

Through the

Looking Glass

Activism
it's a girl thing

You can take action on issues you feel are important and here are some tools you can use!

Activism It's a Girl Thing

This is a speech about young women and activism by Aoife Campbell, a member of The Y Factor steering group. This speech was part of the Countess Markievicz School 2014.



You can watch it on our website here <http://www.yfactor.ie/index.php/blog/article/watch-aoife-campbells-amazing-speech>.

Alternatively, you can photocopy and share an abridged version of this speech (below) and discuss some of the points brought up within.

Start:



The Y Factor is a youth initiative of the National Women's Council of Ireland. The idea behind the project is to build a sustainable movement for equality among young women and men between the ages of 16 and 25.

Embodying several different pieces of action, the project works with 2nd level students and youth group participants throughout Ireland with the aim of increasing understanding of gender discrimination and to enhance young people's capacity to challenge and address discrimination.

The Y Factor is also a platform which allows young people to contribute to public debate around the issues of gender inequality, aiming to encourage and support leadership amongst young women.

Often, when young women are considered in the media, within online platforms, in social policy and by figures of authority, the rhetoric which surrounds us is

inaccurate, unhelpful and ultimately disempowering. Despite the rights for women won by brave and progressive groups, it is still increasingly difficult to be a young person in Irish society.

- We are simultaneously encouraged to resent and police our bodies within a deeply misogynist culture and are unable to establish any ownership over that same body under restrictive State policy which refuses to effectively legislate for reproductive choices.
- We still face stigma and significant financial cost when we attempt to access reproductive health care which is legislated for under Irish law.
- We are expected to emigrate from an economy that prioritised bond holders and bankers over the security of decent work and conditions for the next generation; failing this, we are expected to live on less than €100 a week and to take up exploitative work schemes

which devalue our labour.

- Thousands of young women are living in especially vulnerable situations, such as direct provision, many are living in inadequate and inhumane housing situations and many are homeless.

Poverty is a girl thing, sexual violence is a girl thing, and lack of reproductive rights is a girl thing.

Alongside the basic human rights being eroded here, these young women don't have a voice on any of the issues that affect them.

We cannot talk about women without talking about the gender norms which police what it means to be a woman and equally what it means to be a man.

Young men in our society are restricted by the demands of their own gender, which is not supportive of seeking help in times of distress or prioritising emotional needs over the demands of a limiting and often unhealthy masculine role.

We have to **empower** young people to be critical of the ways in which they experience gender and to challenge areas where they experience inequality. Politics should not be relegated only to the Dáil and the Seanad, politics is everywhere. The informal sector of care, reproductive rights and poverty which is uniquely feminised are especially political - the

voices of young women here need to be heard. We need to make these areas public, debate about them and demand changes to the policies, laws and norms which inform them, in our families, schools, in our communities and beyond.

This form of politics and activism is happening, for example, in youth and community groups which campaign tirelessly to retain their already limited funding; in campaigns like 'DON'T BE THAT GUY' which, spreading over colleges in Ireland makes a stand against the myth that sexual violence is ever the fault of the victim. Activism is happening every time we are media critical and when we encourage others to reject harmful and disrespectful advertising. For example the EU Commission's attempt at highlighting the lack of women in science with their highly offensive 'science is a girl thing' video, fostering a culture where it's normal, logical and empowering to inform such institutions that sexualising the women you apparently want in science is embarrassing and wrong when actually as it stands:

To end, young people need feminism, we need to have a voice and to foster the confidence and bravery required to speak even when nobody asked, to criticise and advocate alternatives to, the roles, policies and institutions which restrict us, to work together in solidarity to demand the services and supports we need. ”

Anger, organisation, activism and advocacy - its a girl thing.

Taking Action

Young people can be political and active in their local area; this section shows them how.

'Lobbying' is trying to influence the actions of decision-makers to benefit certain groups.

Begin by identifying the issue or problem that you want to see changed and what you want to do about it.

- What change do you want to see?
- What is in place now that needs to change to achieve this?
- What actually has to be done to make that change happen?

WHO HOLDS THE POWER?

- Who has the power to make decisions about your issue?
- Who has the power to influence the decision makers?
- Have you included those directly affected by the issue? Their lived experiences are powerful evidence.

BE PREPARED

- Research your issue. Find out how much support there is for your issue and who is against your argument
- Look at how similar situations have been dealt with in the past.

BUILD SOLIDARITY

- Contact other organisations working on the same or similar issues
- Are there organisations/projects who do not work on that issue but who would support it.



Some actions you can take to build your lobbying campaign are:

- Organise a workshop/seminar to raise awareness of the issue and invite local groups and decision-makers
- Organise a protest march to highlight the issue
- Use press releases or photo opportunities to get media attention
- Organise a letter-writing or emailing campaign
- Organise a meeting with your TDs or Councillors
- Use online tools, petitions e.g. Change.org, Facebook and Twitter

PLANNING IS CRUCIAL!

Before you start, consider the 5 Ws: Why? What? Who? Where? When?

Why are you organising this event? What do you hope to achieve? How do the goals of the event fit in with the group's goals and aims?

What is it going to be about? Don't try to cover too much in one event. What kind of event will you hold? Will there be guest speakers? Information stands? Workshops? Drama or musical pieces?

Who is the event for? Who is your audience? Local community? Other groups in your project? Politicians, decision-makers and media?

Where is it going to be held? Where will be the best space for the audience you expect to come? Is it wheelchair accessible?

When is the right time? When is the right time to get as many of the people you want to come there? Evening or daytime? Are there particular dates or times of the year most suited to highlighting your issue?

In organising your event, you should make sure that specific people in your group take responsibility for different jobs so that they are not forgotten. Some things to consider are:

Running Order: You will have to draw up a running order of the day so that you know what time things are expected to happen. This will give structure to the event and make sure you DO NOT PANIC! You will also need to let guest speakers know what time you expect them to speak and for how long.

Speakers: If you have guest speakers, you must check with them if they need to use a computer for presenting on a big screen. Do you have internet or should they bring their presentations with them?

Publicity: How will you advertise this event? You might do posters or email out invites to the event. You will know your audience and how to communicate with them. Be sure to leave enough time for people to make arrangements to be there.

Budget: How much will the event cost? Do you have to pay for a venue? Will you provide tea and coffee? Will the posters/fliers cost?

Accessibility: Is your venue accessible by wheelchair? If not, do you have a ramp?

WHY NOT CONSIDER?

MARCH
08

INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY

OCTOBER
11

INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF THE GIRL

Organise a Protest

Many groups wish to make their cause more visible. Protests or rallies are a great way to do this. In one way, these show that people are dissatisfied with the status quo (the ways things are) and in another, it helps people feel supported and energises the cause.

It also allows people who are not affected directly by the issue to become involved and become allies (supporters) of the cause. These relationships can be very valuable in creating movements.

→ BE CLEAR ABOUT THE AIMS OF YOUR PROTEST

Decide together what you hope to achieve by holding a protest. Is your main aim to show support, raise awareness or to influence decision-makers? You must agree this so that after the protest when you are evaluating, you can see the impact. A protest which has a specific 'ask' around something topical will get more public attention.

→ WHO ELSE CARES ABOUT THIS?

Think about the groups in your community or other groups who are active on this subject. Do a search through Google or Facebook to see who can be of help to you. Contact them and tell them of your intentions. Maybe you could work together and many hands

make light work. This will also mean that all of their supporters will be invited also. Don't forget to contact NWCI for support!

→ SEND OUT NOTICE OF THE PROTEST TO ALL YOUR SUPPORTERS

You can advertise this publicly and by email. You should consider setting up a Facebook page as this has wide reach and your supporters can engage with you and share the information with their friends, family and allies. Tell people what the protest is about; the time, location and speakers. Remember, you don't need a huge crowd to make an impact!

→ WHO SHOULD SPEAK?

Invite interested politicians and key supporters, musicians/poets and give each of them 5 minutes maximum to speak about the cause you are promoting. Consider asking key community leaders from your own community to speak. Make sure someone from your group says a few words too! You should explain why your group felt this was a relevant issue to campaign on.

→ RUNNING ORDER

The group in general will have to be available to take questions and steer people in the right direction; however, you should appoint someone to introduce the issue and give a brief background as to what you are protesting about, introduce the speakers, keep speakers on time and motivate the crowd.

→ WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO HOLD YOUR PROTEST?

This depends on who you want to attend and who you are aiming the protest at. If you want to attract TDs in the Dáil, lunchtime is probably the best time. If you want to attract local councillors then at the start or finish of their council meeting would be a good time. If it is a local solidarity protest you must look to the needs of your community to find the best fit.

→ WHERE TO HOLD YOUR PROTEST?

Many protests are held outside the Dáil and this is the best place if your message is aimed at politicians. If you are aiming it at local councillors, then outside the

offices of the local council is appropriate. In general, choosing the place where the people you are trying to influence will be and where supporters can come but also where you can catch of by passers also. In this regards similar to choosing the appropriate time, the place will be decided by your aims.

→ MAKE CONTACT WITH THE GARDAÍ

You must let the Gardaí know when and where you plan to organise a protest. If it is a march, you need to tell them the route and they can re-direct the traffic to make it safe for you pass through.

How to Get Attention for Your Protest

Put simply; make sure your protest is colourful, well-advertised and makes lots of noise!

No matter how serious the issue you are marching for, be creative and fun in your approach. Keep an upbeat atmosphere going and you will attract a lot more people and raise greater awareness.

- **Decide on a colour or theme for the protest which will be very visible.** One which is funny or a play on words will communicate easily what the protest is about for people passing by. They may want to join in!
- **Make large banners or posters with your key messages on them.** Short catchy slogans or striking statistics are good as they are easy to read and the media can pick up on them.
- **Prepare a few chants and have a few people ready to sing them with you to get the crowd going.** Can you get a megaphone? Contact other organisations who have held protests before and they may lend theirs to you.
- **Organise some drummers to make some noise which is essential to draw and keep attention on your protest.** The more noise the better. A drum can be sticks and buckets and need not involve a cost.
- **If there is a community arts group in your area see if you can get them on board.**
- **Identify key people in your group to look out for safety issues and to direct media and others to appropriate people.** (Use the running order template to assign roles to specific people). These people should wear luminous or hi-visibility jackets to be identified easily.

Some Considerations

- It is vital that before your protest you agree on a code of conduct and communicate this at the start of the event. Ensure that all parties there agree that the use of violence, threats or insulting language will not be tolerated.
- It is also important to know your rights such as whether you have the right to hand out leaflets. You do!
- Picking a time and place which disturbs a large amount of people may not garner sympathy for your cause. Try to avoid times such as school ending and peak hour traffic etc.
- Always clean up after the event. Remember that people have to use the space after you. The idea is to raise awareness and win people over to the issue at the same time.

You should engage the media before the event to convince them to cover your protest. This will gain the most amount of attention and ensure engagement with your cause after the event. There are a number of ways of doing this, such as:

- Doing a press release
- Having a well-versed spokesperson briefed to speak with reporters
- Social media presence
- Writing blogs or articles prior to the protest promoting it.

Media

Once you have identified the issue and established your goals, you may wish to engage with the wider media about your issue or to promote the actions you are taking. Once again, defining your target audience is key.

You will find that different media sources communicate more with different stakeholders; for example, young people may be easily reached through social media sites like Facebook and Twitter but you may have to go on local radio to access older people and print and a wide range of media to get the attention of politicians.

Create Key Messages

Take your time and work out together what you want people to take away from your action. Use the K.I.S.S. method 'Keep It Simple Silly'. Always stick to the same messaging.

What are the 3 – 4 most important points you want to raise. Define your message in a way that connects with your target audience's values. Link your issue to your target audience's interests. Ask yourself:

- Why would this issue be important to them?
- Why should they care?
- If they act on this issue, how will it benefit them?

Elevator Pitch

One way which is helpful to get everyone on message is to prepare your elevator pitch. This is a tool based on the idea that if you were to get into an elevator with someone you want to convert to your cause, how you would convince them in the two minutes it takes to get to the correct floor.

This can be a fun and interesting way to work out among you what is important for you in what you are doing. It also helps bring everyone onto the same page as you all agree an eventual pitch which will be your key message moving forward. Give it a try!

Who is Listening?

Media consists of television, radio, newspapers, magazines and online media. These can be national or local and can be used in different ways for your different needs.

Some media outlets you could use are: school and campus newspapers/campus radio/community radio/community television/local radio and national radio/national television/local newspapers, national newspapers/community organisation websites and E-zines/social media platforms.

You have to ensure that your spokespersons are:

- Well informed on the subject and the key messages
- Can speak/write well and confidently
- Are good listeners

A Press Release

Most news stories are generated by press releases. A newspaper receives thousands of press releases every day.

It is important to do all you can to make sure that your release is seen, read and used.

The key questions, (the 5 Ws – What, When, Where, Who, Why) should appear in the press release in order of importance. If you can fit them all in in the first or second paragraph, it will increase your chances of your press release being read and understood early on.

A good press release has a good headline, uses active language and keeps it simple.

The layout usually consists of

- Your project logo
- Heading
- 'For immediate release' or Embargo (if you want it to be held until a specific time)
- Dates
- Paragraphs
- Quotations
- Ends
- Editors' notes



Websites often upload their press releases to their website; see the press releases section on the NWCI website: http://www.nwci.ie/?/news/press_releases/P270

In Summary Communicating Your Issue

- Build links with local community groups around local issues. Make connections with community leaders to be ambassadors for your issue
- Use local media to spread awareness and understanding of what you are doing
- Create your own social media site to communicate all the parts of what you are doing. Ask for supporters/volunteers here
- Find creative ways to portray your action
- Present your issue in a way that makes it easy to understand and that explains why you need to take action
- Put out a press release
- Start a blog or spread the message using your social media platforms
- Avoid or explain jargon (words specific to the issue that others might not understand)
- Give photographers a caption that explains your action and who you are
- Create a code of conduct that everyone agrees which is around calm and respectful presentation
- Keep the speakers short and sweet. Try to line up a diverse group of speakers so that as many people as possible will feel involved

(Adapted from Be the Change Toolkit – Comhlámh and NWCI's A Handbook for Women's Groups Working Together for Equality)

Getting Your Voice Heard

Ireland is a democracy, which means that we elect representatives to speak for us in a public forum. The Government is responsible for making sure that we are informed, free to publicly criticise them and able to present alternatives.

We have both a right and a duty to have a say in how our Government works and what it does. If we are not involved, our Government can make decisions without being aware of our needs or opinions. Our job as members of society is to raise issues of concern with them. There are many ways in which we can have our issues heard and try to effect change in society.

Who's Who?

In Ireland, we have two houses of representatives

- **Dáil Eireann**
(House of Representatives)
- **Seanad Eireann**
(the Senate)

There are 166 Teachta Dálas (Irish for members of parliament more commonly referred to as TDs) representing 43 areas (constituencies) who are directly elected by the people.

Each area has 3-5 representatives and they are either members of a political party or they are independent representatives.

You must be over 18 years to vote. You must be over 21 to stand for election to Dáil Eireann.

You must be over 35 to be the President of Ireland

Current TDs are listed by areas at:
<http://www.oireachtas.ie/members-hist/default.asp?housetype=0&HouseNum=31&disp=mem>



Departments

The Government is organised into Departments which deal with specific issues. It is very useful to check which TDs and civil servants are working on specific issues and whether these overlap with your cause. You can find a full list of the Departments and who is working in them here: <http://www.gov.ie/tag/departments/>

Parliamentary Questions

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, TDs may ask members of the Government questions relating to Public Affairs connected with their Departments and official responsibilities. They reply on a 5-week rota basis, meaning that every Minister can be questioned regularly. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, the Taoiseach answers questions that relate to his/her Department. Replies are published as part of the Debates. Asking your TD to pose a parliamentary question to the relevant minister is a great way of highlighting your issue and also ensuring that the relevant Department is doing work on that issue.

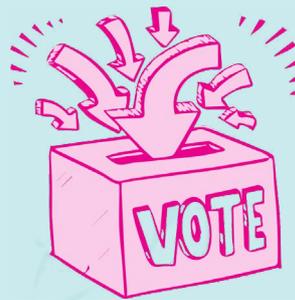


You can get further information and training on how to lobby at <http://www.activelink.ie> and Dochas Wednesday News www.dochas.ie for training courses and workshops.

You can also contact www.nwci.ie for online resources and see how to become a member.

Local Authorities

City or County Councils are run by local councillors who are elected in local elections every five years. You can contact them on issues that concern you. They can be a great resource on issues that concern the local community and a source of information about the system. Often, politicians spend some time as councillors before becoming TDs. A full list of the city and county councils and how to contact them is available at this address: <http://www.environ.ie/en/LocalGovernment/LocalGovernmentAdministration/LocalAuthorities/>



The main way to have your voice heard is by voting in local and general elections. Make sure that you are on the register of

electors and that your details are correct. You can find out how to do this here: <http://www.checktheregister.ie/PublicPages/Default.aspx?uiLang>.

If your details are not there, you can register here <http://www.checktheregister.ie/PublicPages/AppForms.aspx>. However, if you are under 18 years old or don't feel that your specific issue is represented properly in Government, you can 'lobby' decision-makers so that your voice is heard.

Talking to Your Political Representatives/TDs

There are a number of ways to make contact with (lobby) your representatives/TDs

Face-to-Face

You can speak to a TD directly by attending her or his 'clinic'. This is where they have specific hours to meet members of the public. At election times, representatives come door to door hoping to get votes. This is a great time to engage them on issues of concern to you. Contact details are usually on the TD's website and clinic times can be found by telephoning or emailing if they are not on the website.

Letters and Emails

The personal touch is always well received and TDs usually take time to respond to your letters and emails, particularly if your return address shows that you live in their constituency.

Phone call

This can be a quick and easy way of making contact with your TD. Have a list of the points you want to make ready, including the action you want them to take. Jot down relevant bits of their responses and send a follow-up email politely reminding them of their promises.

SETTING UP A MEETING

Write to them explaining your concerns and request a meeting. You can make it a difficult invitation to turn down by having many signatures on the letter. After 3-4 days, follow up with a telephone call. Make it easy for them to meet with you by being flexible on the time and place.

- Invite a board member or community leader along to the meeting
- Prepare a fact sheet for the representative to take away with all the relevant details and background on the issue
- Anticipate questions and have answers prepared
- Agree who says what before going into the meeting. This will make it easier to get all the points across
- Be punctual, prepared and polite.
- Start with a short introduction; who you are, what you do, and what you need from them
- Try to keep it short and to the point
- Finish by listing what has been agreed at the meeting, who will do what, and laying the groundwork for further contact

Send a follow-up letter thanking them for their time, briefly summarising what was discussed and what they committed to do.

Adapted from Be the Change: A toolkit for taking action against poverty and injustice, Comhlamh)

Useful Organisations and Resources

BeLonG To: supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people in Ireland.

🌐 www.belongto.org

☎ 01-6706223 (Mon-Thurs)

Aware: provides support and assistance to people who are affected by depression, bipolar disorder, post-natal depression or suicidal thoughts.

🌐 www.aware.ie

☎ 1890 303 302

(Helpline open 10am-10pm, Mon-Sun)

Bodywhys: is the eating disorder association of Ireland.

🌐 www.bodywhys.ie

☎ 1890 200 444

(Helpline open 7.30pm-9.30pm Mon, Wed and Sun; 10.30am-12.30pm Tues, Thurs and Fri)

NYCI: National Youth Council of Ireland represents and supports the interests of voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people.

🌐 www.youth.ie

☎ 01 478 4122

Citizens Information: provides information about public services and entitlements in Ireland.

🌐 www.citizensinformation.ie

☎ 0761 07 4000 (Mon-Fri)

Childline: is a 24 hour listening service for all children up to the age of 18.

🌐 www.childline.ie

☎ 1800 66 66 66

(Helpline open 24 hours a day)

Text "Talk" to 50101 for TEENTEXT

Text "Bully" to 50101 for support if you are affected by bullying

The Irish Family Planning Association:

promotes the right of all people to sexual and reproductive health information. They provide pregnancy counselling to women and their partners and information on abortion, adoption and parenting at eleven centres nationwide.

🌐 www.ifpa.ie

☎ 1850 49 50 51 (Hotline)

Rape Crisis Network Ireland: presents all aspects of sexual violence with information for women, men, survivors, and supporters with contact details for all rape crisis centers in Ireland

🌐 www.rcni.ie

☎ 091 563676

SpunOut.ie: is a not-for-profit website that gives access to relevant, reliable and objective advice to young people in order to help them make informed decisions.

🌐 www.spunout.ie

TENI: the Transgender Equality Network Ireland, seeks to improve conditions and advance the rights and equality of trans* people and their families.

🌐 www.teni.ie

☎ 01 873 3575

Glossary of Terms

ADVOCATE: A person who actively works to end intolerance, educates others, and supports social equality for a group.

ALLY: A person who is not a member of the group experiencing disadvantage but supports their fight for equality.

BISEXUAL: A person whose sexual attraction is more or less equally directed to a person of either sex.

CARE WORK: Care work is a term for care provided to children, the elderly, the sick and the disabled in care institutions or in the home. The fact that care work is not equally shared between women and men can have a direct negative impact on women's ability to take part in all aspects of social, economic, cultural and political life.

CIVIL PARTNERSHIP: A legally recognised union of a couple, with rights similar to those of marriage.

DISCRIMINATION: The act of showing prejudice. The unjust treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, gender, family status, marital status, religious belief, disability, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, class, social background, and many others.

Gender discrimination refers to any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of gender roles and norms, which prevents a person from enjoying full human rights.

EMPOWERMENT: Describes both the process and the outcome of people - women and men - taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognised) increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance.¹

EQUALITY: Equality means that each individual has access to the same opportunities and is given fair access to achieve to the best of their ability.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: The goal of giving all persons an equal chance to an education and employment, and to protect their civil rights, regardless of their race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age, membership of the Traveller community, (dis)ability, family status or gender. Equality legislation protects people from minority groups from being discriminated against on the grounds of group membership.

FEMINISM: A movement for social, cultural, political and economic equality of women and men. It is a campaign against gender inequalities and it strives for equal rights for women. Feminism can be also defined as the right to enough information available to every single woman so that she can make a choice to live a life with equality and independence. Feminism is a global movement which addresses different issues in different societies and cultures but is tied together with the main goal of achieving gender equality in every sphere of life.

¹ "Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment" Kabeer, Nalia, in *Discussing Women's Empowerment: Theory and Practice*, Stockholm, Sida Studies No.3, 2001

GENDER: Gender describes the roles we learn in our lives which teach us the rights and responsibilities that communities and societies consider appropriate for men and women. We are born as males and females, but becoming boys and girls, women and men is something we learn from our families and societies.

Gender analysis provides context for understanding that gender, and its relationship with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, disability, is important in understanding the different patterns of behaviour and activities that women and men have in economic, social and legal structures.

GENDER EQUALITY: Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

GENDER-SPECIFIC POLICIES: This is policy which uses the knowledge of gender differences to respond to the practical gender needs of either women or men.

GENDER ROLES: Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society/community, which decide which activities, tasks and responsibilities are seen to be male or female. Gender roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and by the geographical, economic and political environment.

HETEROSEXUAL: Persons whose sexual orientation is mostly always directed to persons of the other sex.

HOMOSEXUAL: A person who is mostly always sexually attracted to persons of their own sex

HUMAN RIGHTS: Human rights are basic rights and freedoms that all people are entitled to, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, language, or other status. Human rights include the right to life, freedom of expression, the right to food, and the right to work and receive an education. Human rights are protected and upheld by international and national laws.

INTERSECTIONALITY: Intersectional analysis aims to reveal that people experience multiple identities at the same time and the different types of discrimination and disadvantage that people experience because of a combination of certain identities. It looks to change the way in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression and other forms of discrimination create inequalities that structure the positions women hold in any given situation.²

LESBIAN: Female whose sexual preference is mostly or totally directed to a person of the same sex.

PATRIARCHY: Systems and social structures that give right to male physical, social and economic power over women.

RAPE: Rape is the sexual penetration of any part of the body of the victim with a sexual organ, any object or any other part of the body. The invasion is done by force, or by threat of force. Rape is any sexual act which is done under fear of violence, psychological control, abuse of power, or done to a person incapable of giving genuine consent.³

² AWID Facts and Issues: Women's Rights and Economic Change No. 9, August 2004, Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice, www.Awid.org/

³ Committee on the Status of Women: Glossary on Violence against Women, ngo.fawco.org

RAPE (DATE): Sex that takes place against a person's will through the means of violence, coercion or intimidation, either physical or psychological, by an acquaintance, friend, date or partner. Date rape is a type of sexual assault, where the victim and the person doing the rape are, or have been, in some form of personal or social relationship. Date rape victims are almost entirely women.⁴

(Source: Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, www.medinstgenderstudies.org)

RAPE (MARITAL): Marital rape is any unwanted sexual acts by a spouse or ex-spouse, committed without consent and/or against a person's will, obtained by force, or threat of force, intimidation, or when a person is unable to consent.

(Source: Committee on the Status of Women: Glossary on Violence against Women, www.ngo.fawco.org)

REFUGEE: A person with a well-founded fear of their personal freedoms being endangered for reasons of religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or afraid to stay in the protection of that country. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in any refugee population, approximately 50 percent of the uprooted people are women and girls. Stripped of the protection of their homes, their Government and often their family structure, females are often particularly vulnerable.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS: Rights which recognise the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to access the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.

⁴ Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Geneva: United Nations, 1994, para 7.3 <http://www.unfpa.org>

SEX: Refer to the biological characteristics between men and women, which are the same all over the world and do not change. A male can often be described as having a penis and a female, a vagina.

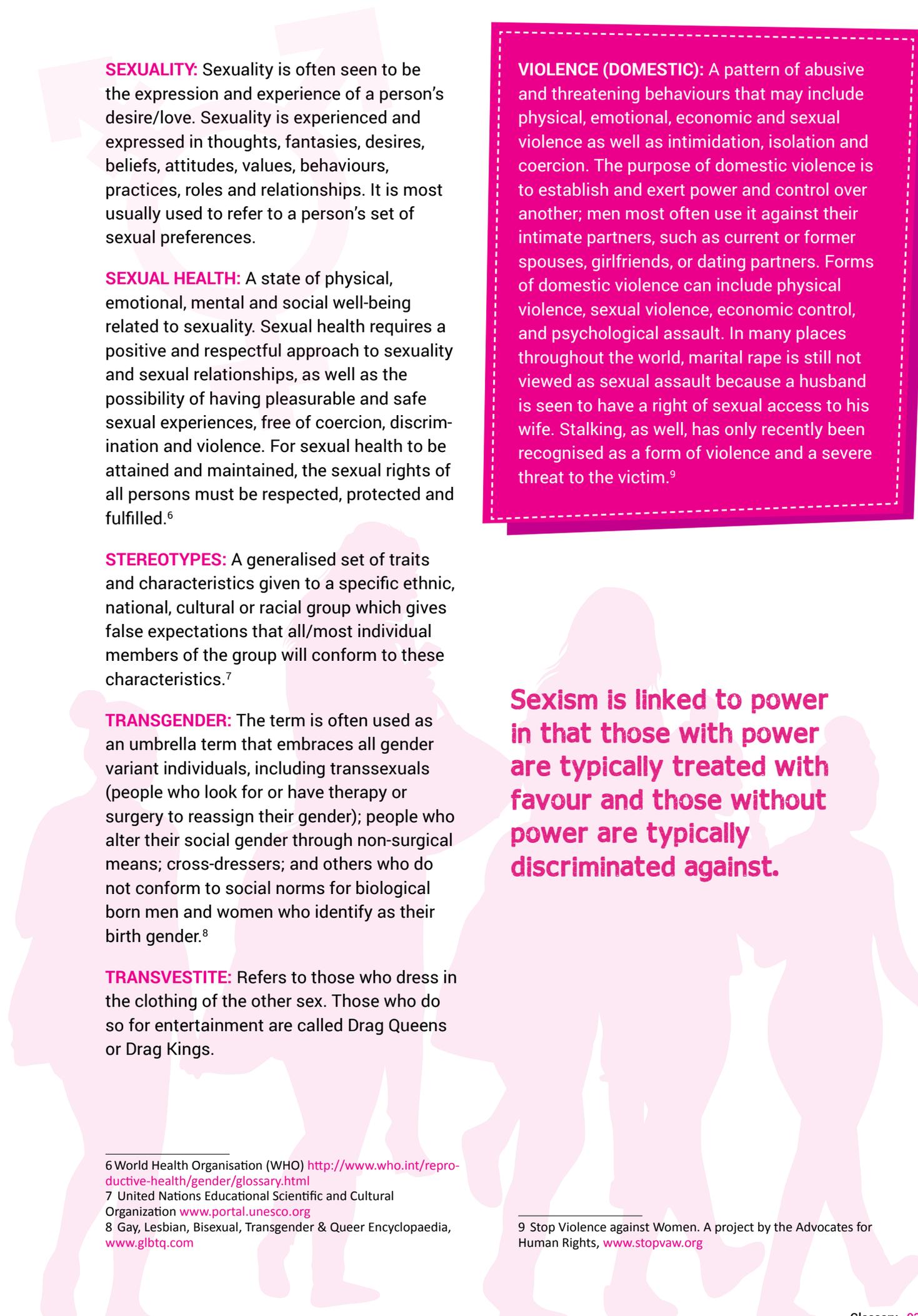
SEXISM: Actions or attitudes that discriminate against people based solely on their gender. Sexism is linked to power in that those with power are typically treated with favour and those without power are typically discriminated against. Sexism is also related to stereotypes, since the discriminatory actions or attitudes are often based on false beliefs, or over generalisations, about gender.

SEXUAL ASSAULT: Sexual assault is any sexual contact for which consent was not given. Sexual assault is a deliberate act of gender-based violence and an expression of power, control and domination over another. It is not an act of uncontrolled desire, attraction or arousal. Sexual assault occurs in every level of society and in a variety of settings.⁵

(Source: Stop Violence against Women, A project by the Advocates for Human Rights. www.stopvaw.org)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Sexual harassment is a form of sexual violence. The term refers to unwanted behaviour where sexuality is used as a means to oppress and position people so as to make or keep them vulnerable. The forms of sexual harassment are usually divided into three different types: (1) verbal: e.g. remarks about figure/looks, sexual and sexist jokes, verbal sexual advances, comments that stereotype and discriminate; (2) non-verbal and/or visual: e.g. staring at someone and whistling; and (3) physical: acts, from unwanted or overbearing physical contact to assaults and rape.

⁵ World Health Organization (WHO) <http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/gender/glossary.html>



SEXUALITY: Sexuality is often seen to be the expression and experience of a person's desire/love. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. It is most usually used to refer to a person's set of sexual preferences.

SEXUAL HEALTH: A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being related to sexuality. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.⁶

STEREOTYPES: A generalised set of traits and characteristics given to a specific ethnic, national, cultural or racial group which gives false expectations that all/most individual members of the group will conform to these characteristics.⁷

TRANSGENDER: The term is often used as an umbrella term that embraces all gender variant individuals, including transsexuals (people who look for or have therapy or surgery to reassign their gender); people who alter their social gender through non-surgical means; cross-dressers; and others who do not conform to social norms for biological born men and women who identify as their birth gender.⁸

TRANSVESTITE: Refers to those who dress in the clothing of the other sex. Those who do so for entertainment are called Drag Queens or Drag Kings.

VIOLENCE (DOMESTIC): A pattern of abusive and threatening behaviours that may include physical, emotional, economic and sexual violence as well as intimidation, isolation and coercion. The purpose of domestic violence is to establish and exert power and control over another; men most often use it against their intimate partners, such as current or former spouses, girlfriends, or dating partners. Forms of domestic violence can include physical violence, sexual violence, economic control, and psychological assault. In many places throughout the world, marital rape is still not viewed as sexual assault because a husband is seen to have a right of sexual access to his wife. Stalking, as well, has only recently been recognised as a form of violence and a severe threat to the victim.⁹

Sexism is linked to power in that those with power are typically treated with favour and those without power are typically discriminated against.

⁶ World Health Organisation (WHO) <http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/gender/glossary.html>

⁷ United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization www.portal.unesco.org

⁸ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Encyclopaedia, www.glbtc.com

⁹ Stop Violence against Women. A project by the Advocates for Human Rights, www.stopvaw.org