



Dear parents and carers

We are writing to you today about an important issue that affects young people across the country and in our community: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). While this topic can be difficult to discuss, it is essential that we work together to help our teenagers understand healthy relationships, respect, boundaries, and the impact of harmful behaviours.

Recently, schools locally and nationally have seen a rise in concerns related to online harassment, misogynistic language, peer pressure, and unhealthy relationship dynamics among young people. Teenagers are growing up in a world where social media, online influencers, and group chats can shape attitudes quickly, sometimes in ways that normalise disrespect or minimise the seriousness of harmful behaviour.

Devon and Cornwall Police are working with local schools and we are committed to creating a safe environment for all students. This includes:

- Teaching about consent, respect, and equality
- Challenging sexist or harmful language
- Supporting students who may feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or unsure about a situation
- Encouraging boys and girls alike to speak up when they see behaviour that isn't right

However, the conversations that happen at home are just as important. Teenagers often look to their parents and carers for guidance, even when it doesn't always seem that way. Talking openly about respect, boundaries, and the impact of harmful behaviour can make a significant difference.

You may find it helpful to:

- Ask your child what they are seeing online and how it makes them feel
- Discuss what healthy friendships and relationships look like
- Encourage them to speak up if they witness behaviour that worries them
- Remind them that everyone deserves to feel safe and respected

If you ever have concerns about your child—whether they may be experiencing harmful behaviour or showing signs of being influenced by unhealthy attitudes—please reach out to us. We are here to support both you and your child, and we can work together to address issues early and constructively.

Thank you for your continued partnership in helping us create a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all young people.

Kind regards
PC Paul Stevenson
Youth Officer

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