

# Responses in context

## We are all in this picture

A social responder is anyone who is responding to a person experiencing or using domestic and family violence. This includes social networks (family, friends, neighbours, colleagues), people working in organisations, institutions, and communities.

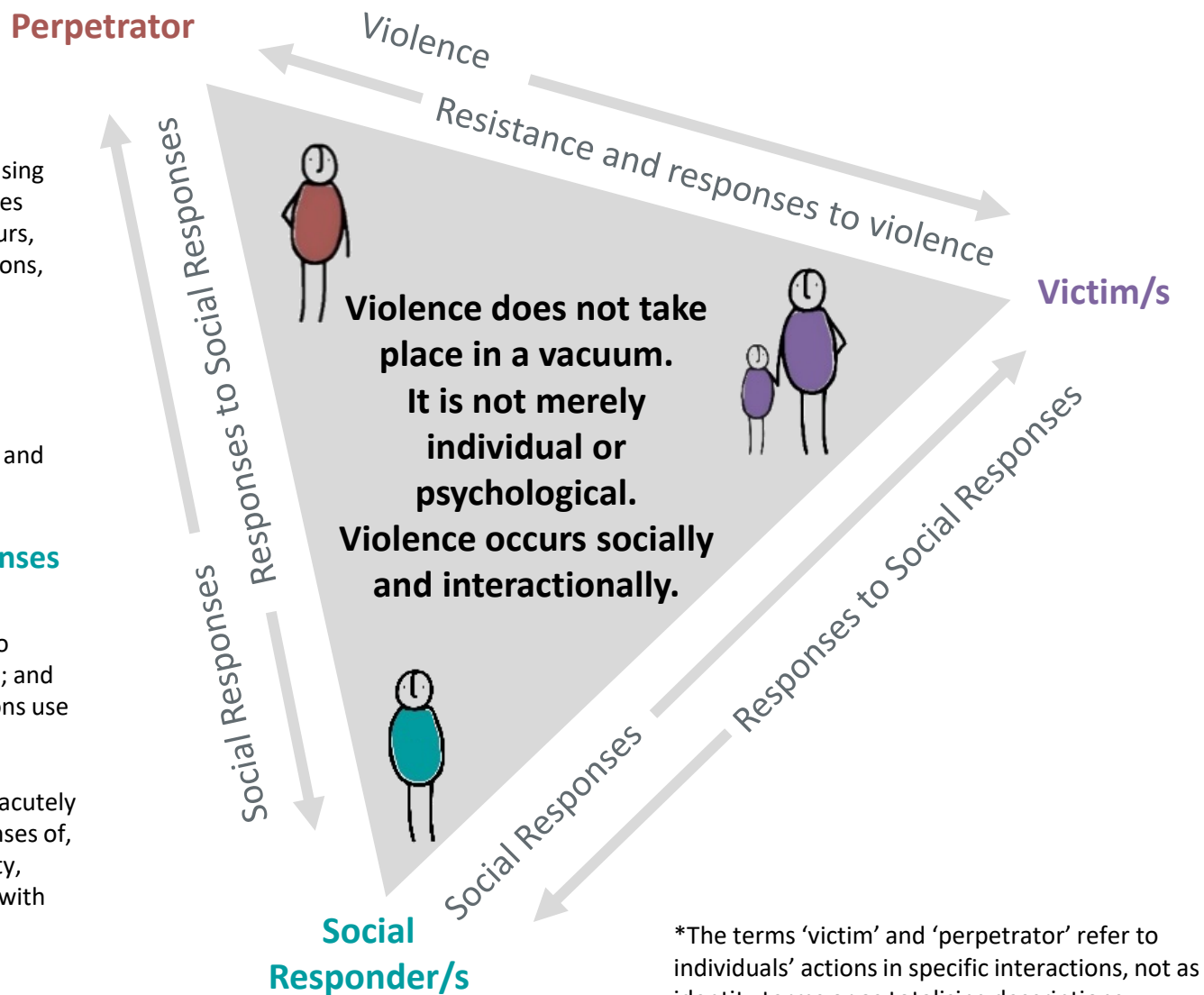
Social responses can also be indirect for example, through media and social commentary, laws, mandates, policies, procedures, commissioning, publications and everyday conversations etc.

## Social | Service | System Responses

Social, service and system responses:

- can be helpful, unhelpful or harmful to people who are experiencing violence; and
- can further enable or mitigate a persons use of power and control.

Victims and perpetrators of violence are acutely aware of, and are anticipating the responses of, others. They are looking for signs of safety, further threat or loss in their interaction with social responders, services and systems.



\*The terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' refer to individuals' actions in specific interactions, not as identity terms or as totalising descriptions.

Despite its prevalence, violence is largely misunderstood. Insight Exchange is informed by the ideas of the [Centre for Response Based Practice](#) which centres on the following tenets:

- (a) People have agency and, alone or with others, a sense of agency is a vital aspect of being
- (b) Dignity is central to individual and collective well-being
- (c) People (alone or in groups) always respond to adversity, and resist violence
- (d) Violence is, with rare exceptions, deliberate
- (e) Violence is unilateral (i.e., not mutual) and consists of actions by one person (or group) against the will and well-being of another
- (f) Language can be used in restrictive or liberating ways, to
  - (i) conceal or reveal violence,
  - (ii) obscure or reveal offender responsibility,
  - (iii) conceal or elucidate responses and resistance, and
  - (iv) blame or contest the blaming of victims
- (g) People are understood better as responding agents than as affected objects
- (h) Social and material context is central to human experience and must be taken into account<sup>1</sup>.

Through Insight Exchange individuals, organisations and communities are invited and supported to reflect on how to respond in ways that uphold dignity and build on safety.

Find out more about the underpinning ideas of [Insight Exchange here](#).

<sup>1</sup>NOTE: This work has been taken and, in small parts only, adapted from the Definition of Response-Based Practice as appears in: Neukrug, E. (2015). The SAGE encyclopedia of theory in counselling and psychotherapy. Thousand Oak: Sage. Volume 2, 894-896.