

# Best practice tips

## for reporting

## on violence

## against women

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ZERO

TOLERANCE

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### 1. Be Considerate

**Report** violence against women in a way that upholds the victim-survivor's right to dignity and does not compromise their safety or anonymity.

**Don't** sensationalise stories with graphic details about the crime, or personal details such as their transgender identity or their involvement in pornography or selling sex.

When covering any form of violence - including harmful traditional practices, like forced marriage or female genital mutilation - be clear that these are rooted in misogyny and avoid stigmatising any ethnic group or religion.

### 2. Don't blame the victim

**Make** the perpetrator the subject of the sentence and assign the verb to them. This is how police are encouraged to write their reports, i.e. *'The perpetrator forced the survivor to...'*

**Never** suggest that violence occurred because of what a woman was wearing, what they had drunk, if they had cheated, or any other reason. Perpetrators are responsible for their actions.

### 3. Name the crime

**Use** *sexual abuse, assault, harassment, rape, domestic abuse.*

**Instead of** *sex, sex scandal, affair, fondles, caress, domestic dispute, abusive relationship.*

## 4. Describe the perpetrator

**Use** *man, perpetrator, offender, abusive partner, rapist, husband, father, son.*

**Instead of** *fiend, beast, monster, great dad, good guy, respected professional .*

## 5. Victim or survivor?

**Use** *victim* when an attack has resulted in the murder of a woman, when discussing the crime or criminal justice system, or when a woman describes herself as a one. Use *survivor* when referring to the woman in all other instances. Or if you have permission, use her name.

## 6. Get quotes from experts and survivors

**Ask** women's organisations for comment and source case studies through them.

## 7. Use statistics to put the story in context

Individual stories of violence against women are part of a much larger problem.

## 8. Images

**Don't use** images that contribute to harmful stereotypes or objectify women.

We have free to use stock images available.

## 9. Include helplines – it can save lives

Your story might have an effect on women who have experienced or are experiencing the same violence. Providing sources of support can encourage women to seek help.