

**Rotary**  
Melbourne



CELEBRATING  
**100**  
— YEARS



# TOOL KIT

**Initiative Rotary Melbourne**



# Rotary Safe Families

## “Tool Kit”

### What is Family Violence?

The United Nations defines family violence as: **“Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual and psychological harm of suffering to a person (family member) including threats, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.**

### Who are Family?

Family includes a number of different people and relationships including:

- **Intimate partners** (e.g. husband, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend, defacto, same sex partners)
- **Ex-partners** (e.g. divorced, separated, prior short term relationships)
- **Children, siblings, adult children**
- **Step family** (e.g. mother’s or father’s new partner/s, or their children)
- **A relative or extended family** such as a grandparent, father-in-law or mother-in-law, aunt, uncle, blended or cultural family member
- **A carer** who is like a family member (Victoria Police website)

### What is Abusive Behaviour?




*While most people associate family violence with physical violence it is much broader than that. Abusive behaviour includes:*

- **Physical assault** (e.g. hitting, pushing, burning, choking, punching, kicking, strangling, restraining, attempts to kill, murder)
- **Sexual Violence** (e.g. being forced to perform sexual acts, rape, sexual assault, being forced to watch or mimic pornography)
- **Financial abuse** (e.g. withholding money/credit cards, controlling all the finances, providing an allowance which is not sufficient to buy what is needed, prohibiting access bank statements, bills, or any financial transactions, making victim account for every penny she/he spends and inspecting all receipts)
- **Psychological and/or emotional abuse** (such as threats, repeated put downs, name calling, shaming/humiliating in public, nasty, hurtful sarcasm, leaving nasty messages (texts, voicemail, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), sexist, racist, ageist, ableist or homophobic abuse)
- **Spiritual** (e.g. using religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate, using religious teachings or cultural tradition as an excuse for violence, preventing a person from practicing their religious or spiritual beliefs, ridiculing religious or spiritual beliefs, forced marriages).
- **Behaviour by a person that causes a child** to hear, see, witness or be exposed to the effects of abuse or violent acts (for example by hearing fights, seeing injuries or damage). (The First Step website)

As Rosie Batty said (following the murder of her 11 year old son by his father):  
***"I want to tell people that family violence happens to [anybody], no matter how nice your house is, no matter how intelligent you are."***  
(Rosie Batty – Australian of the year 2016, family violence survivor and advocate).


## What are the Drivers of Violence Against Women?

 While there is **no** single cause of violence against women, research continually shows that the **main drivers** of higher levels of such violence are attitudes and behaviours that:


- disrespect women
- have low support for gender equality, and
- adhere to rigid gender roles.

***The reality is that Gender inequality is the core of the problem!  
And gender equality is at the heart of the solution!***

## Can We Prevent Violence Against Men?

 At this stage we do not have a good understanding of what is driving family violence against men. It is not difficult to appreciate that if unhealthy and rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity create social norms and conditions that drive violence against women, they can also drive violence against men.

## Can We Prevent Violence Against Women?

 To do this, we need primary prevention activities, to occur simultaneously, where people live, learn, work and socialise. This means :

- in our schools; workplaces; sporting organisations; community groups and clubs through social marketing
- working with the media to better report on family violence when it occurs, and by developing and influencing public policy.

## What Can I Do?



You can help to prevent violence from occurring in the first place by **calling out** friends, colleagues and family members when you witness actions and behaviours that lead to family violence/violence against women. (ByStander Campaign)

Sexism, sexual harassment and abuse are **not** ok and can lead to a culture where violence against women is more prevalent and acceptable. We can all make a significant difference by choosing to call out these behaviours and attitudes when we witness them and **when it's safe to do so!**

While this may seem like a daunting task it's an important one. With the right information and actions on how to call it out, it can be done.

## What Does Abuse Look Like?



On a day to day basis this behaviour can look like someone you know or don't know:

- making a sexist joke over a barbeque lunch or in the workplace
- making sexual/sexist comments about a person
- trying to control how their partner and/or other family members spend money
- trying to insist that their partner tells them constantly what they're doing or where they're going
- trying to stop their partner seeing friends or family
- insisting on always going to see the doctor with their partner



Saying something **when it is safe to do** so says something, and doing nothing says something too: that you're okay with it; that you are buying into the phrase ...

***"the standard you walk past is the standard you accept".***

## When Do I Call it Out?



Even if you're wrong and everything is okay, the damage caused by doing nothing, can be worse. As long as you're not putting yourself or someone else in a dangerous or risky situation, if you feel like you should say something, you probably should. (ByStander Campaign)

***What can I do if I know someone is experiencing domestic violence or at risk?***

***What if I suspect someone I know is experiencing domestic violence, what can I do to help?***

## Recognising Abuse



Being able to recognise signs of abuse is an important first step. These signs could include a person who:

- Appears afraid of/or anxious to please their partner
- Is criticized/humiliated in public
- Feels pressured/forced to do sexual things
- Is controlled e.g. money, friends etc.
- Talks about partner's "jealousy" "bad temper" "possessiveness"
- Seems unusually quiet, anxious, loss of confidence
- Has bruises, sprains, cuts and other physical injuries
- Children seem afraid, have behavioural problems, anxious
- Is reluctant to leave partner
- After separation their partner is stalking, harassing, constantly calling or waiting outside work, outside the home the other places for the victim.

## Should I Get Involved?



Many people worry that they will be 'interfering' or don't want to get involved as they consider it to be a 'private matter'; and/or they fear embarrassment if their support or enquiry about welfare/wellbeing of the other person is rejected and told "their suspicions are wrong". But equally worrying is if someone is being abused and you say nothing. Your support **CAN** make a difference.

## How Do I Approach?



If you suspect someone is experiencing violence or at risk of violence it is best to approach them sensitively without being critical. Most people will appreciate an expression of concern for their well-being, even if they are not ready to talk about their situation. It is unlikely you will make things 'worse' by expressing concern.

A suggested way to commence the conversation is to say something like:

***"I'm worried about you because I've noticed you seem really unhappy lately."***

The person may initially reject your concerns or defend the perpetrator:

- She/he may not be ready to admit there is a problem;
- he/she may feel uncomfortable talking about it with you or anyone else and they may feel shame, fear and/or the inability to "trust" anyone.
- The person may also feel embarrassed or weak. (DVRCV)

## What YOU Can Do!



Listen without judging – it is important not to blame the victim for what happened or is happening to them

- ✓ Believe what is being told to you and don't try to work out the reasons for the abuse.
- ✓ Take the abuse seriously - but note - you do not have to "fix" the problem
- ✓ Help the person to recognise that this is abuse and its effect on children (if children are involved or present when the abuse occurs)
- ✓ Reassure the person/victim that **"It is not your fault"** and that no-one has the right to mistreat you.
- ✓ Encourage them to contact an appropriate service such as 1800RESPECT (See appendix 1 for list of available services). If appropriate offer to do this with them and/or stay with them while they make the call.
- ✓ Respect the person's decisions, even if you don't agree. It is important not to pressure them to leave - it has to be their decision.
- ✓ Respect cultural/religious values/beliefs
- ✓ For your own safety it is important **not** to confront the abuser. Seek other professional advice as appropriate (eg. Police, Mensline, Kidsline, Mens Referral Service etc). (DVRCV)

## Take Care of YOURSELF



**Be honest about the time and type of support you can offer.** Don't push yourself beyond your limits. Seek assistance from the relevant agencies and support services available. At times you may need to leave it to the professionals to deal with some aspects of the situation (e.g. police, courts, professional counsellors etc.) while you continue to provide moral and emotional support to your friend or relative.

## Impact of Family Violence on Children and Young People



Research has consistently found that children of all ages who have been exposed to family violence, particularly coercive and controlling behaviour, have been found to have more problems than children who have not. They have higher levels of emotional and behavioural problems and are at greater risk of physical abuse or having their physical and emotional needs neglected.

## Some Impacts on Children



Children exposed to family violence are also at greater risk of:

- having difficulties controlling their emotions
- developing depression or antisocial problems such as delinquency or violent behaviors, particularly as teenagers
- developing poor relationships with both parents
- developing poor reading and language skills, and
- having difficulties making and maintaining friendships.

When family violence is combined with other problems, such as drug and alcohol abuse and mental health concerns, children are at even greater risk of developing emotional, behavioural, social and educational problems.

## Are All Children Impacted in the Same Way?



The extent each child will be impacted varies depending on:

- The length of time the child was exposed to the domestic violence;
- The age of the child when the exposure began;
- Whether the child has also experienced child abuse with the domestic violence;
- The presence of additional stressors such as poverty, community violence, parental substance abuse or mental illness and disruptions in family life;
- Whether the child has a secure attachment to a non-abusing parent or other significant adult;
- Whether the child has a supportive social network;
- Whether the child has strong cultural identity and ethnic pride;
- The child's own positive coping skills and experience of success;
- Family access to health, education, housing, social services and employment.

Apart from the emotional, physical, social and behavioural damage abuse creates for children, statistics show that domestic violence can also become a learned behaviour. This means that children can grow up thinking it's okay to use violence to get what they want; and as adults it's okay to have violence in their relationships. (DVPC)

## What Can I Do?



Working with children who are impacted by family or domestic violence is a highly specialised and complex practice. There are many professionals and organisations you can contact for advice or assistance if you believe that a child or young person has been impacted by family violence. These organisations have the comprehensive knowledge and skills needed to work effectively with mothers and children involved in family/domestic violence.

*(The Look Out)*



**It is important to Note: If you have a reasonable belief that sexual assault has been committed by an adult against a child, you are mandated to disclose this belief to police. Failure to disclose this is a criminal offence!**

## Recognising When a Child is Impacted by Family Violence

-  Being able to recognize signs that a child or young person may be impacted by family violence is a useful first step. Experiencing domestic and family violence can impact a child's:
- **Behaviors** - they can act out, over-react, be hostile, impulsive, aggressive or defiant. They can also withdraw or run away. This can all be normal for children who have been traumatised by family or domestic violence. It does not mean the children have 'disorders'. Drug and alcohol use can be a problem with older children
  - **Development** – normal development can be impaired. They can look like they are regressing or acting younger than their age. This can be a subconscious way of trying to get to a state where they are safe and secure. It can also be a result of the harm to the brain's development caused by exposure to trauma
  - **Relationships** – they may avoid closeness and push people away. Children may also attach to peers or adults who may be unsafe for them, to try to develop an alternative secure base, if home feels insecure
  - **Emotions** – children often feel fearful, stressed, depressed, angry, anxious or ashamed. Emotional security is the foundation of healthy relationships later in life. This security can be damaged if attachment between the parent, guardian or primary carer and baby is disrupted by domestic violence
  - **Learning** – they may not be able to concentrate at school because they are constantly on the lookout for danger. This can be subconscious. Detentions, missed school and frequent changes of schools can also affect learning
  - **Cognition** - children may have low self-esteem, and think negatively about themselves or people around them. (For example, they may think, 'everyone hates me'.)
  - **Physical Health** - a range of illnesses may be related to domestic and family violence.

Headaches, stomach aches, stress reactions (for example rashes or immune system related illnesses) and sleep disturbances (for example nightmares, insomnia or bedwetting) are common) (1800RESPECT web site)



## What YOU Need to Know if a Child is at Risk



If you know a friend or have a family member who is a victim of or at risk of family violence and has children, you should tell them you're concerned about the effect the violence or abuse has on them and the children. (QLD Gov)

Depending on the child's age you can also provide support to the child or young person by referring them to a relevant website. You can assure them that it's not their fault and let them know that violence or abuse is never okay.

If you are the parent or guardian of a child growing up in an abusive household, you could also:

- ✓ **Tell them that they are loved and the violence is not their fault**
- ✓ **Encourage them to talk about their concerns/worries**
- ✓ **Make sure they know how to call for help, including how to call the police on Triple Zero (000) and how to give the address of their home**
- ✓ **Get support from a domestic violence organisation**
- ✓ **Talk to a teacher, principal or a counsellor about your concerns**
- ✓ **Take yourself and your child to a safe place if necessary. (Qld Gov)**

## Do I Have to Report Child Abuse?



Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. It is a criminal offence in Victoria (and some other States and Territories) that imposes a clear legal duty upon all adults to report information about child sexual abuse to Police.

- Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 36 has an obligation to report that information to Police. Failure to disclose the information to Police is a criminal offence.
- For further information on the criminal offence and what constitutes reasonable belief visit the **Department of Justice - Failure to disclose offence**.

## Reporting & Seeking Help



**If situation is life threatening contact Police on Triple Zero '000'**

**For immediate concerns contact Department of Human Services Child on Protection Crisis Line by telephone on 13 14 78**

**For help or advice call 1800RESPECT**

**To discuss concerns about child abuse contact your local Police Station**

# ELDER ABUSE

The United Nations Principles for Older Persons states *'Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse. This is supported by the Charter of Aged Care Rights which provides for the 'right to ... live without abuse and neglect'.*

## What Factors Increase the Risk of Perpetrating Elder Abuse?



There are a number of reinforcing factors that can play a role in a person perpetrating elder abuse. While these factors do not lead a person to become abusive, they can have an influence on the situation. Reinforcing factors that may affect a person choosing to perpetrate elder abuse include:

- Lack of social support
- Poor mental health
- Dependence on the older person for emotional support, financial help, housing or other assistance
- Substance abuse
- Caregiver feeling stressed and unsupported.

## Where does this Abuse Occur?



Elder abuse can occur in many contexts including the home and residential care settings. It can be perpetrated by family members, friends and non-family members **trusted** by the older person including staff and other residents in a residential care setting.

Most elder abuse occurs within the family or in a domestic setting with the most common form being 'intergenerational' which is perpetrated by an adult child against their parent. (SRV)

## Who Experiences the Abuse?



Similar to other forms of FV, elder abuse is likely to be under reported so the actual prevalence is likely to be higher. (SRV)

Current available statistics indicate that:

- The majority of people who experience elder abuse are women - 73.5%.
- Older men comprise 30% of reported elder abuse cases
- 92% of abuse is perpetrated by persons related to the older person or in a de facto relationship
- 67% of reported abuse is perpetrated by a son or daughter (40% son, 27% daughter)
- 60% of perpetrators are male and 40% female
- Financial abuse and psychological/emotional abuse together are the most common forms of abuse reported by older Victorians at 83.83% (National Ageing Research Institute, p14).

## What Drives Elder Abuse?



The underlying social condition of elder abuse is **Ageism**, and the way people are treated differently as they age. Negative attitudes associated with ageing mean that it can be seen as a time of decline, loss and vulnerability. Ageism results in older people being marginalised and afforded less power and social status.

## Examples of Elder Abuse

### Financial Abuse:

- Forcing an older person to hand over money or an asset, or misusing their funds.
- Using a power of attorney to withhold money or misuse finances.
- Not allowing the person to keep or carry their own money.
- Withholding knowledge of their bank account balance or household bills paid.
- Inheritance impatience – the sense of entitlement to older person’s assets or resources.

### Physical abuse:

- Inflicting pain/injury, (eg. hitting, slapping, pushing, using restraints).

### Sexual abuse:

- Any sexual activity for which the person has not consented.

### Social abuse:

- Preventing contact with relatives, friends or service providers.
- Restricting activities.

### Psychological/Emotional Abuse:

- Threatening and coercive behavior.
- Preventing contact with family and friends.
- Limiting a person’s choices or placing pressure on them regarding their decisions.
- Denying a person the right to make decisions due to their cognitive state.
- Convincing the older person that they couldn’t cope without the carer
- Denying access to ‘small pleasures’.
- Talking about ‘how hard it is to provide care’ in front of the older person.

### Elder Neglect:

Neglect can occur within the home and in residential care settings and can include:

- Neglect of a person’s care needs including inadequate provision of housing or food or being abandoned.
- Neglecting to provide a person with appropriate health or personal care such as:
  - Poor hygiene or refusing to wash the older person.
  - Withholding medication, over or under medicating.
  - Withholding personal or medical care.

- Withdrawing care or equipment that immobilizes or leaves the older person without a way to call for help.
- Refusing or delaying assistance following a personal accident or spillage.
- Receiving Carer's Pension without providing relevant and appropriate care.

## What Effect does this Abuse have on Victims?



Abuse and mistreatment of any kind can have a profound and detrimental effect on a person.

- Feelings of stress and anxiety
- Increased risk of depression and thoughts of suicide
- May increase risk of ill health and early death
- Increase in hospital visits or early admittance to residential care.

When elder abuse results in homelessness and poverty, it can make it more difficult for the older person to cope with illness and disability. People who experience elder abuse often require health, legal and social support services, as well as short and long-term housing options (SRV).

## Do victims of elder abuse seek help?



People who experience elder abuse may be reluctant to seek help because they:

- see the abuse as a family matter
- feel ashamed or embarrassed about the situation
- worry that others will judge them including family and community members
- Fear consequences including:
  - Retribution from the perpetrator
  - Losing or damaging family relationships (including with the perpetrator and others)
  - Losing access to grandchildren
  - Worry about the consequences for the perpetrator



**If you know an older family member or friend is in immediate physical danger or at risk of significant harm, you should contact the emergency services (Police and/or Ambulance) on 000.**

### Warning signs of Elder Abuse

Recognising signs of abuse are a good first step. If you suspect someone you know is experiencing elder abuse there are warning signs that you need to look for. These can include:

- Older person seeming fearful, worried or withdrawn or seems nervous or anxious with certain people.
- Family and/or friends are denied or seem to be denied access to the person.
- Older person no longer goes out socially or gets involved in activities.
- Unexplained injuries (e.g. bruises, broken bones, sprains, cuts etc.)
- Unpaid bills, unusual activity in bank accounts or credit cards.
- They have made sudden or recent changes to a Will, title or other documents.

- Possessions seem to have disappeared
- Experiencing poor hygiene or personal care.
- Absence of needed health items - hearing aids, dentures, medications etc. (SRV)

## Actions YOU can Take if You Suspect Friend, Family Member or Neighbour is Experiencing Elder Abuse:



Talk to the person you are concerned about. Invite them to talk in a place where they are alone and safe.

- Listen to the person. Offer them your time and your support and respect their right to make their own decisions.
- Believe what the person is telling you.
- Remind them they are not to blame and that everyone has the right to live in safety and be treated with dignity and respect.
- Let them know that help is available and offer to assist them in getting the necessary support if and when they are ready to do so.
- Encourage them to call support services such as Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) on 1300 368 821 for advice and assistance. If they are unable to call but you know they want to speak to SRV, you can call on their behalf and SRV will arrange a way to speak to them by phone, at the SRV office or, if necessary, at the person's home.
- Continue to offer support and encouragement even if the person is not ready to accept help at this point in time.

**Be aware** that the person you are seeking to help may feel "shame", be defensive and/or unwilling to engage. It is important to respond in a caring manner no matter their reaction (SRV)

## Questions You could Ask



*"Is there someone you are afraid of or don't feel safe to be around?"* (e.g. a family member, a friend/acquaintance or a person in the care home (staff member, visitor, or other resident)

- *"How do you feel you are being treated?"*
- *"Is this what you expected in this time of your life?"*
- Where there is evidence of physical abuse – ask them in a sensitive manner how they got the injury - advise that sometimes injuries like this that can be a result of a family argument, a family member's stress or frustration, or perhaps a staff member in the home treating people a bit roughly. *"Do you think this may have happened to you?"*

## How do I Respond if Abuse is Disclosed?



It is important to respond with kindness and without blame or judgement for choices they have made

- Believe the person and be willing to listen
- Let the person know they can count on you to be supportive
- Provide choices, not interventions — empower the person to take control of their life. Do not tell them what to do or pressure them to leave the perpetrator. They must make the decision themselves.
- Let the person know (even if they deny abuse) that it's not their fault, they are not alone (abuse can happen to anyone), and that there is help available.

## ***Rotary Safe Families***

### ***Where to get Help and Advice***

#### **Emergency Services**

**In an emergency call 000.**

The Triple Zero (000) service is the quickest way to get the right emergency service to help you. It should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life-threatening or emergency situations.

If you wish to report a crime you can contact [your local police station](#).

#### **Family Violence Response, Advice & Support Services**

**1800RESPECT** – National Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence Counselling Service  
Qualified and experienced counsellors provide 24/7 phone and online counselling, information and help to access other services to all people in Australia affected by sexual assault and domestic and family violence on **1800 737 732** via the [1800RESPECT website](#). Professionals are also encouraged to use 1800RESPECT for support around issues relating to working in preventing or responding to family violence and sexual assault.

#### **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre**

[safe steps](#) Family Violence Response Centre offers confidential support and information and a 24/7 statewide family violence response service through **1800 015 188** (toll-free).

#### **Women's Support Line**

Run by [Women's Information and Referral Exchange Inc.](#) you can call this free, confidential and state-wide phone service on **1800 811 811** (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday). You can also email [inforequests@wire.org.au](mailto:inforequests@wire.org.au)

## Kids Helpline

[Kids Helpline](#) provides private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling for children, teens, young adults and also for parents and carers on **1800 55 1800** (toll-free). Email: [counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au](mailto:counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au) Counselling and WebChat is also available.

## Australian Childhood Foundation

Counselling for children and young people affected by abuse.

Phone: 1300 381 581 Email: [info@childhood.org](mailto:info@childhood.org). Website: [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

## What's OK at Home?

This website for young people has been developed by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria. It has been designed to help people understand what family violence is, why it happens, how to recognise it and how to help others who are experiencing it.

Website: [www.woah.org.au](http://www.woah.org.au) Phone: Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800

## The Line – Website for young people

So, 'the line': What is it, Where is it, and What happens when you cross it?

Sometimes, there's no argument about where to draw the line in our friendships and relationships. But the line can get blurry. So, we're here to talk about it.

This website talks about relationships, gender, sex, bystander action, technology and communication ; how to keep it healthy and respectful, and avoid crossing the line into behaviour that makes someone feel frightened, intimidated or diminished.

So, check out our articles, knowseetheline, follow us on Facebook and join the conversations about where you draw the line. [www.theline.org.au](http://www.theline.org.au)

## Men's Referral Service

[Men's Referral Service](#) provides an anonymous and confidential phone counselling, information and referrals service on **1300 766 491** for:

- men who might be using violent and controlling behaviour towards a partner or family member
- men who have been victimised by a partner or family member
- women wishing to find information about male family violence
- friends, family or colleagues of people who are using or experiencing family violence
- professionals wishing to support a male or female client using or experiencing family violence.

## MensLine

[MensLine](#) is a national phone and online support service for men with family and relationship concerns, which includes video counselling on **1300 78 99 78**

## Victims Support Agency – Men

The [Victims Support Agency](#) provides support and information to help adult male victims of family violence and victims of violent crime.



The service guides victims through the legal process and helps manage the effects of crime through practical assistance and counselling.

Call the Victims of Crime helpline on **1800 819 817** or use the text service via **0427 767 891** (8.00 am to 11.00 pm, 7 days a week).

### **Centres Against Sexual Assault**

These are confidential, non-profit, government-funded organisations providing support and intervention for women, children and men who are victim survivors of sexual assault. The Sexual Assault Crisis Line is **1800 806 292** (24/7). You can also email: [ahcasa@thewomens.org.au](mailto:ahcasa@thewomens.org.au)

### **Relationships Australia**

Support groups and counselling on relationships, and for abusive and abused partners.

Phone: **1300 364 277**

Website: [www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)

### **Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline**

**1800 019 123** (24 hours)

Victims Services has a dedicated contact line for Aboriginal victims of crime who would like information on victims' rights, how to access counselling and financial assistance.

### **Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service (FVPLS)**

This is an Aboriginal community-run organisation providing assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim survivors of family violence and sexual assault. You can call FVPLS on **1800 105 303**

### **InTouch: Multicultural Centre against Family Violence**

This is a state-wide organisation specialising in services, programs and responses to family violence in migrant and refugee communities. You can call InTouch on **1800 755 988**

### **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline**

Visit website: [hotline@workfocus.com](mailto:hotline@workfocus.com)

An Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability. Call the free hotline on: **1800 880 052**

### **Our Place Online**

An online forum for men and women who have suffered abuse in all its forms: psychological, verbal, physical, sexual, and spiritual abuse. The forum is run by a community of volunteers all over the world. Our Place aims to help educate and support those wishing to heal from the damage done. Website: [www.our-place-online.net](http://www.our-place-online.net)

### **Translating & Interpreting Service**

Call the hotline for help **131 450**

Gain free access to a telephone or on-site interpreter in your own language. Immediate phone interpreting is available 24 hours every day of the year on: **131 450**

## General Family Services

### Maternal and Child Health Line

Qualified maternal and child health nurses provide information, support and advice to Victorian families with children from birth to school age (5 years old) 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Maternal and Child Health Line on **13 22 29**.

### Parentline

Parentline is a phone counselling service available to parents and carers of children aged from birth to 18 years throughout Victoria. You can call Parentline on **1300 30 1300** from 8am to midnight, seven days a week, on any day of the year. (Translation service available.)

### LGBTI – Switchboard

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in Victoria and Tasmania can access advice, information, counselling and referrals [QLife](#) (counselling and referral service for LGBTI people) – call **1800 184 527** or chat online

### Aged Care Services



[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

Website for Aged Care Services:

Telephone: **1800 200 422**

### Seniors Rights Victoria

Seniors Rights Victoria provides information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people. If you, your client or someone you know is experiencing elder abuse, please contact their free, confidential Helpline: **1300 368 821**.

### Advocacy Services for the Aged

National Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600 (freecall) or visit OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network) website to find out more about advocacy services.

Website: [opan.com.au](http://opan.com.au)

### Carers' Victoria

Carers provide care and support to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is an older person with care needs. We work closely with government and other support organisations to improve the lives of caring families throughout Victoria.

Freecall 1800 242 636 Freecall our carer advisory line from anywhere within Victoria (freecall from local phones, mobile calls at mobile rates)

## Mental Health Services

### **beyondblue**

The 24/7 [beyondblue](#) helpline on **1300 22 4636** provides information and support to help people achieve their best possible mental health.

### **headspace**

The National Youth Mental Health Foundation's [ehespace](#) service supports young people and their families going through a tough time.

You can call on **1800 650 890** or [register](#) to get help and support via email.

### **Lifeline**

**13 11 44**

Lifeline has a national number who can help put you in contact with a crisis service in your State. Anyone across Australia experiencing a personal crisis or thinking about suicide can call **13 11 44**

## Family Violence Support Apps

Below is a list of support apps available for those experiencing family violence.

### **1800RESPECT**



[1800RESPECT](#) has developed the Daisy app to connect women who are experiencing, or have experienced, sexual assault, domestic and family violence to support services in their state and local area. By linking you to a local service, you will get help fast, be able to read information privately and also contact family or friends through the service. Download Daisy from [Google Play](#) or [App Store](#).

### **Doncare**



[Doncare](#) developed the iMatter domestic violence prevention app to help identify the warning signs of abusive and controlling behaviour in relationships as well as promoting healthy self-esteem. Download iMatter from [Google Play](#) or [iTunes](#).

## Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria



[Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria \(DVRVCV\)](#) developed the SmartSafe+ app. This app is designed to help women collect and store evidence of family violence safely. By collecting this information it will help them get an intervention order, or to prove a breach (recommended for Victorian use only). The SmartSafe+ is available from Google Play or the App Store.

For more information or instructions on how to download the app please contact DVRVCV on **8346 5200** (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or via email at [smartsafeplus@dvcv.org.au](mailto:smartsafeplus@dvcv.org.au)