

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE, ACT NOW!



Educate Intervene Advocate

Women's rights are human rights. Violence against women is an unacceptable human rights violation. The YWCA must prioritize the elimination of all forms of violence and create a just and safe world especially for women and children. As women against violence let us say no to violence against women and act now.

**ACTION PLAN FOR YWCAS
FOR QUADRENNIUM 2018-2022**





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1. WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)

Violence against women also known as gender-based violence are violent acts committed exclusively or primarily against women because of their gender. It is estimated that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives. However, some national studies show that up to 70 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime. The United Nations General Assembly defines “violence against women” as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

2. WHY IS THERE SUCH WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Female subjugation is the ‘social norm’ of a patriarchal culture. VAW is a pattern of behaviour intended to establish and maintain control over women. Patriarchal values and their social norms normalise such acts of violence. We live in a patriarchal society that allows men the privilege of a superior status, power and control. Women are deemed inferior and objects for service and sex. From birth, the patriarchal system conditions men and women to take on gender roles that are considered masculine or feminine. Our cultural traditions and rituals, based on patriarchal values and gender discrimination further reinforce that men are dominant and women are submissive (covering of the head, obedience, weaker sex, male protection etc). Pornography, women as sex objects, domestic violence and sexual assault are social norms in a patriarchal society. The common manifestations of gender inequality and discrimination are son preference; dowry; domestic violence; low female work participation, wage inequality and economic dependence; sexual violence, trafficking and honor killing.

3. WHO PERPETUATES VAW?

Violence against women could be perpetrated by persons of either gender. Family, friends, relatives, colleagues, teachers, employers, neighbours and even the state itself is the perpetrator. Patriarchal values give men power and control over women. Violence against women is perceived as normal. In the name of protection, women are controlled by social rules/ codes or behavior that are discriminatory and restrictive (dress code, staying at home, not go out alone, not permitted to work and have a career). Both men and women under the influence of patriarchal values use violence to control women when they cross these rules or codes. These restrictions and limitations of freedom, choices and opportunities makes women powerless and increases her vulnerability and risk to abuse, violence and exploitation.

Manikandan (upper caste 25 year old boy) stalked and eve teased Nandini (dalit minor girl) till she gave in and submitted. (Manikandan and Nandini worked together as daily wage labour on a road construction site). When she became pregnant he tried to make her abort the foetus. When she demanded to marry, he exploited her vulnerable situation forced her to run away with him using the pretext of intercaste marriage and with four others brutally gangraped her, removed and burned the foetus, and killed her.

30% of the victims of sexual violence were assaulted by their intimate partners¹. **Most often, women face violence from persons well known to them** –Domestic violence is used to maintain power and control over women in the household. Both men and women become perpetrators of this violence. Sexual harassment like stalking and eve teasing is misread to be 'courtship' and 'normal'. Women are conditioned to internalise the patriarchal values of being objects of 'beauty, desire, sex' and become vulnerable to perpetrators of sexual exploitation and violence. This vulnerability is exploited in both private and public spaces.

WOMEN GET SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY STRANGERS? WHY ?!

While violent offenders are most often known to their victims (intimate or estranged partners and spouses, family members, relatives, peers, colleagues, etc.), acts of violence and abuse may also be committed by strangers like in the case of Nirbhaya – the gang rape victim of Delhi. Men with patriarchal values see women as objects of sexual pleasure. The deeply entrenched patriarchal value of victim blaming and being judgmental – why did you wear that dress? / why did you go out alone?/ why were you in that place at that time?/ why did you talk back?/ why did you talk to him?/ puts the guilt and accountability on to the victim. It justifies the perpetrator, decriminalises the act of violence and normalises the masculine power and control over women as sex objects. Stalking, eve teasing, trafficking, sexual assault, pornography, rape, abusing women verbally and physically etc is so common and rarely charged as crimes.

WHEN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS A POLITICAL WEAPON:

Rape, molestation and other forms of violence become weapons between rival groups having enmity with each other. In situations of conflict and when the status quo of power and dominance is threatened, the dominant group or persons use women's bodies to 'teach lessons' to the 'other' and maintain power and control. An upper caste community will rape and assault the women of a dalit or tribal community to

In June 2011, P. Krishnaveni a dalit woman became panchayat president and took charge. The upper caste men expected her to sit on the floor and be a puppet. But she sat on the chair, presided over the meetings and took decisions. This became a threat to the dominant caste group and they began to verbally abuse her and threatened her. On the night of 13 June 2011 they waylaid her and attacked her on the ears, wrists, fingers and neck (where she wore her jewellery).

'show them their place' or 'teach them a lesson'. Rape figures prominently in most of the caste and communal conflicts around the country. Physical, emotional, verbal and economic violence is used when women challenge and become a threat to male power and dominance. It is common to hear staff of government offices, banks, transport systems, hospitals etc use disrespectful and abusive language against women when they are trying to access their rightful services and entitlements. Physical force is often used to exercise power and control.

¹ World Health Organisation

FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	SEXUAL VIOLENCE	EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE
<p>Using physical force which results in pain, discomfort or injury; Hitting, pinching, hair-pulling, arm-twisting, strangling, burning, stabbing, punching, pushing, slapping, beating, shoving, kicking, choking, biting, force-feeding, or any other rough treatment; Assault with a weapon or other object; Threats with a weapon or object; Deliberate exposure to severe weather or inappropriate room temperatures; and, Murder. Trafficking Acid attack Foeticide and infanticide Domestic violence</p>	<p>Touching in a sexual manner without consent (i.e., kissing, grabbing, fondling); Forced sexual intercourse; Forcing a person to perform sexual acts that may be degrading or painful; Beating sexual parts of the body; Forcing a person to view pornographic material; forcing participation in pornographic filming; Using a weapon to force compliance; Exhibitionism; Making unwelcome sexual comments or jokes; leering behaviour; Withholding sexual affection; Denial of a person's sexuality or privacy (watching); Humiliating, criticizing or trying to control a person's Forced prostitution; Sexuality; Purposefully exposing the person to HIV-AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections.</p>	<p>Name calling; humiliating insulting making fun of the person Blaming all relationship problems on the person; Using silent treatment; Not allowing the person to have contact with family and friends; Destroying possessions; Jealousy; Intimidating the person; causing fear to gain control; Threatening to hurt oneself if the person does not cooperate; Threatening to abandon the person; and, Threatening to have the person deported (if they are an immigrant).</p>

PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE	SPIRITUAL VIOLENCE	CULTURAL VIOLENCE
<p>Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in an individual to gain control. Threatening to harm the person or her or his family if she or he leaves; Threatening to harm oneself; Threats of violence; Threats of abandonment; Stalking / criminal harassment; Destruction of personal property; Verbal aggression; Socially isolating the person; Not allowing access to a telephone; Not allowing a competent person to make decisions; Inappropriately controlling the person's activities; Treating a person like a child or a servant; Withholding companionship or affection;</p>	<p>Spiritual (or religious) violence occurs when someone uses an individual's spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate or control that person. Not allowing the person to follow her or his preferred spiritual or religious tradition; Forcing a spiritual or religious path or practice on another person; Belittling or making fun of a person's spiritual or religious tradition, beliefs or practices; and, Using one's spiritual or religious position, rituals or practices to manipulate, dominate or control a person.</p>	<p>Cultural violence occurs when an individual is harmed as a result of practices that are part of her or his culture, religion or tradition. Committing "honour" or other crimes against women where women especially may be physically harmed, shunned, maimed or killed for: Child marriage Falling in love with the "wrong" person; Seeking divorce; Infidelity; committing adultery; Being raped; Cultural violence may take place in: Lynching or stoning; Banishment; Abandonment of an older person Female circumcision; Rape-marriage; Sexual slavery; and, Murder Denying choice in marriage Foeticide and infanticide</p>

VERBAL ABUSE	FINANCIAL ABUSE	NEGLECT
<p>Verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to an individual.</p> <p>Recalling a person's past mistakes;</p> <p>Expressing negative expectations;</p> <p>Expressing distrust;</p> <p>Threatening violence against a person or her or his family members;</p> <p>Yelling;</p> <p>Lying;</p> <p>Name-calling;</p> <p>Insulting, swearing;</p> <p>Withholding important information;</p> <p>Unreasonably ordering around;</p> <p>Talking unkindly about death to a person; and,</p> <p>Telling a person she or he is worthless or nothing but trouble.</p>	<p>Financial abuse occurs when someone controls an individual's financial resources without the person's consent or misuses those resources.</p> <p>Not allowing the person to participate in educational programs;</p> <p>Forcing the person to work outside the home;</p> <p>Refusing to let the person work outside the home or attend school;</p> <p>Controlling the person's choice of occupation;</p> <p>Illegally or improperly using a person's money, assets or property;</p> <p>Not allowing access to bank accounts, savings, or other income;</p> <p>Giving an allowance and then requiring justification for all money spent;</p> <p>Selling the house, furnishings or other possessions without permission;</p> <p>Forging a signature on pension cheques or legal documents;</p> <p>Misusing a power of attorney, an enduring power of attorney or legal guardianship;</p> <p>Not paying bills;</p> <p>Living in a person's home without paying fairly for expenses; and,</p> <p>Destroying personal property.</p>	<p>Neglect occurs when someone has the responsibility to provide care or assistance for an individual but does not.</p> <p>Failing to meet the needs of a person who is unable to meet those needs alone;</p> <p>Abandonment in a public setting; and,</p> <p>Not remaining with a person who needs help.</p> <p>Physical neglect</p> <p>Disregarding necessities of daily living, including failing to provide adequate or necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nutrition or fluids; ○ Shelter; ○ Clean clothes and linens; ○ Social companionship; and, ○ Failing to turn a bed-ridden person frequently to prevent stiffness & bed-sores.

LAWS WOMEN SHOULD KNOW

1. **PROHIBITION OF CHILD MARRIAGE ACT 2006:** Marriages where brides are under 18 years and grooms under 21 years are illegal and subject to action under the law
2. **SPECIAL MARRIAGE ACT 1954:** For marriages between persons of different faiths and castes
3. **DOWRY PROHIBITION ACT 1961:** taking or giving of dowry in any form at the time of the marriage to the bride or the bridegroom and their family is to be penalised.
4. **INDIAN DIVORCE ACT, 1969:** The Indian Divorce Act allows the dissolution of marriage, mutual consent, nullity of marriage, judicial separation and restitution of conjugal rights. Family Courts are established to file, hear, and dispose of such cases
5. **MATERNITY BENEFIT ACT, 1961:** It states that a woman employee who has worked in an organisation for a period of at least 80 days during the 12 months preceding the date of her expected delivery is entitled to receive maternity benefits, which includes maternity leave, nursing breaks, medical allowance, etc.
6. **MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT, 1971:** The Act came into effect in 1972, was amended in 1975 and 2002. The aim of the Act is to reduce the occurrence of illegal abortion and consequent maternal mortality and morbidity. It clearly states the conditions under which a pregnancy can be ended or aborted and specifies the persons qualified to conduct the same.
7. **SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) ACT, 2013:** To ensure women's safety at workplace – the use of language with sexual overtones, invasion of private space with a male colleague hovering too close for comfort, subtle touches and innuendoes.
8. **INDECENT REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN (PREVENTION) ACT, 1986:** prohibits indecent representation of women through advertisement or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner.
9. **NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN ACT, 1990:** represents the rights of women in India and provides a voice for their issues and concerns.
10. **EQUAL REMUNERATION ACT, 1976:** prevents discrimination in terms of remuneration. It provides for payment of equal recompense to men and women workers.
11. **THE CRIMINAL LAW (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2013 ALSO KNOWN AS THE ANTI-RAPE BILL & THE NIRBHAYA ACT, 2013.**
 - maintains life imprisonment for rape as the maximum sentence, yet sets down the death penalty for repeat offenders and those whose victims are left in a "vegetative state".
 - expands the meaning of rape to include penetration of the mouth, anus, urethra or vagina with the penis or any other object without consent.
 - defines stalking and voyeurism as crimes with punishments up to seven years.
 - Gang rape has been recognised as an offence, while sexual harassment has been redefined to include unwelcome advances with sexual overtures and showing pornography without consent.
 - The age of consent of sex has been kept at 18. The law also punishes police and hospital authorities with imprisonment of up to two years if they fail to register a complaint or treat a victim.

TURN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN UPSIDE DOWN TO WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

ACT NOW: EDUCATE INTERVENE ADVOCATE

EDUCATE

- Learn and be informed on all the laws and policies pertaining to women rights and violence against women
- consciously develop a sensitive perspective on the issue, to be non-patriarchal and non-judgmental
- Create awareness and knowledge on women rights - workshops, seminars, focused group discussions etc with an external expert as a facilitator so that we are not diverted by patriarchal values and attitudes.
- Print information and education materials like pamphlets, booklets, posters, etc and distribute in schools, colleges and workplaces where women are present in large numbers.
- Put up posters in the YWCA premises especially targeting hostel residents and young women
- Mobilise and motivate young women to lead discussion, debates, events and programmes on women rights and violence against women
- Whenever there is an incident of violence against women spread awareness on the issue through pamphlets and leaflets.
- Raise resources and print information, education and communication material on important legal instruments like domestic violence act, Anti Rape act, anti sexual harassment at work place act, etc and distribute it widely among members of the public.
- Hold workshops for police personnel, bureaucrats and officers on women rights
- Look around in your area and locality and identify women friendly spaces and organizations to acknowledge and appreciate them. This will increase women friendly spaces.
- Print a one page notice on women rights and a poster and put it up in all the rooms of the hostel, mess and other public areas.
- Make every person who comes into the YWCA aware of women rights and the urgency of having a violence free world for women and children
- Make every person who comes into the YWCA sign a pledge that they will never commit or support any act of violence against women.
- Hold monthly workshops, seminars etc for staff and members of YWCA on violence against women

INTERVENE

- Create and set aside a dedicated space that is safe, supportive and non judgmental especially for young women to speak out freely about their challenges and fears. This does not require any funds - only time, energy, commitment and effort.
- Reach out to communities near you to inform and educate on women rights to a violence free life. Once we start reaching out in this manner, communities will identify with us and seek us out for support on issues of violence
- Visit victims of domestic violence with a non-threatening and non-judgmental attitude to give support and counseling
- Initiate skill development programme for young women to increase their self-esteem and confidence, reduce their vulnerability and prevent violence
- Open short stay safe spaces and crisis centers for battered women with free legal aid and vocational training
- Identify women lawyers and counselors who will volunteer their services for victims and provide a space to help them meet and counsel victims of violence

ADVOCATE

- Establish network and solidarity with other like-minded organizations and run campaigns against violence against women
- Submit memorandums to the district collector and officers on implementation of schemes and policies for welfare and protection of women
- Make efforts to be a member of the district women welfare board, family courts or government counseling centers.
- Maintain good relationships with senior police officers so that in the event of contacting them for help with a victim of violence we will have a supportive police force.
- Use every event and special day to spread messages on women's rights to a violence free life.
- Set aside a day in the week or month to express using some symbols like wearing black or a t-shirt with a printed message or a badge etc to express your stand as women against violence

**BE STRONG AND UNCOMPROMISING TO TAKE UP A STAND
FOR WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE
AND SHOUT TO THE WORLD THAT YOU ARE
A WOMAN AGAINST VIOLENCE.**

¹ These bullets for actions are not exhaustive. Each YWCA must study and apply the best action suitable for them.

ACTION PLAN FOR YWCAS FOR QUADRENNIUM 2018-2022

2018 -2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<p><u>PREVENT (EDUCATE)</u> Design and deliver innovative programs that engage and educate individuals and the community</p> <p><u>PRIMARY PREVENTION:</u> Plan programmes to build awareness on Women Rights/ Laws and policies on women</p> <p><u>INFORMATION MATERIAL:</u> Prepare and distribute in schools, colleges and workplaces</p> <p>Display Posters on YWCA premises especially in Hostels</p> <p><u>TRAIN AND SENSITIZE:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police personnel, bureaucrats and judiciary • Men- to be partners • Parents to learn positive parenting skills • Youth cyber safety issues and use/access of social media • Staff and YWCA members to consciously promote sensitive perspective <p><u>TAKE A STAND:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up against incidents of violence • Express stand through symbols like wearing black badge/ t-shirt • Identify unsafe spaces and demand action 	<p><u>IMPLEMENT (INTERVENE /ADVOCATE)</u> Lead sustained and constructive actions against Violence</p> <p><u>GET INVOLVED:</u> Plan social marketing and awareness campaigns to encourage young people to develop healthy and respectful relationships.</p> <p><u>BUILD NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH:</u> With Organisations -For policy changes; campaigns; implementing of laws and Government schemes for women</p> <p>With Schools, community, religious, and other groups to prevent, respond to, and speak out against violence</p> <p>With Media to build positive media representations of women.</p> <p>With Men groups- to promote gender equality and to encourage men to speak against violence.</p> <p>With Hospitals, law enforcement and service providers to extent immediate support to battered women, for filing zero FIR; Protection against intimidation</p> <p>With Lawyers and counsellors to volunteer free services to victims</p> <p><u>BE VISIBLE IN ACTION:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as Members on Complaints Committee on Sexual Harassment at work place/Protection Officers/Service Providers / Women welfare Board, Child Welfare Board; Family courts. • Through Social Issues Committees to react swiftly against act of violence and build support for interventions at all levels 	<p><u>REHABILITATE</u> YWCA's to become agents of change</p> <p><u>WITHIN THE THREE YEARS EVERY YWCA TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short stay homes • Safe space for young women • Counselling centers • Para Legal/Legal Aid Cell • Skill development Centres <p><u>SURVIVOR NETWORKS:</u> To Support survivors and parents/ spouses/ families to build and strengthen relationships</p> <p><u>WATCH GROUPS:</u> in communities to intervene on issues of Violence and to study the schemes and policies for their effectiveness</p> <p><u>COLLEGE HUBS /Y DEEPA CRECHES/BALWADIS</u> to promote gender equality</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>
<p>END OF EACH YEAR DOCUMENT IMPACT AND EVALUATE WORK IN TERMS OF OUTREACH/ FULFILLING OF THE YWCAS VISION AND MISSION</p>		

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