



**Answers for Women**

## Is Something Wrong?

- Are you sometimes frightened of your partner?
- Are you careful to avoid your partner's anger?
- Does your partner constantly need to know where you are?
- Does your partner try to control your contact with family and friends?
- Does your partner try to make you feel dumb, stupid, crazy or not good enough?
- Does your partner use threats, force or guilt to make you do something you don't want to do?
- Does your partner control how much money you can have and how you can spend it?
- Has your partner attacked or verbally abused you?
- Has your partner threatened you?
- Does your partner make excuses for the abuse like: "I was drunk"; "It wasn't my fault"; "It only happened once, it won't happen again"?

**These behaviours are abusive.**  
**Abuse is wrong.**  
**There is NO excuse for abuse.**

## Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse:** eg hitting, choking, punching, kicking, slapping, pushing, using weapons.

**Psychological Abuse:** eg intimidation; harassment; name calling; playing 'mind-games'; threatening; humiliating, ridiculing; verbal abuse; repeatedly telephoning; stalking/following.

**Social Abuse:** eg choosing the people you can have contact with; monitoring telephone calls; monitoring your mail; humiliating or belittling you in public.

**Emotional Abuse:** eg causing fear; threatening to take the children or harm loved ones or pets; using guilt to manipulate; belittling your feelings; damaging or destroying your belongings.

**Financial Abuse:** eg controlling money and how you can spend it; hiding information about the finances/assets.

**Sexual Abuse:** eg forcing you to have sex; rape; non-consensual sexual photography; or unwanted exposure to pornography or offensive material.

**Spiritual/Cultural Abuse:** eg ridiculing your beliefs and destroying your relationship or connection with your culture or your spirituality; stopping you from practising your preferred religion; or forcing you to engage in unwanted religious practices.

# Healthy Relationships are Respectful Relationships

## In healthy relationships:

- You feel safe with each other
- It's OK to have different opinions
- Disagreements are expressed safely
- Words and actions are respectful
- You each can have your own identity
- Touch is safe
- You respect each other's privacy
- You are both equally important
- Decisions are shared
- You each take responsibility for your behaviour

## Children and Young People Suffer Too

- Children and young people are often strongly affected by domestic violence - even if you think they haven't seen the abuse (Edelson 1999; Carlson 2000).
- Even small babies are affected.
- Children and young people often blame themselves for the abuse.
- They go through feeling terror, fear, anger, sadness, guilt and helplessness.
- They often develop problems socially and have difficulty making friendships.
- Children and young people learn that abuse is a normal part of life and that abuse is the best way to solve problems.

**Many people live with great stress and pressure and still choose not to abuse their partners. Things like natural disasters, alcohol, tiredness, shift work, financial strain, stress and worry about the weather do not cause people to abuse their partner.**

**Abuse is a choice.**

## Did You Know

It is estimated that one in four women have experienced abuse from their partner (ABS 1996).

Reports of domestic violence in rural and remote areas are higher than in metropolitan settings (WESNET 2000).

## Help is available in rural and remote areas

You may feel trapped in an abusive relationship because of your location. It can be **hard to ask for help**, especially in a town where you are known and it's hard to keep people from knowing your business. But there are people who can help you **confidentially** regardless of where you live and whether you want to stay or leave the relationship.

The **priority is safety** for you and your children.

# There is Something You Can Do

**If you are in immediate danger call 000.**

There are **statewide telephone services** that specialise in domestic violence prevention, support and counselling. **You can remain anonymous** and it costs as much as a local telephone call. 1800 numbers do not appear on telephone bills.

## **dvconnect**

Women's Line ph 1800 811 811 (24 hrs/7 days)  
Men's Line ph 1800 600 636 Mon-Fri (9am - 5pm)

**Men's Line Australia** ph 1300 789 978 (24 hours)

**Lifeline** ph 131 114 (24 hours)

## **Elder Abuse Prevention Unit**

ph 1300 651 192 (office hours)

## **Legal Aid Queensland Services**

Domestic Violence Unit ph 1300 651 188  
Women's Legal Aid ph 1300 651 188

**Women's Legal Service** ph 1800 677 278 or 07 3392 0670 (Brisbane)

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal and Advocacy Service** ph 1800 442 450

## Have a Safety Plan

Call **dvconnect** (the statewide telephone service). They can give you ideas on how to be safer both during and after the violence, as well as when the tension is building toward violence. They can also find out what other help is available in your area.

## REMEMBER

**Abuse is wrong.** You have the right to live in safety and without fear of abuse and violence.

**You are not to blame.**

**You are not alone** - there are likely to be many people in your community experiencing abuse and violence.

**People who use violence do so because they choose to.**

**Domestic and family violence** can be found in all economic, educational, religious and social sections of the community.

**There are people and services available to assist you.** They will keep your information confidential and help you make the decisions and plans that are right for you.

### Sources

Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996) Women's Safety Survey, ABS, Cat.No. 4128.0, Canberra. Carlson, B.E. (2000). Children exposed to intimate partner violence. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 1, 321-342. Department of Families (2001). Domestic Violence Statistics. <http://www.families.qld.gov.au/communitycare/dv.html>. Department of Families (2003). Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Week Media Kit. Edelson, J.L. (1999). Children's witnessing of adult domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 14, 839-870. WESNET (2000) Domestic Violence in Regional Australia a literature review PADV Publication.