

Geelong Candlelight Vigil

Wednesday 4 May, 6pm



#GeelongCandlelightVigil2022

Family Violence

Family violence can happen to anyone. It's never your fault.

Family violence occurs when a family member intentionally uses violence, threats, coercion or intimidation to control or manipulate another family member, partner, or former partner. It happens in all kinds of family or intimate relationships and across all ages, communities and cultures.

Family violence may include:

- Violence from one partner toward another partner, inclusive of same-sex and heterosexual relationships
- From an adult child toward an elderly parent
- From parent to a child
- From an adolescent to a parent
- From one sibling to another
- Between extended family members
- By those providing care in diverse home environments

Forms of family violence

While physical violence is more widely recognised, there are many other forms of family violence, including:

- Verbal
- Emotional and psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Social
- Systems
- Reproductive

Family violence is prevalent across our community

In Australia, approximately one in six women and one in 16 men have experienced violence by a current or former partner since the age of 15 (*ABS, 2016*).

In Victoria, police attended more than 93,000 family violence incidents in 2020–21, (*Crime Statistics Agency, 2020-21*). Many people who experience family violence never seek support from services or report this to police. These statistics only show us part of the picture of how common this violence is.

People who use family violence are responsible for their behaviour. The choice to threaten or control someone is an abuse of power and trust.

Family violence is a serious and widespread problem, but it is preventable

We need to come together as a community to prevent family violence. We need commitment from families, communities, workplaces and organisations to help create a community where women are safe, equal and valued and take active steps to promote and normalise gender equality and challenge sexism and discrimination because the impact of violence against women not only impacts women, but all of our society.

Support services

Specialist support services are available to support you or someone you know in-person, over the phone, email or online webchat.



Emergency

Call Police on 000

Barwon region family violence specialist support

The Orange Door

1800 312 820

barwon@orangedoor.vic.gov.au

www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au

The Sexual Assault & Family Violence Centre

03 5222 4318

reception@safvcentre.org.au

www.safvcentre.org.au

Bethany Community Support

03 5278 8122

info@bethany.org.au

www.bethany.org.au

State-wide and national sexual assault and family violence support

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre (24/7)

1800 015 188 or 03 9322 3555

www.safesteps.org.au

1800 RESPECT (24/7)

1800 737 732

www.1800respect.org.au

Sexual Assault Crisis Line (5pm-9am)

1800 806 292

www.sacl.com.au

Victims of Crime Helpline (8am-11pm)

1800 819 817

www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au

Signs someone you know is experiencing family violence

It can be hard to tell if someone is experiencing family violence. Often there are no obvious signs and the person may not even recognise that what they are experiencing is abuse. However, there are some signs you can and should look out for.

- Has the person become withdrawn from close friends and family? Do they seem unusually quiet, lacking in confidence or depressed?
- Does the person say things that indicate their partner is controlling like 'he doesn't like it if I don't let him know where I am' or 'he's always checking my text messages'?
- Does the person talk about their partner being jealous or quick to anger? Have they mentioned their partner getting really angry about something small like the house not being clean enough or forgetting to purchase something from the shops?
- Does the person seem anxious, afraid or just not themselves around their partner?
- Does their partner criticise the person in public, calling them names in front of friends, family or colleagues?
- Has the person ever indicated that their partner pressured them into doing sexual things?
- Has the person ever said their partner pushed them, restrained them, hit them or was in any way physically abusive?
- Has the person ever had physical injuries, like bruises, broken bones or abrasions? If you have asked them about the injuries, have they become evasive, upset or given unlikely explanations?

What should you do to help?

There are a number of things you can do if you are concerned for a friend, family member or neighbour:

- Provide a safe and private space to discuss
- Ask them if they are okay
- Listen without judgement
- Emphasise that they are not to blame for their experience
- Let them know about support services available
- Offer practical assistance and emotional support

The most important thing you can do is listen without judging, respect their decisions, and help them find ways to stay safe.

Support services are here to help you.