Birmingham City Council

7-Minute Learning

The Gendered Nature of Abuse

BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

1 What does it mean?

Abuse is not experienced equally. It is shaped by gender, with women and girls disproportionately affected because of their sex or gender.

2 Why is it gendered?

- Rooted in gender inequality and power imbalances.
- Driven by harmful attitudes, such as misogyny.
- Used to control, harm or limit women and girls' freedom, safety and opportunities.

7 Key messages

- VAWG is a gendered issue that requires a targeted and sustained response.
- Tackling harmful attitudes and inequality is essential.
- Everyone has a role in creating safer, more equal communities.



3 How it shows up

Women and girls are more likely to experience:

- Domestic abuse and coercive control
- Sexual violence
- Stalking and harassment
- So-called 'honour'-based abuse
- Other forms of VAWG, both online and offline

6 What this means for professionals

- Recognise and understand the gendered patterns of abuse.
- Assess risk with a gender-informed lens.
- Consider the wider context, including inequality and discrimination.
- Use a trauma-informed and person-centred approach.

4 Why it matters

- Leads to higher levels of harm, risk and repeat victimisation.
- Has long-term impacts on physical and mental health.
- Affects children, families and communities.
- Perpetuates inequality and limits life chances.

5 The bigger picture

VAWG is both a cause and consequence of wider gender inequality, including:

- Unequal power dynamics
- Harmful stereotypes
- Discrimination and bias
- Social and economic inequality
- Harmful online cultures

Working together to safeguard people and end violence against women and girls in Birmingham.