

## One25 Media Guidance for Coverage of Women with a History of Street Sex Work

The media has a very important role in fighting discrimination and abuse against women with a history or current involvement in street sex-work and substance misuse. Sensationalist and inaccurate reporting can result in a lack of understanding towards this vulnerable group and can lead to damaging repercussions in their and their families' lives.

We request that journalists avoid naming and/or using identifying photographs of this group of women. Identifying these women can prove extremely damaging to their long-term rehabilitation. If in doubt, please email One25's CEO, Anna Smith at [anna.smith@one25.org.uk](mailto:anna.smith@one25.org.uk) or the Fundraising and Communications Manager, Amy Sutcliffe at [amy.sutcliffe@one25.org.uk](mailto:amy.sutcliffe@one25.org.uk). Your support on this matter is greatly appreciated, by both us and the women we help.

### Roles and responsibilities of the media in reporting such stories:

- Professional, humane reporting.
- Respecting a code of ethics, especially in relation to vulnerable women and children.
- Cooperation with One25, especially in relation to awareness raising and prevention.
- Challenge, rather than promote, stereotypes.
- Avoid clichés and labelling of vulnerable women in street sex work such as 'prostitutes', 'junkies', 'vice-girls', 'hookers' etc. and look at the whole person and their positive potential. These women are somebody's daughter, sister, friend or mother and are not defined by their involvement in sex work or the other challenges that they face (e.g. addiction).
- A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself: "Is the story more important than the individuals involved?"

### We are eager to work with journalists who want:

- To make a difference to this group by allowing their accurate story to be told.
- To educate the general public of the abuses within the street sex industry.
- To contribute to discouraging people from any form of discrimination and abuse of these women.
- To boost the women's self-esteem, stop them from internalizing negative stereotypes about themselves and to promote their social inclusion.

### Improve your research and reporting

One25 is keen to cooperate with the media on the sensitive and accurate reporting of stories involving women trapped in street sex-work. We can:

- Come to your office and offer a training/information sharing session to media professionals
- Organise joint training between journalists across Bristol and One25

- Send you our media pack with latest stats, case studies, FAQs and more
- Signpost you to our website at [www.one25.org.uk](http://www.one25.org.uk) or to affiliations of sex-work projects, for example [www.beyondthestreets.org.uk](http://www.beyondthestreets.org.uk)

### **Interviewing guidelines**

Do no harm. Media professionals must be aware that for most women, recounting their history or a specific ordeal to a stranger entails additional trauma and a high chance of relapse. For this reason, One25 will not set up interviews between journalists and our beneficiaries unless the women involved have expressed an informed willingness to be interviewed and will be empowered rather than re-traumatised by the experience. To make this process safe, healthy and anonymous for them, every journalist must agree to the following:

- Be sensitive, discreet and considerate towards the woman being interviewed and respect her need for confidentiality/anonymity.
- Any filming of service users must use a non-identifiable image and preferably an altered voice.
- Where possible we choose to use a pre-record rather than live recording and agree to delete any answers that the interviewee might want to take back and record a different response.
- Discuss interview questions beforehand with the interviewee.
- If the interviewee provides her real name or names of her family members, these must be deleted from the recording. Either use a pseudonym agreed by her or no name at all.
- Provide a female interviewer and female crew where possible.
- Be clear to the interviewee when and where the recorded information will be used and confirm that she understands this with One25's signed permission form.
- If the interviewee doesn't want to answer a question, please take her 'no' as a 'no' and don't push her on the subject.
- The interviewee should be allowed a member of One25 staff present to support her.
- Talk to One25 if you feel unsure on sensitive and respectful interviewing techniques.
- Always treat the women with dignity and respect - the way you would want to be treated in her situation.

Reviewed By	Amy Sutcliffe, Fundraising and Communications Manager
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