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Issued: Wednesday 2 June 2010

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL: 00.00HRS MONDAY 7 JUNE 2010  
X FACTOR STAR HELPS BLOW THE WHISTLE  
ON DOMESTIC ABUSE THIS WORLD CUP**

Reporters, photographers and camera crews are invited to join Rowetta of X Factor and Happy Mondays fame, as she unveils a window display on Market Street in Manchester city centre to launch a Greater Manchester domestic abuse awareness campaign during the World Cup period.

Date: Monday 7 June 2010  
Time: 10am  
Location: NOISE LAB, 42 Market Street, Manchester city centre (between Schuh and Boot's).

**\*\*\*Please confirm your attendance in advance\*\*\***

X Factor and Happy Monday's star Rowetta is backing a Greater Manchester domestic abuse campaign in the run up to and during this year's World Cup.

The campaign is being launched as research shows cases of domestic abuse increase by nearly 30 per cent on England match days\*.

Rowetta said: "This campaign is so close to my heart, as most people know, I escaped from a very violent marriage. If I hadn't found help, and a refuge, I doubt I would be here now. I thought I had no way of escaping, and I didn't think I had the courage. Everybody going through abuse needs to know that there is a way out."

Supporting this campaign is the 10 local authorities, Greater Manchester Police, the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline and Greater Manchester Public Health Network, who have come together to urge domestic abuse victims, their friends and families as well as those committing the abuse to seek help and support in the run up to and during the World Cup.

The window display\*\* consisting of a living room scene with items such as a football shirt, a remote control and a beer bottle taking centre stage will be on show throughout the World Cup and will be a reminder to shoppers that help is available to those who need it.

Assistant Chief Constable Terry Sweeney, GMP's lead on Domestic Abuse said: "Competitive tension, and increased alcohol consumption, can provoke abuse and violence at home. We want to urge victims, their friends and families not to wait, but to seek help and advice immediately before the abuse escalates.

"We will have specialist domestic abuse officers on duty at key times during the tournament to ensure that full support is available to those in need. Our partner agencies also provide valuable help for victims.

"Offenders also need to be clear that the World Cup cannot be used as justification for any abusive behaviour. Support services are available for them to get help, but if they choose to become violent or abusive then we will arrest them and ensure that they are brought to justice. Our priority is to protect victims."

A series of hard-hitting posters incorporating images of a football shirt, a remote control and a broken beer bottle will be displayed in locations such as hospitals, doctor's surgeries and licensed premises, while adverts will run on buses across Greater Manchester.

Information cards will also be distributed providing domestic abuse victims, their friends and families and perpetrators with some key contact numbers for support services.

Sam Priestley, Chief Officer, Independent Choices said: "Our helpline, which has run for over 30 years, sees an increase in calls around major sporting events and often incidences are related to people drinking more.

"We are very encouraged that the Greater Manchester as a region has come together with a strong voice against domestic abuse during this World Cup. Our message is seek help, and the earlier the better, even if it is just to find out your options, local support is available. If you are a victim of domestic abuse or know someone who is then call the Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0161 636 7525."

For more information about those services available to help stop domestic abuse, people can visit: [www.endthefear.co.uk](http://www.endthefear.co.uk). Those responsible can also get help to stop by contacting the Respect Phonenumber: 0845 122 8609.

Kate Arden, lead GM Director of Public Health for Domestic Abuse added: "Violence and abuse are experienced by women and men from all backgrounds, with devastating consequences for their future physical and mental health. This is a serious public health issue and we welcome this campaign to get the message out that domestic abuse is not acceptable in our society and that help is available.

"Anyone affected by abuse by a partner, ex partner or a family member can approach their GP or nurse for help. The Domestic Abuse Helpline staff can also offer support, so we want people to know that they don't have to put up with abuse and that they can get help to stay safe."

Rowetta concludes: "This problem will never go away, but hopefully more and more people will see that there is help out there and no matter how weak you feel, you can regain your strength and get your life back, as I did."

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#### **Media Opportunities:**

- 1) **On Monday 7 June** - there will be the opportunity to interview Rowetta, ACC Terry Sweeney (GMP), Sam Priestley (Domestic Abuse Helpline), Cllr Suzanne Richards (Manchester City Council's lead member on women's issues), window artist Mark O'Brien and Denise Proctor (CEO of Noise Charity). There will also be an opportunity to photograph/film the campaign artwork and the window display.
- 2) Kate Arden, GM Director of Public Health for Domestic Abuse will also be available for telephone interviews on Monday 7 June between 12noon and 2pm, to request an interview please contact: Helena Daniell on tel no: 01942 483086.
- 3) Jon Lord, Chair of the Serious Violent Crime Group under the AGMA Public Protection Commission will be available for interview on Monday 7 June between 11am and 12noon, to request an interview please contact one of the press contacts below.
- 4) There will be opportunities for the media to accompany specialist domestic officers as they respond to incidents during the World Cup.
- 5) Local media opportunities will be available for more information, please contact one of the press contacts below.

**Press Contact:** To confirm your attendance at the launch or for further information, please contact Vanessa Loney, GMP Senior Public Relations Officer, 0161 856 2244/2284 or mobile: 07796 335749 or Sally Wheatman, Press Officer, Manchester City Council on 0161 234 4045.

**Additional Information:**

\*This statistic is taken from the report entitled: 'Lessons learned from domestic violence enforcement campaigns 2006 by the Police and Crime standards Directorate – Home Office and Association of Chief Police Officers.

**Key National Statistics:**

- A victim can suffer from 35 attacks before the abuse is reported to the police
- In the UK on average 2 women per week are killed by a current or former male partner
- Domestic Abuse accounts for 15 per cent of all violent incidents
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime with women at greater risk of repeat victimisation and serious injury
- 89 per cent of those suffering 4 or more incidents are women
- One incident of domestic violence is reported to the police every minute

**\*\*NOISE–Festival.com & NOISE LAB:**

Young artist Mark O'Brien has designed the NOISE LAB window display on Market Street in the city centre via a competition by the charity, NOISEfestival.com. The national, innovative award winning charity, [NOISEfestival.com](http://NOISEfestival.com), promotes the best new talent into the creative industries; particularly those young people disadvantaged by their geographical location, their lack of formal education or their lack of contacts within the creative industries. In December 2009, [NOISEfestival.com](http://NOISEfestival.com), opened NOISELAB, a Guerrilla Pop Up shop in the heart of Manchester. NOISELAB sells and exhibits the work of young creative people aged 30 and under. For more information please visit: [www.NOISEfestival.com](http://www.NOISEfestival.com)