



**A PUBLIC HEALTH  
PREVENTION CAMPAIGN:  
DOMESTIC ABUSE IN  
CHESHIRE, LANCASHIRE  
& MERSEYSIDE**





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## BACKGROUND TO THE ISSUE

Domestic abuse is a significant public health issue, having a major impact upon those directly affected and their families. It affects one in three women and one in six men. Two women a week and two men a month are killed in domestic abuse incidents every year in the UK. There were 33,261 (Merseyside), 4,537 (Cheshire) and 30,505 (Lancashire) domestic abuse incidents recorded by police in 2012/13.

There is a strong body of evidence around the impacts of domestic abuse – witnessed or experienced - on children. Living with domestic abuse adversely affects their health, development, relationships, behaviour and emotional wellbeing. These Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) have consequences for their educational attainment and are strongly related to the development of risk factors for disease and social wellbeing as they get older. Bellis et al stated 'That ACEs are linked to involvement in violence, early unplanned pregnancy, incarceration, and unemployment suggests a cyclic effect where those with higher ACE counts have higher risks of exposing their own children to ACEs.'

The 'Be a Lover not a Fighter' campaign first ran across Cheshire & Merseyside in February 2015 and was evaluated using stakeholder and public comments during engagement along with a large public survey.

Representative of the population and significant to 95%CI, the public survey reported that 39% of the Cheshire & Merseyside population (almost 1 million

people) were aware of the campaign. It had a strong impact through making people think more about domestic abuse, in particular the importance of talking about it. A key recommendation was to refocus the campaign around both children and wellbeing.

The Directors of Public Health in Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire therefore prioritised the delivery of the 2016 campaign to focus on domestic abuse and its impact on children from a public health perspective, supporting and enhancing the impact of local services which work to support victims and perpetrators.

The 2016 campaign was developed with input from local partners in public health, domestic abuse and police. It was supported by Public Health England North West Centre and commissioned by the Cheshire & Merseyside Public Health Collaborative (Champs).

The campaign launched on 8th February 2016 to coincide with Valentines Day and ran for a 4 week period across the following Local Authority areas:

- Blackpool
- Blackburn with Darwen
- Cheshire West & Chester
- Halton
- Knowsley
- Lancashire (focusing on Burnley, Lancaster and Preston)
- Liverpool
- Sefton
- St Helens
- Wirral



## SECTION 1: CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

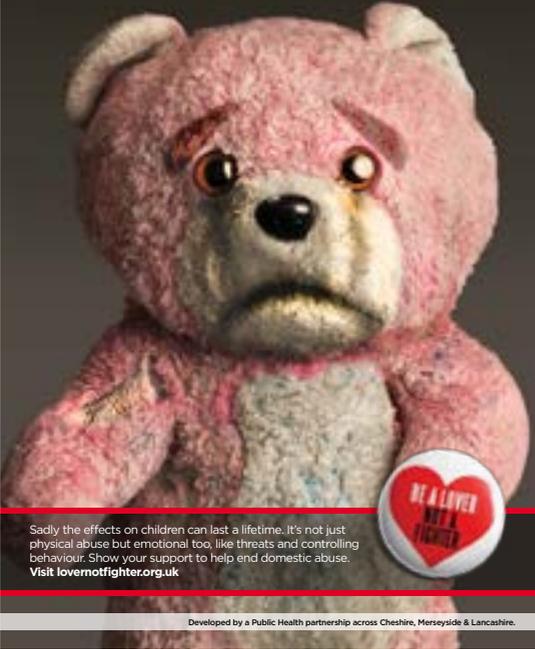
### COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

In addition to educating, a broad aim of the campaign was to reduce the acceptability of domestic abuse – to take steps to ‘de-normalise’ it amongst the public by engaging them to pledge their support to help end it.

Responding to insight, the campaign aimed to:

- Increase understanding of the prevalence, nature and effects of domestic abuse
- Contribute to ‘denormalising’ domestic abuse and its acceptance
- Improve public understanding of the new definition of domestic abuse.
- Highlight the impact on children
- Facilitate conversations about domestic abuse and gain public support for ending domestic abuse

90% of domestic abuse is witnessed by children



Developed by a Public Health partnership across Cheshire, Merseyside & Lancashire.



## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Different creative concepts, headline and copy were tested with the primary target audience to examine how they would be perceived. Based on the results, the chosen route consisted of an image of a child's bear and two other engaging elements:

1. A striking campaign headline – 90% of domestic abuse is witnessed by children.
2. A campaign motif which encouraged support to end domestic abuse using the line 'Be a Lover not a fighter'. This well used phrase denoting peaceful individuals, provided a positive slogan for the campaign.

The campaign was designed to be integrated and multi-channelled to enable all people across Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire to be informed, get involved and lend their support to help end domestic abuse. It utilised the following mix of tactics:

- Campaign Website
- Posters
- Leaflet & Badges
- PR
- Social Media
- Heart Hands
- Public Engagement
- Advertising

## THE CAMPAIGN TACTICS



Merseyside Fire & Rescue with Wirral Borough Council Councillors

### CAMPAIGN WEBSITE

[www.lovernotfighter.org.uk](http://www.lovernotfighter.org.uk)

The website provided a point of contact to inform users about the campaign and how they could support it. It provided positive messaging, highlighting that people can move on from abusive situations and go on to form healthy relationships, as well as signposting to other websites for detailed information and where to get help locally. It also provided information for children that are affected by domestic abuse.

### A4 POSTERS

Posters were provided to partners for distribution to a range of settings, including GP's, Health Centres, Leisure Centres, Pharmacies and Hospitals. A separate poster mailshot was also sent to hairdressers, supermarkets and dentists.

### LEAFLET & BADGES

Leaflets and badges were used in face to face engagement and in other central locations determined by local leads, such as One Stop Shops. At the engagement events, members of the public were able to pledge their support to help end domestic abuse and pick up a free badge pack, which were in pairs so that one could be given to a friend – initiating conversations within the community.

### PR

PR was targeted at all media (print, online and broadcast) across Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire and beyond. At a local level, photo opportunities with Cabinet members and/or Directors of Public Health, as well as other stakeholders, facilitated local media engagement via locally adapted template press releases.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media played a key role in the campaign and aimed to raise general awareness of domestic abuse, its causes and impact. It asked for public support by promoting activity of a viral nature via the 'Heart Hands'.

### HEART HANDS

To generate support via social media, the 'heart hand' was used. This provided a very quick and easy way for the public and people in the public eye alike to show their support to help end domestic abuse. The campaign appeared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and was supported by high profile people including actors/actresses/singers/ sportspeople and organisations of relevance to the target audience, to help spread the message.



The campaign social media pages were:

- [facebook.com/bealovernotfighter](https://www.facebook.com/bealovernotfighter)
- [twitter.com/ilovernotfighter](https://twitter.com/ilovernotfighter)
- [instagram.com/bealovernotfighter](https://www.instagram.com/bealovernotfighter)

There was also a YouTube channel called Be a Lover not Fighter which showed videos of support. Campaign hashtags were #lovernotfighter and #hearhands.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

A series of public engagement events were held in central locations across Cheshire, Merseyside and

Lancashire and aimed to engage with the target audience to encourage participation and support for the campaign. Engagement reflected the understanding from insight that people do care that domestic abuse is a serious issue that no-one wants to talk about but that they want it to end.

## **ADVERTISING**

The campaign was supported by overarching advertising. This included advertising on buses across main routes in Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire and Radio City 96.7 and Rock FM.



## SECTION 2: PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

### WHO WAS INVOLVED?

Partner engagement was key to the success of the campaign. The campaign attracted significant interest from partners such as NHS England, NICE, local hospitals, housing associations, fire service, children's centres and domestic abuse services; who all embraced and supported the campaign, promoting it to their service users.

The campaign provided partners with a platform to help achieve their internal objectives of raising awareness of domestic abuse and the impact on children.

Partners maximised the use of 'heart hands', regularly sharing photographs on social media and some partners issued press releases from their own organisations to declare their support for the campaign.

The campaign attracted strong interest from local schools, who were very keen to promote the campaign to their students/pupils and educate about what is a healthy relationship.

## LOCAL AUTHORITY ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Local Authority stakeholders were engaged throughout the campaign period and provided with materials such as artwork, posters and banner stands to distribute through their own channels.

This enabled stakeholders to further promote the campaign locally. Additional activity ranged from advertising on bus stops and taxis to promoting via digital channels such as intranet and TV screens within public places.



Public Engagement at Chester



Bus Stop Advertising in Blackburn with Darwen

### CASE STUDY: BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN BUS STOP ADVERTISING

Blackburn with Darwen Council invested in advertising on bus stops across the town centre. The artwork was consistent with the wider campaign and provided more visibility for the campaign locally.

### CASE STUDY: KNOWSLEY COUNCIL & WIRRAL COUNCIL FIRE ENGINE ADVERTISING

Both Knowsley & Wirral Councils worked with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service to rebrand two of the fire engines with the campaign creative. This provided an excellent medium to promote the campaign and demonstrated how services are working together to tackle the issue.



Merseyside Fire & Rescue

*"Its great to see a campaign about this. My sister was in her first marriage and he used to throw food over her and used to make her sleep on the landing. It was awful."*



## **CASE STUDY: ST HELENS COUNCIL ROAD SIGNS**

St Helens Council worked alongside their Highways department to promote the campaign via the roadside traffic alert sign system. The signs carried two key messages and was a highly effective medium to promote the campaign to the general public.

## **CASE STUDY: SEFTON COUNCIL PROMOTION DAY**

Sefton Council ran a promotion day within 'Strand by Me' to target the most deprived southern areas of Sefton and raise the campaign profile with key local community groups. The day proved to be successful, with a number of badge packs issued and a high level of public engaging in conversation about the issue.

## **CASE STUDY: CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER AWARENESS DAY**

Cheshire West & Chester Council attended the Emergency Department at the Countess of Chester Hospital to raise awareness of the campaign and promote positive messages. The public engaged very positively and were very supportive of the issue of domestic abuse being raised and the campaign.

## **CASE STUDY: LANCASHIRE PUB ENGAGEMENT**

Lancashire County Council engaged with local pubs in Lancaster by providing posters to help raise awareness of the campaign; which was positively received with landlords and the public.



## SCHOOL & COLLEGE ENGAGEMENT

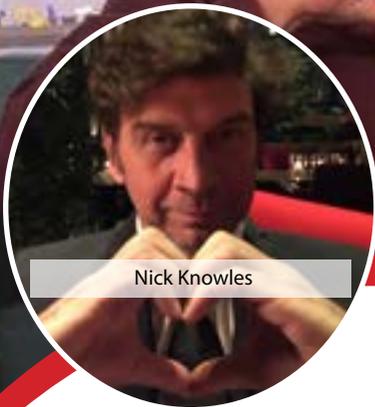
A key emphasis of the campaign was to engage with young people through schools and colleges. A campaign pack consisting of posters and badge packs was issued to the local college within each Local Authority area in Cheshire & Merseyside.

- Riverside College
- St Helens College
- Wirral Metropolitan College
- Knowsley Community College
- Hugh Baird College
- City of Liverpool College
- Cheshire West College

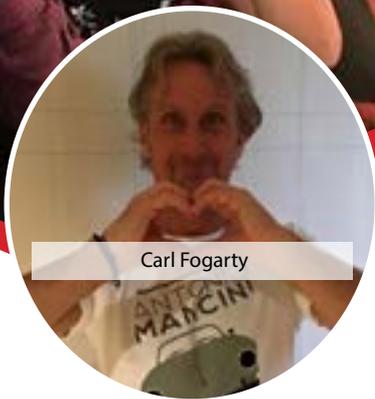
Colleges utilised their materials by promoting the campaign across the campus and through the Student Union. Badge packs were handed to students to encourage them to talk about the issue and healthy relationships.



Philip Schofield and Holly Willoughby



Nick Knowles



Carl Fogarty

## CELEBRITY ENGAGEMENT

The campaign attracted an overwhelming level of celebrity support which assisted in promoting the key messages and creating wider awareness. Celebrities that endorsed the campaign included:

- Carl Fogarty
- Claire Simmo
- Claire Sweeney
- Dan Whiston
- Jamie Carragher
- Jake Abraham
- Jon Walmesley
- Hannah Hobley
- Holly Willoughby
- Karen Bryson
- Lee Charles
- MGP Madd Team
- Nick Knowles
- Pete Price
- Philip Schofield
- Philip Olivier



## SECTION 3: EVALUATION & RESULTS



### EFFECTIVENESS

The campaign ran for a period of 4 weeks and was monitored and evaluated using a number of analytical tools including:

- Website Analytics
- Online pledges of support
- Social Media Analytics
- Media Coverage
- Engagement Contacts
- Celebrity Endorsement
- Public Feedback

Overall, the combined marketing activity reached an estimated 1.5 million people across Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire; and engaged with nearly 60,000 people – which is a really high level of engagement for the budget involved and significantly higher than in 2015.

Although not a key campaign measure, during the campaign period calls to both helplines featured – The National Domestic Abuse helpline and the Mankind Initiative helpline - increased significantly during the time the campaign was active.

The term 'Be a Lover not a Fighter Campaign' has increased in popularity with the website coming top of the list in a Google search.





**1.5 MILLION** PEOPLE SAW THE  
**CAMPAIGN ACROSS CHESHIRE,  
MERSEYSIDE & LANCASHIRE**



## KEY RESULTS

*"I've liked your Facebook page already, great campaign. I will wear my badge with pride."*



Reach – Numbers reached within Cheshire, Merseyside, and Lancashire	1,474,200
Engagement – No. of adults engaging with the campaign via events, social media and website	59,904
Number of badges distributed	50,000
Pledges of support – No. of adults pledging their support	2,450
Celebrity Engagement – No. of celebrities supporting the campaign	18
Media – No. of pieces generated	65+
Media – Value of PR generated	£86,789.23
Website Visitors – Unique	3,750

## **60,000 PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH THE CAMPAIGN ACROSS CHESHIRE, MERSEYSIDE & LANCASHIRE**

*"I suffered violence and it was when he went to attack my daughter that I left. But we now have counselling for what we both went through – the effect lasts a lifetime. Great and well-needed campaign!"*

## BREAKDOWN BY ACTIVITY



### SOCIAL MEDIA

The campaign performed extremely well on social media reaching over 300,000 unique people and engaging with over 12,000 people. Many users shared their personal stories on the page. Heart Hands performed significantly better than the 2015 campaign, with a high number of people participating. The better performing posts attracted in the region of 200 - 300 likes and over 200 shares; showing viral behaviour.

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engagement events were held at 12 locations across Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire. The events engaged with nearly 7000 people.

Engagement Event	No. of People Engaged
Marketgate, Lancaster	400
The Mall, Blackburn with Darwen	600
St Georges, Preston	820
Houndshill Shopping Centre, Blackpool	400
Charter Walk, Burnley	700
Runcorn Shopping Centre, Halton	600
Kirkby Market, Knowsley	500
The Hardshaw Centre, St Helens	500
St Johns Shopping Centre, Liverpool	500
The Strand Bootle, Sefton	500
Forum Shopping Centre, Chester	600
Birkenhead Market, Wirral	700

### PR

Media played a key part in the campaign, reaching over 1 million people and generating 65+ pieces of coverage across the North West media. Aside from the campaign-led press releases, partners such as Wirral University Teaching Hospital and the Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner also issued their own releases in support of the campaign. This demonstrates the ease with which the campaign could be adopted by partners and maximise opportunity to increase campaign awareness.

Public Engagement at Liverpool





## CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

The 2016 campaign was not formally evaluated in the way that in 2015 was. However anecdotal evidence from the public engagement events and through social media showed that the campaign achieved the overall aims.

The impact on children was highlighted through the campaign creative and key messaging. The 'bear' image and headline of '90% of domestic abuse is witnessed by children', triggered audience attention; interest in the campaign and generated conversation both through the public engagement events and social media.

Achievement of the high level of reach and engagement and the distribution of nearly 50,000 badges over the campaign period are evidence that there was public support to consider the issue. The chosen campaign marketing channels were effective in gaining public support and facilitating conversations to help end domestic abuse.

*"I'm shocked by the fact men also suffer abuse. I've been told by a family friend of a man who had scars on his stomach from a hot iron and how he was too ashamed to tell anyone that his wife was abusing him."*



Alongside promotion of the main headline, the campaign communicated messages about the prevalence, nature and effects through the badge card, website, social media and PR. One of the most visited pages on the website included 'What is a Healthy relationship?' and social media postings quoting '1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men' headline were engaged with the most. This shows an interest in understanding the prevalence, nature and effects of domestic abuse.

Through engagement and encouraging people to talk about the issue, many people commented how campaigns such as 'Be a Lover not a Fighter' are important to raise awareness of the domestic abuse. This shows a positive move towards denormalising domestic abuse and its acceptance.



## RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

Investment in the campaign was on a fixed basis per local area covered, with additional financial support from Champs Collaborative and PHE North West. Adopting a collaborative approach in this way produced significant cost savings through economies of scale.

- The campaign delivery cost per person reached was £0.07. This is estimated as almost an eighth of the possible costs if the campaign was delivered in and by a single local authority area (£0.50pp).
- This ROI estimate is based on the validated public reach of the campaign in 2015. The 2016 reach, though not validated with formal evaluation, appears to be higher again which implies a better ROI than £0.07 per person reached.

*"I was affected as I saw my abusive father hit my mum. I now suffer PTSD and am getting support but I still struggle from my experiences. I will most definitely support this campaign."*

*"The campaign was focused on children witnessing abuse, this was different to the usual campaigns and therefore was responded to well. The campaign picture of the bear was very good at evoking conversation, the response was mixed but it served the purpose of driving discussions about domestic abuse."*



Public Engagement in Sefton



Public Engagement in Preston

## STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Some 100 stakeholders were invited to participate in a survey to give their views on how the campaign was managed and where they would like to see improvements.

Of these, 51 responded giving a response rate of 51% which is far higher than a survey of this type would normally receive (around 33%).

The overwhelming response to the campaign was positive. The campaign was seen as a valuable addition to existing local activity and communications on domestic abuse, although a small minority did not agree with some elements of the approach.

85% responded that they would want to run this campaign again in their area.

**85% of  
respondents would  
want to run this  
campaign  
again in their area**



The Champs Support Team

## SECTION 4: CHALLENGES & LEARNINGS

A series of learnings from the campaign are summarised below. These were included in the submission for the 2016 NICE Shared Learning Awards. This campaign is one of three finalists from over 60 entries and the winner will be selected in July 2016.

### **Local leadership is key to success**

The local areas where the campaign performed best were those with the strongest public health leadership on this issue and where good partnership working embraced innovation.

### **Build a model that allows local choice**

Building on the work in 2015, the 2016 campaign was modelled on an 'opt-in' funding basis. This was successful in

that it produced stronger buy-in from the local partners involved. This model provided a core list of deliverables for the collaboratively commissioned work and an additional but equally important list of tasks for a nominated local 'lead' person, usually from public health or communications departments with local authorities.

### **Get partners engaged early**

People's inputs from different points of view are an asset to development. To avoid potential confusion and gain support from stakeholders working in the field with a novel approach such as this; it is important to engage as many people as possible early.

*"Please can I have a badge to support it. My daughter is waiting to go to court as she has experienced domestic abuse by her husband."*



### **Relate plans to recognised theory and models – and talk about it**

- Ensure that at the heart of the approach the work is grounded in good theory and a tried and tested process – in this case social marketing theory.
- The use of social marketing techniques in the development of campaigns that segment, develop approaches for and then engage specific audiences is a specialist field which was not universally understood by partners; they remain undervalued as tools for behavioural change and need to be presented as part of a good multiagency approach.

### **Accept that innovation takes time to be accepted**

Doing something new can be met with real positivity or real challenge – get good evidence, apply good theory, evaluate well and disseminate the successes, and then innovation that works can move towards accepted good practice.

### **Collaboration brings benefits**

The economies of scale and shared learning from a collaborative partnership approach can benefit all partners financially and by having a bigger impact, as well as fostering partnerships for future work – in this and other areas of prevention work.

## SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS



Overall, the results and feedback indicate that the 2016 campaign was successful and performed well against aims and objectives. A great deal was learnt about effective joint working across a wide range of partners that could be transferred to many Public Health projects.

Overarching practical conclusions:

1. The campaign was seen as having a great deal of importance by the public and stakeholders as a means to raise awareness of domestic abuse and as a valuable part of the mix of interventions needed to tackle the issue.
2. A joined up campaign that enables all services to get involved is an effective concept both in terms of resource and finance, providing an ideal model to achieve shared objectives in the future.
3. The campaign name was well received amongst the public and most partners and most stakeholders (85%) would like to see it active again. Though a minority were unsupportive of the campaign name, it effectively engaged the wider general public and young people.
4. Through engagement activity, the scale of domestic abuse became apparent; nearly all people engaged with had either experienced domestic abuse or knew a friend/family member that had.
5. The public were happy to discuss the issue and show their support in any way that they could and domestic abuse survivors were very keen to get involved as mentors to those experiencing domestic abuse.



Public Engagement at Burnley

## SECTION 6: ACCOLADES

**NICE** National Institute for  
Health and Care Excellence



'Be a Lover not a Fighter' has been successful in receiving recognition as an effective, public sector campaign. Accolades include:

- The 'Be a Lover not a Fighter' campaign (2015) received a runner up in the Northern Marketing Awards best not for profit campaign in January 2015.
- The 2016 campaign competed against stiff competition to become one of three national finalists for a NICE Shared Learning award in July 2016.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank all the people who have given their time to work on and develop this campaign. To view a full list of acknowledgements, please visit [www.lovernotfighter.org.uk](http://www.lovernotfighter.org.uk).

## AUTHORS

Matthew Ashton  
Chair and Lead Director of Public Health for Domestic Abuse,  
Champs Public Health Collaborative

Pippa Sargent  
Social Marketing Campaign Lead

Anne Pennington  
Principal Insight Analyst

Nicky Smith  
Director, Mint Umbrella

This campaign was delivered by  
Champs, the Public Health Collaborative  
across Cheshire and Merseyside.

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For more information and for an  
electronic copy of this report contact:

Champs  
Suite 2.2, Marwood  
Riverside Park  
1 Southwood Road, Bromborough  
Wirral CH62 3QX

[www.champspublichealth.com](http://www.champspublichealth.com)  
0151 666 5123



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Public Health  
Collaborative