



CENTRE FOR
NON-VIOLENCE
ending violence against women & children

What is Family Violence?

Information about
Domestic and Family Violence



What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

IN AN EMERGENCY FOR FIRE, POLICE AND AMBULANCE

DIAL	000
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TEXT CALL – EMERGENCY DIAL	106
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Other 24 Hour Emergency Numbers

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre	1800 015 188
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Lifeline Free call	131 114
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Alcohol & Drug Counseling Free call	1800 888 236
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Child Protection Crisis Line	131 278
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Family Drug Help	1300 660 068
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Gamblers Helpline	1800 858 858
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Kids Help Line	1800 551 800
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Lifeline – Suicide Help Line	1300 651 251
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What is Family Violence?

It is not easy to explain what is meant by Family Violence. As a rule though, it usually means abusive behaviors towards other members of a family, including married or de facto relationships, blood ties, step or blended families or relationships of a comparable type. Ordinarily, the parties are now or have been residing together. However, this is not always the case.

Most people in an intimate relationship will encounter family quarrels and other forms of conflict from time to time. Family violence occurs when family quarrels and other conflicts are replaced by abuse. Family violence is different because one person exercises superior power to control, harm or frighten others.

Although men can be victims of family violence, one in six Australian women report being physically or sexually assaulted by a current or previous partner (ABS: Personal Safety Survey, 2012). Children too, are often the silent victims.

Not all men choose to be violent or abusive towards women and children.

VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE THERE IS NO EXCUSE

Whilst family violence is most commonly understood as physical or sexual abuse, power and control can also be exerted by the use of social, financial, emotional, psychological, cultural and verbal abuse or stalking. These forms of abuse may happen without physical or sexual abuse being present, although often they occur with one of the other. Singly or combined with another form of abuse, they can maintain a situation from which the victim of the abuse finds it difficult to escape.

Often the abuse is a series of seemingly minor events which taken on their own are not viewed as serious. Together, however, they constitute damaging and often dangerous patterns of behaviour and events.



Types of Abuse

VERBAL, EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Any words or behaviours that do not give equal significance and consideration to another person's feelings and experiences and which are intended to destroy or harm another's belief in themselves is abuse.

Verbal, emotional and psychological abuse is frequently hard to define or recognize. It can be the basis of all other forms of controlling and violence behaviour.

This type of abuse includes not listening to or ignoring another person's feelings, manipulation with lies, threatening to take something away from them or a loved one, threats of suicide, damaging or threatening to damage property, harassment, humiliation or ridicule or any part of their person, such as their appearance, cultural background, skills, family, friends, beliefs, occupation, or their capacity to cope and succeed on their own.

FINANCIAL OR ECONOMIC ABUSE

This form of abuse includes not providing access to financial resources, not involving the other person in any financial decisions, expecting a person to manage on an impracticable amount of money and then blaming and criticizing the other person when they are unable or incapable of doing so, not permitting the other person to contribute to finances by working or by controlling the other person's income, assets and spending.

STALKING

Stalking involves harassing or frightening someone by following them, making unwanted phone calls or sending things to someone with the intention to harm or scare them.

ABUSE USING TECHNOLOGY

The use of technologies such as mobile phones, computers, and tracking devices to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behavior is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated online, through texts, calls, etc. It may also include stalking behavior aided by technology.

What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

Types of Abuse *continued*

SOCIAL ABUSE

There are three main forms of social abuse. The first is the verbal or psychological abuse delivered in public. This manipulating behaviour also includes behaviour that belittles another person's religious or spiritual beliefs.

The second is 'smothering'. This behaviour includes intruding, dominating and restricting another person's social activities, interests, employment opportunities or access to transport and the phone.

The third is manipulating and isolating another by denying access to friends and family or by pushing family and friends away. Social abuse includes any behaviours that denies a person the right to be of equal standing and autonomous.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

The most obvious form of violence is physical abuse. In Victoria, one in 3 women aged 15-44 have experienced physical violence (Vic Health Research Summary: Violence Against Women in Australian, 2011).

Physical abuse usually begins with a lack of consideration for the physical comfort or needs of others. It can escalate to actions which include all types of assaults and torture, such as pushing, hitting, shaking, scratching, poking, kicking, choking, burning, twisting limbs, biting, using objects as weapons and/or using weapons, and damaging the home or objects. The severity of the injury ranges from no visible signs to visible signs, permanent injury or death.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse include unwanted fondling, touching, using sex to punish, using objects during the sexual act against another person's wishes, causing intentional injury during sex, bondage against another person's wishes, forcing a person to watch, participate or behave sexually in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Sexual abuse is not only a violation of a person's body; it is also abuse experienced at an emotional level. It is an act of invasion and abuse of power.



Effects of Domestic and Family Violence

Whether the abuse is directed at other members of the family or not, witnessing or experiencing Family Violence usually has a very damaging effect on all who witness it or are subjected to it.

VIOLENCE AFFECTS ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Often other members of the family live in fear of the next outburst of violence, feel helpless, alone, blame themselves, have trouble getting the violence out of their minds, have trouble sleeping, nightmares and various other common responses.

NO ONE DESERVES TO BE ABUSED

COMMON RESPONSES

Responses to family violence in any form can occur singly or in multiple ways. It must be noted that not all who witness or experience family violence will be affected in the same way. There may be as many different responses as there are different people.

FEAR

The fear of future violence to self or loved ones often becomes the most powerful weapon and controlling mechanism used by the abuser. Abuse is usually accompanied by coercion, bribery or threats to force the other person into submission.

SELF CONCEPT

Over time, a person's belief in their worth, their self concept and their sense of having rights and choices becomes eroded by the constant blame for the abuse from the abuser.

Additionally, the victim can become habituated to the behaviour, seeing it as normal or as something deserved.

What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

Effects of Domestic and Family Violence continued

PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

Living with family violence can lead to physical problems such as headaches, abdominal complaints, asthma, peptic ulcers, anorexia, bulimia, obesity and skin problems.

EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Family violence can lead to depression ranging from general lethargy, eating and sleeping problems to suicide attempts or self harm. Low self esteem, poor social skills, lack of motivation, addictive behaviours such as drug/alcohol abuse, compulsive gaming/spending or general dissatisfaction can also result from living with family violence.

DISASSOCIATION

Disassociation is a defence mechanism against trauma, whereby a person develops amnesia at certain times or events.

HELPLESSNESS/POWERLESSNESS

People who live with family violence often feel that they have no control over their own lives or at times over their own bodies. They feel that they have no choices available to them.

RESPONSIBILITY/ISOLATION

Often the abused feel that they are responsible for keeping the abuse a secret and/or keeping the family together. This feeling or responsibility can isolate the person from family and friends.

GUILT/SHAME

The victim often believes that the abuse is their fault or that they deserve it.

VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE
HELP IS AVAILABLE
THERE IS A SOLUTION
YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME

RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES

Victims often find it difficult to maintain long-term relationships. Often they have a fear of sex or intimacy, have indiscriminate or multiple sex partners, or they view violence as a way to cope with stress/pressure, as a normal part of family life and model such behaviour in other relationships.

PARENTING PROBLEMS

The victim may be over protective of their children, or they may have a fear of being a bad parent or that they may abuse their children. Some parents who are currently in a family violence situation, or have been in a family violence situation, consider that violence is the only way to handle family pressure and/or discipline.

**NO ONE WHO IS
OR FEELS THREATENED
SHOULD FEEL THAT
THEY ARE TO BLAME.**

**VIOLENCE CANNOT
BE EXCUSED UNDER
ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**



What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

Types of Domestic and Family Violence

There are five main categories of Family Violence. The two most common are Spouse/Partner Abuse (Domestic Violence) and Child Abuse. The other three are not as widely discussed but do exist in our communities. They are Elder Abuse, Sibling Abuse and Parental Abuse.

ELDER ABUSE

Any form of abuse against an elderly person.

The abuser may be a family member, friend, neighbor, paid carer or other person in a position of trust or authority.

Elderly people may not speak out due to isolation, dementia, protection of the abuser, lack of knowledge, the fear of losing their independence and/or their mental competence being challenged. The elderly are often thought of as being frail in mind and body and unable to make their own decision.

SIBLING ABUSE

Any form of abuse between siblings.

They may be siblings through blood ties, step or blended families, de facto relationships or any other relationship of a comparable type. Parents/care givers or the siblings themselves may not speak out due to the lack of information regarding the difference between normal sibling rivalry and sibling abuse.





PARENTAL ABUSE

Any form of abuse between a parent/care giver and a child.

The abuse can occur between any person deemed as a parent or a carer of a child or dependent, an older child or a teenage child.

Parents/care givers may be reluctant to speak out due to the child being young and unable to live independently, and the fear of being seen as an unfit parent. Often the parent/care giver is reluctant to press charges.

CHILD ABUSE

Any abuse and/or neglect of a child.

Child abuse is a situation wherein a parent or any other person who has care of the child/children inflicts or allows to be inflicted any emotional or physical damage which causes or can cause a risk of disfigurement, death or impairment of physical/emotional health or development or both.

SPOUSE/PARTNER ABUSE (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE)

Any form of abuse between spouses/partners.

Behaviour by one person that has been adopted to control his/her partner and which results in one partner having a greater power than the other and/or results in physical, sexual and/or psychological damage.

What is Family Violence?

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The Purpose of Abuse

The purpose of abuse is to demean, humiliate, degrade, coerce, subdue and enslave another person. Abuse works to isolate another from all other reference points, to have total control over all aspects of another person's financial and social resources, thus making the other person totally dependent on the abuser for all necessities.

FAMILY VIOLENCE CAN HAPPEN IN ANY FAMILY AND ACROSS ALL CULTURES





The Three R's of Family Violence

REMEMBER

No person has the right to threaten or physically harm another. It does not make any difference if the abuser and the victim are related or residing together. The victim, no matter what age, nationality or sex, has the right to be protected.

RECOGNISE

Abuse can escalate in severity, intensity, brutality and frequency over time, and more severe methods of control are generally imposed by the abuser if one form of abuse fails to produce the desired effect on the victim.

REALISE

Some forms of abuse are likely to have a greater impact in terms of immediate distress and long lasting effects. Rather than put all forms of abuse and types of family violence into one group, each case has to be looked at individually.



What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

Who can help

Loddon Area (formerly Loddon Campaspe Region)

Domestic Violence Counselling & Support for Women & Children

Centre for Non-Violence (CNV)
Support for Women and Children experiencing violence

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre
Support for Women & Children experiencing violence

Sexual Assault Services

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)
Central Victoria; 9:00am - 5:00pm
After Hours; 5:00pm - 9:00am

Housing

Centre for Non-Violence (CNV)
Support for Women and Children experiencing violence

Castlemaine Housing Service

Haven; Home, Safe - Bendigo

Haven; Home, Safe - Kyabram

Office of Housing - Department of Health & Human Services

St Luke's Anglicare Echuca & District Accommodation Support

COBAW Community Health

ARC Justice - Housing Justice



03 5430 3000
Free call 1800 884 292

1800 015 188

5441 0430
1800 806 292

03 5430 3000
Free call 1800 884 292

5479 1000
1800 825 955

5444 9000

5452 0019

5434 5555

5482 0900

5421 1666

5445 0909
1800 450 909

What is Family Violence?

Information About Domestic and Family Violence

Who can help

Loddon Area (formerly Loddon Campaspe Region)

Support Services

Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative

Catholic Care Sandhurst

Njernda Family Services

Mental Health Services

Anglicare Victoria

Police

If there are threats made against you call triple zero

Bendigo Police Station

Castlemaine Police Station

Echuca Police Station

Kyneton Police Station

Maryborough Police Station

Programs for Men who use Violence Towards Family Members

Men's Behaviour Change Program Bendigo

Legal Services

ARC Justice - Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre

Victoria Legal Aid

Bendigo

Melbourne

Other Services

Bendigo Uniting Care Outreach (Food Relief)

Salvation Army - Bendigo

St. Vincent de Paul Assistance Centre - Bendigo



Orange bar

5442 4947

5438 1300

5480 6252

5454 6000

5440 1100

Orange bar

000

5448 1300

5470 4100

5483 1500

5421 2900

5460 3300

Orange bar

1800 884 292

Orange bar

5445 0909 or
1800 450 909

5448 2333 or
1800 254 500
1300 792 387

Orange bar

5443 4972

5440 8410

5443 5688

What is Family Violence?

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Who can help Statewide

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre

Alcohol & Drug Counseling (direct line) – 24 hr

Centrelink
Families and Parents Payment
Appointments

Child Protection Services (After Hrs)

Child Protection Services (notification of child abuse)

Gamblers Helpline

Lifeline – 24 hr

Men's Referral Service

Victims Support Help Line

WIRE
Women's Information & Referral Exchange

Women's Legal Service (legal advice line)



1800 015 188

1800 888 236

136 150

131 021

131 278

1800 675 598

1800 858 858

131 114

1300 766 491

1800 819 817

1300 134 130

1800 133 302



**CENTRE FOR
NON-VIOLENCE**
ending violence against women & children

Gender and social equality in a violence-free world

This booklet is intended as a guide only and while care has been taken to provide as accurate information as possible, no liability is taken for any errors or omissions.

Additional copies may be obtained by contacting:

Centre for Non-Violence

PO Box 958
BENDIGO 3552

1800 884 292

P: 5430 3000

F: 5430 3050

E: reception@cnv.org.au

We would like to
acknowledge the traditional
custodians of the land upon which
we live, work and learn.



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