

Banner 4:

BIG, “the Berlin initiative to combat violence against women“, was set up in 1995. As the “Berlin intervention centre for domestic violence”, BIG has run the telephone hotline 6110300 daily from 9 am to midnight since November 1999.

Callers to the number are dealt with anonymously and are able to speak to female operators offering practical help, legal advice and the addresses of women’s refuges and safe houses.

If victims of abuse are unable to seek help from the intervention service themselves due to traumatisation, lack of information or immobility, the female staff can also visit the victim at home with an interpreter and provide help through “mobile intervention”.

The services provided by BIG were expanded in 2005 to include a contact advisory service, which means:

Following removal of perpetrators by the police, BIG will make initial telephone contact with the victim of violence, explain information on support options and accompany the victim to secure accommodation.

The BIG hotline is constantly in use. In 2005, over 6,000 women called the number.

Thanks to the broad media coverage and its low-threshold services, the project is recognised as a success that is also highly regarded by the justice department and politicians.

Since the introduction of the Law on Protection Against Violence (*Gewaltschutzgesetz*) in 2002, BIG has been working alongside the police and criminal prosecution service on a legal basis.

In 2005, the police recorded 12,814 incidents of domestic abuse. The victims received legal assistance and social support.

For a home free from violence!

“The first step is to simply pick up the phone and call us...”