

# Impacts of domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence (DFV) is when someone behaves abusively towards a person they are in a relationship with. It is a pattern of behaviour that controls or dominates a person and makes them fear for their own and/or other people's safety and wellbeing.

physical violence

sexual violence

verbal abuse

emotional abuse

psychological abuse

economic abuse

cultural abuse

social abuse



spiritual abuse

financial abuse

elder abuse

identity-based abuse

technology facilitated abuse

control and domination

threats

coercion

## DFV IS A MAJOR SOCIAL, HEALTH AND WELFARE ISSUE

- 22 million Australians have experienced DFV since the age of 15 ([AIHW](#))
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience violence at a rate three times that of non-indigenous women ([Our Watch](#))
- People with disability are nearly two times as likely to experience DFV ([AIHW](#))
- For migrant and refugee women, experiences of violence are compounded by racism, immigration processes, language barriers, religious beliefs ([Our Watch](#))
- Intimate partner violence is experienced at higher rates across LGBTIQ+ individuals and communities ([ARCSHS](#))

## DFV ALSO HAS ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

- \$22 billion a year is the estimated cost of DFV
- \$1.9 billion of this is attributed to businesses and productivity
- Absenteeism makes up \$860 million for those experiencing violence and \$443 million for perpetrators

[KMPG](#)

## DFV IMPACTS THE WORKPLACE

- Experiencing violence can impact productivity, withdrawal from colleagues, difficulty concentrating and impacts on attendance
- Work can provide economic security and stability for people experiencing violence

[Monash Gender & Family Violence Prevention Centre](#)



1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732 | NSW DV LINE: 1800 656 463

# Gendered drivers of domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence (DFV) can happen to anyone across all of society however it overwhelmingly affects women.

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## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS GENDERED

- 1 in 4 women compared to 1 in 13 men have experienced DVF
- Women were sexually assaulted at a rate 7 times higher than men
- Almost 2 in 5 women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace
- Men are more likely to experience violence from another man who is a stranger, in a public place. Women are more likely to experience violence from a man who is a partner, in a private place

[ABS, Personal Safety Survey](#)

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## DRIVERS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**DRIVER 1:** Condoning of violence against women

**DRIVER 2:** Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life

**DRIVER 3:** Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity

**DRIVER 4:** Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

[Our Watch, Change the Story](#)

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## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE.

TOGETHER WE CAN ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING REASONS THAT VIOLENCE EXISTS IN THE COMMUNITY INCLUDING NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS.



# Workplaces can make a difference

Responsibility for preventing family violence sits with everyone. This tip sheet outlines some key actions that workplaces can take to help prevent violence.

## EQUALITY AND RESPECT

- Leaders to role model respect and commit to gender equality
- Train staff in workplace equality and respect, see tools from Our Watch [here](#).
- Equal pay for equal jobs
- Call out sexist jokes and conversations that condone violence

*The standard we let slide, is the standard we accept.*

***Step up. Speak out. Set the standard.***

## CULTURE

- Company values to reflect equality and respect and clearly communicated behaviours on what is and isn't accepted
- Diverse leadership and management teams
- Embed a culture that does not tolerate bullying or harassment

## POLICIES AND PRACTICES

- Have DFV policies and practices in place to support victim-survivors and hold perpetrators to account
- Address work practices that discriminate against women
- Connect people experiencing DFV to local specialist referral services and/or Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service
- Provide practical support, for example a portion of pay to a new bank account, access to phone and/or computer, a meeting room/private space and time to organise personal admin
- Refer to the [Male Champion's of Change](#) guide for workplace responses to those using violence and [Insight Exchange](#) workplace resources on supporting people experiencing violence

## EVERY CONVERSATION COUNTS

- Every staff member has an opportunity to promote gender equality and respect
- Make your conversation count with customers, your team, clients and stakeholders. We can all make a difference.



# Supporting disclosures of domestic and family violence

Disclosures of DFV may be to a line manager, HR or to a co-worker. It's not their role to provide counselling, but they do play a vital role in listening to the person experiencing violence.

Here are some helpful ways to support employees responding to DFV disclosures.

## ACKNOWLEDGE

- Believe experiences
- Truly listen and take disclosures seriously
- Be empathetic, compassionate and non-judgmental

*It's important to remember that a perpetrator's use of violence is a choice.*

## BE THERE

- Offer support not solutions - be guided by the person who has experienced violence
- The impacts of DFV can be long lasting and recovery is not a linear process
- On average, it takes 7 attempts to leave a DFV relationship and costs \$18,000 ([ANROWS](#))

## CONNECT

- Assess for immediate danger - call 000 if risk is high
- Refer to specialist supports like 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732 to the local [Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service](#) or use [Ask Izzy](#) to find a local DFV service

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