



Educational resource

FOR SCHOOLS

HIDDEN WOUNDS

Introduction

In a world that is constantly evolving, it is our duty to break the silence surrounding the injustices we encounter. In the United Kingdom, the situation is particularly alarming: **1 in 6 girls and 1 in 20 boys** will experience abuse during their childhood. Over **2.3 million people** aged 16 and over, including 1.6 million women and 712,000 men, have endured domestic abuse in the year ending March 2024. This violence has profound repercussions, leading to social exclusion, harassment, and a social and economic cost estimated at **£85 billion a year**, encompassing expenditure on the criminal justice system, healthcare, and lost productivity.

This ecosystem of suffering is not confined to individuals; it affects our entire community, urgently calling for change. It is within this context that the play "Hidden Wounds" emerges, not merely as a show, but as an essential opportunity for raising awareness about the reality faced by so many young people. Accessible from the age of 12, this bold work delicately addresses crucial themes such as equality of opportunity and violence in all its forms, confronting audiences with real testimonies that provoke deep reflection.

With nearly 8,000 inspired spectators, including many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, "Hidden Wounds" stands as a powerful educational tool and a catalyst for change. It encourages young individuals to engage in the pursuit of a violence-free future. By integrating this dynamic work into your schools, you are actively participating in a movement for awareness—an urgent call to action to build a fairer and more compassionate community. Take your students on this enriching journey, capable of transforming lives and sowing the seeds of a better future.

**1 in 6 girls and
1 in 20 boys**

will be abused in childhood

(source NPCC : National Police Chiefs' Council)

2.3 million people

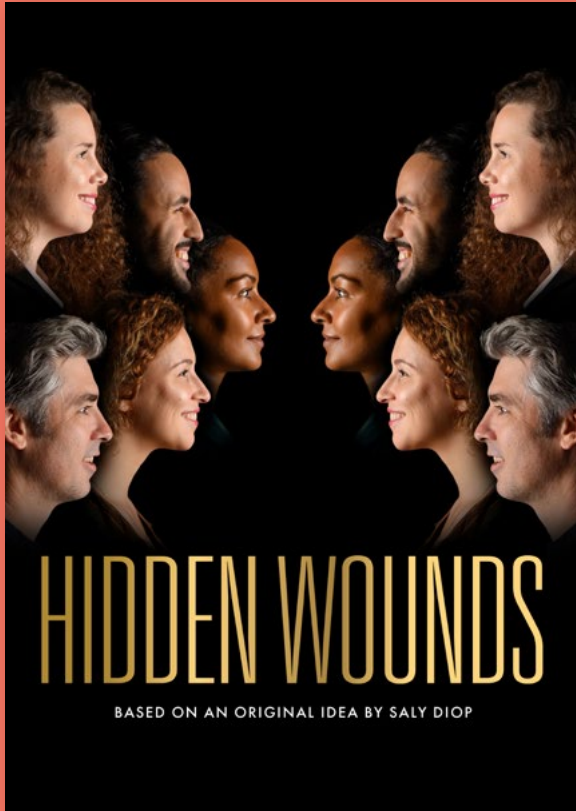
aged 16 years and over (**1.6 million women and 712,000 men**) experienced domestic abuse in year ending (YE) March 2024

(source ONS : Office for National Statistics)

£85 billion

per year is the estimated social and economic cost of domestic violence in the UK. This figure includes costs to the criminal justice system, healthcare, social care, housing, and lost productivity due to time off work, according to the Home Office and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

Presentation of the play



Title of the play : "HIDDEN WOUNDS"

Authors : Saly Diop and Emile Abossolo Mbo

Director : Olivier Maille

Duration : 1 hour

Audience : Suitable for ages 12 and up, with no upper age limit.

This play is presented in the form of a performance, primarily targeting professional and educational audiences. It is followed by a dynamic exchange with the audience, allowing for live feedback in the format of debates, conferences, or panel discussions. Subsequently, these discussions can continue in small groups, either as part of workplace training focused on **equal opportunities and violence prevention** or during classroom interventions addressing **sexism and equality of opportunity**.

Synopsis

Five thirty-somethings meet once a month at one of the group's homes to share, reflect, and support one another. Amel and Amar, the inseparable twins, Binta the determined, Romain the cerebral, and Laetitia the sensitive soul are bound by an unbreakable friendship, built on strong foundations of kindness and respect. However, this evening at Binta's, marking her housewarming party, promises to be different. Amel and Romain have a plan, one that could change their lives and destinies. The evening is set to be filled with emotions and unexpected twists.

Characters



Laetitia : Caring and sensitive, she is a protective figure for her loved ones, always prioritising their needs over her own. Adopted at birth, she has never known her biological parents.

Binta : Full of energy and of Malian descent, she was placed in care at the age of 15 after escaping a forced marriage. Always straightforward, she speaks her mind without hesitation. Behind her "strong character," there is a young woman bearing her own scars, who has worked tirelessly to study and achieve her dream job: judge.



Romain : Energetic and dynamic, he has a leader-like quality in a group. His weapon of choice is humour; he doesn't hesitate to crack a joke whenever the opportunity arises. Yet, behind this playful facade lies a man with a big heart who wants to make a difference.

Amel : Twin sister to Amar and of Maghrebien descent, she has started her own business. A down-to-earth individual, she cares for her surroundings with love and strength. With a difficult past, she dreams of freedom and justice, aspiring to be a "strong" woman, always knowing the right words to unite and inspire others. She aims to uplift those around her.



Amar : Twin brother to Amel and of Maghrebien descent, he is a combat sports champion and the latest addition to the group. Amar has a son with a disability. More reserved by nature, he tends to be cautious. He has fought many battles alone in life and is among those who find it challenging to ask for help.

The names and characteristics of the characters are currently being revised to better reflect the diversity of the British population.

Themes adressed

- Discrimination
- Racism
- Street harassment
- Bullying
- Social exclusion
- Disability
- Domestic violence
- Psychological abuse
- Child exploitation
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Equality of opportunity and solidarity

Awareness for schools

- **A transformative play:** Designed to name, understand, and recognise that “I am not alone,” this performance is accessible from the age of 12, with no upper age limit.

We are aware that our young people, due to their increasing exposure to screens and social media, may lose sight of empathy and the importance of human relationships. That is why we have chosen theatre as a powerful tool to help them project themselves and engage in enriching emotional experiences, ultimately strengthening their ability to feel and understand others. In addition to the performance, we can implement a variety of educational activities that provide a holistic and engaging approach, allowing participants to explore the themes in greater depth and maximise the impact of this transformative experience on their lives.

- **School interventions :** These sessions aim to decode the mechanisms of sexism, an essential step towards action. They first create a safe space for young people to express their thoughts and emotions after the performance. Then, they raise awareness of gender discrimination and encourage them to envision an equal society through creative and collaborative workshops.
- **An inspiring exhibition titled “What would you say to the little girl or boy you once were?”** This exhibition features nearly 50 roll-up portraits of men and women, displaying their childhood and adult faces alongside their journeys. It shines a light on inspiring role models for all, broadening the scope of possibilities.
- **A competition for creating prevention spots aimed at young audiences :** This fun and educational competition invites students to produce a prevention spot on the theme of equality of opportunity, drawing inspiration from their experiences during the performance and classroom engagements. This initiative allows young people to take action and express themselves.

Educational value of the play

1. AWARENESS OF SOCIAL ISSUES

The play enables students to become aware of difficult and often invisible realities related to violence and discrimination, encouraging a deeper understanding of social issues.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHY

By placing themselves in the characters' shoes, students can develop their ability to empathise, which is crucial for understanding the emotional and psychological consequences of violence and discrimination.

3. PROMOTION OF CRITICAL THINKING

The performance encourages students to think critically about stereotypes, prejudices, and social norms, allowing them to analyse and question the structures of power and inequality present in their own world..

4. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The play may inspire students to engage in actions that change mindsets and combat injustices, through projects or community initiatives.

5. ENHANCEMENT OF INTERCULTURAL SKILLS

By addressing themes related to cultural and identity differences, the play promotes respect and appreciation of diversity, fundamental in a globalised world.

6. CREATION OF A DIALOGUE SPACE AND LIBERATION OF SPEECH

The exchange with the audience after the performance can serve as a starting point for classroom discussions on often taboo subjects. This creates a safe environment to address difficult issues and encourages the sharing of experiences and perspectives.

The silence surrounding violence has tragic consequences, not only for the victim but also for their surroundings. This mutism transforms into a cycle of shame, withdrawal, and frustration, further isolating those who suffer. When they recount their experiences years after acts of violence, they often reveal broken life trajectories marked by echoes of pain that resonate through time.

We must urgently address this topic, as it is hard to imagine the extent of the consequences for children exposed to such violence. For victims, it is not only about physical or emotional wounds; these are traumas that persist and can resurface in adulthood, shaping individuals who find themselves trapped in a reality of suffering.

These traumas leave an indelible mark, turning some into criminals or others into individuals who resort to desperate paths such as prostitution. Yet, for the vast majority, they are simply deeply scarred human beings carrying within them a legacy of pain that sometimes drives them to perpetuate cycles of violence. Their personal struggles not only manifest in their existence but also pass down through generations, creating an invisible ecosystem of suffering that transcends the individual.

It is thus crucial to understand that what we do not see—the invisible wounds—has a catastrophic impact on society

as a whole. Each affected life is a life potentially lost to resilience and fulfilment. By confronting these realities, we have the opportunity to awaken consciousness, begin to break these chains, and work together to build a future where violence is not a legacy, but a memory that fades in favour of collective healing.

7. IDENTIFICATION OF THE MECHANISMS OF VIOLENCE

Students can gain a better understanding of how violence manifests (psychological, social, physical) in different contexts, and the different forms it may take in their own lives.

8. EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

By developing a better understanding of human rights and equality issues through the entire "Hidden wounds" project, which includes the play, the exhibition of inspiring role models, school interventions, and the prevention spot competition, "Hidden wounds" contributes to forming informed and responsible citizens.

These educational interests make "Hidden wounds" not only an entertaining piece but also profoundly educational, capable of catalysing essential reflections and discussions on contemporary societal issues.



Educational objectives

1. AWARENESS OF VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION

- Inform students about the various forms of violence against women and minorities, including harassment, discrimination, domestic abuse, and violence towards children at home, in school, and on social media.
- Develop an understanding of the different manifestations of racism and gender inequality.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY

- Encourage students to feel empathy towards victims of discrimination and violence, recognising the importance of solidarity in the fight against these issues.
- Foster a culture of kindness and mutual support within the group.

3. PROMOTION OF CRITICAL THINKING

- Stimulate debate on topics such as consent, empowerment, and the right to bodily autonomy.

4. IMPROVEMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS

- Develop students' abilities to communicate openly about sensitive topics and to express their emotions and opinions constructively.
- Reinforce skills in active listening and respect for differing viewpoints.
- Promote respect and appreciation for cultural, gender, and ethnic differences.
- Encourage young people to actively engage in the fight against inequality and to become agents of change in their community.

5. USE OF EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

- Introduce tools such as the "violence-o-meter" and "harassment-o-meter" to help students identify and evaluate the degree and intensity of violence and/or harassment, and to discuss the violence and discrimination they might encounter in their daily lives.

Preparatory activities

1. Class Discussion

Organise a discussion on the themes of the play, such as violence against women, discrimination, and racism. Ask questions to provoke thought, for example: "What forms of violence or discrimination do you know of?" or "Have you ever witnessed such situations?"

2. Documentary Research

Invite students to conduct research on related topics such as forced marriage, bullying, or laws concerning violence against women. They can then present their findings to the class.

Post-show activities

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. What emotions did you feel during the performance?

Identify the moments that touched you the most and explain why.

2. How did the characters in the play prompt you to think about social realities?

Is there a character with whom you particularly identify?

3. Which themes did you find the most poignant or relevant?

Why do you think these themes are important today?

4. How did the play contribute to your understanding of issues such as harassment or discrimination?

What new perspectives did it offer you?

5. Did you notice any humorous elements in the play?

How was humour used to address serious topics?

6. Were there elements in the play that felt realistic or reminded you of real-life events?

Can you draw parallels between fiction and reality?

7. What messages or lessons do you take away from this performance?

What would you like to change or improve in your own behaviour or that of those around you?

Activities

1. Class Debrief

Organise an open discussion where students can share their impressions of the play, what they liked or did not like, what shocked them, and what moved them.

2. Writing a Report

Ask students to write a report on their experience, including a summary of the play, their personal reactions, and an analysis of the themes addressed.

3. Emotion Evaluation

Have students assign emotions related to specific scenes of the play using a scale (for example, from 1 to 10) and justify their choices.

4. Theatre Workshop

- Organise a theatre session where students can create scenes inspired by the play to explore the themes from a different angle.
- Invite students to choose a scene from the play that impacted them and reenact it in small groups, adding their own interpretation or changing the dialogue.

5. Creation of a Violence-O-Meter

Introduce the violence-o-meter tool and ask students to create their own version, adapting categories for group discussions about what is acceptable and unacceptable in interpersonal relationships.

6. Round Table with Guests

- Invite speakers (social workers, psychologists, educators) who can share their experiences regarding the issues addressed in the play. This can provide students with real-life perspectives.

7. Viewing Thematic Videos

Show short films or documentaries on the topics discussed in the play, followed by a class discussion to facilitate contextualising the themes.

8. Introduction to Non-Violent Communication (observation, feeling, need, and request)

Keywords : autonomy, learning, kindness, empathy, work, play, sharing, cooperation, adaptation according to everyone's abilities.

Contacts and support resources

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS



101

NON-EMERGENCY POLICE NUMBER

*To report a crime
that is not urgent*



999

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police, Fire, and Ambulance.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE

Phone: **0808 2000 247**

Website : **womensaid.org.uk**

Provides free, confidential support 24/7 for women suffering from domestic violence.

MEN'S ADVICE LINE

Phone: **0808 801 0327**

Website : **mensadvice.org.uk**

A helpline for men who are victims of domestic violence, providing advice and information.

VICTIM SUPPORT

Phone: **0800 168 9111**

Website : **victimsupport.org.uk**

This service offers support to victims of crime, including domestic violence.

RAPE CRISIS

Phone: **0808 802 9999**

Website: **rapecrisis.org.uk**

A 24-hour service for victims of rape and sexual assault.

CHILDLINE

Phone : **0800 1111**

Website: **childline.org.uk**

Offers free support for children and young people who need help or want to talk about their problems.

SAMARITANS

Phone : **116 123**

Website: **samaritans.org**

A confidential listening service for anyone in distress or crisis.

ONLINE PLATFORMS

REFUGE

Website : **refuge.org.uk**

Provides information on available refuges for domestic violence victims, as well as practical advice.

NHS CHOICES

Website : **nhs.uk**

Information on mental health and resources for victims of domestic violence.

ONLINE PLATFORMS

WOMEN'S AID

Website : womensaid.org.uk

An organisation that supports women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

VICTIM SUPPORT

Website : victimsupport.org.uk

Offers support to victims of crime and abuse.

NSPCC (NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN)

Website : nspcc.org.uk

Dedicated to protecting children from abuse and maltreatment.

STONEWALL

Website: stonewall.org.uk

Provides support to LGBTQ+ individuals facing discrimination.

THE NATIONAL LGBT+ DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

Website: galop.org.uk

Offers support for LGBTQ+ individuals who are victims of domestic violence.

MIND

Website: mind.org.uk

Provides support for mental health issues.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Discrimination and Racism

Racism: A Very Short Introduction by Ali Rattansi.
Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge.

Bullying and Social Exclusion

The Bully Book by Eric Kahn Gale.
We Are All Made of Stars by Rowan Coleman - addressing the lives and struggles of marginalised individuals.

Violence Against Women

Believe Me: How Trusting Women Can Change the World by Alexandra E. K. Anwandji.
Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo - exploring women's struggles through the lens of diverse characters.

Violence Against Children

The Boy Who Was Never Loved by John G. Hartman - a narrative about child maltreatment.
A Child Called It by Dave Pelzer - a powerful testimony of a troubled childhood.

Solidarity and Equality of Opportunity

The Equality Illusion: The Real Story Behind Sexism by Kat Banyard.
Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

USEFUL QUOTES

"We cannot fight for a better world without addressing the inequalities and injustices faced by individuals and communities alike." — Malala Yousafzai

"Violence is never a solution. True revolutions begin with love and compassion." — Desmond Tutu

To go further and truly become aware of the issues

Timeline evolution of women's rights and human rights in the UK and worldwide

1832

Reform Act

Although limited, the Reform Act expanded the right to vote to a small portion of the male population, excluding women.

1840

First Women's Rights Convention

A symbolic event in Seneca Falls, USA, which inspired the women's movement in the United Kingdom.

1870

Education Act

Women began to access formal education at all levels, though access remained limited.

1897

Formation of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)

One of the main groups campaigning for women's suffrage, implementing aggressive campaigns to secure this right.

1967

Abortion Act

Legalisation of abortion under certain conditions, marking a significant advancement for women's reproductive rights.

1963

Publication of "The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan.

Launch of the modern feminist movement, influencing many women in the UK.

1928

Equal Franchise Act

Extended the right to vote to women aged 21 and over, placing them on equal footing with men.

1918

Representation of the People Act

Women over the age of 30 gained the right to vote in the UK, marking a major turning point in the history of women's rights.

1970

Equal Pay Act

Introduction of the equal pay legislation aimed at reducing the gender pay gap.

1972

New York Marathon

First woman, Catherine Ndereba, to run a marathon.

1975

Sex Discrimination Act

Aimed at combating discrimination based on sex in both hiring and employment.

First solo travels by women

Women began to travel alone, challenging social norms regarding female mobility.

1984

First woman to fly solo around the world.

A significant event challenging gender stereotypes.

2011

UN Security Council Resolution 1325

Recognition of the importance of women's involvement in peace and security processes.

2010

Equality Act

Consolidation and expansion of anti-discrimination laws, encompassing all aspects of discrimination, including on the basis of sex and sexual orientation.

2002

Introduction of representation quota legislation.

Measures implemented to increase women's representation in politics.

1995

Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing

Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a turning point for women's rights globally.

2013**Legalisation of same-sex marriage**

Same-sex couples gained the right to marry, reinforcing civil rights for all.

2017**#MeToo**

A global movement against harassment and sexual assault, which resonated strongly in the UK.

2018**Saudi Arabia – Right to drive**

Women gained the right to drive, marking a notable advancement in their rights within a conservative society.

2019**Domestic Violence Act**

Enhanced protections for victims of domestic violence, including provisions to support affected children.

Suggestions for topics to work in class

Study of Types of Violence and Discrimination:

Explore the various forms of violence and discrimination that exist in order to raise students' awareness of these issues.

Analysis of Statistics on Inequalities and Violence Against Women : Discuss relevant data and figures that highlight the inequalities and violence suffered by women, in order to foster a deeper understanding of the situation.

Exploration of Key Concepts : Address essential concepts such as human rights, equality, and non-discrimination, as well as children's rights. This also includes the prevention of violence, the rights of minorities, psychological manipulation, the right to bodily autonomy, and the history of feminist movements and the fight against racism. Particular attention will be given to the different types of violence for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding.



These themes will enable students to engage actively in critical reflections and become informed and responsible citizens.

Conclusion

The quest for gender equality rests on a profound transformation of our values, beliefs, and representations. The project "HIDDEN WOUNDS", through its play based on true stories, plays a pivotal role in this process. By questioning our perceptions and inviting the audience to reflect on their own representations, it contributes to raising awareness of equality issues and enables individuals to become agents of change.

Although progress has been made, there is still much to be done to integrate equality into mindsets, and it is up to all of us – teachers, parents, students, citizens – to meet this challenge. Together, by engaging in open discussions and questioning our daily behaviours, we can build a future where everyone, regardless of gender, finds their place and voice in a truly equal society. Equality should not be merely an ideal but a living and impactful reality.





CONTACT-US!

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