

family violence

Family violence can affect anyone from any social or cultural background, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. It is about gaining and maintaining power and control. Family violence (or intimate partner violence) can take many forms of abuse. It is not limited to physical violence or sexual assault, but can also include emotional abuse, manipulation or social/financial control.

Family violence includes:

- Grabbing, pushing, slapping, punching, unwanted sexual behaviour – this is physical/sexual assault
- Yelling, screaming, punching walls, standing over, making threats or preventing the other from leaving
- Name calling, belittling remarks, put downs, continuous criticism, making fun of the other, threatening to harm oneself – this is emotional and psychological abuse
- Making most of the decisions
- Controlling the money of the household
- Not allowing the other to socialise or see their family

Family violence has some devastating impacts. Long term impacts of this behaviour may include:

- Relationship and family breakdown
- Long term psychological damage, such as depression
- Restricted access to children (when applicable)
- Serious injury
- Assault charges and legal issues

If you believe that you have a family violence problem:

1. Take responsibility for your actions – no one ‘makes’ you do or say anything.
2. Accept that you need help. Research shows that family violence behaviours do not just ‘go away’ despite the best intentions to stop. In fact, family violence is very likely to get worse over time.

Feeling remorseful because of a recent incident of abuse is NOT a good indicator of whether you will change.

3. Call MensLine Australia. Reaching out for help often takes a great deal of courage. MensLine Australia can offer you non-judgmental and confidential support to assist you in dealing with family violence issues.
4. Discuss how to develop a safety plan with a MensLine Australia counsellor. A safety plan is a series of behaviours and steps that you commit to in order to keep your family safe.
5. Follow up on referrals to counselling or behaviour change groups as soon as possible.

If you believe you are experiencing abuse:

1. Recognise that the abuse is unlikely to stop unless the other person agrees to seek professional help or you remove yourself from the situation.
2. Call MensLine Australia to provide you with support and discuss options.

This tip sheet is part of a series of self-help tools for men. More tools can be found at www.mensline.org.au. For more information and assistance, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78.

1300 78 99 78
www.mensline.org.au

MensLine Australia is a professional telephone support, information and referral service for men, specialising in family and relationship concerns.

Talk it over
**Mens
Line**
AUSTRALIA