

Safe families

Aboriginal Parent Easy Guide

Feeling loved, safe and secure is very important for our children. It helps them to develop, learn and thrive in life.

Everyone in the family needs:

- > respect and kindness
- > loving care
- > people to look out for them and help them.

In a safe, loving home everyone is happier and healthier:

- > babies develop better
- > children can learn better at school
 - they don't worry about what's going on at home.

Everyone has the right to feel safe – babies, children, teenagers, adults and Elders.

Violence at home harms everyone in the family.

Violence is not part of our culture.

It is never OK.



A safe, loving home is important for everyone, especially children.

Violence affects everyone

- > Babies in the womb don't grow as well if mum is stressed.
- > Children's brain development can be affected.
- > Children can feel worried, scared and alone. They may show signs of stress by becoming very quiet, angry or 'misbehaving', having aches and pains or wetting the bed. Some children blame themselves for the violence.
- > Adults' and teenagers' health, jobs, study and relationships can be affected.

Types of violence and abuse

- > physical harm
- > making threats
- > calling people names or 'putting them down'
- > taking money - making people pay for things
- > stalking, constantly calling or texting
- > harassing or bullying online, e.g. Facebook
- > controlling who people see and what they do
- > not letting people be involved in culture or religion
- > making people do sexual things when they don't want to.

How violence happens

Violence can be from one partner to another, or between other adults. Teenagers or children can be violent to parents, brothers or sisters.

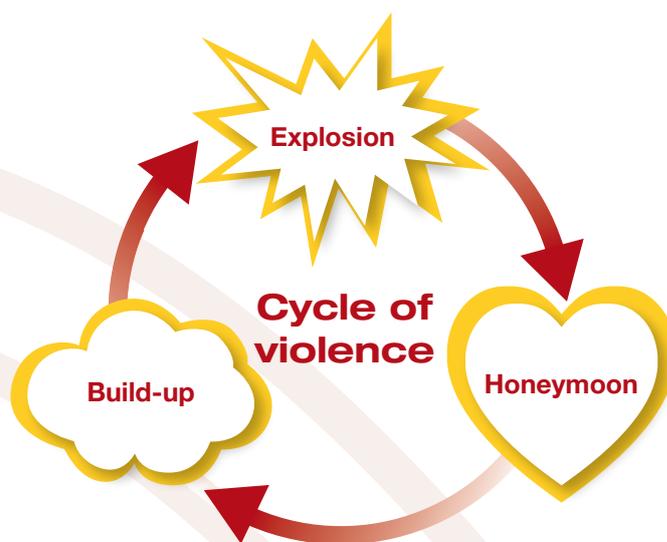
Violence can be big explosions or lots of 'small' acts over time. They can happen often or only sometimes. Violence can happen at home or in the community.

Some violence happens over and over in a cycle. There can be:

- > **build-up:** the person gets angry at small things, no matter how hard everyone tries to keep the peace
- > **explosion:** they yell, make threats or are physically violent
- > **honeymoon:** they say 'sorry', promise to change and things seem good for a while.

After days, hours or minutes the build-up starts again and the cycle repeats.

Remember many violent and abusive acts are against the law!



What you can do

...if there is violence in your home

- > Call the police on 000 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.
- > Make sure children are safe.
- > Seek help from services in this Guide.
- > Make safe escape plans for times when violence/crisis happens

...if you are worried someone is being hurt

- > Let them know you are there for them.
- > Encourage them to seek help.
- > Don't put yourself in danger. Contact a service for help.

...if you are worried about a child

It can be hard to know what to do if you are worried that a child doesn't seem to have things they need such as:

- > food and proper clothing

- > going to medical appointments
- > going to school every day.

You could encourage the parents or carers to seek help from a service. They might just need a little help to do things differently.

If you are worried about a child's safety, call the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78. You can speak to an Aboriginal worker if available.

...if you are worried about your own anger

It can be hard to admit we have an anger problem, or that we are violent or abusive towards people we care about. It's never too late to change. Services in this Guide are a good place to start.

Why people stay

It can be hard for people to leave. They might:

- > hope the person will stop
- > think that gifts and affection mean the person has changed
- > fear more harm or retaliation from the person or their family
- > think they won't be believed, or people will say it's their fault
- > not want to break up the family
- > not have anywhere to go
- > not have money or help to leave
- > have grown up around violence and not see it as a problem. They don't realise it is not normal and not acceptable.

If someone you know is living with violence, work out how you can safely support them to get help from professionals.

Want more information?

If you are in immediate danger call the police on 000

Services

Women's Health and Domestic Violence Service, NNSW
LHD, PO Box 498, Lismore, NSW, 2480
Phone 0428 400 880

Child Abuse Report Line

Phone 13 14 78, 24 hours

Speak to someone if you are worried a child is being abused or neglected. You can ask to speak to an Aboriginal worker if available.

1800 Respect (National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling)

Phone 1800 737 732, 24 hours Counselling helpline, information and support.
www.1800respect.org.au

Mensline Australia

Phone 1300 789 978, 24 hours

Speak to someone about relationships or family concerns.
www.mensline.org.au

Beyond Blue

Phone 1300 224 636, 24 hours

Speak to a mental health professional about how you feel no matter how big or small the problem.
www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline

Phone 13 11 14, 24 hours

Crisis support and suicide prevention.
www.lifeline.org.au

Kids Helpline

Phone 1800 551 800, 24 hours

Phone and web counselling for young people aged 5–25 years.

www.kidshelpline.com.au

Family and Community Services Reporting Line

Phone 132 111

Health Direct: 1800 022 222

Domestic Violence Line 1800 656 463

Women's Legal Service NSW: 1800 801 501

Indigenous Women's Legal Contact Line: 1800 639 784

Men's Referral Service: 1300 766 491

Websites

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For parenting information www.raisingchildren.net.au

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Various resources to help parents at any stage in life.

Local Services

Aboriginal Legal Service Lismore:

Phone 1800 643 - ALS Lismore

3/15 Molesworth Street, Lismore NSW 2480

Phone 02 6623 4400

Lismore Women and Children's Service

Phone 02 6621 2685

Email lismorerefuge@norwacs.org.au

PO Box 619, Lismore NSW 2480

Bugalma Bihyn Aboriginal Women's and Children's Refuge

Phone 02 6621 5187

Gurgan Bulahnggelah Aboriginal Health (Jullums)

Phone 02 6621 4366

Provides a range of medical and general health services, including counselling referrals and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and adults.

www.gurgun.com.au

Aboriginal Outreach Worker and Counsellor - Interrelate

Phone 02 6623 2750

Yarning and counselling, running health and wellbeing workshops, and empowering people to make positive and healthier life choices.

Child and Adolescent Trauma Counselling Service

Northern Rivers Community Gateway

Email reception@communitygateway.org.au

Phone 02 6621 7397

Brighter futures

Phone 6621 6992

Support and services to improve the emotional, social, health and educational developmental outcomes for families and their children.

Refer to Service Listing for contact details of other local services