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Launch of 'A strange empty space' report, amplifying women's voices through lockdown

The lockdown has left many women and their children facing many challenges to be safe and survive, from being left homeless, to lacking basics such as food and clothing, to having no phone and no way to ask for help during the crisis whilst in isolation.

We surveyed women we support through our Minerva services and affected by the criminal justice system, who shared their lock down experiences.



"I made it, I did not give into temptation and I am proud. Still no groups, I miss the support. I miss my daughter. I would like routine and purpose back in my life. The uncertain feelings remain, but I try to stay positive."

[Read full report here](#)

'I Am With Her' campaign and appeal

In response to the lockdown Advance launched our '**I Am With Her**' campaign and appeal. Being at home should not mean being unsafe.

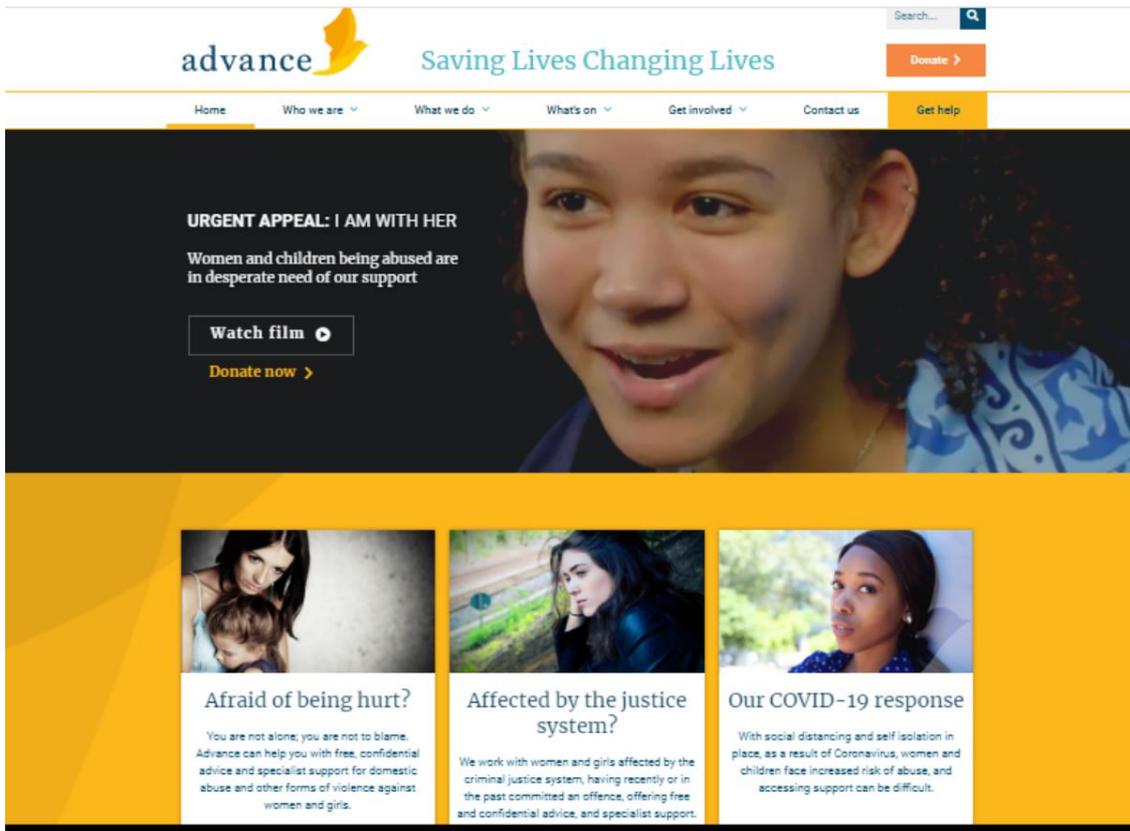


Calls to our helpline have increased over 35% since lockdown, and we expect them to continue to rise. We are working hard to ensure our vital advice and support services can continue to safely help the women and children who are reaching out to us, during these deeply worrying times. **We are determined to be there for those who need our help** and have no one else to turn to and we desperately need your support. Join us to say that I AM WITH HER **#IAmWithHer**.

Watch the stories of [Naomi, Lisa, Debbie, Amira and Sophie here](#)

[Donate today](#)

Launch of our new website



Advance launched its new online home at advancecharity.org.uk, making it possible for you and our supporters to get involved and women and children to get help, as we work towards our vision of a world where women and girls can lead safe, violence-free and equal lives. You can now explore Advance's journey, team and impact at [Our Story](#) and its work, services and resources for professionals at [What we do](#). To find out more about news and events, as well as activities at our Women's Centres, visit [What's On](#) and join in to support us by working with us, volunteering or taking on a challenge and fundraising with us at [Get Involved](#).

Keep in touch, sign up for our [newsletter](#) or you can [Contact us](#) to find out more. **If you are worried** about being hurt or concerned about someone you know, you can [Get Help](#).

The website was developed in partnership with [tothepoint](#) and its Managing Director, Simon Hutton said of the collaboration: 'It is such a privilege to be able to work for organisations that are a force for good and can make a real difference to people's lives'.

A day in our lives: 'Connections'- our virtual summer awayday'

During the Covid-19 crisis, our Advance team have responded with the same passion and determination they show every day, putting women and children at the heart of everything we do. Now more than ever we have embodied our values with innovative and collaborative responses, listening and empowering those we support and each other.



After three months of working remotely in challenging times, we wanted to spend our Summer Awayday together (over 6 hours) as planned before lockdown! Our theme was “Connections”, taking time to reflect, share and laugh together and we looked for innovative ways to connect over 80 of us across London and beyond!

Our day started with “**Connections boxes**” delivered to everyone in advance, full of props, treats and games that were shared throughout the day. In the morning, teams shared successes and made plans for the coming months, taking team photos wearing fun paper glasses (the props!); at the break we shared the treats (cookies and drinks too!), photos and words of inspiration. In the afternoon, we spent time getting to know other teams and putting our investigative skills to work on virtual escape rooms. With more afternoon treats from our “boxes”, we shared **a live gig just for us**, with performances from comedian **Josie Long**, **Rachel Riveros** of **E33Dance** and singer/songwriter **Catrin Evans** – thank you all for your generosity!

A great day together! We are ready to continue to work towards a world where every woman and girl can lead safe, violence-free and equal lives. **#IAmWithHer**

Women's voices from lockdown

Miriam's Story

“My Advance advocate gave me the confidence to reach out to my doctor when my mental health deteriorated as lockdown extended further. With Advance's help, I am planning to safely leave with my children after lockdown restrictions are eased”



[Read Miriam's Story here](#)



Sam's Story

"[My keyworker at Advance] was so amazing and so helpful, like it's the first time that I've got to where I've got to today and I do believe it's got a lot to do with Minerva and Advance. And the judge giving me a bit of a break."

[Read Sam's Story here](#)

Policy update: The Domestic Abuse Bill

There are 2.4 million victims of domestic abuse a year aged 16 to 74 (of which 1.6 million are women) and about 750,000 domestic abuse offences were recorded by the police in 2019. In December 2019, the government committed to "support all victims of domestic abuse and pass the Domestic Abuse Bill", originally introduced in January 2018 during the previous parliament. The Bill provides a definition of domestic abuse and aims to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences, safe in the knowledge that the state will do everything it can, both to support them and their children and to pursue the perpetrator.

The Domestic Abuse Bill completed its Third Reading and was voted through by the House of Commons in July 2020. The Bill will now be debated in the House of Lords before it receives Royal Assent and becomes law. Advance contributed to the [consultation of the Domestic Abuse Bill](#) and we pay close attention to its progress.

[Track the progress of the Domestic Abuse Bill here](#)

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General enquiries:

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marketing@advancecharity.org.uk

Domestic Abuse

Get help if you are afraid of being hurt or concerned about someone you know:

[020 8741 7008](tel:02087417008)

angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

Criminal Justice:

Get help if you are involved in the criminal justice system:

[020 8563 2225](tel:02085632225)

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