

Domestic & family violence factsheet

Domestic and family violence often occurs as a pattern of violent, abusive or bullying behaviour towards a partner, former partner or family member to scare and control them. Domestic and family violence can happen to anyone, regardless of your gender, age, sexual orientation, culture, religion, education or occupation.

What can domestic and family violence look like?

Domestic and family violence can materialise in many, often subtle ways, including:

- **Physical abuse**
 - Punching, hitting or kicking
 - Strangulation and suffocation
 - Throwing objects at you or in your direction
 - Sexual assault
- **Emotional abuse**
 - Puts you down
 - Calls you names
 - Makes you think you are crazy
 - Makes you feel guilty or bad about yourself
- **Using isolation**
 - Controls what you do or where you go
 - Controls who you see and talk to, and for how long
 - Uses excuses to justify their actions, including 'I'm protecting you' or 'I'm only doing it because I'm jealous'
- **Minimising their behaviour**
 - Does not take your concerns seriously
 - Blames you for the abuse
 - Blames tiredness, stress, work, alcohol or drugs
 - Denies actions ever occurred
- **Using children**
 - Makes you feel guilty about the children, including calling you a 'bad parent'
 - Uses the children against you or to relay messages
 - Threatens to take the children away
- **Financial abuse**
 - Prevents you from getting a job or forces you to quit
 - Forces you to give them your wage or earnings
 - Does not allow you access to cash or bank accounts
 - Gives you an allowance
- **Using male privilege**
 - Treats you like their servant
 - Makes decisions that concern you without your input
 - Limits your role to within the household
- **Coercive and controlling behaviour**
 - Threatens to hurt you, hurt themselves or share intimate images if you take certain actions
 - Makes you do illegal actions, such as buy drugs
 - Makes you take out debt in your name or sign things you don't understand
 - Withholds medication or money
 - Monitors you via GPS
 - Goes through your phone, social media, emails, banks accounts or internet history

- **Using intimidation or harassment**
 - Destroys or breaks property
 - Abuses pets or children
 - Makes you aware they have weapons in the house
 - Makes you afraid by using looks, actions or gestures
 - Follows you or turns up at your workplace
 - Constant calls or texts

A combination of these tactics is often used by an abusive partner to gain power and control over their victim. You don't need to experience all of these types of abuse for it to be domestic and family violence

What should I do if I know or if I think I am experiencing domestic and family violence?

You should:

- Call 000 if you are in immediate danger.
- Tell someone like a close friend, doctor or support worker.
- Seek counselling options from a doctor or support worker.
- Document the violence in a notebook and by taking photos.
- Keep any police reports or records of your attendance at a doctor or hospital.
- Contact [Marrickville Legal Centre's Domestic Violence Support](#) Service to make an appointment with our DV Support Worker.

Contact

Do you need to talk to someone? We can help. [Submit an enquiry online](#) or call Marrickville Legal Centre on 02 9559 2899.