

National Strategy to Prevent Violence in Intimate Relations

Danish Government – June 2010

Foreword

No woman, man or child should face violence in their daily life. Violence in intimate relations, also called domestic violence or spouse abuse, can never be accepted by a society that believes in equality and personal freedom.

It is essential for the Government to fight violence in intimate relations. Violence is an expression of a lack of respect for the person who is the target of the attack. It is an expression of lack of equality. Living with violence is utterly and completely degrading.

The Government wants to promote a changed attitude that embraces women, men, co-workers, friends and neighbours. Violence within the family is not a private problem. We all must stand together, put our foot down, and say no to domestic violence.

But words are not enough. We must also act. Since 2002 the Government has waged – in two separate action plans – a determined fight to combat domestic violence. Fortunately we can see that the effort has had an effect: there are fewer victims of battery, and the victims themselves are more aware of their opportunities to get support and concrete help and how to come forward and take action.

But we have yet to achieve our goal. We must keep up the hard work. Some 28,000 women and 9,000 men are the victims of domestic violence each year, some 21,000 children live in homes where domestic violence occurs, and one in ten young women has been abused by a partner. Those statistics are still far too high.

The National Strategy therefore addresses the parts of the problem that still persist. Prevention must be a top priority in the effort. It is not enough to offer support once violence has already reared its ugly head. Our focus has to be on ensuring that violence never occurs in the first place. At the same time, a more broadly based effort will ensure that everyone can make a contribution. Finally, we will use the coming years to evaluate the various efforts to prevent violence in intimate relations. We must, among other things, discover and disseminate the most effective methods for preventing domestic violence and supporting victims, in both the short and long term.

With the National Strategy the Government and political parties approving disbursement of funds for social welfare projects from the so-called rate adjustment pool have created a framework for the continuing efforts. The many experienced individuals and organisations committed to preventing intimate partner violence will work hard to achieve the strategy's goals: fewer victims, better prevention and the development of more research to serve as the foundation for a concerted effort.

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2. Attitudes and Actions

What is the problem?

The good news is that the number of battered women has fallen. The bad news is that there are still an estimated 28,000 women who become the victims of domestic violence each year. And that is 28,000 too many. In addition, far too many children – an estimated 21,000 – grow up in the insecurity of a home touched by domestic violence.

Approximately 9,000 men are also victims of domestic violence each year, most often at the hands of a male partner.

Unfortunately, domestic violence – and the humiliation and degradation it causes – cannot be eliminated from one day to the next, or even from one year to the next.

But we must set for ourselves the clear goal of constantly reducing the number of victims of violence and the number of children who live in a home where domestic violence occurs, until it is eventually eliminated. Until that goal is achieved, we must ensure that women and men who are exposed to violence get the help and support they need. And that the help that is given is competent and effective.

In order to achieve this, the Government, in collaboration with the political parties approving the disbursement of funds for social welfare projects from the so-called rate adjustment pool, has set aside DKK 35 million over three years (2010-2012) to fight against what professionals call 'violence in intimate relations'.

The DKK 35 million will be used to fund progressive new measures, as well to ensure that the good work already being done continues.

The title for the effort is 'Preventing Violence in Intimate Relations', and, as the name indicates, is directed at all types of domestic violence, as well as the effects of domestic violence on children.

What has been done so far?

Since 2002 the Government – in collaboration with the parties voting for funding adjustments for social welfare programmes – devised two action plans. This has had a major impact and has given rise to a number of specific initiatives.

Activities aimed at helping victims

- Improved support for victims of domestic violence – including expanded capacity at women's shelters
- Legal advice for battered women – mainly at crisis centres
- Handicap friendly entrances at selected crisis centres
- More research into the need to help battered ethnic-minority women and children
- 24-hour hotline for battered women
- Information folders in Danish and nine other languages

- Psychological counselling for children at crisis centres and acute psychological assistance for women at crisis centres
- The website www.voldmodkvinder.dk, which offers comprehensive information about support and help

Activities aimed at supporting professionals

- More education, information and research to help the various professional groups working with victims of violence in intimate relations.
- Development of professional handbooks
- Legal advice for professionals
- Training for crisis centre employees about ethnic-minority women and children
- Continuing training of local authority employees

Activities aimed at treating and reforming abusers

- Treatment for abusive men
- Support for other initiatives to treat and reform abusers
- 'Eviction law' that would let victims remain in their home by allowing authorities to issue restraining orders for abusers

Information campaigns

- A number of information campaigns, whose goals include changing perceptions about domestic violence. Two earlier examples are a 2008 information campaign to fight partner abuse and a campaign from spring 2009 entitled, 'Take Warning Signals Seriously', which was aimed at children and teenagers

What will happen?

Many of the current activities will continue. New efforts in the 2010-2012 period are aimed at three specific areas:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Short- and long-term support for victims of intimate partner violence
- Research, public support and cross-disciplinary cooperation

Specific efforts are described in detail in the 30 initiatives below.

Who is our audience?

The National Strategy aims to toughen the broad efforts to help men and women who have been battered by a current or former partner. Children who live with domestic violence in the home are another important target group. Put plainly: it is unacceptable that approximately 21,000 children will grow up in families with a parent who is the victim of domestic violence, and thereby the insecurity of a home touched by violence. In addition to the significant problems these children face growing up, they also risk becoming victims or abusers: children who witness domestic violence or are themselves the victims of it are more likely to become either victims or perpetrators of domestic violence as adults. This negative social pattern must be broken as soon as possible.

The majority of initiatives are broadly aimed at the above-mentioned groups. However, there are also specific initiatives directed towards Danes with foreign heritages, as these groups, in some cases, require extra effort. The same is true for disabled women and men.

Who can do what?

The Danish system already offers a number of ways to support female and male victims of domestic violence. Public authorities and volunteer organisations are both involved in help and support efforts, while many professional groups work both directly and indirectly with victims. Municipal family counsellors and social workers, health professionals in emergency rooms, general practitioners and the police, are often the first ones to come in contact with cases of domestic violence.

All of these professional groups have a need for knowledge. A number of the National Strategy's 30 initiatives focus precisely on improving opportunities for these groups to stop domestic violence at an early stage and offer victims the best possible support and guidance. Professionals also need more options when seeking to help victims move beyond the crisis centres to a life without violence.

Over the past 30 years, private women's crisis centres have performed a central role in supporting victims of domestic violence; in some cases they also help the victims to transition after staying in a crisis centre. A variety of voluntary organisations such as Mødrehjælpen, a charity organisation helping mothers, and Børns Vilkår, an advocacy group for children, provide support as well as guidance.

Politicians, for their part, can take initiative to create a framework and secure funding to carry out the effort – which is exactly what the National Strategy seeks to do.

Specific problems are described as concisely as possible in the following 30 initiatives. What is already being done and what might possibly be done, as well as future initiatives and services, are also described, underscoring that the National Strategy to Prevent Violence in Intimate Relations is characterised by both approaches and actions.

3. The sooner, the better

Early intervention is vital when it concerns domestic violence. All experience shows that the earlier prevention and intervention efforts are made against violence, the better. Not only is violence at home a source of anxiety and insecurity for children, there is also a major risk that the next generation will inherit the curse. Children who grow up with domestic violence themselves all too often become victims or abusers as adults. The Government is therefore prioritising prevention and early intervention.

The coming years' work with prevention and early intervention will ensure that fewer children and teenagers grow up in homes touched by violence – and that if violence starts – it will be stopped as quickly as possible.

Initiatives aimed at children and teenagers:

1. **Information for children and teenagers.** New studies show that even pre-teens experience partner violence. The 2008 report 'Dating violence in Denmark' shows that 13,000 young women and 4,500 young men each year are exposed to physical violence from a boyfriend or girlfriend. Children and teenagers must therefore be informed about their rights and opportunities for help and support if they are abused. At the same time, they need to learn to set limits and not to accept abusive behaviour. Nearly all perpetrators of domestic violence are men or boys, but the victims can be of either sex. For this reason, the information for children and teenagers must deal with gender roles and relationships between boys and girls (Department of Gender Equality).
2. **Teaching primary school classes about violence in intimate relations.** Too many young people are the victims of some form of violence in their relationships. Some ten percent of young women and four percent of young men report having been sexually or physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend within the past year ('Dating violence in Denmark', 2008). As early as primary school, there should be a focus placed on combating different forms of partner violence and their effects on children. That involves determining what relevant teaching materials are available and the approach that should be taken to them. In some cases, new teaching materials may need to be developed to provide teachers and students with information and inspiration. Moving forward, schools must be kept up to date about the materials that can underpin instructions about the subject (Ministry of Education).
3. **Counselling for teens in violent relationships.** Teens who are exposed to violence in their relationships often hesitate to seek help by or to report it to the public authorities. One way to address this is to give them direct access to anonymous telephone and online support or guidance (Department of Gender Equality).

4. **Emphasis on the duty to notify authorities of suspected domestic violence.** People who suspect that a child is living with domestic violence have a duty to inform the municipal authorities. Word needs to be spread that this outweighs any duty of confidentiality. To do this, there needs to be more focus on the duty of professionals and everyday citizens to notify the authorities whenever they suspect child neglect due to domestic violence (Ministry of Social Affairs).

Treatment options

Many abusers want to stop their violent behaviour, but they are not capable of doing it without help. Some of these men can stop their violent behaviour if they receive treatment.

Today there are many different treatment options available. It has already been decided that past activities should be identified and evaluated. This task will be completed in 2011, at which point, based upon the study's findings, an evaluation will be made as to the most effective treatment options that abusers can be offered. Until then, various treatment options can be supported.

5. **Making treatment available to abusers as early as possible.** Treatment must help stop the cycle of violence and reduce the risk of further domestic violence (Ministry of Social Affairs).
6. **Making treatment options known.** Abusers must be made aware of where and how they can get treatment. There is also a need for special programmes aimed at abusers with non-Danish heritages (Department of Gender Equality).
7. **Treatment options in prisons.** To help abusive men – including men convicted of intimate partner violence – break the cycle of violence and prevent further abuse, it is important that these men in prisons are offered help to stop their abusive behaviour. Already today there are a variety of different treatment options available to violent individuals. The Prison and Probation Service has, among other things, set up a pilot project which involves providing treatment to people convicted of violence in intimate relations. The treatment supplements other forms of treatment, either during incarceration or as a condition of parole. The experimental programme will be evaluated in 2011 (Ministry of Justice).

Information and attitudes

Domestic violence is not a private problem. We must not ignore that a friend, neighbour or co-worker shows distinct signs of being abused by a partner. Fortunately, in the last few years, attitudes have been changing about domestic violence. In the past it was all too often regarded as a private matter or met with silence – perhaps because people were uncertain about what they could do to help. Today we have broken a great deal of the silence surrounding domestic violence. The perspective that domestic violence is quite simply unacceptable has taken hold and is growing. But it is not enough to have an opinion. We all have a responsibility and the power to help the victims of domestic violence – whether we are professionals, family members, co-workers, neighbours or politicians.

In coming years, we must work to change attitudes and spread information about how to help victims of domestic violence. At the same time we must ensure that battered women and men know their rights and the opportunities available to them for help.

8. **Spreading information and changing attitudes.** Taboo, silence and hesitation surrounding domestic violence is fortunately on the wane. To move forward in influencing positive attitude changes we must continue to focus on broad information campaigns – including initiatives aimed at Danes with foreign heritage (Department of Gender Equality).

9. **Dissemination of knowledge about options for help.** A variety of public and voluntary organisations offer support and guidance for victims of domestic violence, from crisis centres to voluntary organisations and social services. However, victims and the general population must know about them. Initiatives will therefore be launched to inform the public about these options, so that both victims themselves and people close to them know where to turn should violence occur (Department of Gender Equality).

4. Support here, now and in the long-term

A core part of the effort to stop domestic violence hinges upon helping its victims early and effectively. Because it is often difficult for a battered woman or man to seek help, it is crucial that victims are met with both understanding and professional support.

Support for victims has to do with alleviating the effects of violence in the short- and the long-term. The National Strategy therefore focuses on how we can help right now, and how we can help in the longer-term. New initiatives are under way in both areas.

Fast and effective help is needed as soon as a violent as soon as the abuse occurs. But there also has to be a long-term plan for helping the victims so that they can live life as unmarked as possible by violence – and without fear of further attacks. The challenge is especially obvious when it comes to helping victims who apparently do not seek any of the options available to them.

Support, here and now

10. **Open, anonymous and direct counselling.** An estimated 28,000 women each year are the victims of violence in intimate relations. Only a small group – approximately 2,000 – seek refuge at a crisis centre. Part of the reason could be that they do not know about crisis centres or other options for help. But the reason could also be that they do not see themselves as part of the target group for these options. To address this, a project to develop a model for a new type of open and anonymous counselling will be started (Department of Gender Equality and Ministry of Social Affairs).
11. **Study of children from families with domestic violence.** Children, whether they are themselves victims of violence or are witnesses to violence in the family, often suffer long-term effects. Professionals – municipal employees in particular – have a responsibility to examine the child's living conditions and provide early help, if the child lives with domestic violence. In order to better target and improve this effort, a study should be carried out to determine how many children are living with domestic violence, how it affects children, and what kind of help they should be given (Ministry of Social Affairs).
12. **General practitioners' counselling of victims of domestic violence.** General practitioners often come into contact with the victims of domestic violence in their consultations. In addition to being encouraged to ask about domestic violence if they suspect it exists, they should also be able to help the victim act. To do this, general practitioners need more information research about existing support options so that they can counsel victims and help them find the most appropriate source of help (Ministry of the Interior and Health).
13. **Referrals from healthcare professionals for counselling and help.** Healthcare professionals such as emergency room personnel also come into contact with victims of domestic violence. To strengthen the contribution healthcare professionals already make in referring

domestic violence victims to relevant help, they should be constantly updated about available and planned support programs (Ministry of the Interior and Health).

14. **Handicapped victims of domestic violence.** Handicapped women and men also live in violent relationships, but they do not always get help because too few know about the problem. Moreover, professionals such as home caretakers are unaware about available support programs, such as crisis centres with handicap access. In order to address the situation, professional groups that work with the handicapped should be informed, so that they can provide support to battered women and men with handicaps (Ministry of Social Affairs).
15. **Evictions and restraining orders.** Regulations for evictions and restraining orders are important. Primarily, because they can prevent further violence. Secondly, they send a clear signal to the abuser that violence against a partner is totally unacceptable. The regulations make early intervention possible, and without requiring that the victim flee from a shared home. A restraining order or eviction can furthermore enhance social workers' options in terms of resolving social problems in a home. The police play a crucial role in the practical efforts involved in enforcing the rules about evictions and restraining orders. The police's knowledge about and experience with enforcing the laws is therefore important. The Ministry of Justice has urged one of its special committees to examine the regulations for evictions and restraining orders and consider whether changes are needed to ensure better protection for victims and to make them feel safer. At the same time the committee will review whether to begin tracking violent or threatening men using GPS (Ministry of Justice).
16. **Support in the workplace.** Employers and co-workers can also act if an employee shows signs of being a victim of domestic violence. A holistic approach means that the victim can get help from as many places as possible. Stopping violence benefits the workplace as well, as domestic violence often leads to the victim having a difficult time keeping a job. If the victim's employer and his/her co-workers are to be able to read the signs of violence and step in, they need to be better informed. Workplaces must therefore provide information about violence and how to help victims seek out help. Employers and labour organisations will be asked to help disseminate information and anchor the initiative (Department of Gender Equality).

Long-term support

17. **Follow-up for victims of violence.** When women finally break out of a long history of domestic violence, serious psychological and physical effects are often still present – even after the violence has stopped. To learn more about this area, the Minister for Gender Equality and the Minister for Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs will commission a study of the current experiences with follow-up efforts, transitioning to life beyond the crisis centre and mediation. The study will include women of Danish heritage as well as women of non-Danish heritage. Moreover, the survey will include both domestic violence and 'honour-

related' conflicts. As concerns honour-related conflicts, male victims will also be included in the survey. Current experience will also be evaluated in terms of an international perspective, to ensure that future efforts are as effective as possible. The goal is to evaluate how and whether an effective recovery and transition program can ensure that battered women do not return to a life with violence (Department of Gender Equality and Ministry for Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs).

18. **Schooling and homework assistance for children at crisis centres.** Children at crisis centres are an especially vulnerable group. Beyond the problems that exist in their families, they are often unable to attend school for a period of time. Educating these children is important: on the one hand, it maintains a kind of daily routine for the children; on the other hand it helps to ensure that they will not struggle and lag behind their peers once they are able to return to normal schooling. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs will conduct a study of how many children are affected and how these children receive their schooling, including potential problem areas and examples of effective solutions to keep up with their class work. The survey can eventually lead to the preparation of recommendations for good implementation (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Affairs).
19. **Special support for ethnic-minority women who have been in crisis centres.** Ethnic-minority women apparently have an even harder time getting out of violent relationships than women of Danish heritage. They often go back to the abusive partner and very seldom establish their own homes after leaving the crisis centre. Municipal family counsellors, who are typically in contact with battered ethnic-minority women, must therefore have a broader understanding of the issues facing this group so that they can make them aware of the opportunities available to them after a stay at a crisis centre (Ministry of Refugee, Integration and Immigration Affairs).
20. **Alcohol and domestic violence.** Domestic violence and alcohol problems often go together. Children with a parent who drinks are at much greater risk of experiencing violence at home than other children. Therapists who deal with alcohol abuse must be trained to detect violence, while personnel at women's crisis centres must be trained to detect alcohol problems. Both types of professionals must receive additional training to detect such problems in order to ensure that they are addressed (Ministry of the Interior and Health).
21. **Reinforced efforts for victims.** The Government will prioritise evaluation of ongoing efforts to help victims of violence to determine whether efforts to help victims can be improved. To this end, the Ministry of Justice has created a working group, which, in light of experiences of other Nordic countries, will review needs and options to help victims of violence in intimate relations.

5. More research and collaboration among professional groups

We must ensure that professionals who support and counsel families affected by violence have the right competencies and necessary information. Victims of domestic violence must be able to contact professionals who are capable of dealing with the special problems related to abuse.

Many of the professionals who work with families affected by domestic violence say there is a need for more information so they will have the resources to offer even better professional support. For this reason, there must always be a strong focus on gathering and exchanging information, as well as ensuring that information is accessible to the professionals who work with cases involving domestic partners.

At the same time it is important that there is a good and open collaboration between the various individuals and organisations involved. This National Strategy continues many of the current initiatives to improve collaboration between professional groups and to develop and disseminate new knowledge. A range of new initiatives will also be launched:

Public support and encouraging cross-disciplinary cooperation

22. **Further improvement of cross-disciplinary working relationships among various authorities.** A study about best practices will be carried out and the findings will be shared. The study will seek to identify the best ways to work together across disciplines and among the various authorities. The information can be used for inspiration and improvements in other areas (Department of Gender Equality).
23. **Dissemination of information about local authorities with good results dealing with domestic violence.** Many municipalities are not especially prepared to deal with cases of domestic violence. Others are very good at it – whether it is in regard to violence between partners or cases concerning children living with domestic violence. Inspiration from municipalities that have good results can help ensure that better counselling and treatment options are provided in cases of domestic violence – regardless of where in the country a person lives. A collection of case studies about methods used by the municipal authorities that have the best records should be compiled and the information shared in order to provide inspiration for how to manage domestic violence cases (Ministry of Social Affairs).
24. **Competency improvement among municipal professionals and centralised counselling services.** Professionals who come in contact with victims of domestic violence must have the knowledge and competencies necessary to give the right help and support. The National Knowledge and Specialised Counselling Organisation, VISO in Danish, offers free counselling to individuals, municipal authorities and organisations if the right expertise cannot be found in the municipality itself. VISO should be used as an important participant and resource for

municipal authorities in particular in domestic violence cases (Department of Gender Equality).

25. **Competency improvement among police, prosecutors and judges.** In cases of domestic violence the victim will not necessarily be as interested in reporting the perpetrator or testifying against him/her as in other types of cases regarding violence. It is therefore important that police officers, prosecutors and judges who come in contact with victims of domestic violence understand the special psychological mechanisms that typically operate in such cases. A better understanding of these mechanisms is instrumental in ensuring that the way authorities deal with the case is not perceived by the victim as yet a new violation. The training of new police officers should therefore continue to focus on the problems related to domestic violence, and additional focus should be placed on the problem in the individual police districts. This could be accomplished by hosting training days that feature the participation of professionals from other institutions and organisations. Prosecutors need to be more familiar with the specific problems associated with violence in intimate relations, and the Director of Public Prosecutions will take steps toward offering specific training in how to handle domestic violence cases. Similarly, the Danish Court Administration will offer specific training to increase judges' understanding of the specific problems related to domestic violence (Ministry of Justice).
26. **Collaboration between NGOs and authorities.** A new project is also being launched to learn more about collaboration between NGOs and public authorities. On the basis of this project a new model is being developed as inspiration for future collaboration throughout the country (Department of Gender Equality).
27. **Easy access to counselling and practical instructions for professionals.** Information and instructions about things like relevant laws should be no more than a click away for professionals who deal with families affected by domestic violence. It should also be easy for professionals to find good advice about other organisations and public authorities that they can collaborate with and how to go about doing so. An online guide with information, practical instructions and good advice will be developed for professionals who work with violence in intimate relations (Department of Gender Equality).

Knowledge, statistics and information:

28. **Approved and relevant statistics, research and information.** The national data banks about violence against women and men, as well as yearly statistics from women's crisis centres, should continue to be gathered together in a central resource. Efforts and results must continue to be documented. Together these actions may also inspire discourse about the problem. New knowledge can only help to improve the effort to stop domestic violence (Department for Gender Equality and Ministry of Social Affairs).

29. **Research about men who are abused by a male or female partner.** We need to learn more if we are to reach out to battered men. A study should be carried out to uncover the problems that battered men experience when they seek help and support. The existing help and support programs currently available for battered men should also be identified (Department for Gender Equality and Ministry of Social Affairs).
30. **Study of why some women choose to stay at crisis centres while others don't.** Do battered women themselves feel that they received the necessary and correct help? Why do some battered women refuse to seek support and help from any of the options available to them? These are questions that we need to begin to address in order to improve the focus of new efforts. To gather answers battered women will be interviewed, both while they are staying in crisis centres and after moving out, to determine, among other things, new and different ways to support and help (Department of Gender Equality).

Appendix 1

Facts about violence in intimate relations

Victims of violence

An estimated 28,000 women are the victims of domestic violence¹.

An estimated 8,900 men are the victims of domestic violence².

Women at shelters³

In 2009, the 36 crisis centres providing statistics to LOKK – the National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark – reported that a total of 14,821 women sought help, and that 1,881 women entered shelters.

Of the women entering shelters, 29 percent were not Danish citizens, according to LOKK's statistics.

The average stay at shelters was 43 days.

One in five women moves back in with a violent partner after staying at a shelter. Women without Danish citizenship and women who are married or live together with their partner are more likely to move back in with a violent partner.

About half of the women leaving shelters have reached an agreement with their local municipal social services about follow-up support. In 2008, the figure was about a third.

Children at crisis centres⁴

In 2009, 1,817 children spent time at crisis centres.

Nearly all children spending time at centres have witnessed acts of violence against their mother, and three out of four children have lived in a violent home for at least a year.

A third of children at shelters have stayed there previously. The average stay for children was 50 days.

¹ National Institute of Public Health (2007): Men's violence against women – extent, characteristics and the measures against violence – 2007.

² National Institute of Public Health (2008): Violence against men – extent and characteristics.

³ National Board of Social Services (2010) LOKK Statistical Annual 2009 – Women and children at shelters.

⁴ National Board of Social Services (2010) LOKK Statistical Annual 2009 – Women and children at shelters.

Nearly a third of children who live in a violent home have told someone else about their situation. Children are most likely to tell a teacher, followed by family members and friends. Incidents of violence in the home reported by children were investigated in 72 percent of cases.

Violent partners⁵

Violence against women is primarily carried out by men. Almost all cases of domestic violence that are reported to the police involve a man abusing a woman. In 20 percent of cases, the violent partner is not a Danish citizen.

Dating violence⁶

The study 'Dating violence in Denmark' documents that ten percent of all women between the ages of 16 and 24 and about four percent of men in the same age group are or have been⁷ involved in a violent relationship. Those participating in the study said they felt there was a need for greater awareness of the problem.

The typical victim is a woman under 20.

Women victims suffer more physical and emotional problems than men do. The effects include sadness, dizziness, stomach aches, abdominal pains and low self-esteem.

Male victims are less likely to seek help (16.7 percent, compared with 24.7 percent for women).

Domestic violence and children

Based on the number of women reporting that they are the victims of domestic violence each year⁸, it is estimated that some 21,000 children experience violence in their homes.

Children whose mother or father has an alcohol problem are eight times as likely as other children to experience violence in the home⁹.

Municipal efforts to prevent violence in intimate relations

⁵ National Institute of Public Health (2007): Men's violence against women – extent, characteristics and the measures against violence – 2007.

⁶ National Institute of Public Health (2008): Dating violence in Denmark.

⁷ Violence in this study includes all forms of psychological, sexual or physical violence. As such, the definition applies to a broad range of acts, such as bullying, harassment, threats, restriction of liberty and rape, as well as various types of physical violence.

⁸ National Institute of Public Health (2007): Men's violence against women – extent, characteristics and the measures against violence – 2007.

⁹ Ugeskrift for Læger (2004): The long-term consequences of parental alcohol abuse: a cohort study of children in Denmark.

In 2009, the Danish National Board of Social Services carried out studies in order to map the way municipalities respond to violence in intimate relations¹⁰. Among its conclusions:

- Between a fifth and a fourth of the country's municipal authorities have staff specially assigned to respond to violence in intimate relations
- Hardly any municipal authorities have a written policy for dealing with violence in intimate relations

¹⁰ National Board of Social Services (2009): Municipal authorities and their services to respond to violence: a questionnaire about services offered by municipal authorities in cases of violence in intimate relationships and 'honour killings'.