

Stay or leave?

Safety for you and your children is the most important consideration.

Living with a violent or abusive partner affects your health and wellbeing.

The situation may make you feel:

- ▶ 'Useless' and 'hopeless'
- ▶ Anxious and fearful
- ▶ Angry and lonely

Leaving or changing the situation can be very difficult:

- ▶ There are things you can do to keep you and your children safe.
- ▶ There are people and services that will listen to you and can help you to change your situation.

Effects on your children

Children are effected by seeing, experiencing or hearing violence or abuse in their home regardless of their age.

Even if your child is not being physically hurt, they could:

- ▶ Become anxious and fearful
- ▶ Learn to see and use violence and abuse as acceptable behaviour

There are services available that can support you and your children.

You have the right to be free from violence and abuse

You have the right to be:

- ▶ Happy
- ▶ Safe
- ▶ Unafraid
- ▶ Treated with respect
- ▶ Listened to and believed
- ▶ Emotionally supported and to ask for help
- ▶ Make decisions and choices

Where can I go for help and support?

We suggest you make contact with some of these services now, regardless of whether you intend to use them at this time. It is always best to have support and a plan before an emergency.

SHE Tasmania: 03 6278 9090

South: 6278 9090

North: 0428 162 216

North West: 0428 057 415

State-wide counselling & support

Family Violence Counselling Support Service:

1800 608 122

State-wide support & late opening hours

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732

National 24/7 support

Police: 000

In an emergency

If your partner is abusive or violent

Family violence may include physical, emotional, verbal, psychological, financial, social and sexual abuse.

Family violence occurs in all levels of society, in all cultural groups and at all ages.

Family violence is the most common form of physical assault in Australia.

Most family violence is carried out by men against women. However, it can also be perpetrated by women in heterosexual relationships and by either party in same sex relationships.



Warning signs

Is your partner:

- ▶ Often angry?
- ▶ Jealous?
- ▶ Demanding?
- ▶ Possessive?
- ▶ Threatening?
- ▶ Physically violent?
- ▶ Critical of you?
- ▶ Charming with other people but different at home?

Does your partner:

- ▶ Have strong views on traditional/domestic roles?
- ▶ Make most of the decisions?
- ▶ Lose their temper over small things?
- ▶ Shout and/or hit you then blame you for their actions?
- ▶ Use threats against you, the children, pets or property?
- ▶ Humiliate and ridicule you?
- ▶ Force you to do sexual things you don't want to do?
- ▶ Try and stop you from seeing family and friends?

These types of behaviours can make you feel powerless, confused, isolated, trapped, worthless, angry, and even 'crazy'.

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, your partner may be abusing you.

Are you to blame for the abuse?

NO!

No one can cause another person to be violent or abusive.

People who abuse their partners often blame other people, things or situations for their violence. They make choices about how to respond to their frustrations and to you, even if they are not aware of making those choices.

VIOLENCE and ABUSE are UNACCEPTABLE. These are criminal acts for which your partner is totally responsible

Does alcohol make him violent?

NO!

Drinking is used as an excuse to avoid taking responsibility.

What if they are sorry?

Being sorry doesn't stop the abuse or it would have stopped long before now.

Violence and abuse is rarely a one-off event because it arises from attitudes and expectations. Even if your partner promises to change, the violence or abuse is likely to come back later.

Can they really change?

YES, but there are no guarantees.

Your partner might tell you they will stop abusive behaviours:

- ▶ If you leave or threaten to leave
- ▶ If you make changes
- ▶ When they are feeling less stressed
- ▶ If you get a Family Violence Order

How will you know if they have changed?

Real change is only possible if your partner decides they want to change their attitudes and expectations regardless of whether you remain together or not.

Ask yourself;

- ▶ Do you still feel afraid when you are with them?
- ▶ Have they stopped being violent or threatening towards you and others?
- ▶ Are they able to be angry without becoming verbally or physically abusive?
- ▶ Are you able to express your feelings towards them without being attacked?
- ▶ Can they respect your right to say no?
- ▶ Can you go out without their permission?