

Language Guide

Name the crime

USE THIS	INSTEAD OF	WHY?
Language that accurately conveys the gravity of sexual assault: <i>sexual abuse, assault, harassment, rape</i>	<i>Sex, sex scandal, affair, fondle or caress to describe sexual violence.</i>	Using phrases like <i>sex scandal</i> makes it sound consensual; it both minimises and sensationalises the crime.
Words that make it clear that sexual assault is violent and non-consensual e.g. oral rape, sexual assault etc.	Gratuitous details of the assault e.g. forced mouth onto (<i>the victim-survivor's specific body part</i>).	Rape is an act of violence, there is no need to insert salacious details.
<i>Domestic abuse</i> <i>Men's violence against women</i>	<i>Domestic violence</i>	Most organisations working in this field use the term <i>domestic abuse</i> instead of <i>domestic violence</i> , as this conveys a much wider spectrum of abuse, which can be psychological as well as physical.
<i>Abusive partner, woman living with an abusive partner</i>	<i>Abusive relationship</i>	Placing blame on the relationship or relationship dynamics, rather than on the abuser, is suggesting that both people are equally at fault.
<i>Domestic abuse</i>	<i>A domestic/domestic dispute</i>	Domestic/domestic dispute frames the incident of violence as a private domestic or family problem and not a crime.

Name the perpetrator

USE THIS	INSTEAD OF	WHY?
<i>Husband, father, son etc. Man, perpetrator, offender, abuser, rapist etc.</i>	<i>Fiend, beast, pervert, monster, paedo, brute, criminal, thug, wife-beater, wom- an-basher.</i>	Men who rape, commit sexual violence or domestic abuse are ordinary men, usually someone's dad, brother, uncle, or friend.
<i>Man, perpetrator, offender, abuser, rapist etc.</i>	<i>Great father/devoted dad/ a good guy/respected member of the community/esteemed coach, profes- sional, community leader.</i>	These generate sympathy for the perpetrator, implying there is a 'reason' for their 'out of character' behaviour.

Name the victim-survivor

VICTIM OR SURVIVOR?		WHY?
<p>Some people identify as <i>victims</i> and some identify as <i>survivors</i>. It is best to ask the individual which they would prefer. Where this is not possible use <i>victim</i> when an attack has resulted in the murder of a woman, when discussing the crime or criminal justice system.</p> <p>Use <i>survivor</i> when referring to the woman in all other instances.</p> <p>You can also use victim-survivor if you are not sure or if you are speaking in general terms.</p> <p>Or if you have permission, use her name.</p>		Although victim is a legal definition which is necessary in the criminal justice system, some women prefer to use survivor as a term of empowerment to convey they have started a healing process.
USE THIS	INSTEAD OF	WHY?
<i>Woman who sells sex, Woman involved in pornography/ prostitution.</i>	<i>Prostitute, sex worker, porn actress/porn star.</i>	Prostitution and pornography are exploitation of women - not work.
<i>Woman who was murdered; use the woman's name where possible.</i>	<i>Murdered/dead prostitute</i>	Regardless of their past, women who were murdered, are women first.
<i>Abused child</i>	<i>Child prostitute, teenage prostitute, schoolgirl lover, underage lover.</i>	Sexual contact with a child is always abuse.
<i>Woman who has experienced domestic abuse A survivor of domestic abuse</i>	<i>Battered woman</i>	These alternatives better describe the survivors of domestic abuse.