

Do I have a problem with family violence?

Family violence exists in a relationship when the power dynamic between family members becomes fixed in favour of one person over another as a consequence of any controlling behaviour that results in physical hurt, fear of harm, the inability to engage equally, loss of control, the inability to access resources and/or the inability to exercise autonomy.

Family violence can occur between spouses, partners, parents and children, siblings and in other relationships where significant others are not part of the physical household but are part of the family and/or are fulfilling the function of family.



Are you able to relate to any of the following?

- Can the relationship between you and your partner and/or other family members be described as a **“power OVER relationship”** rather than a **“power WITH relationship”**?

In other words, do you want and are you in control?

- Do you use and/or have you used any threatening or violent behaviour towards your partner and/or other family members? (See overleaf for examples of these behaviours.)
- Are those on the receiving end of your actions suffering? (See overleaf for how violent behaviour can affect the person on the receiving end.)
- Are you unwilling to accept responsibility for what you do?

Maybe you:

DENY your behaviour

(“I wasn’t violent/abusive/controlling”)

MINIMISE your behaviour

(“I only pushed her”)

JUSTIFY and EXCUSE your behaviour

(“If she stopped nagging me I wouldn’t have hit her”

“I’m the head of the house and she should obey me”)

BLAME others for your behaviour

(“They make me so mad”

I’m under a lot of pressure at the moment”)

If you can identify with any of the above, you have a problem with family violence.

You will not solve this on your own.

Talk to someone about it immediately.

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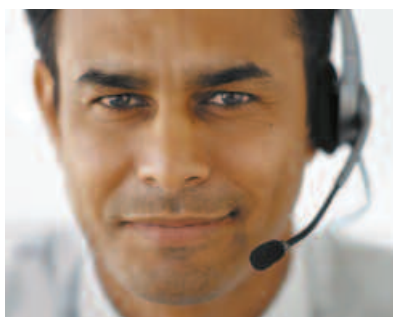
Examples of violent behaviour:

- Engaging in physical and/or sexual assault eg. grabbing, pushing, slapping, punching, rape.
- Making threats to harm eg. yelling, screaming, punching walls, standing over another person, preventing someone from leaving, making actual threats.
- Engaging in emotional and psychological abuse eg. name calling, belittling remarks, put downs, continuous criticism, ridicule, threatening to harm yourself.
- Restricting another person's actions eg. going everywhere with them, questioning them about where they go and what they do, checking up on them, stalking, isolating them from family and friends.

- Preventing another person from making choices eg. making most of the decisions, expecting them to ask permission, controlling household finances.

Examples of how these behaviours affect the person on the receiving end:

- They are physically or psychologically hurt.
- They feel unsafe around you and afraid of your anger or violence.
- They feel unable to express themselves freely and honestly.
- They become withdrawn and guarded when you are around.
- They feel and act unsure of themselves.
- They yield to you and/or allow you to make all the decisions.
- They become depressed and anxious.
- They lose affection and respect for you.



The only service of its kind, Mensline Australia provides confidential telephone counselling, information and referral to specifically enable men to enhance their relationships and manage the challenges associated with disruptions to their family life or primary relationships.

Managed through Crisis Support Services Inc, Mensline Australia is a national service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the cost of a local call.

Mensline Australia was established in September 2001 as part of the Commonwealth Government's Men and Family Relationships initiative. Since then, the service has been overwhelmed by calls from men around the country wanting to talk about their relationships.

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Mensline Australia
is managed by Crisis Support Services