

Services

1800RESPECT

National sexual assault, domestic & family violence counselling service
Tel: 1800 737 732 (24 hours)
www.1800respect.org.au

safe steps: Family Violence Response Centre

Telephone counselling and referral to safe accommodation
Tel: 03 9322 3555
Tollfree: 1800 015 188 (24 hours)

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

Support and information and the number of your local outreach service
Tel: 03 9486 9866
(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

In Touch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

Support and information for

immigrant women in their language
Tel: 03 9413 6500
(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service

Support, accommodation and information for Indigenous women
Tel: 03 9482 5744
(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

WIRE

Information, telephone counselling and referral for women
Tollfree: 1300 134 130
(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

What would really have helped is to have a relative or friend to mind the kids for a while.



Domestic
Violence
Resource
Centre
Victoria



**Domestic Violence
Resource Centre Victoria**

Preventing violence, promoting respect

Is someone
you know being
abused in a
relationship?

Information
for families,
friends and
neighbours

What is abuse?

Every couple has arguments. In a respectful relationship, both partners feel free to say their opinions, to be themselves, and to say 'no' to things they don't want to do. But in an abusive relationship, one partner tries to dominate the other through criticisms, demands, sexual pressure or physical harm. For the victim and her children, this behaviour can be frightening and harmful.

It would have helped if my family had said that his behaviour wasn't ok ... and that they were there if I needed them.

How can I recognise abuse?

Signs may include:

- She is afraid of her partner or is always anxious to please him or her
- She hardly ever sees her friends or family
- Her partner often criticises or humiliates her
- She seems anxious or depressed
- Her partner orders her about or makes all the decisions
- Her children seem afraid of her partner
- She often talks about her partner's 'jealousy' or 'temper'
- She has cuts, bruises, or other injuries
- Her partner or ex is constantly calling or following her
- Her partner pressures or forces her to do sexual things

It's important to understand ...

It can be very difficult to leave an abusive partner.

She may be afraid her partner will hurt her, confused about her feelings, worried about the children, or she may hope that things will get better. She may think the abuse is her fault.

Emotional abuse – such as put-downs, demands or threats – can be just as harmful as physical abuse. Abuse is never the fault of the victim.

Physical and sexual violence and threats are against the law.

My best friend really helped me. She never judged me or made me feel like it was my fault.

How can I help?

Many people worry that they will be 'interfering' if they get involved. But your support can make a difference.

You can:

- Tell her you're worried about her, and explain why
- Listen to her and take the abuse seriously
- Help her to understand that the abuse is not her fault
- Help her to protect herself
- Offer practical help like minding the children, cooking her a meal, offering a safe place to stay
- Maintain regular contact with her
- Find out about services and legal options available to help her

It's not helpful to tell her what to do or to judge her for staying.