

Violence against women costs society £40bn yet charities working to tackle the problem are grossly under-funded

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New figures released today show that violence against women costs society £40bn a year, more than the Government's defence budget.

The figures are published in a new report, *Hard knock life**, by New Philanthropy Capital (NPC), which highlights the lack of financial support available to charities working to tackle different types of violence against women, including sexual violence, domestic violence, honour crimes, forced marriage and trafficking.

NPC, which aims to improve the effectiveness of charities, reports that domestic violence alone costs society £20bn a year. Yet three of the most prominent charities helping to tackle domestic violence, Refuge, Women's Aid Federation of England and Eaves Housing for Women, have a combined income of just £17m. In contrast, the Donkey Sanctuary's income for 2006 was £20m, with a further £30m in reserves.

Martin Brookes, Chief Executive at NPC, commented:

"Over seven million women in the UK suffer from domestic violence at some point in their lives. That figure is unacceptably high, yet charities offering essential support and services to victims are failing to get the funding they need. We would urge donors and government to support the vital work conducted by charities highlighted in our report. Without their work, millions of women and children would struggle to find the help they need to live free from abuse."

The impact of domestic violence on women can be devastating, going beyond physical harm and affecting not only the victim but also her children, sometimes for years after the abuse has stopped.

The report highlights the positive impact a number of charities working in this area have on the women they support.

Charities such as HALT make it easier for women to access the services they need to keep safe. For example, they provide women with practical support, and a shoulder to lean on through the court process. Advocate schemes have positive results, with the rate of women staying with the court process until the end increasing from 40% to 88% and the rate of prosecutions rising from 30% to 66% when an advocate is involved. With more convictions, more women are protected from further violence.

While these results highlight the important role advocates play in helping victims, there are not enough trained advocates in the UK. NPC recommends a charity called Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), which runs accredited training programmes for advocates, to increase the number of advocates and to improve the standard of service they provide to women in need.

It costs the charity £2,250 to train an advocate. This translates to only £10 for every family helped, based on a conservative estimate that each advocate will go on to support an average of 240 women.

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*For further information about NPC, its research reports and charity recommendations, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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Notes to Editors

1. New Philanthropy Capital advises all types of donors on how to give more effectively. It identifies examples of charities with highly effective approaches to tackling problems in the sector. By recommending these charities to potential donors, NPC aims to increase the quantity and quality of resources available to the charitable sector.
2. NPC focuses on human welfare, including problems in communities and families, education, and health and disability in the UK. NPC has published research on sectors ranging from cancer to older people, and the environment to special educational needs.
3. NPC develops a detailed understanding of social problems by talking to policy-makers, practitioners, academics and other experts. Its charity recommendations are arrived at after visiting and analysing charities across the sector. Assessments are made of the achievements, the need for additional funding, the financial structure and fundraising potential, as well as the risks.
4. NPC uses its research and experience to help donors ensure they have high impact and a rewarding experience. This can involve developing a tailored giving strategy to meet specific goals, selecting which charities to support and reporting on impact. Donors can also access NPC's research and some of its recommendations at no cost on NPC's website.
5. This report, *Hard knock life*, is based on 18 months of research, including interviews with 40 leading experts in the field, such as government, police, academics authors and charities, as well as visits to and detailed analysis of more than 40 charities across the UK.
6. The costs to society mentioned in the report include the emotional costs to individual, the physical and mental health costs, the lost output to society, the costs to the legal system, social services and other agencies.
7. In addition to CAADA and HALT, NPC recommends nine other effective charities working in this field: Aanchal, ADVANCE, Glasgow Rape Crisis Centre, One25, POPPY Project, Refuge, Southall Black Sisters (SBS), Standing Together Against Domestic Violence and Tyneside Rape Crisis Centre.



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