


**FAMILY  
VIOLENCE**  
**IT'S NOT OK**

**HOW CAN  
YOU HELP?**



**It's hard to know  
what to do when you  
know - or suspect -  
that a friend or family  
member is living with  
violence.**





**How do I know what is the right thing to do?**

**Should I say something or mind my own business?**

- The sooner you reach out to someone who is being violent the sooner they can get help to change.
- The sooner you reach out to someone living with family violence the sooner they can get help.
- People want help from friends and family first.
- What you do and say can make a difference.



## **FAMILY VIOLENCE IS:**

- partner abuse
- child abuse and neglect
- elder abuse and neglect
- dating violence
- violence in other family relationships.

## **ABUSE CAN BE:**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL** – threats, name calling, jealousy, put downs, smashing things, stalking, controlling what you say, do and wear.

**PHYSICAL** – hitting, kicking, biting, pushing, strangulation, using weapons.

**FINANCIAL** – taking your money, running up debts in your name, checking all receipts.

**SEXUAL** – rape, forced sexual activity, unwanted touching, sexual activity with a child or young person under 16.

**NEGLECT** – not providing food, shelter, clothing, leaving children home alone, not getting medical attention.

# THE SIGNS

Family violence takes many forms – it's not just physical. It can be psychological, sexual, financial and verbal.

People being violent and people being hurt try to hide the violence because they feel ashamed and guilty.

Victims may be scared to talk about it in case the violence gets worse.

## **PEOPLE EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE MAY BE:**

- fearful, nervous
- isolated, don't want you coming round
- worried about someone's reaction
- sad, angry
- lacking in confidence
- keeping secrets
- walking on eggshells.

## **CHILDREN WHO ARE LIVING IN VIOLENT HOMES MAY BE:**

- fearful
- silent and withdrawn
- aggressive
- unusually well behaved

### **and show:**

- signs of violence such as bruising
- a sudden change in behaviour.

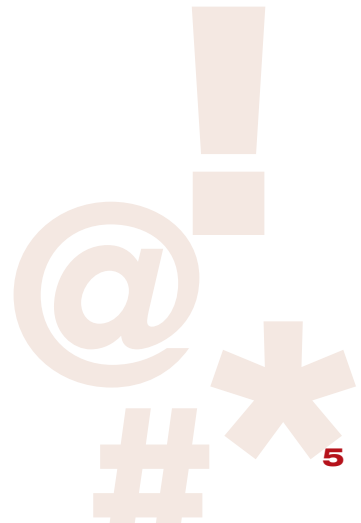
AGGRESSIVE CRITICISM  
PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION  
CHECKING UP  
PUT DOWN  
CONTROL  
SILENT BRUISING SECRETS  
ANGRY SAD FEARFUL JEALOUSY  
ISOLATED BEHAVIOUR WORRIED THREATEN  
WITHDRAWN POSSESSIVENESS  
NERVOUS CONFIDENCE LOOKS WORRY

“LISTEN TO YOUR INTUITION  
- IF YOU FEEL SOMETHING’S  
NOT RIGHT, ACT ON IT.”



**SIGNS THAT SOMEONE  
MAY BE VIOLENT AT HOME  
INCLUDE:**

- threatening looks and words
- controlling their partner and children
- checking up on their partner
- yelling and swearing
- put downs and criticism
- physical intimidation
- making all the decisions
- jealousy and possessiveness
- controlling finances.



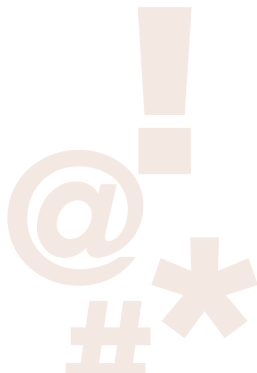


## **DANGER SIGNS**

**Separation is the most dangerous time for victims of violence – women and children are particularly at risk from death and serious violence when a relationship is ending.**

**Signs that a victim may be in danger of being killed or seriously harmed include:**

- the victim is very afraid
- a relationship has ended or a court order has been issued
- threats to kill or commit suicide have been made
- excessive jealousy or controlling behaviour from a partner or ex-partner
- the victim is being stalked
- previous incidents of violence, especially if it is getting more severe and frequent
- the victim is isolated
- aggravating problems such as drug or alcohol misuse, mental health problems
- violence to others
- cruelty to animals.





**IF YOU OR SOMEONE**

**YOU KNOW FEELS:**

**TRAPPED#**

**OR HAS BEEN**

**HURT** **HUMILIATED\***

**\*IN DANGER**

**SCARED**

**STALKED**

**CHOKED/STRANGLER**

**PUT #  
DOWN**

**SUICIDAL CONTROLLED**

**THREATENED**

**MADE TO HAVE SEX**

**\*MAKE THE CALL**

**GET HELP**

# GETTING INVOLVED

- **Never put the victim's or your own safety at risk.**
- **If someone is in danger, or you think someone could be harmed, call Police on 111, even if you are not sure.**
- **If you want to talk to your friend or family member about the violence, it's best to pick a quiet time - not when the violence is happening.**
- **Adults living with violence need support to make decisions in their own time when they are ready. It's important to go at their pace.**
- **If children are being hurt they need adults to step in and take charge of their safety. They need to be able to tell adults they can trust what is happening to them.**
- **Don't be afraid to offend an adult in order to protect a child.**



“I remember a neighbour was looking over the fence when I was getting a hiding and didn't do anything. And I'm thinking - are you serious? They said afterwards 'I just didn't know what to do.' I wanted them to ring the cops, yell and scream.”  
(Victim)



“You need people that are real and not going to lie to you. People that are truly there for all the right reasons. Not because they have to but because they want to, not because of your past or your reputation or the drugs or money, because they truly want to see you succeed.”  
(Perpetrator)

“  
**TAKE VIOLENCE  
SERIOUSLY INCLUDING  
THREATS OF VIOLENCE  
TO SELF AND OTHERS.**”



# WHAT WORKS

## LISTENING




“I got a lot of help by just talking to my family and friends, and just having them there and listening to me. I spent hours talking to them.”

## NAMING THE VIOLENCE



“When I saw my mate yelling at his partner I decided to man up – I took him aside and said there’s got to be a better way. The good thing is he got help and we are still mates today.”



A man with dark hair, wearing a dark t-shirt, is sitting at a wooden table outdoors. He is holding a white mug with a red stripe with both hands. He has a thoughtful or slightly skeptical expression on his face. In the foreground, another person's hand is visible holding a white mug. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees.

**There's got to be a better way mate.**

## **PRACTICAL HELP**



“We’d already had a few chats over the fence so when I heard yelling one night I felt alright about asking her if she was OK and if I could do anything to help.”

## **LOOKING AFTER CHILDREN**



“The children are often down there at the neighbours’, they are the greatest. They’re a couple in their sixties, they’ve got grandchildren of their own. My kids wander down whenever they like basically, she’ll babysit for me. They’re good.”

## **BEING THERE**



“I had this mate and when I got out of hand and turned up at my wife’s house she would call him and he would always come and get me, whatever the time, sometimes it would be three in the morning.”



“My friend said I could call anytime, anytime at all and I did, I would call up at all times of the day and night and that would be OK.”



## GETTING INFORMATION



“A woman at work had picked it up. She approached me and said ‘Look things aren’t right’. She gave me the phone number of the women’s refuge and a lawyer and said she would come with me. It made it so much easier.”





## WHAT TO SAY AND DO

There are many different ways to reach out to people living with family violence. There isn't one right thing to do or say.

### HELPING PEOPLE WHO ARE VIOLENT

- challenge the behaviour not the person.

#### **SAY** CAN I HELP?


- do you need to talk?
- it's not OK your kids are scared of you
- I don't like the way you talk to your partner
- there's got to be a better way mate.

#### **DO**

#### FIND OUT ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE

- let them know violence is not OK and help is available
- find out what help is available
- offer to go with them to get help.



The image features a dark red background. In the center, two men are shown in silhouette, facing each other in profile. A light-colored speech bubble with a tail pointing to the man on the right is positioned above them. The text inside the speech bubble is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The overall composition is simple and focused on the interaction between the two figures.

**I don't like the way you talk  
to your partner.**

## HELPING VICTIMS

- give support not advice
- listen
- take violence seriously
- don't tell them what to do
- let them make their own decisions however long it takes
- BUT call 111 if someone is in danger.

### **SAY** ARE YOU OK?

- is someone hurting you?
- are you scared to go home?
- is there anything I can do?
- do you feel safe at home?
- it's not your fault someone is hurting you
- when you're ready I'm here
- it's not OK that you are being hurt.

### **DO** KEEP IN TOUCH

- call to say Hi
- offer to babysit
- listen
- be there
- keep the door open
- offer a safe place to go
- help make a safety plan
- find out about family violence.

**It's not your fault someone is hurting you. When you're ready I'm here.**



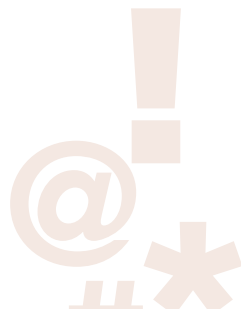
## **HELPING CHILDREN**

**Do something – don't assume others are.**

**Don't worry about offending an adult in order to help a child.**

**Children need adults to keep them safe. If you are concerned about a child you can:**

- be involved in the child's life
- tell them if they ever need to talk to someone they can come to you
- make your home a safe place for them
- offer support to their parents
- if a child is in danger call the Police.





**THEY SEE AND  
HEAR EVERYTHING**



## DON'T GIVE UP

- If the person you are trying to help gets angry, don't take it personally.
- People living with violence feel a lot of shame. It's not easy to admit that you are living with violence whether you are doing the violence or it's being done to you.
- Back off but let them know you are there if they need you.
- Find out more about family violence and how to help. You can call a family violence service or 0800 456 450 to talk through what you can do.
- It can take a long time for victims to leave. Violence doesn't happen all the time and they may still love the person.
- Changing violent behaviour takes a long time, it's not an instant decision.
- Research shows that people who have changed from a violent life had at least one other person who believed in them.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

It's not OK information line: **0800 456 450**

Crimestoppers: **0800 555 111**

Child Youth and Family: **0508 326 459**

Women's Refuge: **0800 733 843**

Shine: **0508 744 633**

National Network of Stopping Violence: **04 802 5402**

Age Concern: **[www.ageconcern.org.nz](http://www.ageconcern.org.nz)**

Family Court: **[www.justice.govt.nz](http://www.justice.govt.nz)**

Relationships Aotearoa:  
**[www.relationshipsaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.relationshipsaotearoa.org.nz)**

**In an emergency phone Police on 111**

Visit the Get Help section at  
**[www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)**





IT IS **OK** TO HELP

| 0800 456 450

| [www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)

New Zealand Government