but I knew it wasn't right.

"It wasn't until I was directly asked about domestic abuse at my hospital appointment that I realised that I could tell somebody. I was referred to Women's Aid by the Medical Social Worker and was contacted that day by their outreach worker. She immediately put me at ease, didn't judge me and helped me look at what my options were. So much has happened over the last few months.

"The outreach worker supported me to apply for a domestic violence order and accompanied me to court. She helped me to get a solicitor. I got the order, but my husband kept breaching it, we were still living in fear. She encouraged me to call the Gardai and even came to the station with me to make a statement.

"It was really hard because I wasn't able to get legal aid - he earned too much money. Women's Aid helped me with the cost of a solicitor. I was also sent vouchers by my outreach worker to buy food and essential supplies for the kids and the new baby.

"My outreach and medical social workers supported me throughout my pregnancy, which was a really hard time, emotionally and physically. They helped me understand that it wasn't my fault, and I had options.

"Despite everything, I had a healthy baby boy. My outreach worker continued to support me in the months after until they could link me in with a local counsellor. They even helped me pay towards the counselling costs. Although, I am still dealing with the ongoing abuse from my husband, I feel stronger, and I know the shame is not mine."

*Name and some details changed to protect identity and safety.



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Section 2 About Women's Aid

About Women's Aid

Our Vision

Women's Aid's vision is an equal Ireland, with zero tolerance of domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women.

We do this by:

Advocating, influencing, training and campaigning for effective responses to prevent and reduce the scale and impacts of domestic violence and abuse on women and children in Ireland

and

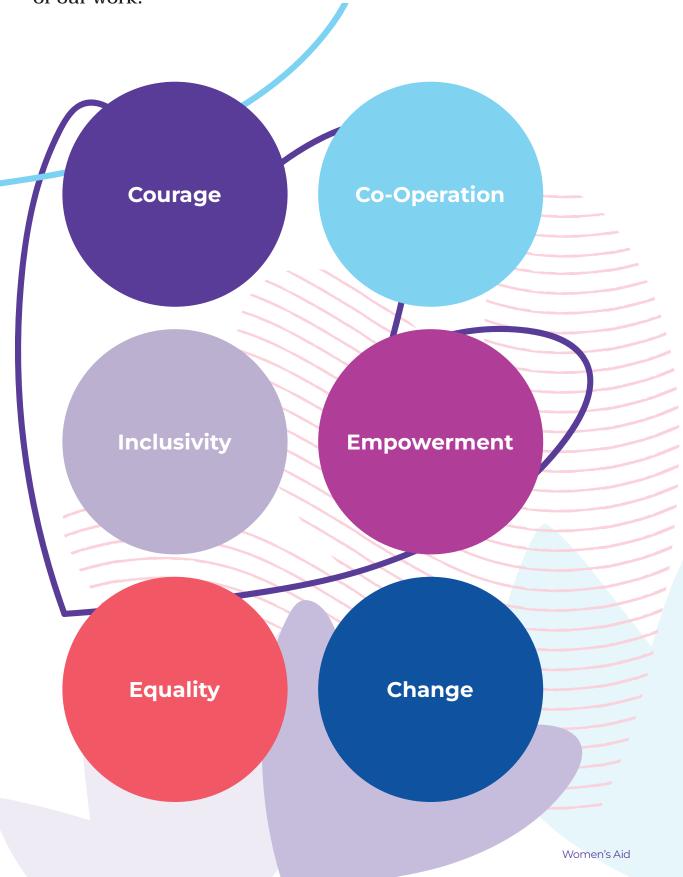
Providing high quality, specialised, integrated support services.

Our Purpose

Women's Aid is a national feminist organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse including coercive control since 1974.

Values

Our organisational values of **Courage**, **Co-Operation**, **Inclusivity**, **Empowerment**, **Equality** and **Change** express the ideals and beliefs that sustain and guide us in every aspect of our work.



To achieve our vision of zero tolerance of domestic violence and abuse and all forms of violence against women, Women's Aid:

- · Acts with **courage** to boldly challenge patriarchal systems, structures and attitudes in all aspects of our work.
- Works in **co-operation** to share knowledge, skills and expertise to achieve shared goals and improve responses to domestic violence and abuse.
- · Strives to embed **inclusivity**, diversity and accessibility across all our work.
- Supports the **empowerment** of women to exercise agency on their own behalf as a right, whatever their circumstances.
- Believes that achieving **equality** in status, rights and opportunities for all women is essential to address the causes and consequences of domestic violence and abuse.
- · Works to achieve positive **change** for everyone through a combination of individual, community-based and social action.



"I finally found the strength to leave in January this year and while it was one of the most difficult things I've ever had to do, I couldn't have done it without the comfort and support from the lovely lady who answered my email and assured me that I didn't have to tolerate his behaviour and that I would be okay. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all at Women's Aid for your tireless efforts to help women in horrendous situations." - Alana



Women's Aid Theory of Change

Enablers

- · Creating awareness
- · Educating audiences
- · Influencing audiences
- · Contributing to prevention initiatives
- · Service provision
- · Supporting survivors
- Sustaining staff and volunteers
- · The Survivor Voice

Inputs

- · Staff
- · Volunteers
- · Expertise
- · Resources
- · Collaboration
- $\cdot \ \ Donor \ Funding$
- · Peer Organisation
- Support / Survivor Voice

Assumptions

- · Society can be capable of change
- Building and drawing on the knowledge and skills of survivors informs change
- · All forms of DVA (Domestic Violence and Abuse) are preventable
- The outcome of society free from DVA is achievable
- · Women's Aid has the capacity to deliver its mission
- · Resources will be available to continue our work

Purpose

Working for the prevention of domestic violence and abuse by: Influencing, educating and advocating for effective responses, to reduce the scale and impacts of domestic abuse AND providing high quality, specialised, integrated, support services.

Social Change

Shared Agenda Understanding Awareness Training Education Advocacy Campaign

<u>Change</u>

Tolerance Levels

Individual Change

Empowering Survivors
Delivering Services
Acknowledging & Supporting
Women

Stakeholder Community Change

Working with stakeholders to enable change Collaboration Alignment for Change Engagement Change Legislation

Vision

An equal Ireland, with zero tolerance of domestic abuse and all other forms of violence against women

> Change Service Provision

Change Policy

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Women's Aid Work

Women's Aid is a national, feminist organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse since 1974. We have five clear areas of focus, based on our Theory of Change, which creates the structure for us to end violence against women in Ireland.

1. Promoting healthy relationships

Violence against women is not inevitable. All forms of violence against women are preventable. By preventing abuse and focusing on supporting people to understand and live healthy relationships for everybody, we can build a different world.

2. Strategic research

Everything we do is underpinned by fundamental, evidence-based research. Through strategic research and quality data collection we quantify and measure our impact. Research impact is real change in the real world.

3. Frontline services

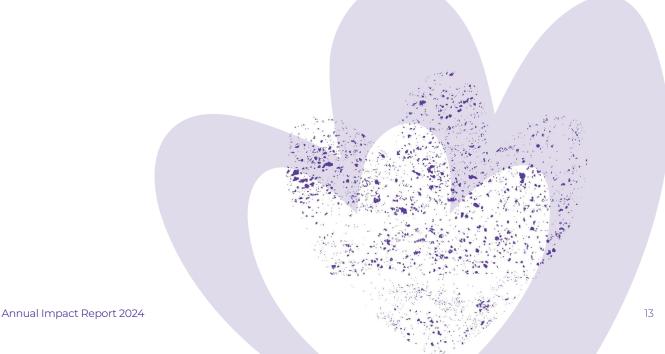
Women's Aid was set up in 1974 to provide a response for women and children who faced devastating abuse with no support and no laws to protect them. We continue to develop and evolve our life-preserving frontline services to meet the growing needs of women and children across Ireland, including: the National Domestic Violence Helpline, High-Risk Support Project, and a range of specialist Dublin based outreach and court support services.

4. Specialist training and policy support

Knowing how to respond appropriately can make a significant difference to reducing the isolation and risks to women and children living with the dangers of domestic abuse. Through specialist training we aim to inform people who may contribute to enhancing the safety of women. We offer training nationally to stakeholders from key sectors including Health, Legal and Law Enforcement, Employment, Children and Young People and Community and Voluntary.

5. Whole community activation

Creating long-lasting change for women and children who face violence means to create fundamental change across society and how we, the people of Ireland, think about domestic violence and abuse. We contribute to this through a combination of public awareness activities, campaigns and advocacy work to influence and improve national policy and legislation.



Our Strategic Priorities 2025-29

Strategic Priorities

After extensive consultation, our strategic priorities remain based on a strong dedication to the women we serve and an unwavering focus on bringing about the social changes in Ireland that will deliver our vision. During the period 2025-29, we have framed our plan around 3 strategic priorities:



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Delivering a coordinated, inclusive and coherent programme of work comprising: - direct services, training, advocacy, and educating through awareness-raising work that is focused on prevention, support and driving positive social change.

- 1. Developing and delivering Women's Aid specialist frontline services.
- **2.** Applying an intersectional lens to all aspects of our work.
- **3.** Educating through raising public awareness of all forms, causes and consequences of domestic violence and abuse.
- **4.** Building on Women's Aid advocacy, research, expertise and reputation to inform key decision-makers and to contribute to the national dialogue on action to prevent and combat domestic violence and abuse.
- **5.** Developing and enhancing the range of training solutions aimed at strengthening responses of frontline professionals and other key stakeholders to domestic violence and abuse.



Strategic Priority 2

Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships

To continue developing and strengthening cross sector partnerships and strategic relationships; enabling Women's Aid to cooperate and effectively contribute to political, social and other forums responding to violence against women in Ireland.

- Working with authorities, agencies and community and voluntary organisations, as a trusted partner, to inform the national and international agenda on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and influence positive change in ways that prioritise the interests of all women.
- **2.** Continuing to develop partnerships to increase awareness, understanding and to combat the harms of pornography.
- **3.** Establishing clear structures and systems to better harness and activate the wisdom and insights of those with lived experience of domestic violence and abuse.



Strategic Priority 3

Continually Strengthening Capability and Expertise

Support the work of the organisation by ensuring that the information, resources, systems and structures required are in place.

- 1. Strengthening our economic resilience and capacity.
- **2.** Ensuring the organisation has the capacity to meet its business and operational compliance requirements.
- **3.** Ensuring our work is continually data driven and supported.
- **4.** Aligning our people, our values and our culture.
- 5. Building and supporting volunteer engagement.
- **6**. Ensuring excellence in compliance and governance.
- 7. Aligning Women's Aid with Environmental, Sustainability and Governance principles.

Context

Over the period of Women's Aid's previous strategy (2022-2024), extensive progress in responding to domestic, sexual and gender-based-violence (DSGBV) has been made in Ireland. This progress includes:

- 1. Important legislative changes, such as the creation of new offences to criminalise image based sexual abuse, a non-fatal strangulation or suffocation and stalking and paid Domestic Violence leave, have been enacted.
- 2. The ambitious Third National Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Strategy is being implemented, including the setting up of CUAN, the statutory Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Agency. Work has begun to reform the family law system and revise SPHE and RSE school curricula to include reference to gender equality, consent and healthy relationships.
- 3. There have been welcome increased resources for vital specialist domestic violence services, though these are coming from a baseline of historic neglect and are still not sufficient.

However, domestic violence and abuse of women and children continues to exist:

• 275 women have died violently between 1996 and present day, 87% of women (where the case has been resolved) were killed by a man known to them, and 20 children died during incidents where women have died violently.^d

- 35% of women in Ireland, more than one in three, have experienced psychological, physical and/or sexual abuse from an intimate partner.^e
- One in four (25%) women in Ireland experienced sexual violence as an adult with a partner.^f
- Over the three years of our previous strategy (2022-2024) Women's Aid frontline services responded to **91,677 contacts** and heard **105,581 disclosures of abuse of women and children subjected to domestic violence.** This figure represents only the tip of the iceberg of what is happening to women and children in Ireland at the hands of an abuser.^g
- An Garda Síochána responded to over
 178,500 domestic abuse incidents
 between 2022-2024, which translates to an average of 1,144 incidents every week.^h
- a S2 and S3, Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020.
- b S21, S22 and S23 Criminal Justice Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.
- c S7, Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2023.
- d Women's Aid Femicide Watch April 2025.
- e EU Gender-based Violence Survey, Fundamental Rights Agency, 2024.
- f CSO Sexual Violence Survey, 2023
- g Women's Aid Annual Impact Reports, 2022-2024.
- h See 65,000 reported domestic violence incidents in 2024, Irish Examiner, 27th January 2025, https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41561812.html (accessed 27.04.25).

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Challenges

Challenges continue to exist in responding to domestic violence and abuse:

- 1. Specialist services are still overstretched and underfunded, and therefore challenged to meet ever increasing demand, especially to meet the needs of more marginalised and minoritised women.
- 2. The housing crisis and dearth of appropriate specialist accommodation provision for survivors of abuse limits options for a safe home in the medium and long term.
- 3. The Family Law and Criminal law systems do not work efficiently for survivors of domestic violence and abuse creating lengthy, protracted, and traumatising delays for women and unsafe outcomes.

5. There is a continuing increase in online/ technology facilitated gender-based violence. This includes the harm of online pornography on efforts for gender equality, on the development of healthy sexuality and relationships, and on levels of coercion and violence. In the face of increasing understanding and evidence of the negative impact on young people's behaviour and experiences, there continues to be little meaningful accountability for online hosting/ facilitating platforms and perpetrators.



Section 3 Activities and Impact Summary 2024

Four Year Comparative Frontline Services Statistics

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Contacts with Women's Aid	32,144	28,638	31,229	26,906
24hr National Freephone Helpline (including calls, instant messages and emails)	24,396	20,891	23,566	21,126
Face-to-Face Support Services (including one to one support, court accompaniments, drop-in visits, HRSP, maternity outreach support sessions)	7,748	7,747	7,663	5,780
Talk Time Hours (24hr National Freephone Helpline calls and instant messages)	4,567	4,112	3,940	3,863
Disclosures of domestic abuse against women and children	46,765	40,048	33,990	33,831
Against Women	41,432	35,570	28,579	28,096
Emotional	25,441	21,974	20,851	19,902
Physical	9,590	7,851	4,509	4,707
Economic	4,522	4,297	2,290	2,383
Sexual	1,879	1,448	9,28	1,104
Against Children	5,333	4,478	5,412	5,735
Emotional	5,109	4,253	5,006	5,361
Physical	142	167	315	282
Sexual	82	58	91	92
Referrals, Provision of Information and/or Advocacy by Helpline and Regional Services	31,323	23,329	18,667	21,446

"I do feel better after the call."

"I feel so much better after talking to you and getting this information, thank you."

"Thank you for talking to me, to be honest with you, you saved my life."



"You seem to understand where I'm coming from. You're the only one listening to me."



2024 Summary

32,144 Contacts with Women's Aid



24,396
contacts with the 24hr
National Freephone Helpline
(including calls, instant
messages and emails)

contacts with Face-to-Face
Support Services (including
one to one support, court
accompaniments, drop-in
visits, HRSP, maternity
outreach support

sessions)

4,567
hours of National
Helpline Talk
Time

Referrals, Provision of Information and/or Advocacy by Helpline and Regional Services Support Workers



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There is another day in everyone. Thank you for being so good, you've given me that extra bit of strength to change this situation.

46,765

Disclosures of domestic abuse against women and children



Emotional **25.441**

41,432

Disclosures of domestic abuse against women

5,333

Disclosures of domestic abuse against children

Sexual **82**

Physical **9,590**

Economic 4,522

Sexual 1.879

Emotional **5,109**

Physical **142**

144,131 visits to www.toointoyou.ie Emergency funds distributed

€390,000

to women and children

263,345
visits to
www.WomensAid.ie

2,871.50

hours

of service by

45 volunteers



Representation on

18+

national and local policy and advocacy groups Full compliance

with the Charities Governance Code and awarded the CII Triple Lock Standard.

1,422 people

participated in

184

training events.

Celebrating 50 Years of Women's Aid:



A Legacy of Support, Advocacy, and Change

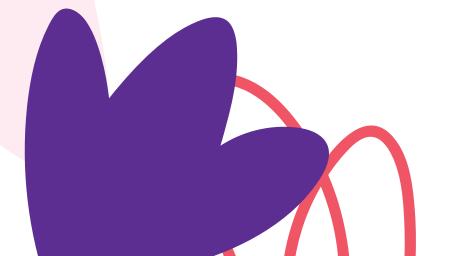
In 2024, Women's Aid marked a powerful milestone, 50 years of unwavering commitment to ending domestic violence against women in Ireland. Since its founding in 1974, when it established the country's first refuge for women, Women's Aid has grown into a national force for change, support, and empowerment.

The journey began with a simple yet revolutionary act: creating a safe space for women fleeing abuse. Just two years later, in 1976, Ireland introduced its first domestic violence legislation, allowing women to access three-month barring orders. This legal recognition was a pivotal moment, and Women's Aid continued to push for stronger protections. By 1981, protection orders were introduced and barring orders extended to 12 months.

Throughout the 1990s, Women's Aid evolved from a refuge provider into a leading front-line and social change organisation. In 1992, it launched the National Freephone Helpline, which has since answered over half a million calls. The following years saw the introduction of one-to-one support, court accompaniment services, and Ireland's first prevalence study on domestic abuse, Making the Links (1995). In 1999, Safety and Sanctions exposed critical gaps in the legal system's response to victims.

The 2000s brought further innovation. In 2005, Ireland's first domestic violence public awareness TV campaign dramatically increased calls to Women's Aid. By 2009, training for maternity hospital staff and psychotherapists was introduced, and in 2011, the groundbreaking Too Into You campaign launched, targeting young women experiencing abuse in relationships.

Women's Aid has consistently adapted to meet emerging needs. In 2014, it partnered with An Garda Síochána and the Vodafone Foundation to launch the High-Risk Support Project, which started its expansion nationwide in 2022. The Helpline became a 24/7 service in 2016, and in 2018, Women's Aid played a key role in the passage of the Domestic Violence Act, which for the first time recognised coercive control as a crime.







Women's Aid CEO, Sarah Benson, with former CEOs, Denise Charlton and Margaret Martin at the Women's Aid 50th Anniversary Conference in November 2024.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 saw a 43% surge in calls, prompting the extension of the Instant Message Support Service to seven days a week. In 2021, the Emergency Fund for Women & Children was launched, distributing over €1.5 million to services across Ireland. That same year, the Maternity Project and Employer Engagement Programme were established.

In 2023, Women's Aid helped secure statutory paid domestic violence leave and launched <u>dvatwork.ie</u>, a support hub for employers. In 2024, it published groundbreaking research into the harms of pornography and a report on Intimate Partner Abuse experienced by Disabled Women in Ireland.

Today, Women's Aid stands as a beacon of hope and resilience. With five decades of impact behind us, the organisation remains steadfast in its mission: to create an equal Ireland free from all forms of violence against women. The journey continues—until every woman is safe.

"I feel better now talking to you, I feel more empowered, I know to trust my intuition."

Annual Impact Report 2024

Collective disclosures to the National Freephone Helpline and Face-to-Face Support Services*

During 2024 Women's Aid heard thousands of disclosures of abuse perpetrated against women and children. Below is a summary of these disclosures comparatively over the last four years. Each disclosure represents an incident of harm and trauma perpetrated by abusers against someone they ought to respect, love and cherish.

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Disclosures of Abuse against Women (HL and SVS): Total	41,432	35,570	28,579	28,096
Emotional Abuse	25,441	21,974	20,851	19,902
Physical Abuse	9,590	7,851	4,509	4,707
Economic Abuse	4,522	4,297	2,290	2,383
Sexual Abuse	1,879	1,448	928	1,104
	2024	2023	2022	2021
Disclosures of Abuse against Children (HL and SVS): Total	5,333	4,479	5,412	5,735
Emotional Abuse	5,109	4,253	5,006	5,361
Physical Abuse	142	167	315	282
Sexual Abuse	82	58	91	92

"You don't
know what you've
done for me,
I actually feel heard.
My anxiety was so high
at the beginning of
this call and I feel it
has lessened."

"Thank you for chatting. You do a really good job."

"Really
appreciate the
chance to talk, be
heard and not feel
so alone in t¹
mess.

"I'm so thankful
for this service
I can't explain the
comfort I've gotten
from the last few nights
chatting I'll never forget
it for as long as
I live."

* Women's Aid services are survivor led, therefore disclosures to our services are based on what women choose to tell us during calls or meetings, rather than a process of systematic questioning. Therefore these probably represent an underreporting of tactics of abuse experienced.

Women's Aid

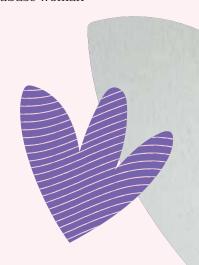
Domestic abuse against women

Emotional Abuse

25,441 disclosures

- Verbal abuse
- Isolation from family/friends
- Blaming the victim for abuse
- Belittling
- Undermining
- Threats to take the children from her or threat to gain full custody
- Coercive control
- Threats to kill
- Damage to belongings
- Denying the abuse is happening
- Threat to self-harm suicide
- Monitoring whereabouts
- Accused of parental alienation
- Harassment
- Threat with a weapon
- Gaslighting

- Stalking
- Threats to kill/harm her family/children/pets
- Prevented from leaving the house
- Cyberstalking
- Threat to make homeless
- Using legal system to further abuse woman



Physical Abuse

- Beaten
- Thrown/Pushed
- Hit
- Punched
- Strangled/choked
- Kicked
- Assaulted with a weapon (i.e., hammer, golf club, hurl, gun)

- Attempted homicide
- Bitten
- Stabbed
- Hair Pulling
- Teeth broken.
- Harm with knives including cutting and stabbing

9,590 disclosures



Economic Abuse

- No access to family finances
- Putting into debt
- Not paying maintenance
- Abuser who will not contribute to paying any utilities or bills, despite earning
- Emptying bank accounts

- Gambling family money
- Not allowed access to employment
- Uses tactics to disrupt work
- Under pressure to give up work
- No access to a bank account

4,522 disclosures

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Domestic abuse against children

5,333 Disclosures

5,109
disclosures
of emotional
abuse

82disclosures
sexual abuse

disclosures of physical abuse

Types of abuse

- Emotional abuse including verbal abuse, name-calling and being threatened with violence.
- Physical abuse including slapping, hair pulling, assault with weapons.
- Children, including infants, hurt by the abuser as they attacked the mother.
- Sexual assault and molestation.
- Witnessing domestic violence against their mother.
- Children forced to go on access visits with an abusive father.
- Mother-Child bond deliberately damaged by abuser.
- Older children abused by fathers through the use of technology.

Abuse during access

Women reported that they were subjected to abuse during access visits **786** times and that children were being abused and neglected while on access visits numbering **216** times.

Where women indicated that they felt their children were at risk of emotional, physical and/ or sexual abuse, the 24hr National Freephone Helpline recorded **337** contacts where there was a social worker involved in the case.

Annual Impact Report 2024

Impacts of domestic abuse against women and children

The mental and physical impacts of domestic abuse including coercive control on a woman's health and well-being are significant and can be long lasting and wide ranging. The ultimate cost, in some extreme cases, can be fatal due to homicide and suicide.

Physical impacts include:

- Broken bones and broken teeth.
- Bruising.
- Nausea.
- Acquired brain injury.
- Nerve damage.

- Damage to throat and neck due to non-fatal strangulation.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Miscarriage.



Mental and emotional impacts include:

- Depression, anxiety, panic attacks, fear.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- Feeling alone with nobody to turn to.
- Suicidal ideation and attempted suicide.
- Hyper-vigilance.

Other impacts include:

- Living in, or being at risk of, poverty.
- Fear of homelessness and homelessness.
- Living in fear of deportation or the threat by abuser of spousal visa not being renewed.

Children experience both short-term and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

These include:

- Guilt.
- Anger.
- Insecurity and anxiety.
- Difficulty with sleep, including nightmares.
- Flashbacks.
- Lower self-worth.
- Difficulties at school.

However, it is important to remember that some children may not exhibit any negative effects.

28 Women's Aid



Pets and Animals as a Tactic of Abuse

In 2024, Women's Aid continued to document and respond to the deeply distressing use of pets and animals as a tactic of coercive control and abuse. The data collected through our Helpline and frontline services reveals a disturbing pattern: perpetrators frequently exploit the emotional bond between women and their animals to instil fear, assert dominance, and punish or manipulate their partners.

Reports included threats to harm or kill pets, abandonment, physical abuse of animals, and using pets as leverage to control women's movements or decisions. In many cases, women were prevented from accessing their pets, had animals stolen or hidden from them, or were falsely reported to authorities in an attempt to discredit or isolate them. Some callers described pets being poisoned, starved, or killed in front of them or their

children. Others were forced to leave beloved animals behind when fleeing abuse, or were unable to access refuge accommodation because they could not bring their pets.

These incidents are not isolated—they are part of a broader pattern of psychological and emotional abuse. The cruelty inflicted on animals is often mirrored in the treatment of women and children in the home. The trauma of witnessing or fearing harm to a pet adds another layer of suffering and can be a significant barrier to seeking help.

Women's Aid continues to advocate for greater awareness of this form of abuse: as a marker of high risk behaviour, and for services that recognise the importance of the human-animal bond in safety planning and support.

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Statistics:

In 2024, Women's Aid recorded 44 cases where pets and animals were used as part of coercive control and abuse. These cases reveal a disturbing pattern of cruelty, manipulation, and psychological torment, where perpetrators weaponised the emotional bond between women and their animals.



Perpetrators of Abuse



Where known, the relationship between a victim/survivor and their perpetrator is recorded. Below is the information for the period 2021-2024 as disclosed to our services. Women's Aid will support any victim who contacts us regardless of sex, gender or sexuality. Where appropriate we may also refer a caller to ongoing support from the freephone Male Advice Line or LGBT Ireland if this is useful to them.

33%abused
by an
ex-partner

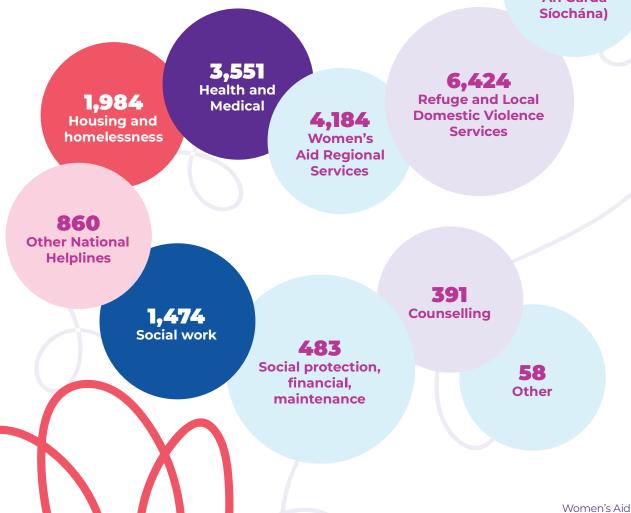
	2024	2023	2022	2021
Abuser	%	%	%	%
Current male partner	49	55	58	57
Former male partner	33	31	26	25
By man who was not an intimate partner or ex	13	9	10	11
Female abuser	5	5	6	7

Referrals, Provision of Information and Advocacy

On **31,323** occasions the Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline and Regional Services made referrals to other agencies, provided information, and advocated on behalf of women.

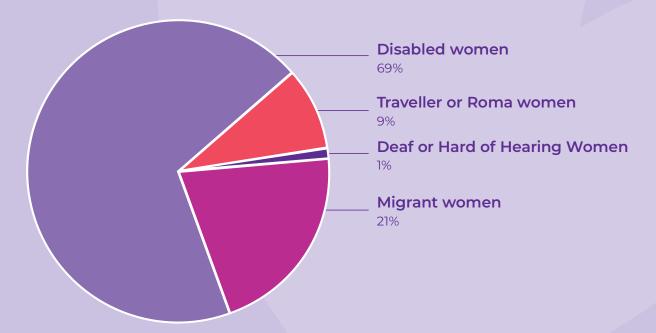
30

11,914Legal (including
An Garda
Síochána)



Supporting women facing additional barriers

1217 callers to the **National Freephone Helpline** identified as being deaf/hard of hearing, Disabled, coming from a Migrant, Traveller or Roma background.



Of women who accessed our Face-to-Face services, 40% were migrant women.

43% languages used were EU

We facilitated 706 calls through 32 different languages

57% were non-EU

The
two most
frequent
languages were
Arabic and
Polish.

Specialist Training and Development Activity 2024

Women's Aid delivered a total of **184** training events to **1,422** participants. A total of **106** organisations availed of bespoke training for groups from individual organisations, or had participants engage in mixed group trainings.

Additionally, the training department delivered a range of inputs and awareness sessions during 2024, a total of **33** events to **1,369** people, of whom **351** were employer representatives engaged in targeted awareness sessions

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Training events	184	138	81	60
Participants	1,422	1,162	835	600
No of organisations	106	130	116	169
Inputs and awareness sessions	33	32	41	15
No. of people	1,018	1,461	2,047	500
DV at Work session participants	351	510		



Strategic Communications Activity 2024

In 2024, Women's Aid continued to advocate for social change and create awareness on the prevalence and harms of domestic abuse against women and children, as well as intimate relationship abuse against young people.



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Fundraising Activity

More than **5,000**

people supported our Direct Mail appeal programme

Over

700
donors gave
monthly
donations

6

transformational gifts in wills and in memoriam gifts

1,299

people took part in the Cold Swim for Women

ran the
Women's Mini
Marathon for
Women's Aid

1,135
people took part
in the Walk 80K
in February

1,749
people took part
in Walk 100 Miles
in September

ran the Dublin Marathon for Women's Aid

people hosted International Women's Day coffee mornings

#TEAM Women's CAIC

Team Women's Aid at the VHI Women's Mini Marathon

Section 4 Plans for 2025 and Beyond

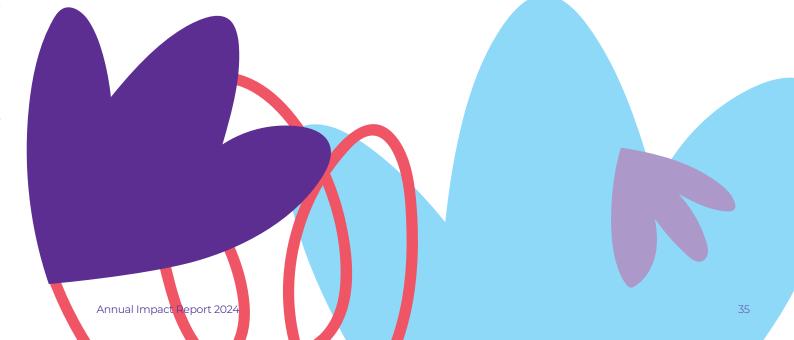
Plans for Future Periods

Women's Aid will continue to deliver its vital frontline services, critical public awareness and advocacy and expert training. In 2024 Women's Aid successfully completed delivery of the final year of our Strategic Plan (2022-2024) to support the organisation to identify opportunities for growth and development.

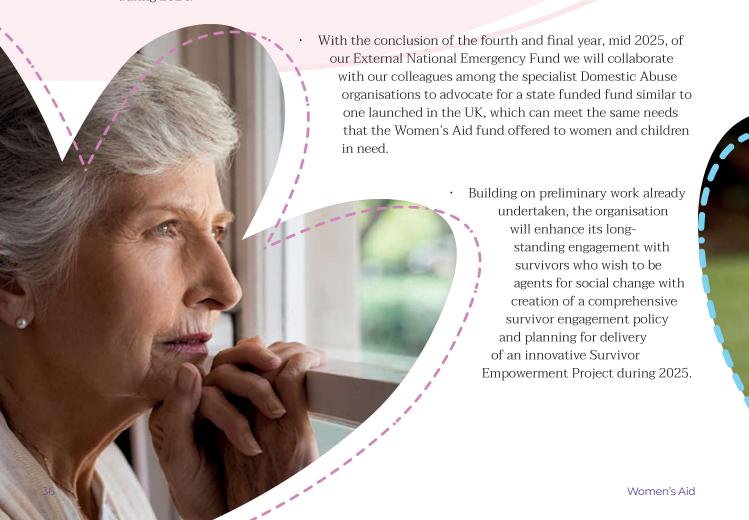
Women's Aid plans for 2025

Women's Aid is extremely proud of our team's performance during 2024, where the company continued to grow and develop its range of charitable activities in an innovative and strategic way. We now have a clear and focused Strategic Plan 2025-2029 to frame and drive our work over the coming period. Some examples of achievements, which we will continue to build on in 2025, with the support of our new strategic framework include:

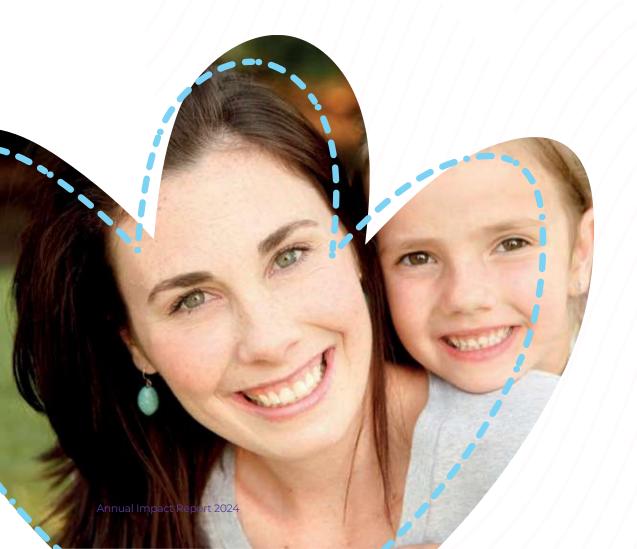
- During 2024 we undertook, with independent support from 2into3, a comprehensive
 consultation, review and preparation of our strategic priorities for the coming years. This is
 documented in the new Women's Aid Strategy 2025-2029, which will be the framework within
 which the organisation will plan and carry out its work for the coming period, to ensure that
 the Women's Aid maintains a clear focus for targeted operations, growth, and sustainability for
 coming years.
- The National Freephone Helpline continues to be a crucial support to women across Ireland 24hrs a day, seven days a week, including through over 240 languages where interpretation is required. Our Instant Messaging Support Service has been maintained for those who may wish to communicate silently (e.g. if in proximity to their abuser), for deaf and hard of hearing women and others for whom this just a more comfortable mode of expressing themselves. Review of evolving peak call times and longer, more complex calls to the service will inform targeted continuing investment to meet continuing demand. During 2025 the National Helpline will continue to expand the hours of Instant Messaging Support, available via both www.womensaid.ie and www.womensaid.ie and <a href="https://www.toointoyou.ie.



- In 2024, Women's Aid successfully completed the fifth consecutive application process to maintain the Helplines Partnership Quality Standard for the National Freephone Helpline, which defines and accredits best practice in helpline work. We will implement the recommendations from this valuable process in 2025 and ensure that standards are maintained throughout this accreditation period.
- Through very welcome grant support from the Department of Justice, the unique High Risk Support Project which Women's Aid delivers in partnership with An Garda Siochana and Vodafone Ireland, began its national expansion in Q4 2023 which continued in 2024 and is ongoing in 2025. This work is informed by an independent evaluation, commissioned and completed in 2024, to support the project becoming fully nationwide with effective systems and structures in place to manage this new scale of operation.
- Women's Aid published two landmark research reports during 2024, as noted above, and we
 will use the findings and recommendations of each during 2025 to contribute meaningfully to
 national work to improve responses to all victims/survivors of domestic abuse, including disabled
 women, and to accelerate activities to combat the harmful impacts of pornography on children,
 healthy and equal relationships and gender equality.
- Through the wonderful generosity of many donors, Women's Aid will continue to offer an Internal Emergency and Security fund to women engaged directly with a range of our services during 2024.



- Our court based drop-in service (DAIS), located in Ireland's largest Family Law Court is sustaining significant demand and will continue full time in 2025, with opportunities to expand considered in line with available capacity in the Courts office.
- Commencing an ambitious five-year Business plan in 2025, aligned with the new Organisation Strategy, we will overhaul our online training activities and further develop our training offering to create additional accredited training offers for key target audiences including employers, and professionals from among health, legal, civic society and youth support sectors to ensure we meet the needs of those seeking our specialist support.
- Women's Aid will continue to collaborate with other partners to be a leading voice in campaigning and influencing key legislative reforms in 2025 with priority focus on new legislation, including the Family Courts Act and legislation arising from recommendations in the <u>Study on Familicide & Domestic and Family Violence Death Reviews</u>. We will also be monitoring the implementation of recent legislation that has been enacted, such as Coercive Control; Non-Fatal Strangulation; Stalking and other key measures such as the provision of Statutory Paid Domestic Abuse leave which will better support and give access to justice for victims/survivors.



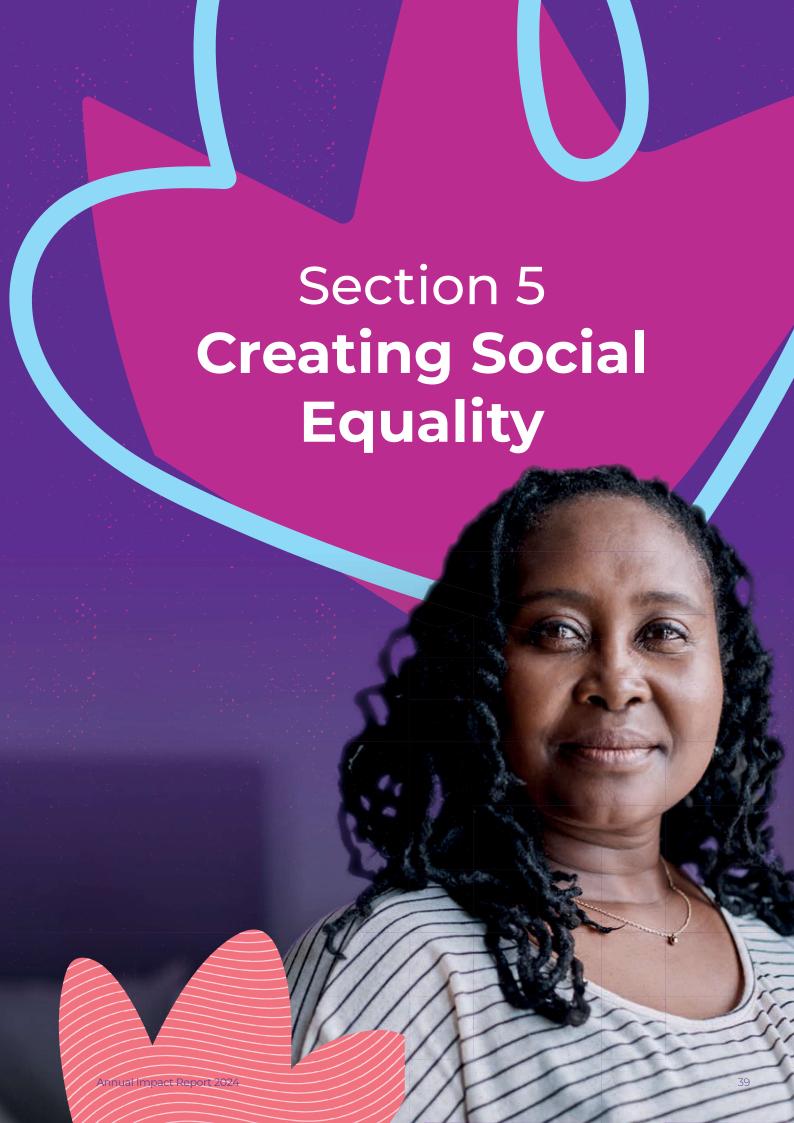


- Women's Aid concluded the fourth and final year of its Too Into You project pilot in 2024. An independent Evaluation report was considered, and the project is now on a permanent footing as a key strand of Women's Aid work, designed to promote healthy intimate relationships and support young people, particularly young women, who may be at risk or subjected to abuse. At the start of 2025 we finalised and commence delivery of a Too Into You Project strategy which provides a framework and plan to achieve the strategic and sustainable growth and positive impact of this unique project for young people into the future.
- Our unique three-year pilot Maternity Project in partnership with four Maternity Hospitals, to increase support and referrals of pregnant women experiencing abuse during pregnancy concluded at the end of 2024, with a detailed independent evaluation by the Centre for Effective Services. The Maternity Outreach component is now a core part of our frontline services offer, through core funding support from Cuan (previously Tusla) which was granted in 2024, Women's Aid will continue to provide two Maternity Outreach Support Workers who collaborate with Medical Social Work to ensure swift specialist support for pregnant/post-partum women subjected to abuse. Our Training & Development Department will continue to develop and enhance the unique co-created training modules to continue to expand availability to both maternity and other key health sector stakeholders.

In addition to the above, during 2025, Women's Aid must practically invest further in some essential maintenance works to ensure our offices provide a safe and healthy work environment.

Therefore, we start 2025 fully committed to continuing our ongoing vital support work supported by our new Strategy 2025-2029 and expanding this to continue to work incrementally and sustainably towards an Ireland where there is zero tolerance of domestic abuse.

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We drive real social change through a cohesive and coordinated approach.

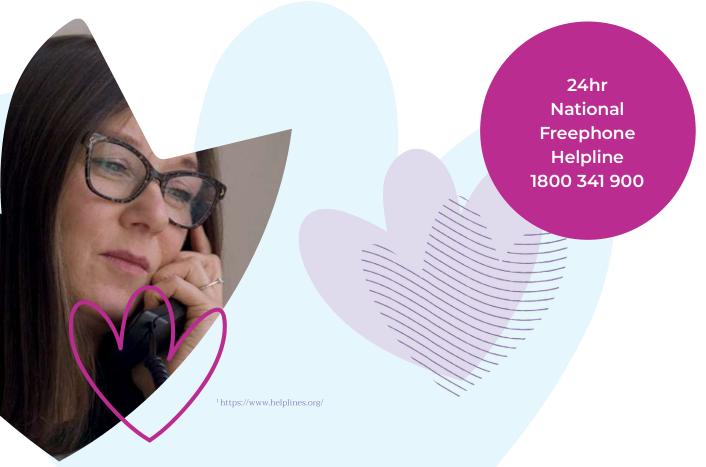
Over-arching Goal: To deliver a coordinated and coherent programme of work comprising direct services, training, education, advocacy, and awareness raising work that is focused on prevention, support and driving positive social change.

National Freephone Helpline Services

Women's Aid operates the 24hr National Freephone Domestic Violence Helpline in the Republic of Ireland. The Helpline provides a listening ear, emotional support and practical information to women subjected to violence and abuse from their current or former partners. The Helpline also acts as a gateway for direct referral to all other local specialist services across Ireland. It is the only free and national domestic violence and abuse Helpline with specialised, trained support workers.

The National Freephone Helpline has now been accredited five times by the Helplines Partnership¹ Quality Standard – spanning a period of continuous accreditation since 2012). The current accreditation was granted after a rigorous accreditation process and inspection by the Helpline's Association during 2024 and is valid until November 2027.

The Helpline was funded primarily by Tusla (with the grant transitioning mid-year to Cuan) during 2024, with some additional non-statutory fundraising and grant support.



National Freephone Helpline Key Outputs 2024

During 2024, there were a total of 28,477 contacts with the National Freephone Helpline. Compared to 2023, this represents a 36.31% increase, with an increase in contacts across all communication channels and in overall contact time also. See Table one (1) below.

	2024	2023	2022	2021
National Freephone Helpline Total	28477	20891	23566	21126
Helpline Calls Responded to	21151	18077	20905	18911
IMSS	2135	1768	1808	1420
Emails	1110	1046	853	895
Hours talk time (IMSS and HL Calls)	4567	4112	3940	3863

The Language Line – Women's Aid Telephone Interpretation Service

The 24hr National Freephone Helpline has a Telephone Interpretation Service facility covering over 240 languages/dialects for callers needing support in their own language.

We facilitated **706** calls through **32** different languages in 2024, an increase in interpreter supported calls of 15.92% when compared to 2023. Some 43% of languages used were EU, while 57% were non-EU.

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Language Line Calls	706	609	494	548
No of different languages	32	36	33	30
EU	43%	51%	66%	43%
Non-EU	57%	49%	34%	57%



"You've been very caring and a great listener. You've given me some insight and inspiration. Thanks for being there for me."



Instant Messaging Support



The Women's Aid IMSS is a free, confidential, and secure service where women can seek support and advice from fully trained Helpline Support Workers through instant messaging. The service is open daily and can be accessed through www.womensaid.ie or www.toointoyou.ie. The service is accessible to deaf and hard-of-hearing women, and more easily accessible than a phone call for women who feel they are at risk of being overheard by their abuser.

There were 2,135 online Instant Messaging Support conversations with the Helpline team during 2024.

"I rang this helpline tonight completely defeated and you took me out of that vortex I've been sucked into of thinking he has all the power and control. You used words like brave, strong and commendable and an amazing mom to my child and for the first time I saw myself in a different light and I believed you, thank you so much for helping me and I truly mean that."

"Women's Aid helped me to save my life. I thought I was going to die; I was at a crossroads and if it wasn't for you, I'd never would have left the abuse. You have no idea how grateful I am for the helpline. I tell every woman how amazing Women's Aid is because it helped me do a 180 in my life and if there is anything going on just to give them a call".

"I called Women's Aid in desperation. Not thinking that I would get clarity, more just needing someone to talk to. The kind voice that talked to me for over 20 mins gave me a glimpse that it wasn't my fault and that in fact, this is abuse. It doesn't matter whether it's bruises or breakdowns, the outcome is still the same."

"You have made me feel validated so thank you for that. I didn't class my experience as abuse, but I can see now that it is. Nobody has ever said that I am a good mum before."

"This was fantastic support and helped me a lot with getting my friend to continue to move forward. She's a lot more determined at the moment, and this wouldn't have happened without your support and advice."

"Thank you so much for the very helpful guidelines and support. I will read this carefully and share with my daughter. It is so good to know help is always only a phone call away."



Regional Face-to-Face Services

Women's Aid operates a range of Regional Services for women, particularly in the greater Dublin area. These are comprised of our:

- · One-to-One Support Service, including court accompaniment.
- · Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (DAIS)
- · High-Risk Support Project (HRSP)
- · Maternity Outreach Support Service
- · Counselling project

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Regional Services Contacts				
One-to-One Support visits	937	903	1,399	994
Court Accompaniments	282	233	178	140
DAIS Drop-In sessions	902	891	890	905
HRSP Support sessions, including emails, phone, SMS contact	2,707	3,005	1,954	1,643
Maternity Outreach visits, court accompaniment, and phone/SMS contact	1,259	1,234	1,382	-
Support emails/calls (1:1 and DAIS)	1,660	1,481	1,860	2,098
Total	7,748	7,747	7,663	5,780

	2024	2023	2022	2021
Number of Women Supported by Regional Services				
One-to-One	486	371	389	276
DAIS	812	868	890	572
HRSP	333	319	267	290
Maternity Outreach	188	147	53	31
Overall total	1,819	1,705	1,599	1,169



First-time and repeat or continuous service users in 2024

During 2024, of the 1,819 women who we supported through our direct services (i.e., excluding our National Helpline), 1,454 were accessing our services for the first time and 365 were receiving continuing support from the previous year or were previous clients returning for support.

1,819 women who we supported through our direct services

One-to-One Support Service

The Women's Aid One-to-One Support Service provides in-depth information and support to women who have been subjected to domestic violence and abuse throughout Dublin City and County and was funded primarily by Tusla and the Department of Justice (Victims of Crime) in 2024, with both grants transitioning to the new DSGBV Agency, Cuan, during the year. This ongoing face-to-face and phone support can include court accompaniment, safety planning, advocacy, and referral support to external organisations. Our advocacy and referral work includes accompaniment to the local gardaí to make statements; assistance with legal aid applications; support with immigration status within the context of domestic violence and abuse; advocating to Housing Authorities for women who are no longer safe in their homes; and support in accessing local refuges.

Court accompaniment includes emotional support before, during, and after the court proceedings, clarifying legal terminology, and exploring further options. We support women with applications and hearings in the context of domestic violence orders as well as access, custody, maintenance, divorce, and separation cases where domestic violence and abuse are present. We also support women pursuing criminal proceedings against their abusers for crimes including coercive control and assault causing harm.

1,454 were accessing our services for the first time

365
received support previously

937
face-to-face/support
visit contacts

During 2024:

The Outreach* team engaged in 937 face-to-face/support visit contacts with 486 women in total during 2024. 372 women used this service for the first time this year. Outreach staff accompanied 135 women to court on 282 occasions.

(*See additional support figures for the Maternity project below.)



"I would not have been able to go to court without Women's Aid."

Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (DAIS):

A Drop-In Service for Women in Dolphin House Family Law Court

Based in the Dolphin House Family Law Court in Dublin, the Domestic Abuse Information and Support Service (DAIS) is a free and confidential drop-in service for women who are subjected to domestic violence and abuse. The service is available Monday to Friday $9.30~\rm am - 4.30~\rm pm$ and provides support and information on legal options and safety planning, and links women in with domestic violence and abuse services for ongoing support. Women's Aid runs this service in partnership with the Inchicore Outreach Centre, and with funding support from the Department of Justice.

During 2024:

Some 812 Individual Women were supported through 908 interventions following drop-ins to this dedicated service based in Dolphin House Family Law Courts. The DAIS team made 53 internal referrals to Women's Aid's other support services, and 411 referrals to external services for additional ongoing support were also made.

"I went into Dolphin House yesterday and spoke for a couple of hours with Women's Aid, they were amazing and helped explain the abuse and the control I've been experiencing. They helped me with my application for a safety order, and I did get it vesterday."

"Just to also say that I received wonderful support and guidance when I was in search of the barring order from your colleague who I met in Dolphin House. She is amazing at what she does and provided crucial support to me during this incredibly difficult time."

High-Risk Support Project (HRSP)

The High-Risk Support Project provides a multi-agency response to women at a high-risk of ongoing violence, abuse and homicide from their ex-partners and ex-spouses. Women's Aid works with An Garda Síochána and local domestic violence services to deliver a coordinated rapid response system for women and their families, which is generously supported by the Vodafone Foundation and the Department of Justice.



During 2024:

In 2024, 333 women, and 502 children were supported by the HRSP. There were 108 new users of the service in 2024. During 2024 152 HRSP participants had their case closed. At the end of 2024 there were 181 active users on the project, compared to 207 active service users at the end of 2023.

This unique and lifesaving project has been operational in the Dublin Metropolitan Region since 2014 and is currently embarking on a national roll-out through all five Garda Regions. In 2023 the rollout to the Eastern Region was achieved, and during 2024 (Q4) the HRSP extended to the Southern Region. It is intended that we will complete the full roll-out to cover the Northwestern Region by the end of 2025.

Women's Aid Maternity Project

This was an innovative pilot project (2021-2024) to support and enhance maternity hospitals' and units' response to victims/survivors of domestic violence and abuse, through jointly created, delivered and operated Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) Training, Awareness and Referral Programme. The project was supported though fundraising and was a unique partnership between Women's Aid and the three Dublin maternity hospitals (the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, the Rotunda Hospital, the National Maternity Hospital) and Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (primarily Cork University Maternity Hospital, which collaborated on design, delivery and evaluation of the key strands of the programme).

The project was also supported by an External Advisory Group comprised of a wide range of skilled professionals, including patient representatives, representatives from minoritised groups and public health and policy experts.

During 2024, the final year of this innovative project, piloting of a co-created specialist training for obstetric staff was led by our Maternity Project Co-Ordinator. The Centre for Effective Services (CES) was commissioned as an independent evaluator, and it completed a detailed report assessing the outputs, outcomes, and future potential for all of the project activities. This was launched publicly at an end-of-project event on 7th November, 2024, there are further details of this below.

Our dedicated Maternity Outreach Worker, who is a part of the Women's Aid Regional Services team, was joined in mid-2024 by a second dedicated worker following a successful application for core statutory funding for these unique roles. The successful application was supported by the Interim Evaluation Report completed in Q4 2023 by CES, demonstrating its value and impact. The Maternity Outreach Team received referrals directly from the staff of the three Dublin Maternity Hospitals and during the year supported 188 pregnant/post-partum/post-termination women who

were subjected to intimate partner abuse with 229 one-to-one meetings, 974 phone/ SMS contacts and an additional 56 court accompaniments. During 2024, 162 women used the service for the first time.

There was also an awareness raising strand to the Maternity project and details of our campaign in 2024 are noted further in this report.

Counselling Project

The Women's Aid Counselor Project pays for up to six sessions of therapy for women who have engaged with the Women's Aid Outreach Support Service. Women who have disengaged or are about to disengage from the Outreach Service can be referred to the Counselling Project, by their Outreach Worker.

The Outreach Worker will provide the woman with the various accrediting body websites and if necessary, will support the woman to find a therapist, in her community. There are specific criteria regarding who can be referred and it is hoped that it will ease the transition for women who no longer need Outreach support. This initiative is funded by Women's Aid exclusively through fundraising.

In 2024, eught women availed of the Counselling Project.

"Thank
you for your
kind message and
support. It has been a very
difficult time for me and
very overwhelming. I truly
appreciate you acknowledging
what I've been through.
Thank you again for your
understanding and for
being there during
this time."

"Thank you,
going over these
small logistical details
has really helped me. You
really, really helped me here,
more than anyone has in a
long time. Thank you for
listening to me, nobody
has really listened to
me in a long time."

"This
was fantastic
support and helped
me a lot with getting my
friend to continue to move
forward. She's a lot more
determined at the moment,
and this wouldn't have
happened without
your support and
advice."

Referrals, Provision of Information and Advocacy

2024 Stats External Referrals	One-to- One	Maternity	DAIS	Total
Legal (inc. Gardaí)	126	268	298	692
Refuge/Housing	16	41	10	67
Local DV services	10	28	83	121
Social Protection	6	11	4	21
Women's Aid One to One, Court Accompaniment and/or Dolphin House Support and Referral Service	0	0	53	53
Health and Medical	1	7	1	9
Counselling	9	7	2	18
Social Worker	3	16	4	23
Other	25	24	9	58
Total	196	402	464	1062

Legal Information	Count
Support and information given	4808
Gardaí	2051
District Court	1565
FLAC	421
DAIS	352
Legal Aid	230
GP	167
Hotline.ie	5
Transferred call	4

Housing/Homeless	Count
Support and information given	847
Local Authority	527
Homeless Agency Service	302
Threshold	143
Focus Ireland	59
Simon Community	22
Transferred call	17



Internal and External Emergency Fund for Women and Children



In 2024, Women's Aid dispensed a total of €390,549 in funds directly and indirectly to support women and children in need.

Internal Emergency Fund for Women and Children

In 2024, Women's Aid dispensed €90,549 in funds to women who were in receipt of direct support from our own frontline services during the year. These vital funds covered a wide range of urgent and practical needs including (but not restricted to): CCTV and home security costs, bills, groceries, as well as offering some small contribution at Christmas, a key time of financial pressure for women suffering economic hardship as a direct and indirect result of the abuse they are subjected to.

The fund was administered as follows:

Vouchers to a total value of

€22,550

were issued to 87 women. These vouchers could be used in a wide variety of retail outlets to assist women to meet some everyday needs for themselves, their children, and households.

Twenty-six (26) women also benefited from the Legal Fund to a total value of

€11,702.

This support enabled women to part pay legal fees for representation in court and pre court consultation.

An additional **€33,800**worth of vouchers were provided to 84 women using our frontline services to support them and their children before Christmas 2024.

Eighteen (18) women also benefited from support for procurement of home security measures, to a total value of

€22,497.

Women's Aid provided funding for cameras, new locks, alarm systems and monitoring, sensor lights and video doorbells to help improve the security of their homes. In most cases, these security measures were recommended by Garda Crime Prevention Officers.



External Emergency Fund for Women and Children 2023 and 2024

Through simply unprecedented public generosity during the Covid 19 pandemic, Women's Aid was in a position to further extend our emergency funds to benefit women and children nationally via a scheme offered to our colleagues in local domestic violence services throughout the country. The Women's Aid Board designated funds to support four rounds of this fund between 2021 and 2024 for eligible organisations.

In 2024, we paid out 30 grants in allocations of €10,000 totalling €300,000* to specialist domestic violence services nationwide. Our 2024 External Emergency Fund for Women and Children will be reported in our 2025 Directors report when the grants have been spent and grant outcome reports received.

Reporting on the 2023 External Emergency Fund for Women and Children (Round Three)

In mid-2023, in addition to Women's Aid internal fund for women using our own direct services, €296,674 was distributed in allocations of €10,000 across 30 independent specialist domestic violence services for the direct benefit of women and children in need. Funds were expended by mid-2024 and all recipients submitted grant outcome reports. A snapshot summary of the incredible impact of these funds is noted here:

"This money has saved my life and allowed me to escape my abusive husband. Without it I wouldn't have been able to leave."

"Myself and my daughter have been living on cereal and I often go hungry to ensure there is enough for my daughter."

"All I can say
is thank you so, so
much. I can't wait to
call into my credit union
and hand it over and start
a fresh. I am actually so
emotional in a good way
now though." [Put in
debt by abusive
partner]

"As I work, I
was just over the
limit to be eligible for
legal aid. My ex-partner
pulls me back to court
but then doesn't turn up,
leaving me with a big legal
bill. This fund takes
some pressure off of
me."

"I honestly don't know what to say and you have no idea how much this will help. I am extremely grateful both to you and Women's Aid for the vouchers. I really, really am. I spent all weekend worrying whether I would be able to manage this Christmas and genuinely now I can."

"I can't thank you enough. Being able to put up cameras has made our home feel safer." "I felt I could not get my head above water in relation to managing my finances. This allowed me to focus on the necessities for my family and I, like food and rent. Thankfully I'm back on track and I'm currently managing to stay ahead of bills. This would not have happened if it wasn't for the financial help and invaluable support and advice I received."

^{*}In 2024, there was a refund from a domestic service provider relating to the 2023 External Emergency Fund for €3,326. This refund is reflected in our 2024 accounts.

Women's Aid External Emergency Fund

 $\overline{1,756}$ women and at least

402 children were direct beneficiaries of the Women's Aid External Emergency Fund for Women and Children, distributed by 30 independent specialist domestic violence services all over the country.

€67,068.34

was spent on groceries, including vouchers. so women could buy household basics such as food, clothing, school supplies and shoes.

€30,829.68 was offered to help women cover essential utility costs (electricity, heating, etc.)



€37,364.85 was offered to help cover fuel and transport costs, including motor tax, insurance, and public transportation.



€31,797 contributed towards women's legal fees.



€38,835.30 went towards security costs (changing locks, CCTV, reinforcing doors etc.)



€20,416.58 was spent on childcare and

baby equipment and clothing costs.



€23,548.23

supported women with home relocation and rental costs



€12,305.90

was spent on supporting women and children with medical costs including dental

support and other therapies.



€11,513.43

was given for household items, including white goods, furniture, bedding and household repairs.



€5,818.70 contributed to emergency accommodation costs.



€17,175.95

contributed towards a wide range of other urgent needs women and children had, such as the purchase of a mobile phones or tablets, family support, Christmas costs, and support to buy new clothing for job interviews.

Training and Development

Developing and Enhancing the Range of Training Solutions Aimed at Supporting Frontline Professionals

Specialised Training

Women's Aid's Training and Development Department has a proven track record of designing and delivering specialist domestic violence and abuse training to local and national organisations throughout Ireland. We support organisations in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors, as well as corporate bodies, to enhance and improve responses to women who are subjected to domestic violence and abuse. All Women's Aid training is informed and guided by our decades of experience directly supporting women and by models of best practice.

Women's Aid Training and Development Department had a wide reach to multiple audiences in 2024, including healthcare professionals, social workers, community workers, employers, lawyers, family support workers, Gardaí and domestic abuse support workers. All these audiences have one thing in common, which is that they interact with victims/survivors of domestic abuse meaning they have the potential to make a positive difference to women's lives. Women's Aid training is designed to equip people with the knowledge and skills to recognise where abuse may be happening to someone and respond safely and effectively to victims/ survivors.

Training Outputs	2024	2023	2022	2021
Training events	184	138	81	60
Participants	1,422	1,162	835	600
No of organisations	106	130	116	169
Inputs and awareness sessions	33	32	41	15
No. of people	1,018	1,461	2,047	500
DV at Work session participants (DCEDIY Contract 2023-Q1 2024)	351	510		

During 2024:

Women's Aid delivered a total of 184 training events to 1,422 participants. A total of 106 organisations availed of bespoke training for groups from individual organisations, or had participants engage in mixed group trainings.

Additionally, the training department delivered a range of inputs and awareness sessions during 2024, a total of 33 events to 1,369 people, of whom 351 were employer representatives engaged in targeted awareness sessions, commissioned as part of the Women's Aid contract with the Department of Children, Disability, Equality, Inclusion and Youth (DCEDIY) to support the implementation of new statutory domestic violence leave provisions for employees in Ireland.



Domestic Abuse as a Workplace Issue

The Training and Development Department is also home to the Employer Engagement Project. Through this project, Women's Aid offers the Employer Response to Domestic Abuse training package, a specialist service for employers with the objective of creating a supportive and safe workplace environment for victims/survivors of domestic violence and abuse. During 2024 Women's Aid continued to develop its bespoke training offering to a wide variety of employers from all sectors wishing to implement Domestic Abuse policies, in line with best practice for adherence with the groundbreaking new provision for Statutory Domestic Violence Leave, that took legal effect on the 27th November 2023. Employees experiencing domestic abuse are now entitled to up to five days domestic violence leave at full rate of pay.

Employees
experiencing
domestic abuse are
now entitled to up to
five days domestic
violence leave at
full rate of pay.

In addition, in 2023 Women's Aid Training Department, in partnership with Talbot Pierce Consultants, were successful in being granted the tender with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to create resources for employers of all sizes in Ireland to help implement this new law successfully. The products of this contract included developing a policy template with guidance notes, delivery of information sessions and an email support service. The work pertaining specifically to this contract concluded at the end of Quarter 1 2024.

During 2024
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its bespoke training
offering to a wide variety of
employers from all sectors
wishing to implement
Domestic Abuse
policies

Domestic Violence as a Public Health Issue

In 2024, the Training department continued its roll-out of training, funded by the National Women and Infants Health Programme of the HSE, targeted at all maternity care staff in the 19 maternity hospitals/units across the country. This training was also offered to gynaecological health professionals. Healthcare professionals need to be alert to symptoms and signs of domestic abuse and be equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond safely and effectively to women who are being, or have been, subjected to abuse by a current or former partner.

In parallel our innovative Maternity Project concluded at the end of 2024, after its three-and-a-half- year duration. This pilot project was independently evaluated by the Centre for Effective Services (CES). It was a highly successful and pioneering collaboration between Women's Aid, the Rotunda, the National Maternity Hospital, the Coombe Hospital and Cork University Maternity Hospital that increased practical support to pregnant victims/survivors of domestic abuse, increased understanding of coercive control among maternity staff, and created safe, disclosure friendly environments in maternity hospitals and units across the country. The pilot produced a uniquely co-designed and created suite of training offerings for maternity health staff. These training sessions (e-learning, online live and in-person practice sessions) were piloted to nearly 350 maternity care staff. In parallel, regular specially designed hospital-based awareness campaigns increased visibility of the issue and built understanding of the signs of domestic abuse during pregnancy and had a dedicated outreach component, as noted above in our services section.

Healthcare
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symptoms and signs
of domestic abuse

Regular specially designed hospitalbased awareness campaigns increased visibility of the issue

Trends and Reflections for Training

The data from 2024 reflects several important trends:

Sustained growth in demand for training, particularly in healthcare and workplace settings.

A strategic focus on depth of engagement, with more organisations opting for multi-level or repeat training.

A shift toward quality over quantity in awareness sessions, prioritising meaningful engagement over large numbers.

Continued integration of survivor voices and lived experience into training content, ensuring relevance and impact.

We are proud of the reach and impact of our training work, but we also recognise the ongoing need. Domestic abuse remains a pervasive issue in Irish society, and education is one of the most powerful tools we have to challenge it.

Training plans for 2025

In 2025, we aim to:

Expand the Maternity Project to additional healthcare settings, including general practice and public health nursing.

Strengthen our evaluation processes to better capture the longterm impact of our training.

Increase our capacity to deliver DV@Work training, responding to growing demand from employers.

Develop new sector-specific training modules, including for the legal and housing

sectors.

Together, we are building a more informed, compassionate, and responsive society—one training session at a time.

Annual Impact Report 2024

Strategic Communications

Raising Public
Awareness of Domestic
Violence and Abuse

Women's Aid
leads the way in
raising awareness and
providing information
on domestic violence
and abuse to victims and
survivors, their families
and friends, their
communities and
wider society.

Public Awareness and Campaigns

Our annual public awareness campaigns and communications activities are a vital way to highlight the prevalence, nature and impact of domestic violence and abuse, intimate relationship abuse and femicide.



Allianz Stand Strong and World's Strongest Women Campaigns

In February 2024, Jennifer Zamparelli, comedian and radio and TV presenter, backed the Women's Aid and Allianz Insurance call for people across Ireland to take part in a powerful demonstration of solidarity and support for those subjected to abuse. Stand Strong was a yoga-based campaign which aimed to raise awareness and essential funds for the thousands of women every year that contact Women's Aid for support.

The award-winning World's Strongest Women TV campaign continued in 2024 running in November and December. The campaign highlights the resilience, strength and courage of women who are living through domestic abuse and pays tribute to the courageous women, and inspires others that there is a way out, giving them hope for the future by empowering them to ask for help.

At the heart of this campaign sits the powerful comparison between the world of physical strength that we are all familiar with, which is often portrayed as the only type of strength, versus the strength of the many women out there who are impacted by and living through domestic abuse.

International Women's Day

In the lead up to International Women's Day we shared 8 Facts for March 8 to raise awareness of the harm women experience in Ireland and globally. It was also an opportunity to discuss the issue of violence against women being the cause and consequence of gender inequality.



Ladbible Ireland

Considering news events which brought genderbased violence into the spotlight in July, Women's Aid partnered with LADBible Ireland to raise awareness of the severity of the issue in Ireland with our 'She's Someone' campaign.



WellFest Charity Partner

In May, Women's Aid was the charity partner for WellFest, Europe's largest health and well-being festival held in Dublin. This was an opportunity to raise awareness of domestic violence and the Women's Aid frontline support services across two days





Awareness Campaign in Health and Medical Settings

From
October 2024 to
January 2025,
Women's Aid ran
a National Helpline
Awareness campaign in over

160
health and medical

settings

From October 2024 to January 2025, Women's Aid ran a National Helpline Awareness campaign in over 160 health and medical settings reaching patients and healthcare providers across the country. The digital screen advertisement encouraged anyone subjected to domestic abuse to reach out to Women's Aid for support.

Awareness materials were also distributed to all

of the maternity units across the country

Domestic violence and maternity awareness campaign

Also in November 2024, Women's Aid ran a national Maternity Awareness campaign during the 16 days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The awareness campaign worked with four of Ireland's leading maternity hospitals. We partnered to support women subjected to domestic violence and abuse including coercive control. The partnership is between Women's Aid and the three Dublin Maternity hospitals (the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, the Rotunda Hospital, the National Maternity Hospital) and Ireland South Women and Infants Directorate (primarily Cork University Maternity Hospital). The awareness campaign utilised social media to disseminate information, and the hospitals highlighted the bespoke posters in key areas. Awareness materials were also distributed to all nineteen of the maternity units across the country for this campaign.

Annual Impact Report Launch

In June, Women's Aid launched our Annual Impact Report which outlined 40,048 disclosures to our National Freephone Helpline and Regional Face-to-Face services during 28,638 contacts in 2023. This represented an 18% increase on the previous year and the highest ever recorded by Women's Aid.

In addition to the Annual Impact Report 2023. Women's Aid also launched research

carried out with the pro bono support of Authur Cox LLP which examines the charges and convictions arising from the coercive control offence to date. The <u>Insights Report:</u> Review of the Publicly Reported Enforcement of the Coercive Control Offence examined 11 concluded cases based on publicly available sources. This review offered timely, thought-provoking insights into the nature, impact, and prosecution of coercive control since the enactment of the new offence in 2019.

Annual Impact Report 2023

40,048
disclosures to our
National Freephone
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Face-to-Face services

during **28,638**

contacts in 2023

18%

ncrease on the previous year and the highest ever recorded by Women's Aid



Women's Aid became the Charity Partner of Shamrock Rovers F.C which saw the Charity benefit from a percentage of ticket sales. Shamrock Rovers celebrated the partnership with a to specially designed season ticket which included the Women's Aid Helpline number. Pictured at the launch of the partnership (L-R): Aaron McEneff, Jess Hennessy, Lee Grace, Stephanie Zambra, Sarah Benson, Graham Burke, Aine O'Gorman

Strategic Research

More Harm, More Barriers, More Silence: Exposing the Hidden Abuse of Disabled Women

In October 2024, Women's Aid, in partnership with Trinity College Dublin and the Disabled Gender-Based Violence Taskforce, launched a groundbreaking research report titled *Disabled Women's Experiences of Intimate Partner Abuse in Ireland*. This vital study sheds light on the unique and often invisible challenges faced by disabled women experiencing abuse from intimate partners.

The findings are stark and deeply troubling. An overwhelming 98% of participants reported that their disability significantly impacted their ability to seek help and cope with abuse. Many described how abusers — often in the role of carer — weaponised their disability, withholding medication, denying basic care, and using their impairments to undermine their credibility as parents or partners. Abuse was not only physical or emotional, but also deeply entwined with the women's dependence on others for daily living.

The report also revealed that 60% of disabled women experienced abuse specifically related to their disability, including being denied support for basic needs like mobility, hygiene, and communication. 70% reported verbal abuse targeting their disability, and 68% felt professionals were less likely to believe them because of their disability status.

This research highlights a critical gap in Ireland's domestic violence response: services are often inaccessible, under-resourced, and not equipped to meet the specific needs of disabled women. Many survivors reported feeling isolated, disbelieved, and excluded from support systems that should protect them.



Women's Aid is calling for urgent action, including:

- · Improved accessibility of domestic violence services and the court system;
- Specialist training for legal professionals, support workers, and disability service providers;
- Inclusion of disabled women's needs in the Government's third national strategy on domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence.
- In a move to ensure accessibility, the Executive Summary of the report was made available in Irish Sign Language and Plain English, setting a new standard for inclusive research dissemination.

This campaign reinforces Women's Aid's commitment to ensuring that no woman is left behind in the fight against intimate partner abuse. By amplifying the voices of disabled women, we are working to dismantle the barriers that silence them — and to build a society where every woman can live free from fear and harm.



Facing Reality: Confronting the Harms of Pornography

In October 2024, Women's Aid launched a landmark research report titled Facing Reality: Addressing the Role of Pornography in the Pandemic of Violence Against Women and Girls. This powerful initiative, developed in partnership with the Sexual Exploitation Research and Policy (SERP) Institute and funded by Community Foundation Ireland, represents a critical intervention in the national conversation on gender-based violence.

The report presents stark findings: mainstream pornography is increasingly violent, degrading, and widely accessible — including to children. It documents how acts such as strangulation, verbal abuse, and spitting are now commonplace in pornographic content, blurring the lines between sex and sexual violence. These portrayals are not only harmful in themselves but are actively shaping the sexual attitudes and behaviours of both adults and young people in Ireland.

The research underscores a disturbing reality: pornography is not a private matter of consumption, but a public issue with farreaching consequences. It contributes to the normalisation of misogyny, distorts healthy sexual development, and undermines efforts to achieve gender equality. The report also highlights the urgent need for a coordinated response that includes public education, child protection, and regulation of the pornography industry's exploitative business model.

We are advocating for: Comprehensive relationship and sexuality education that addresses the influence of pornography;

Stronger protections for children and young people online;

Women's Aid is calling for decisive action.

- Public awareness campaigns to challenge harmful norms;
- Policy reform to hold the pornography industry accountable.

This campaign builds on previous research showing widespread public concern in Ireland about the impact of pornography on society. By commissioning Facing Reality, Women's Aid has taken a bold step in confronting a deeply entrenched and often overlooked driver of violence against women and girls.

As we continue our work to end domestic and sexual violence, this report serves as both a wake-up call and a roadmap. It reminds us that to create a safer, more equal society, we must be willing to face uncomfortable truths — and act on them.

Harms of Pornography

During 2024 and in parallel with the completion and launch of our commissioned research on pornography, Women's Aid continued to convene a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders who have shared concerns regarding the harms of pornography on society as an impediment to gender equality, an exploitative industry, and its serious impact on children and young people. This group is collaborating with a view to further activities to address these harms in 2025when there will be a focus on the research and identifying tangible means to action its recommendations...



Breaking the Silence:

Supporting Pregnant Women Experiencing

Domestic Abuse

In November 2024, Women's Aid published the independent evaluation of its pioneering Maternity Project, a three-and-a-half-year collaboration with four of Ireland's leading maternity hospitals. The project aimed to improve the response of maternity services to pregnant women experiencing domestic violence and coercive control — a time of heightened vulnerability and risk.

The findings were sobering. A significant number of pregnant women subjected to abuse reported that fear, shame, and concern about having their children taken away prevented them from disclosing their experiences to maternity staff[1]. These barriers to seeking help often left women isolated during one of the most critical periods of their lives.

In response, the Maternity Project delivered specialist training to nearly 350 maternity care professionals, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to recognise signs of abuse and respond appropriately. The initiative also introduced hospital-based awareness campaigns and created disclosure-friendly environments across participating hospitals, including The Rotunda, The National Maternity Hospital, The Coombe, and Cork University Maternity Hospital.

A key innovation was the establishment of a dedicated one-to-one support service in the three Dublin maternity hospitals. This service provided same-day support to 379 women referred by hospital staff, ensuring timely and compassionate intervention.

The evaluation, conducted by the Centre for Effective Services, found that the project had a positive impact on both staff and patients. Maternity professionals reported increased preparedness to ask about abuse and respond to disclosures, while women accessing care felt more supported and informed.

Importantly, the majority of women surveyed expressed support for routine screening



for domestic abuse throughout pregnancy — a clear call for systemic change in how maternity services address this issue.

This project exemplifies Women's Aid's commitment to early intervention, traumainformed care, and systemic advocacy. By embedding domestic violence awareness into maternity care, we are not only protecting women but also safeguarding the wellbeing of future generations.

As we look ahead, Women's Aid is advocating for the national rollout of this model, ensuring that every pregnant woman in Ireland has access to safe, supportive, and informed care — no matter where she lives.

Maintaining Momentum: Celebrating 50 Years of Women's Aid

In 2024, Women's Aid marked a major milestone — 50 years of unwavering advocacy, support, and action to end domestic violence against women and children in Ireland. To commemorate this landmark anniversary, we hosted a national conference titled *Maintaining Momentum* at the Clayton Hotel, Cardiff Lane, Dublin. The event brought together over 200 stakeholders, professionals, and allies from across the country to reflect on our progress and renew our collective commitment to gender equality and zero tolerance for violence against women.

The conference opened with powerful addresses from Women's Aid Chair Ailbhe Smyth and CEO Sarah Benson, who reflected



on the organisation's origins in 1974 and outlined the day's agenda. The tone was set by spoken word artist Natalya O'Flaherty, whose performances — *Think* and *Not Like Other Girls* — resonated deeply with attendees. A poignant floral installation of 267 flowers stood at the heart of the venue, each bloom representing a woman whose life was taken by violence, as recorded in our Femicide Watch.

The day featured two plenary sessions and six breakout discussions, with over 30 speakers and panellists exploring critical issues such as coercive control, the impact of abuse on children, and the role of men in ending gender-based violence.



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A key highlight was the launch of *Evolving Manhood: Attitudes, Influence and Well-being Among Irish Men*, a new research report developed in partnership with Core. The study, based on a nationally representative survey of 1,000 adults, examined perceptions of masculinity and the importance of male allyship in achieving gender equality.

Women's Aid emphasised that real progress requires men to be active participants in dismantling harmful norms and promoting equity — not only in relationships, but across all areas of society, including politics, business, and caregiving.

The conference also featured two exhibitions: one chronicling Women's Aid's five-decade journey of activism and impact, and another showcasing the Too Into You Valentine's pop-up shop, with ambassadors engaging attendees on the importance of healthy relationships for young people.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all speakers, attendees, staff, and volunteers who made the day so meaningful. Special thanks to our sponsors Arthur Cox, Allianz, and Core. Together, we are maintaining momentum — and building a future free from violence.



Femicide Watch 2024

What is Femicide?

Each year we publish updated figures on the number of women killed by their partners or expartners since we began collecting data in 1996.

Femicide is broadly understood as the killing of women and girls by men. It differs from male homicide in specific ways as most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners. It is a term used to describe killings of women and girls precisely because they are women and girls.

Femicide is both a cause and a result of gender inequality and discrimination, both of which are root causes of all violence against women.

Femicide is often linked to ongoing emotional, physical, sexual and economic abuse including coercive control perpetrated by a partner or ex-partner against a woman. The understanding of femicide as the murder of a woman because of her gender is important.

We know that although men are much more likely to be victims of homicide in general at the hands of a wide range of perpetrators, women who are murdered are highly likely to have been murdered by an intimate partner, ex-intimate partner or family member.

Why do we track Femicide figures?

Domestic violence and abuse kills women. It kills children too. The types of abuse and behaviour that precedes intimate partner femicide mirrors what we hear from women each day on our 24hr National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900 and at our regional support services.

We know just how dangerous domestic violence abuse can be and that unfortunately, the horrendous catalogue of incidents that women disclose to us every day are just the tip of the iceberg. More public awareness of the signs, signals and patterns that lead to femicide is needed.

In 2024, **5 Women**died violently in the Republic of Ireland

Patricia Muckian

Deana Walsh

Vanessa O'Callaghan

Searon Naughton

Mirjana Pap

Number of women who died violently in recent years

5 in 2024

9 in 2023

in 2022

Dedication

Each woman killed violently is an outrage. An absolute tragic loss of life resulting in utter heartache and trauma for those left behind.

The Women's Aid Femicide Watch is dedicated to all women whose voices have been silenced through violence, and whose boundless potential was robbed of them and their loved ones. We also dedicate this work to the bereaved families, friends and communities of women murdered enduring unimaginable pain of loss and absence while left to pick up the pieces.

7 in 2021

Media Coverage and Online Activity Women's Aid had a strong media presence in 2024, gaining over 3,500 mentions in broadcast,

Women's Aid had a strong media presence in 2024, gaining over 3,500 mentions in broadcast, print and online media during the year. The coverage of Women's Aid and the work we do was steady throughout the year, with particular highs in June to coincide with the launch of the Annual Impact Report for 2023, and also in the final quarter of the year due to the publication of a number of research reports and the Women's Aid 50th anniversary national conference taking place.

Strategic Communications	2024	2023	2022	2021
Media items	3,513	4,339	5,421	
Impact Report attendees	130	120	250	400
16 Days event attendees* (* in 2024 50th Anniversary Conference)	220	224	350	
No of submissions	6 (not including election manifesto)	10	13	11

Media Items breakdown*	No. of items 2024	No. of items 2023	No. of items 2022
Broadcast	1,270	1,770	2,598
Online	574	1,975	1,973
Print	1,669	594	850
Total	3,513	4,339	5,421

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Women's Aid Social Media

Women's Aid has a strong social media presence across a range of platforms, which are extremely important to our awareness raising work, and to recruit fundraisers for various campaigns.

Across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter) and BlueSky, Women's Aid had 148,979 followers at the end of 2024.

"We haven't
been able to find
anywhere at all with any
information and help
until your website
came up."

The most impactful content for Women's Aid on social media, including in 2024, was when we amplified or told the stories of survivors-victims of domestic violence and abuse. Whether this was highlighting news articles on court verdicts and sentencing, women telling their stories, or news and statements on current events.

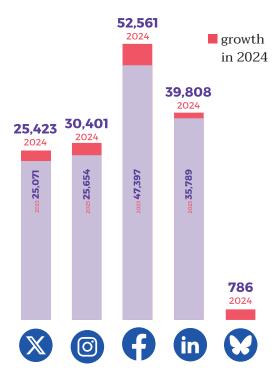
On Instagram, posts with information and other awareness raising content performed strongly, with victim-survivor stories leading engagement on Facebook and Twitter.

The Groups feature on Facebook is an extremely effective tool for our fundraising campaigns, with thousands of users joining Women's Aid Groups to discuss their fundraising efforts in 2024.

Website Sessions	2024	2023	2022	2021
Visits to www.womensaid.ie	263,345	256848	330727	213206
Visits to www.toointoyou.ie	144,131	63138	29758	17122
Visits to www.dvatwork.ie	3,053	4048		
Total	410,529	324,034	360,485	230,328

Women's Aid's Social Media Community

Women's Aid	2024	2023	2022	2021
Twitter/X	25,423	25,071	23,747	21,123
Instagram	30,401	25,654	19,070	11,209
Facebook	52,561	47,397	44,497	41,134
LinkedIn	39,808	35,789	19,881	10,085
Bluesky	786			
Too Into You				
Twitter	737	743		
Instagram	5,500	4,560		
TikTok	1,200	907		
Total	156,416	140,121	107,195	83,551



Combined Social Media Community

Influencing Government and Policy

Submissions and General Election 2024 Manifesto

Women's Aid's advocacy and policy is rooted in and informed by women's voices and experiences from across Ireland that engage in our Direct Services. It is framed by our Strategic Plan and is agile to respond to national and international contextual developments.

Working at national and international level, we provide relevant information and recommendations to government and other relevant agencies on the nature and prevalence of domestic violence, the barriers faced by women experiencing domestic violence, the inadequacies of existing legislation/systems, and information on how to improve system responses to women.

Women's Aid also prepares submissions to various government bodies, policy and lawmakers. This work aims to build political will and provide relevant information and recommendations on how to better address crimes of violence against women, provide appropriate services, and protect women and their families.

In 2024, Women's Aid made the following submissions:

- · Submission on the National Strategy for Women and Girls (November 2024).
- Submission via questionnaire on Guidelines for Expert Reports in Family Law Proceedings (September 2024).
- Submission to the Courts Service on its ICT, Digital and Data Strategy 2024-2027 (July 2024).
- Submission to the Department of Justice on the Draft Review of Child Friendly Information about the Family Justice System (March, 2025)
- Submission on the NACCA Draft Wellbeing Specification For all primary and special schools (Via Questionnaire)
- Submission to the Coimisiún na Meán Consultation on the Draft Online Safety Code for Video Sharing Platform Services (January 2024).





General Election Manifesto 2024

Women's Aid prepared our Manifesto and engaged with political parties to encourage them to prioritise the issue of gender-based violence in their own manifestos, election campaigns and any programme for government. The Women's Aid manifesto included twelve detailed recommendations for action under the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention — Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Policy Co- Ordination and Data Collection.

Our four overarching priorities for the next Government to commit to, were:

- Properly resourcing and implementing the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.
- **Ensuring** that the TNS **commitment to an intersectional focus** is consciously reflected in all actions taken and is fully resourced.
- **Ensuring** that **children are central in all actions** of the Strategy and have a voice in its delivery.
- **Combating online DSGBV**, including intimate image abuse (IIA), by preventing abuse, protecting, and providing resources for victims/survivors, addressing the harms of online pornography, and holding online platforms and social media accountable.

Following the election, Women's Aid continued to engage with those forming the new Government to ensure that the issue was a priority for the programme for government.



Too Into You Project



Too Into You

Women's Aid runs the Too Into You campaign, aimed at young people aged 18–25. It raises awareness about healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, red flags of abuse, and offers support through its dedicated site, toointoyou.ie. The campaign also reaches friends, families, and professionals, and spotlights the often-hidden abuse in young relationships. Its 2024 public awareness drive won Gold for Best Native Campaign at the Digital Media Awards.

Integrating Too Into You into Existing Programmes

Women's Aid's Too Into You Project collaborates with a number of colleagues in organisations like DRCC, SpunOut, BelongTo, The Shona Project and various higher education institutions to help raise awareness of our supports and the campaign. We do this through collaborating on content for social media, awareness raising talks and stalls, and through the sharing of resources and materials. The Project Coordinator also shares resources and materials with teachers, youth workers and others working directly with young people to help them signpost to supports for intimate relationship abuse and teach young people about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.



Submissions

Women's Aid also made a submission to the National Strategy for Women and Girls highlighting technology facilitated abuse against young women and the importance of projects like Too Into You to increase awareness of intimate relationship abuse among young people and to offer alternatives to unhealthy and controlling behaviours through evidence-based education and public awareness campaigns centred on gender equality.

70 Women's Aid

School Curriculums

Too Into You materials will be included in the updated Junior Cycle SPHE textbook, in the Relationships and Sexuality Education chapter, for use among Third Years in Irish secondary schools. It will include pages from the Yes It's Abuse report on young people's understanding of, and attitudes towards, intimate relationship abuse.

Project Evaluation

The external evaluation of the Too Into You pilot project was completed with a report produced. A series of key recommendations were made by the evaluator which were taken on board in devising a five-year strategic plan for the continuation of the Too Into You project.

Too Into You Project Activities Too Into You Awareness Campaigns

From Valentine's Day, 14th February, to International Women's Day, 8th March, Women's Aid ran the #TooIntoYou public campaign to raise awareness among young people of the red flags of abuse and the supports available at toointoyou.ie. Organic content and ads targeted at young people ran on Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok encouraging young people to take the

Relationship Quiz and to use the chat service at toointoyou.ie. The campaign also involved an in-person pop-up Valentine's experience where young people, influencers and content creators, and members of the public were invited to visit an activation in Dublin City Centre aimed at disrupting young people's idea of romance and to show how abuse can hide in relationships that seem romantic on the surface. The event received widespread support and engagement on social media. The campaign also won Gold for Best Native Campaign at the Digital Media Awards.

Organic content was also heavily driven throughout the year with content focused on online safety, setting boundaries, and emotional abuse. The Relationship Quiz at toointoyou.ie was taken 19,900 times.

The
Relationship Quiz
at toointoyou.ie was
taken

19,900 times.

TooIntoYou Social Media Reach

1,492,401



Too Into You Engagement Activities

Too Into You aims to be present in various spaces where young people are. Throughout the year, Too Into You ran awareness tents and stalls at Longitude and Electric Picnic music festivals, Shona Project Shine Festival, Transition Year conferences and college campuses across Ireland. The Too Into You project team and volunteers engaged directly with young people in a fun and engaging way to explain the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and to promote prevention and early intervention by raising

awareness of the red flags of abuse and the supports provided at toointoyou.ie. Too Into You also ran seven awareness raising talks with young people and those who support them and ran five workshops, including for young Traveller women and women in Youth Reach, to teach young people about intimate relationship abuse. Women's Aid also ran a Too Into You pop-up at our 50-year conference to highlight the project work and resources.

Too Into You	2024	2023	2022	2021
Website views	144,131	63,138	29,758	17,122
Social Media Reach	1,492,401	1,698,273		
Social Media Impressions	6.1m	9.6m	9.5m	
Awareness Information Stalls	14	9		
Workshops (pilot project)	5	5		
Awareness Raising Talks	7	10	12	

#TooIntoYou Valentine's Pop-Up Shop

On Valentine's Day 2024, Women's Aid launched a bold and thought-provoking initiative in the heart of Dublin City Centre — the #TooIntoYou Valentine's Pop-Up Shop, titled *Toxic Delights*. This innovative campaign was designed to challenge young people's perceptions of romance and shine a light on the often-hidden red flags of intimate relationship abuse.

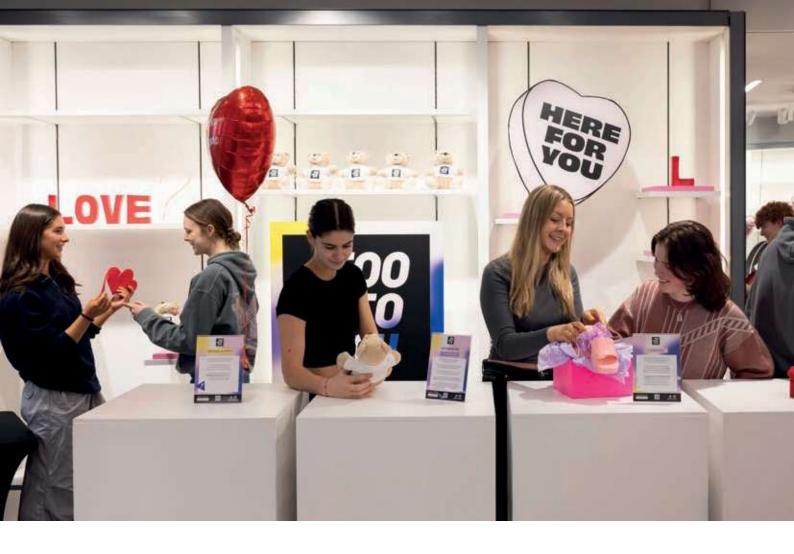
For many, early relationships can be confusing, and harmful behaviours may be misinterpreted as signs of affection or care.



"From years of supporting young women subjected to abuse, we know that it can hide in relationships that appear romantic. This campaign is about sparking a conversation and helping young people reflect on how they are treated in their relationships."

Mary Hayes, the coordinator of the #TooIntoYou campaign

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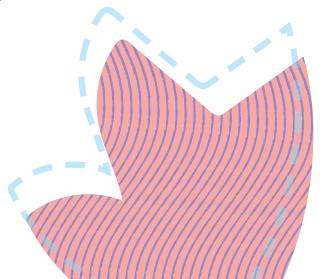
The pop-up shop marked the beginning of our four-week national #TooIntoYou awareness campaign, which ran until International Women's Day on March 8th. The campaign aimed to empower young people, particularly young women, to recognise the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviours. For many, early relationships can be confusing, and harmful behaviours may be misinterpreted as signs of affection or care. *Toxic Delights* sought to disrupt these misconceptions.

Inside the shop, visitors encountered seemingly romantic gifts with a sinister twist — love-heart balloons printed with controlling messages like "Let me see your phone," a GPS tracker disguised as a necklace, and red roses paired with dark warnings. These items were designed to provoke reflection and conversation, highlighting how abuse can be masked by gestures that appear loving on the surface.

The campaign also promoted TooIntoYou. ie, our dedicated website for young people,

which offers resources such as a relationship quiz, red flag indicators, and access to support services. The initiative was supported by the Community Foundation Ireland's Youth Fund and included new video resources tailored to young audiences.

By creatively engaging the public in a highvisibility space, *Toxic Delights* succeeded in raising awareness and encouraging critical thinking about love, control, and consent. It exemplifies Women's Aid's commitment to prevention through education and outreach, ensuring that young people are equipped to identify abuse and seek help when needed.



Section 6 Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships



Strategic Priority 2

Building and Nurturing Effective Partnerships

Over-arching Goal: To continue actively developing cross sector partnerships and strategic relationships; enabling Women's Aid to collaborate and to remain visible, active and contributing constructively to political, social and other forums responding to violence against women in all its forms.

Women's Aid values the trust of its funders and other key stakeholders. We recognise the value of mutual respect and collaborative partnerships with our funders and with peer organisations, supporters, donors, and volunteers. Ensuring that Women's Aid is a trusted partner is a centrepiece of our strategy, that supports us to work effectively with other key actors in our sector. We continue to undertake key activities that will support us to deepen and strengthen our stakeholder relationships.

During 2024 the following key objectives, under the second priority of our multiannual Strategic Plan were our primary focus:

Ensure that Women's Aid is recognised as a trusted partner to funders and agencies and other community and voluntary sector stakeholders.

In addition to full compliance and fulfilment of our service agreements with our funders during 2024, Women's Aid continued to bring the concerns and issues of women experiencing domestic violence and abuse to a number of national and local fora.

Women's Aid actively develops crosssector partnerships and strategic relationships, enabling the organisation to collaborate and to remain visible, active and contributing constructively to political, social and other for responding to violence against women in all its forms.

In 2024 Women's Aid was represented at:

- Barnardos Childhood Domestic Violence Project: Advisory Committee
- Barnardos Children Living with Domestic Violence Community of Practice
- Children and Young People's Services Committee (DLR)
- Coalition for Children Living with Domestic & Sexual Violence (CLwDSV)
- Courts Services Civic Society Forum
- DRCC Research Advisory Coercion and Intimate Partner Violence in an Irish Context
- Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women
- Family Law Court Development Committee of the Courts Service
- Family Justice Forum
- Legal Aid Board External Consultative
- Legal Aid Board External Consultative Forum - Domestic Violence Subgroup



- Pavee Point DSGBV Project Advisory Group
- Department of Justice, Public Awareness Sub-Committee
- Mary's Community Employment Project
- · The SAVE Forum
- · The Victims' Forum

In 2024, Women's Aid continued our membership of:

Charity Retail Ireland

Children's Rights Alliance

Irish Observatory on Violence against Women and Girls

National Women's Council

SAFE Ireland

The Charities Institute Ireland

The Wheel

Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)

Work with authorities, agencies, and peer organisations to inform the agenda and to influence change positively, in ways that prioritise the interests of women.

In addition to our notable membership of a range of key groupings, and our formal policy submissions, Women's Aid also foster collaborative relationships with organisations and individuals to mutually inform and strengthen responses to women. During 2024 there were meetings with a wide range of stakeholders supporting women in addiction, using homeless services and ethnic minority, disabled and migrant women.



Building and supporting volunteer engagement

Volunteers provide crucial support to our National Helpline staff team, and to our shop. All volunteers receive full training and induction relevant to their roles.

During 2024 our Helpline Volunteer Co-Ordinator continued to foster positive relationships and keep the Helpline volunteer team engaged, and our shop manager recruited and supported several volunteers for our charity shop. Volunteers are invited to all organisational events (e.g. summer party, Christmas gathering) and receive weekly updates of our 'media watch report' and other important information updates regarding organisational activities, and briefings on government or public policy initiatives to ensure they remain fully informed. They are informed and invited to support Women's Aid various public awareness campaigns during the year also.

To coincide with our annual Volunteer Appreciation Day, Women's Aid arranges a gesture of appreciation to acknowledge the wonderful contribution our volunteers make to the organisation.



Investing in Volunteers Awards

Investing in Volunteers is a national quality standard for best practice in volunteer management. In 2023 Women's Aid undertook a lengthy and rigorous process and was delighted to be awarded accreditation of its volunteer programme supported by Volunteer Ireland. This is a three-year accreditation.

The Investing in Volunteers (IiV) standards have been active since 1995 and were most recently updated in March 2021.

There are six quality areas that a volunteer involving organisation needs to work on, and be assessed on, to achieve the award:

Planning for volunteers Valuing and developing volunteers

Vision for volunteering

Recruiting and welcoming volunteers

Volunteer inclusion

Supporting volunteers

The full standard can be downloaded from www.investinginvolunteers.co.uk