



# Violence in relationships

When one person in a relationship controls or hurts another, or makes them feel unsafe, it is known as family and domestic violence. It can happen to anyone, in any type of relationship. No one has the right to hurt another person and cause them to live in fear. This is NOT okay and you are not responsible, or at fault in any way, for their violent behaviour.

**1 in 4 women**  
**1 in 13 men**  
*have experienced violence from an intimate partner since the age of 15.*

ABS Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2016.

Relationships that are positive include respect, care and safety.

Sometimes **manipulation, jealousy, threats, control and violence** creep into a relationship over time. In other relationships, there are warning signs from the start.

Sometimes things change after events such as pregnancy, marriage, having children, relocating to live somewhere new, losing a job or misusing drugs or alcohol.

***If you don't feel safe, respected, and cared for - something is wrong.***



**Violence doesn't have to include physical harm. It can include a range of things such as these examples.**

- ▶ **Emotional violence** – calling you names, putting you down, blaming you for things, frightening you
- ▶ **Financial violence** – not letting you have access to money
- ▶ **Physical violence** – hitting, dragging, kicking, strangling
- ▶ **Sexual violence** – forcing you to have sex or perform sexual acts
- ▶ **Spiritual violence** – stopping you from following your faith
- ▶ **Social violence** – cutting you off from family or friends, lying about you to others
- ▶ **Neglect** – stopping your access to care and essentials such as food or medicines
- ▶ **Stalking** – spying or following you, constantly messaging you, tracking you electronically.

There is usually a **pattern of control and violence** that occurs. Often the perpetrator will apologise, try to make it up to you, and promise to change after a violent outburst. Almost always, the violence gets worse over time, and can result in serious harm or sometimes death. **It is important to know your options for keeping safe.**

**Living with violence can be a frightening and confusing time.** It can impact your happiness, physical health, self-esteem, relationships with others, jobs, friendships, emotional coping and parenting.

**Violent people often use threats and intimidation to control others. This might include:**

- ▶ Threatening to kill you
- ▶ Threatening to turn children, family or friends against you
- ▶ Threatening to harm or kill pets
- ▶ Threatening to kill themselves if you leave or tell anyone about the abuse.

# How to help

You know your situation and the warning signs best. **Trust your instincts and knowledge.** You've already been doing a lot of things that help to keep you safe without you even realising it. For some people, leaving a relationship can increase the risk of being injured or harassed. If you are starting to think about leaving, it is a good idea to talk your situation through with a support service and put a plan in place.

Most people develop a **safety plan** that reminds them of actions to take to help keep them, and their children, safe when the situation becomes dangerous. Another option is taking out a **Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO)** through the court. The Order can include conditions such as stopping the violent person contacting you or coming near you. It is also important for you to learn how to use **technology** to keep yourself safe.

You can learn more about these options online. There are some useful websites listed below.

**Remember - you never need to do any of this on your own.**

## Important things to remember

- ▶ Someone else's violent behaviour is **not** your fault.
- ▶ You are the best person to decide what the safest action is.
- ▶ Trusted family and friends can be a great source of support.
- ▶ Speaking up and seeking help takes courage.
- ▶ There are many domestic violence services available to support you.

*You are not alone*



Most domestic violence websites have a button to quickly close down the website if needed.

**X EXIT**

## Information and Support

**Women's Domestic Violence Helpline** or (08) 9223 1188; 1800 007 339 (free call)  
24-hour crisis support, as well as counselling, advice and referral for women in WA.

**Womens Health and Family Services** website - Domestic Violence Advocacy Service Central

Free services to all West Australian women who are experiencing or at risk of family violence. Includes services for women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds who are experiencing violence.

**1800RESPECT** website; and counselling service 1800 737 732 (free call)

A 24-hour counselling, information and support helpline for people experiencing family and domestic violence. Auslan and interpreter services are available. [1800respect.org.au/help-and-support](https://1800respect.org.au/help-and-support)

**Daisy app:** A free phone app that connects women who are experiencing or have experienced family violence to services in their state and local area. [1800respect.org.au/daisy](https://1800respect.org.au/daisy)

**Legal Aid WA** website and Infoline 1300 650 579. Includes legal and FVRO information. [legallaid.wa.gov.au](https://legallaid.wa.gov.au)

**Esafety Commissioner:** technology safety information. [esafety.gov.au](https://esafety.gov.au)

**Qlife** (LGBTI+ counselling and referral) 1300 184 527

**Men's Domestic Violence** helpline 1800 000 599

**Safe from Violence** booklet (Relationships Australia). Includes safety planning and other information. [relationships.org.au/relationship-advice/publications/pdfs/safefromviolence.pdf](https://relationships.org.au/relationship-advice/publications/pdfs/safefromviolence.pdf)

Police assistance and reporting (not emergencies)

**Call 131 444**

**Emergency Call 000** Police, Fire, Ambulance