

UNDERSTANDING GBV

STUDENT COUNSELLING UNIT

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SERIES

What is Gender-based violence?

Gender-based violence is defined as any sort of harm done to a person or group of people based on their real or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Types of Gender-based violence

- physical violence
- verbal violence (including hate speech)
- psychological violence
- sexual violence
- socio-economic violence.
- There also two other categories of violence: domestic violence and (sexual) harassment, both of which may be a combination of all five types of violence mentioned above.

Contributing Factors to GBV

- **Cultural factors** - Historical patriarchal and sexist views legitimise violence to maintain the dominance and superiority of men.
- **Social factors** - Being a victim of gender-based violence is perceived in many societies as shameful and weak, with many women still being considered guilty of attracting violence against themselves through their behaviour.
- **Economic factors** -The lack of economic resources generally makes women, but also LGBTI+ people particularly vulnerable to violence.
- **Political factors** - The under-representation of women and LGBTI+ people in power and politics means that they have fewer opportunities to shape the discussion and to affect changes in policy, or to adopt measures to combat gender-based violence and support equality.

Sources to assist those experiencing GBV

1. **UP Careline** - Call 0800 747 747/
SMS 31393
2. **South Africa Suicide Crisis Helpline** - 0800 212 223 or 0800 121 314
3. **People Opposed to Woman Abuse (Powa)** - Helpline: 083 765 1235/
Toll-free helpline: 0800 150 150/
Website :www.powa.co.za
4. **Lifeline South Africa** - 0861 322 322
5. **The Gender-Based Violence Command Centre**
- 0800 428 428

How to prevent GBV?

- Encouraging women's full participation in civil society
- Develop and implement structured programs that guide the examination of gender norms and their relationship to power inequities, violence, and other harmful behaviors
- Providing GBV clinical services in lower-level health facilities
- Addressing the needs of child survivors
- Developing practical guidance for building whole systems

How do I assist someone experiencing GBV?

- If you are worried about someone's safety, make sure to stay in touch. Avoid making the abuser suspicious so that communication lines can stay open.
- Ask your friend how they prefer to connect. It is important to establish a safe communication channel.
- Be supportive, affirm and validate their experience.
- Respect their right to consent. Unless you strongly believe that your friend's life is in danger, avoid taking actions without their consent.

