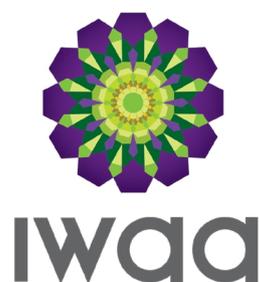


PEACE-BUILDING LEADERS TOOLKIT

**Being a leader in conflict resolution
and family violence prevention in
multicultural communities**

This Toolkit offers strategies and skills to become a leader to help resolve conflict, prevent family violence and build more equal and peaceful communities. It has emerged from deep dialogue and training between agencies and leaders from diverse communities in Brisbane, and from research and practice over many years.

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Being a Leader

Key skills and behaviours that help make you an effective leader and peace-builder

What makes an effective leader and peace-builder

The most effective community peace-builder leader is one who is trusted by the people, seen as honest, a good listener and communicator, who follows clear, fair processes, can keep things confidential, is not biased and supports people towards safely and respectfully resolving their conflicts.

These key factors have been highlighted by leaders:

Trust

- Work to build trust with the community
- Show honesty, commitment and knowledge then people have trust and open their hearts
- Need trust from those in dispute and also their families.
- Where there is family or other violence extra safeguards are needed to keep trust
- Findings from inquiries about abuse within some religious and other institutions means greater work is needed to rebuild trust

Good Listening

- Listen to all sides
- Be supportive and respectful
- Do good consultation with all sides, working from a grass roots level

Understand the problem

- Find out what the problem is. Need full knowledge of dispute
- Know as much as you can about each side to the conflict and the background of the conflict
- The parties need to get to the root of the conflict

Confidentiality

- High standards of confidentiality will build trust and encourage the community to discuss their problems
- Parties should know their information will be kept confidential unless they consent to having it passed on, or where there's a need to prevent a real and serious threat to someone's safety, where there's clear risk of child abuse or where the law requires it. These are the standards of professional counsellors

Balance

- Be inquiring and supportive
- Attempt to be balanced and impartial, but always support non-violence and healthy relationships
- Know if you have a conflict of interest which makes you unable to properly support parties in a dispute, and then pass the task on to competent others

Show honesty, commitment and knowledge then people have trust and open their hearts

Look for common ground

- Look for common ground between parties

Respect

- Always show respect for the parties
- Sharing food can help this process

Focus on strengths

- Focus on people's strengths
- Sometimes may need to encourage patience or acceptance to just let the dispute go and move on. But not if it encourages or condones domination, intimidation or other violence by one of party over another

Intervention

- Some people see community leaders as having religious or social authority and believe they should intervene and make decisions to help solve the dispute. Advice can be effective but it is ultimately the decision of the parties themselves. Sometimes the law will force the parties to do something

All should be equal

- All parties should be treated equally and not be under threats or pressure from others in the conflict
- Gender equality is vitally important - see later sections on this

Know the law

- Make yourself aware of basic legal rights and responsibilities where there's a dispute and refer to legal advice when needed

Share your experience

- Share past experience of solving problems – the positives, negatives, outcomes

Know your limits

- Know when you need to bring in others. Use networks available to you and refer to appropriate services where necessary

Cultural fusion

- Diverse communities are constantly negotiating between cultures. Fusion of cultures may be the best way forward
- Explain how things operate in Australia
- Value philosophies and wisdom from different cultures
- Understand culture, the good and the bad, and take what's best from each
- Explore deeply any cultural or religious practices that may have unhealthy effects or lead to possible breach of mainstream law

Community education

- Education of the community, particularly of new arrivals, about key Australian laws and legal processes is important

Ethical Practice

- An effective leader has clear, strong ethical dealings with the community. A Peace-builder's Pledge has been developed as part of this toolkit



Know your legal limits

Leaders need to be very clear about their legal and ethical boundaries. They also need to make these boundaries clear to the community to manage people's expectations of their role of leaders and act lawfully. This will help build trust which is at the core of effective leadership and peace-building.

Confidentiality and risk of harm

Parties to disputes in the community should know that leaders will keep everything confidential and the only time confidence would be breached would be if there is a need to prevent a threat to someone's life or health, or if a court compels disclosure. Lawyers and counsellors are allowed to breach client confidentiality where there is an immediate risk of serious physical harm. Leaders in a peace-building process should inform police where there is real danger of harm.

In a family violence situations for example, suggesting the couples stay together can bring great risks. Family and domestic violence is widespread with great risk of serious physical or psychological harm, or even death - around one woman is killed each week in Australia by her intimate partner.

Duty of care

If community members rely on leaders for advice there may be a legal 'duty of care' that the leader owes even though they are working voluntarily. A 'duty of care' is a legal duty to use reasonable care not to cause harm that could be reasonably foreseen.

A duty of care means you should anticipate possible causes of harm and do everything reasonably practical to remove or minimise those possible causes. Part of good practice would be to help people understand their level of risk and the options available to make them safer. For example, people at risk of family violence should be referred to specialist family violence service.

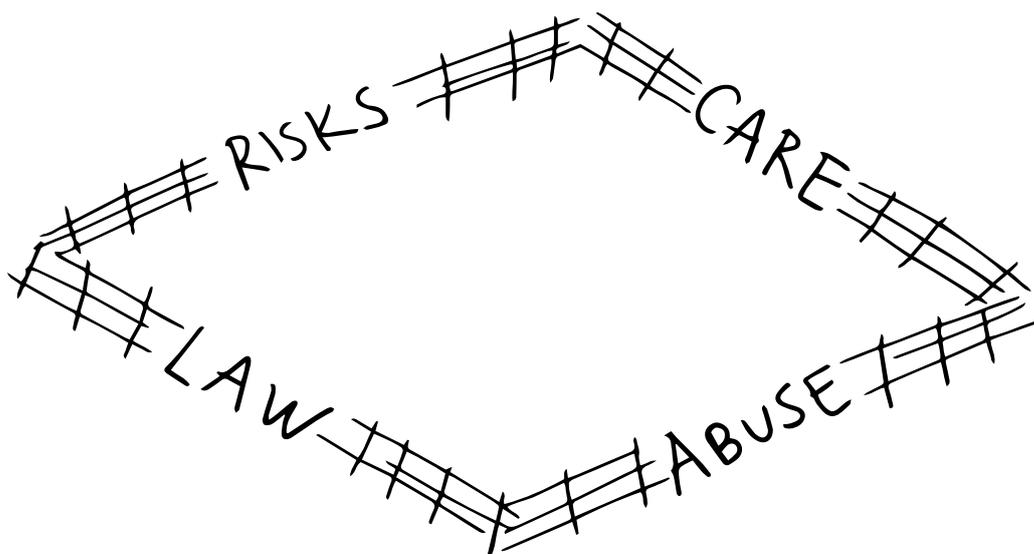
A leader could be sued for 'negligence' and have to pay compensation towards any loss the injured person suffered even though they are a volunteer. The standard of care required is higher if a person holds themselves out as having special skills and the injured party relies on that.

Reporting Child abuse

With child abuse the law puts a duty on teachers, doctors, nurses and childcare workers to report to Child Protection if they reasonably suspect a child is at risk of significant harm from physical or sexual abuse.

In Queensland, all adults also have a legal duty to report any sexual abuse by an adult of a child under 16, unless there's a reasonable excuse not to. A reasonable excuse may be that the child is now an adult and does not want it reported. This duty applies to religious confessions but not to lawyers or sexual assault counsellors.

If there is notification it may be good practice to work with the child's mother, if she is not a source of risk to the child, helping her to understand the risk and the reasons for the notification.



Giving evidence in court

A Leader could be required to go to court and give evidence about a conflict resolution process that the leader has been involved in if, for example, criminal charges are brought against a party to the conflict. This is different for lawyers as their conversations are 'privileged', which means whatever is said during their dealings with clients cannot be used in court. Mediators, family violence and sexual assault counsellors may also have some level of 'privilege' depending on whether they work with government agencies and what is in the agreement to mediate.

Legal advice

Leaders should refer people to lawyers when they need legal advice. Legal Aid and Community Legal Centres can give free advice and sometimes may take cases on.

Be aware that if you give advice about migration law and you're not a lawyer or registered migration agent it can be a criminal offence. You can pass on information from someone else and put people's answers on a form, but cannot give migration advice.

Your self-care

There are high demands on leaders and peace-builders, and the work is complex, time consuming and usually done voluntarily. It is important that leader's look after their physical and emotional health and well-being. Look after yourself. Don't over-commit. You and the community need to have realistic expectations of what you can and can't do. Know which conflicts are urgent or non-urgent

Dealing with people's conflict can give rise to stress and 'vicarious trauma' (the transfer of the effects of severe trauma from the person who was traumatised to a worker or supporter). Don't feel embarrassed if you need help; talk with trusted people or counsellors about any issues; keep physically fit; try to have some quality relaxing time with yourself and with your family; avoid using alcohol or other drugs to de-stress.



Effective Peace-Building

Approaches and processes to help manage disputes and build peace

Cultural respect

All cultures have wisdom and strength with much to teach, but also to learn. Integrating the best from different approaches into our relationships and practices is an inspiring challenge we can all are up.

While there is huge diversity within First Nations people, they share a deep connection to country from which much can be learned. Deep respect for the earth and the interconnections of lifeforms can be a core foundation for prioritising values in approaches to resolving conflict.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart in 2017 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders called for a Makaratta, the coming together after a struggle, an agreement for a fair and truthful relationship that will bring a better future. This is at the heart of peace-building.

Analyse culture closely

Culture is a broad term and includes practices that have developed in groups over a long period of time. Culture can be a powerful bond, but also cause division where it excludes or degrades others.

Cultural practices always need to be analysed closely to see if they are appropriate in a modern context.

Cultural practices can lead to conflict and to breaking the law. For example:

- A view that man should be head of the house can lead to domination of women, unequal relationships and family violence
- Attitudes that a female child is of less worth than a male child, devalues girls and women
- A practice of seeking revenge or honour killings leads to more violence
- A culture of heavy alcohol drinking can heighten conflict and violence
- Conflict over repayment of dowry can lead to control and abuse of a married person

- Circumcision of females, even if done overseas, is a serious criminal offence of 'female genital mutilation' in Australia

We should always beware of stereotyping. Not everyone from the same group or place follows the same culture.

Challenges to resolving conflicts

Community leaders say that some of the main challenges to resolving conflicts in their communities are:

- everyone wants win-win
- negative peer influences
- high demands on leaders
- lack of courage to address disputes
- not enough recognition of leader's roles
- youth lack respect for elders and parents
- one group won't respect or accept another
- elders themselves are sometimes in conflict
- cultural expectations for reparation when wronged
- some have a sense of entitlement and lack of insight
- to save face a person won't admit their wrong, nor change
- lack of support and understanding from some mainstream services
- person in the wrong spreads gossip which re-ignites the conflict across groups
- the Australian legal system may conflict with cultural ways of solving disputes

People managing their own conflict

Most disputes are resolved between people themselves. Although it can be difficult and requires courage and time, the process of honestly and respectfully working through conflict ourselves can be deeply rewarding and build stronger relationships.

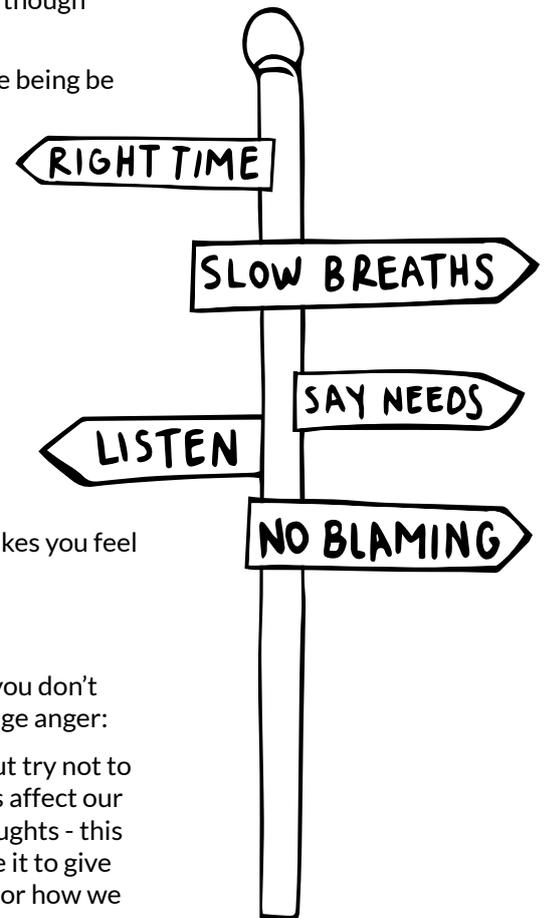
Conflict is natural and is everywhere. Sometimes all we need is to feel we are being heard and respected, even though we may not fully get what we want.

Useful processes to help manage disputes fairly include:

- Agree a time for talking
- Don't discuss when angry
- Talk in a safe space
- Give enough time
- Listen with respect. Put yourself in the other person's position
- Speak with respect. Have your say
- Avoid blaming
- Say what your needs or interests are in the dispute. Say how it makes you feel
- Avoid aggression. Have a break if you're angry or tired
- It can sometimes be useful to write out what was agreed

It is natural to feel anger in personal disputes when things seem unfair or you don't get what you want, but there are strategies to learn acceptance and manage anger:

- Where conflict causes anger or fear, accept that it is happening but try not to let those thoughts and feelings control what we do. Our thoughts affect our feelings, which affect our actions. We can be in control of our thoughts - this is called being 'mindful'. Anger and fear are normal and we can use it to give us energy (pump us up), but that doesn't have to be violent. Monitor how we feel and how we react when angry
- Practice long slow breathing; develop positive thoughts about ourselves; walk away and deal with the problem later when not angry; do physical exercise; drink water; pray or meditate; hit a pillow; talk to trusted family, friends or other helpers
- There's many free confidential helplines (see '[Getting Help](#)' section)



Giving advice

If people trust and respect a community or religious leader, and the leader has experience and wisdom, then clear advice from the leader about what to do and how to act to solve a dispute, can be effective.

Leaders must make sure their advice is lawful and supports equality in relationships between people.

Giving advice can overlap with a mediation role. In mediation, people are supported to look at options and come up with the solutions themselves, rather than just following advice from someone else.

Counselling

Counselling is a process of talking with someone to help them clarify the issues around problems and explore options and strategies forward. Counselling to manage deep loss, trauma or addiction is a long term process done by trained professionals. Sometimes counselling may be useful to support individual parties emotionally to help them focus on resolving the dispute they are having.

Mediation

A mediator supports people to make their own decisions about how to resolve the conflict themselves. The mediator's role is to manage the process, listen carefully, reflect on their own reactions, act in an unbiased way and never give advice. These pointers below are useful in whatever process of conflict resolution.

A GOOD MEDIATOR WILL...

- Offer a safe place to talk and clear process to enable each side to fully and safely tell their story to each other and explore ways forward
- Before the start, prepare each party individually about their needs and the process that's taking place
- Give options for parties to have others at the mediation, if all agree
- Disclose any possible conflicts of interest and not continue to mediate if they or the parties think this conflict may make the mediator non-neutral
- If needed, use 'shuttle mediation', going back and forth between disputers rather than have them together
- Keep things confidential unless there is danger of harm or a crime
- Not take sides, but help people understand the problem
- Listen carefully, summaries accurately what's being said and done, and ask good questions to move things forward
- Know how to reframe and reflect communications in ways that encourage clearer understanding of the dispute and possible resolutions
- Help disputers focus on common ground
- Suggest ways to move forward if asked or if the parties are stuck, but always leave it to the disputers to decide
- Be aware of gender inequality and shape any conflict management process accordingly (see later sections)
- Understand different cultural factors that may affect conflicts and work with and around them while not compromising key processes and principles
- Help people come up with solutions themselves and check if the solutions are workable
- Know when they can't help solve all problems and show disputers where else they can go to get help
- Ensure each party can get legal advice so they know their legal rights and responsibilities
- Don't go ahead if one party is being intimidated or pressured by the other
- Make sure any agreement between disputers is written where needed
- Be a good role model, and mentor others to be good role models

Dispute Resolution Services are offered by the Queensland Government, Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The Dispute Resolution Branch (DRB) accredited mediators commonly deal with family and intergenerational disputes, relationship separation, neighbour disputes (fences, noise, children, pets) workplace, commercial and disputes between many parties (see [Neighbourhood Mediation Kit](#)). The mediators follow careful processes to try to bring people together to talk over their differences to reach an agreement. This means savings in time, legal fees and court costs and helps free-up the court system.

The DRB services are usually free. Attending mediation is generally voluntary— for a mediation session to go ahead, both parties need to agree to attend. Before applying for mediation the parties should be willing to meet to resolve the dispute.

The DRB also recruits and trains mediators to conduct mediations within the community.

A peace-building process

Professor Johan Galtung is the pioneer of global peace studies and is sometimes called the ‘father of peace studies’. He has been called on to mediate between groups in some of the world’s deepest conflicts. Below are some approaches he suggests for facilitators in individual or group conflicts:

Conflict is not violence, but could lead to it. Wherever there is violence there is an unresolved conflict. There is an incompatibility of goals and means that have not been transformed.

In community peacemaking, the aim is not to get parties to negotiate and compromise, but to understand each other. There are different approaches to assisting the parties to reach this understanding, and any process to promote peacemaking can be adapted to suit their specific needs. Prof. Galtung suggests an approach that may be useful is as follows:

The facilitator should first talk one on one to each party without the other party so that each can talk freely uninterrupted by the

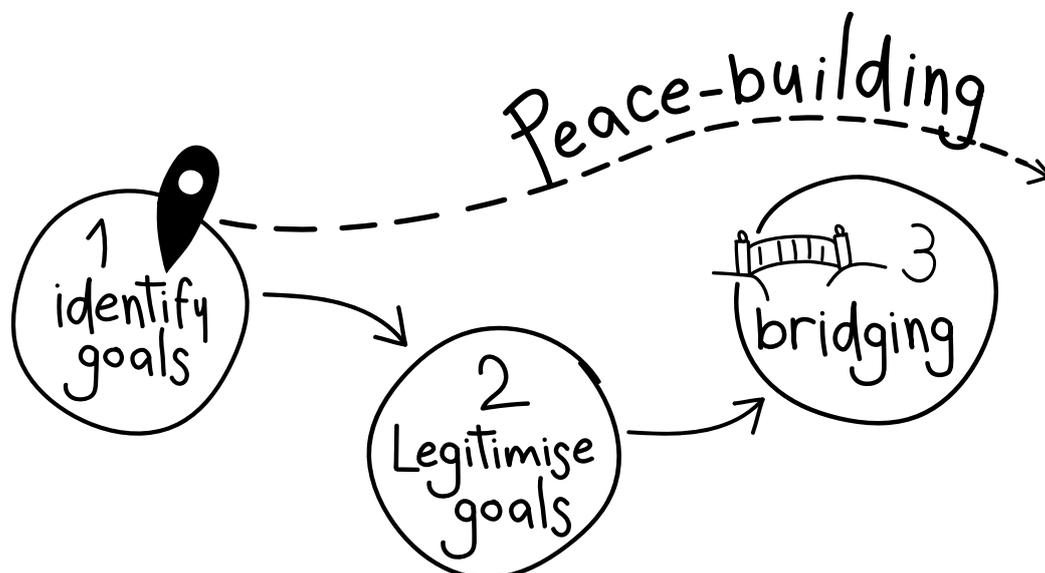
other’s negativity towards them. No accusing the other or trying to corner them or show their inconsistencies.

Don’t start with ‘how bad the other is’ rather start with ‘I want to hear what you want. We will talk of the other party, and when we do, can you think of a time in the past where the other party was good, or what would it look like for them to be good’.

The facilitator should ask searching questioning. Every sentence of yours should end with a question mark. This is not like negotiation where it’s a fight. Debate comes from the French word ‘to beat’ - to win by cornering the opponent. This is not the way of mediation.

The facilitator should try to make the parties feel comfortable, that they have a listener who has ‘empathy’ (the ability to understand and share the feelings of others - being inside the other). Empathy is different to ‘sympathy’ (which is pity and sorrow for someone’s misfortunes).

The aim is to encourage the stakeholders to cooperate for mutual and equal benefit.



There are several stages when facilitating a conflict

1.

Map the conflict - identify the goals

During the separate meetings with each party, ask them about their goals. Ask 'what does the situation look like where you want to be or want to get to?'

This will be complex especially where there are multiple parties. It may also be necessary to bring in more parties, who may have additional goals. The facilitator must be able to work with complexity, but it may be necessary for the stakeholders to prioritise their goals too.

2.

Legitimise the goals

Are the parties goals legitimate? You find this out by looking at elements of law, human rights and basic needs

- Law – must be followed but be aware it can reflect specific class interests and if you want to resolve deep conflict there may need to be a change in the underlying basis of the status quo.
- Human rights - are a good guide but don't look only at the international convention on civil and political rights, but also at the convention on economic, social and cultural rights.
- Human needs - these are deeper than human rights. Humans are a combination of body, mind and spirit and so need to consider survival, physical well being, freedom of the mind and identity of the spirit

If the facilitator thinks that a party's goals, or some of them, are not legitimate, the facilitator should ask that party or parties questions for example, about whether they might see their goals differently in the future, and could even assist them to come up with some possibilities.

3.

Bridging

The next step is for the parties to talk with each other. They may find out what they both want may not be unreasonable, and there is a way that they and their goals can come together. If they can't talk together then the facilitator can manage a process to enable them to do so.

It is important for the facilitator to maintain the trust and confidence of the parties. Some important things to remember are:

- Don't moralise or tell them they are bad. The approach should be Constructive / Concrete / Creative. The facilitator must construct something that will make the parties feel comfortable. This requires Intuition and creativity. It's like an art.
- Don't be afraid to suggest things. A good facilitator will have a lot of possible solutions already, but propose solutions as a question. Don't command them. Make them fascinating. Contextualise the goal – ask 'what will this good ending look like' e.g what does a good marriage look for you?.
- A positive/negative and past/future dialogue is very powerful. The parties often start with 'how bad the other is'. Pause them and say 'wait, I promise we'll get to this but I first want to hear what you want'. And later when they've talked about how bad the other is say 'can you think about a time in the past where the other was good or what would it look like for them to be good'. Get specific with the negatives and also think about what are you most afraid of for the future. Go beyond the current reality into something new.

Prof Galtung says the aim is to paint on the wall a wish that is so attractive the parties can say that even if this is not exactly what I wanted I can go with it. Resolving conflict needs creativity. There is a move beyond the present reality into something new. The Western approach is only one approach he says. There is wisdom in other civilisations also.

Family and Domestic Violence

Violence in the family is a major community problem and is mainly against women. There are strong laws and services directed at trying to keep people safe.

Extent of family violence

Gender-based violence is violence which is directed against a woman because she is a woman or which affects women disproportionately. Violence includes physical, sexual or psychological harm and threats of harm in public or in private life.

Statistics indicate that around 40% of people over 18 in Australia have experienced violence. Men experience more general violence than women but this is usually from other men, and often from strangers.

Violence in the home is perpetrated against women far more than against men. Women are far more likely to experience sexual and partner violence.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Personal Safety Survey, quoted in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019 'Family, domestic and sexual violence Snapshot, 11 September 2019

Police deal with over 250,000 domestic violence matters each year in Australia. In Queensland that's around 200

per day - 8 every hour, 70,000 per year. In Australia, on average one woman a week is killed by a partner or former partner.

Women are three times more likely to be hospitalised due to family and domestic violence (of the men hospitalised for DV from a woman, much of that is retaliation or defence against violence from the man).

There are other forms of domestic and family violence against women- forced marriage, trafficking for sexual exploitation, female genital cutting, incest and violence around dowry. Data is limited for these.

Violence before age 15 - physical violence against children is most often done by a parent and sexual abuse is most often done by someone known to the child who is not a family member.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Personal Safety Survey, quoted in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019 'Family, domestic and sexual violence Snapshot, 11 September 2019 LINK

Community awareness

Most Australians have an accurate knowledge of what constitutes violence against women and do not endorse this violence.

More Australians are recognising non-physical behaviours as violence (but around 20% do not believe that controlling or denying a partner money was a form of violence)

Knowledge about violence against women has increased, but 40% are unsure where to access help for domestic violence.

Taboos around speaking about sex may mean some women are unlikely to disclose about sexual violence and seek help.

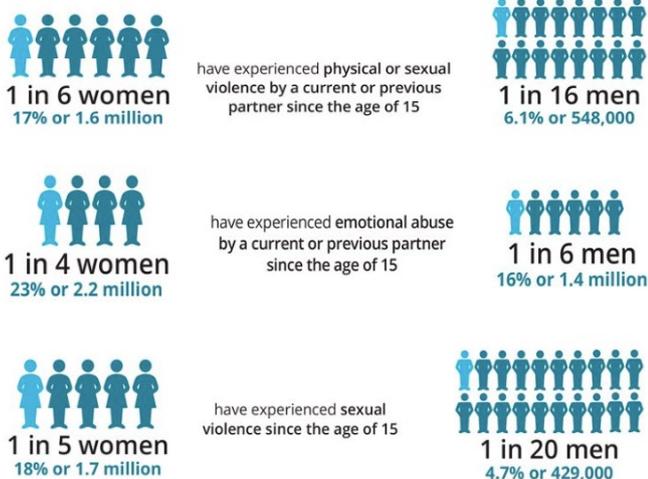


Figure 1: [Personal Safety Survey figures quoted in Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story 2019, from ABS 2016 Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW.](#)

Why there is more violence against women

A major driver of violence against women is a history and attitudes of male domination and possession of women. Evidence shows violence against women is higher where:

- there are rigid gender beliefs that men own their female partners, that women are just objects of sexual beauty, and that men are naturally more aggressive and sexually driven
- male peer relations emphasise aggression, sexual conquest and disrespect and where men don't stand up against violence as they fear rejection from their male peers
- men try to justify, excuse, blame-shift or downplay violence against women
- men control and dominate women in private and public situations

Men in these situations are more likely to have a sense of entitlement. An aggressive male drinking culture can promote further violence and gender inequality.

Early experience of or exposure to violence can also create beliefs that violence is an appropriate form of discipline, punishment or way of solving disputes.

Through much of history men have been positioned as superior to women. Today around a quarter of Australian's still think men should control relationships and be the head of the household. Challenging these approaches is a key important strategy for reducing violence and conflict against women.

Studies also indicate that some violence against women may increase as society moves closer to gender equality. As women begin to

play a more prominent role in paid work and society a 'male backlash' can happen as some men try to re-establish what they see as a 'natural' or 'traditional' gender order.

Above largely from [Our Watch \(2015\) Change the Story](#)

Family Violence law

Family violence is not only physical

Family violence includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse, threats to hurt someone or their property or pets and damaging property.

It includes any behaviour that 'controls or dominates someone and causes them to fear for their safety or wellbeing or that of someone else'. This covers 'coercive control' which can include repeated verbal abuse and intimidation, control over finances, stopping contact with family and friends, monitoring, following and stalking.



DV LAW

- Protect
- Hold accountable
- Chance to change

What laws apply

The main justice system response to family violence is through Domestic Violence Protection Orders (in Queensland through the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012)

A DV Protection order is a civil law matter made in a Magistrates Court after an application is brought by the police or the 'aggrieved' against the 'respondent'. Sometimes the respondent brings a 'cross-application' against the aggrieved.

The law's main aim is to protect people experiencing DV, including children. It also aims to hold the abuser to account but give them a chance to change if possible.

If the abuser (perpetrator) breaks the court DV order after it's made, then it becomes a criminal matter. They can be penalised, including jail if it's a serious breach.

Family violence could also be dealt with by police as a crime by bringing charges such as assault, sexual assault, rape, stalking and others.

'Coercive control' may also be made a crime in Queensland.

Who the law is aimed at

The DV law covers Intimate personal relationship - married, de facto, engaged, couple relationships, and includes same sex relationships.

It also covers family relatives, adult siblings, parents. It does not include children under 18 (except those in an intimate relationship).

The law also covers informal care relationships where one person is dependant on another for assistance with daily living.

DV Protection Order

A Domestic Violence Protection Order can be applied for by an individual or the police. The alleged perpetrator must be given a chance to respond but a temporary order can be put in place. The order is done through the Magistrates Court and continues until the date the court says, or 5 years

Protection is the primary need. Orders can have different conditions. Where both persons might be doing the violence, the court will look to see who is most in need of protection

What a court Domestic Violence Protection Order does

Family violence law tries to protect people within the family, but has a layered approach to family violence. A domestic violence protection order:

- can act as a strong warning.
- may say you can still stay together, but do no violence
- may say abuser must not go near you
- won't give a criminal record, unless the abuser breaks the court order.

Police Protection Order

If Police suspect domestic violence, they have power under the law to enter a home, question people and issue a police protection notice or take the person committing the violence into custody in a watch house for up to 8 hours.

When released from custody, the police will either issue a protection notice or give the respondent a copy of the DVO application.

The Police Protection Notice requires the person to be of good behaviour and not commit domestic violence against the aggrieved, and may also prevent them from contacting the aggrieved or coming within a certain distance of a premises for 24 hours.

Applying for a DV order

A protection order can be applied for [online or in person](#) at a Magistrates Court, by the client, a lawyer, friend, family member or by the police.

An urgent temporary order can be asked for. The court clerk will arrange for a copy of the application and any temporary order to be delivered to the respondent by local police.

Details of the steps to apply are on [Legal Aid's website](#).

As a Domestic Violence Protection Order is initially a civil matter, the court must be satisfied on the 'balance of probabilities' (that's it's more probable than not that) that there is a risk. If the police bring criminal charges then the proof required is higher - 'beyond a reasonable doubt'.

Responding to a DV application

When responding to a DV application the respondent can:

- Adjourn for further legal advice (usually only once)
- Consent to the order without admission of fault
- Consent with admission (not commonly used)
- Voluntary Intervention Order (participate in a perpetrator program)
- Challenge/Contest the application
- Consider putting in a cross-application saying the applicant was violent

Changing a DV order

DV orders can be varied or revoked.

The aggrieved can apply to vary a condition, the duration of the order or the person named on the order. It is dealt with in the same way as making an application for a protection order.

The Court may vary the order only if it considers the safety, protection and wellbeing of the Aggrieved or named person would not be badly affected by the variation.

DV PROTECTION ORDER

- Strong warning
- Crime if breach DVPO
- Can vary DVPO if safe

Forced marriages

Forced marriages are a crime. If a person tricks, threatens or pressures someone, whatever age they are, into marriage which they do not freely and fully agree to, it is a forced marriage. It applies in Australia or where someone is taken overseas to get married. An arranged marriage is not a forced marriage if both partners are over 18 when they get married and they can choose whether or not to participate. But it is a forced marriage if either partner is unable or unwilling to give full consent.

In Australia, children under 18 are in law not able to give consent to marry, unless they are 16 or 17 and have permission from a Court.

An overseas marriage is accepted in Australia if it would have been legal had it been done in Australia.

Partner visa applicants can leave sponsor and may still get permanent visa if can prove DV during a genuine relationship.

Visas and family violence

A person on a temporary spouse visa who suffers domestic violence from the Australian sponsor and leaves the relationship, may still be able to get permanent residence and stay in Australia if they can prove the relationship was genuine and there was domestic violence during the relationship.

This only applies to partner-type visas and Global Talent (858) and Child (445) visas. If the DV victim is not on one of these visas then the only options to stay would be to extend their current visa (unless they are a dependent on the visa of the perpetrator) or apply for some other skilled or family visa, or apply for a protection (refugee) visa if they fear return to their home country. This is complex and urgent legal advice is needed.

The sponsor perpetrating the violence sometimes threatens that they can get their spouse deported, but whether a person can stay permanently is a decision of the government and not the sponsor. If the sponsor withdraws the sponsorship the applicant should get urgent legal advice.

Any Australian citizen or permanent resident who's want to sponsor someone for a Prospective Marriage or Partner visa, must give the Department of Home Affairs an Australian and foreign police check certificates, plus written consent to disclose violence offences to the visa applicant. The department can refuse the visa if the sponsor does not provide the checks or if they have had violence offences and at least 12 months jail previously.

If a visa holder or applicant commits family violence in Australia or another country this can lead to their visa being canceled or refused because of 'bad character'. Citizenship applications can also be refused.



Family violence services

There are a wide range of critical services, shelters and help-lines that provide professional, confidential safety, advice and support for victims/survivors of family and domestic violence. See the 'Getting help' section below.

Children and family conflict and violence

Children and family violence

The laws says a child has been exposed to domestic violence if they hear, see or otherwise experience domestic violence. This could include seeing damaged property in the home or helping a family member who has been hurt as a result of domestic violence. A parent can request the court to include their children on the parent's domestic violence protection order.

Children under 18 can be the applicant or a respondent to a domestic violence protection order if they are in an intimate personal relationship such as a de facto couple.

Children and domestic violence orders

Parents or children can't apply for domestic violence orders against each other where there is serious conflict. Children under 18 cannot be an applicant or respondent to a domestic violence protection order against their parents or other family members. If things are that serious it would be more likely that the Child Safety Department would get involved if the child is at risk of harm.

Adult children can apply for domestic violence orders against their parents and adult siblings can apply against each other.

Child safety

If police and Child Safety think the young person is needs protection they can make an application for a child protection order, say where the young person should live.

Some people, like doctors, nurses, teachers, police are required by law to tell Child Safety if they suspect a young person has suffered or is at risk of significant harm.

However in Queensland all adults now have a legal duty to report

any sexual abuse by an adult of a child under 16, unless there's a reasonable excuse not to. This even applies to religious confessions but not to lawyers or sexual assault counsellors. A reasonable excuse may be that the child is now an adult and does not want it reported.

Parents' legal responsibilities

Parents are the legal guardian until child is 18 and can make decisions for the child though as the child gets older, they have more of a right to have a say in those decisions about you and their role should become more about giving advice.

Parents and any person who has care of a child under 16, has a legal duty to provide food, clothing, and shelter and protect them from risk to their personal safety and health .

Parents/carers must take reasonable action to remove the child from harm and are held to have caused any consequences to the child caused by not doing their duty, that duty, whether the child is helpless or not (s.286 Criminal Code Qld).

Parents, or people who have lawful care of a child under 12 cannot leave them unsupervised for an unreasonable length of time (s 364A Criminal Code Qld)

Parents must make sure their children attend school up till age 16 or until they complete Year 10



Parental discipline

Parents can make rules at home and the law allows discipline using 'reasonable force' as long as it does not cause significant harm to their children (s.280 Criminal Code Qld). Modern parenting in Australia tries to build strong bonds with children using reasoning, rewarding good behaviour and withdrawing privileges as discipline.

Some experts say physical punishment does more harm than good, is often not effective and teaches you to try to solve things using fear and violence. Parenting is very complex and supports are available.

Children and the criminal law

Children have rights but also responsibilities under the law. They must obey the law. The level of responsibility depends on age.

- The law says a child under 10 cannot be criminally responsible. A child aged 10 to 14 will only be charged if police can prove they understood the act was wrong
- Children are dealt with in the Children's Court up till 18. After this they're dealt with in adult courts
- Children's courts usually give lesser penalties than adult courts because of the young age and lack of experience of the young person
- If a court records a criminal conviction it can affect employment and travel in the future. For non-citizens, criminal convictions can lead to cancellation of visas and possible deportation

Children leaving home

A young person is expected to live with their parents or legal guardians until they are 18 —but there's no law that says they must stay at home until then. If they leave home, the authorities cannot not force them to return home if the young person lives in a safe place and can financially support themselves. The authorities will consider the parents' attitude and the young person's maturity level.

Children after parents separate

If parents separate the law encourages them to agree themselves about arrangements for children. If both parents agree, this arrangement can be formally written down as a [parenting plan](#), which can be made legally binding by lodging it with the court as [consent orders](#).

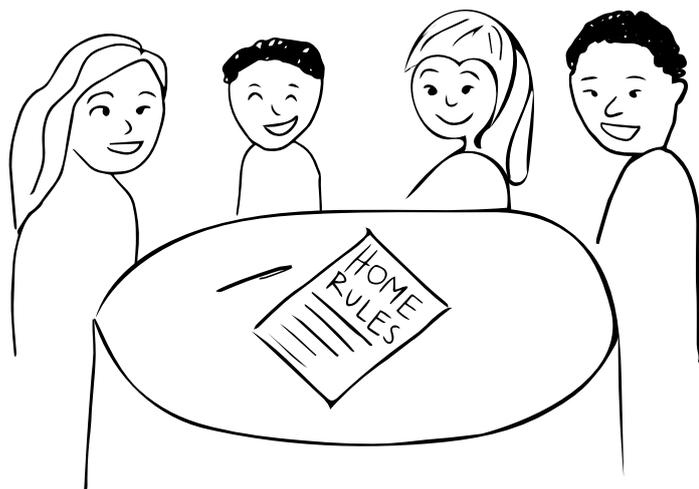
If parents can't agree then the Family Court will decide which

parent the child will 'live with' and which parent they will 'spend time with'. The court must consider the child's safety, and their right to a meaningful relationship with both parents.

It's far better for the parties to agree about children and property arrangement rather than fight in court as it is a huge drain on people's money, time and emotions and resources. People should get legal assistance to fully know their legal rights about separation and have their rights respected.

Children in conflict resolution processes

If children are involved in any conflict resolution process, leader's should ensure the children are sufficiently mature and old enough to take part, that they and their parents are fully informed and consent. The child should also have an adult supporter to advocate for them if they want.



Separation and divorce

The law allows a married or de facto couple to leave the relationship for any reason. The law will only step in to make sure that children are cared for properly and that the couple's assets are divided fairly.

The federal Family Law Act 1975 deals with divorce and with arrangements for children and property of divorced or separated couples.

Couples can separate at any time and, if married, can get divorced by proving 12 months separation. Separation can even be while they are living in the same house.

In marriages for less than 2 years couples must get counselling before they can apply for divorce, unless there is family violence.

Generally, people married overseas can get divorced in Australia if one of them is a citizen or permanent resident or ordinarily lives here and has done so for 12 months or more before the start of the court process.

While there is a high rate of separation and divorce people should not have to stay together, especially if there's violence.

Successful separation

Many families and couples can have good lives even though they have separated. Children and families are healthier and happier where there is respect and no violence.

Even if the family has split, there is great benefit in the partners being respectful and cooperating. Despite the separation, parents can still give their children safe and positive life experiences when they are with them. Being abusive towards the other parent will affect the children. As they grow older children will make their own decisions about their parents and the type of relationship they want with them.

Resolving parental and financial issues after separation

Family dispute resolution services are available at any time during a relationship, a separation or a court case. These can be free, or at cost, depending on a person's financial situation.

Before a divorce is granted the parties must attend family dispute resolution where there's a child under 18, or a dispute as to children. Mediation isn't used where there's family violence.

Accredited family dispute resolution practitioners are trained to help people sort through their problems and try to reach agreement when they are separating. Family dispute resolution can be used at separation:

- to apply to court for parenting orders about arrangements about the children
- to resolve financial issues such as property settlement, spouse maintenance or child support.

If agreement is reached it can be made legally binding by applying to the court for [consent orders](#).

The process is that the party who wants mediation contacts a service, the service then contacts the other party and explains mediation and asks if they will take part. Mediations can be via shuttle (parties in different rooms) or on the phone, and can take four or five hours or more. If the other party won't take part then you get a certificate to show the court you've tried mediation.

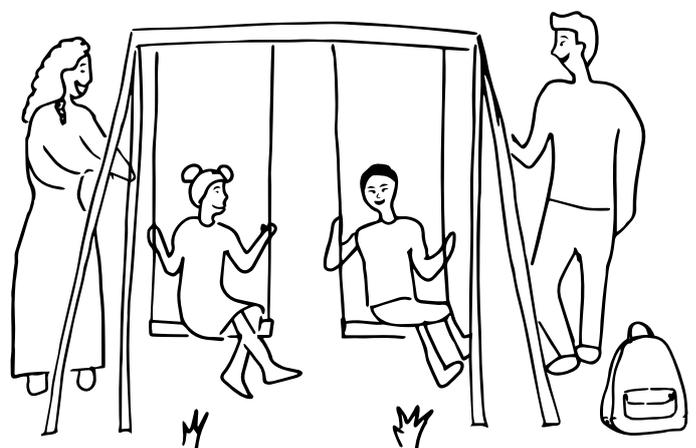
Child support

Child support is payment made by one or both parents to the other to help with the cost of looking after the children. After separation, parents can make their own agreement or apply to Department of Human Services (Child Support) for an administrative assessment. Can object to assessment (within 28 days).

DHS gives support by calculating, collecting and transferring child support payments.

Family Relationships Centres can arrange dispute resolution to help parties reach agreements.

A child over 18 can get 'Adult child maintenance' from a parent if they're doing education or an apprenticeship or have a serious illness or physical or mental disability.



Building Family Peace

Community peace-building starts in our families, friends and communities. At the centre of this is promoting respectful, equal relationships and safely challenging and changing abusers

What is needed to prevent family violence

Research tells us that to prevent violence communities need to:

- Raise understanding of what is DFV and the laws
- Promote gender equality and challenge and change rigid gender norms that oppress women or can be used to justify male dominance in the family
- Practice culturally appropriate ways to educate the community and intervene to prevent violence and build peace
- Engage men in the prevention as men are the most likely to be violent
- Empower open-minded voices who can help reform norms while maintaining community solidarity.
- Avoid stereotyping communities and acknowledge racism and discrimination
- Be 'trauma-informed' (understand the effects of war/conflict/trauma) and take into account that other factors intersect - ethnicity, class, age, sexuality and other forms of social difference and inequality (intersectional approach)
- Explore cultural norms deeply (prevention may need to focus on the way norms are used to excuse or reject violence as opposed to changing the norms themselves - Webster 2016, p. 41)

For men:

Role as bread winner and provider - is changed by refugee and social security support. Added to often poor employment brings sense of failure and can result in DV to assert some dominance again.

For women:

Cultural shame and betrayal - loyalty, marriage is for life, women should work through the problems, and this may lead to putting up with abuse to avoid family and community shame.

Religion:

can be a source of resilience and comfort but can be used to oppress if religious leaders took 'a corrective approach rather than empathetic approach toward domestic violence' and urged women to 'tolerate rather than eliminate the experience' of violence' (Gharfournia et al cited in UQ Pro Bono Centre 2020)

Increased liberalisation of women after arrival in Australia is seen by some men as threatening.

Some research suggests:

Violence prevention efforts should address culturally specific supports for violence and gender inequality. For example, some Christian men may defend gender inequality by claiming that male dominance is allowed by God and supported in the Bible. This interpretation can be challenged by finding other Christian accounts which reject this privilege, including Biblical references which state that God created man and woman equally, that a Christian marriage should be a partnership, and so on.

Other aspects of this work include placing 'tradition' in its social and historical context, showing that 'tradition' has varied over time and is shaped by many forces and factors, and inviting assessment of the positive and negative aspects of tradition (Greig and Peacock 2005 quoted in Flood (2013).

What works with abusers

Primary prevention - address underlying causes of DFV to prevent it before it starts

Secondary prevention / early intervention - address risk factors for those at risk of abusing or being abused

Tertiary prevention - longer term response to known victims and perpetrators of violence (Tayton et al. 2014, p. 20)

If we know what works, and doesn't work, in DV perpetrator programs then that can inform how we can approach our prevention work in the community.

- **Involve community**
- **Individualised**
- **Understand any trauma and disadvantage**
- **Don't condone violence**
- **Hold abuser accountable**

- Mainstream DV perpetrator programs typically use a feminist perspective placing responsibility for violence with the perpetrator and highlighting the role of patriarchal gender relations in contributing to DFV (called Psycho-educational approaches)
- Cognitive behavioural approaches are more psychological and focus on violence as a learned behaviour

Research about refugee communities perpetrators says:

- Community should be involved, as members often first turn to their community
- Interventions to be more effective should be matched to the particular attendees, be culturally relevant and take account of issues such as trauma, language, mental and physical health, limited employment or education and should recognise gender inequality as a root cause of DFV

- Connection - If spend time and listen to what abuser has gone through before taking them to the group there is more chance of change
- While men may try to avoid responsibility by pointing to their own oppression (often through refugee trauma, limited education, unemployment, discrimination etc), their disadvantage needs to be understood and acknowledged by facilitators
- For refugee communities trauma, cultural and gender role change, alcohol and gambling, and experience of racism create an added complex web of challenge which intersect with gender inequality, and should be accounted for in DFV perpetrator interventions, but should not be seen as the cause of the violence
- Men should know that DFV perpetrator programs are individual and safe
- Some community or religious leaders may: encourage silence and inadvertently condone violence; and have limited knowledge or be suspicious of perpetrator services
- May need to work with drug and mental health interventions but not in a way that removes responsibility on abuser for the violence or neglect the effect that violence has on women and children
- It's unclear how effective mainstream perpetrator programs are, and whether they would be effective for CALD and refugee-background men
- Invitational narrative may be effective

(Above is summary of ANROWS 'Best practice principles for interventions with domestic and family violence perpetrators from refugee backgrounds' 2020) LINK

(Information for 'Family Peace-Building Dialogue - March 2021)

Effectively engaging with abusers

All people can promote gender equality and respect, which are at the heart of community peace-building. This means building skills to carefully challenge male dominance and entitlement and the condoning, excusing and blame-shifting of male-violence.

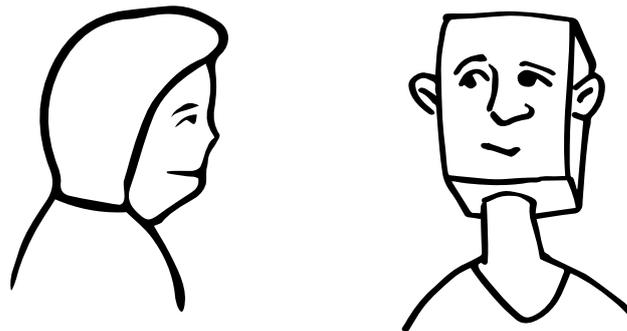
Engaging with men who may not support or understand gender violence and equality requires care and skill. Abusers often seek sympathy and it's important to avoid colluding with them while encouraging them to take responsibility for their violence and its consequences.

The 'Invitational narrative' approach used to change and hold accountable perpetrators of violence, gives some useful techniques.

- Be respectful and inquisitive. Treat the person as an equal

- Listen for what matters to the man, his core ethics and the kinds of relationship he hopes for. Go slow and give time for reflection
- Ask questions such as: What might restrain someone (you) from choosing respectful and non-violent ways of being? How does culture shape your individual beliefs and actions?
- Create a non-judgmental and safe environment that supports violent men in facing their shame in a way that highlights contradictions between their behaviour and their stated ethical preferences
- Support men to name the violence and the harm that results. Rushing this too quickly can lead to active resistance, avoidance or defensiveness
- Discussion around dominant male culture and its broad social impact often occurs later in the engagement, and only when the man seems ready to explore this

Above from [ANROWS \(2019\) 'Engaging Men: Invitational narrative' approach](#)



'Invitational Narrative' Strategies

The below are some strategies from a practising family relationship counsellor.

Provide a safe space: Be honest about limitations to confidentiality, i.e. having to breach confidentiality if someone is at serious and/or imminent risk of harm.

He is likely to present as the victim, and sceptical. If confronting him before he has trust and respect, or before he is ready to name his violence/abuse, he may shut down and/or disengage. Beware of possible past trauma being 'triggered'.

If the female has disclosed violence/abuse, and the male has not, beware of confronting him as this could put her at increased risk of harm.

Sit side-by-side, as opposed to opposite and/or at a table

- Sit or go for a walk in a park while talking
- Practice active listening (aha, uh hum; I see; thank you for trusting me)

Encourage him instead to produce his own, non-violent/abusive solutions by exploring his positive personal, cultural, community and/or religious value

Mimic his words and explore until he can name his violence/abuse, e.g. he may use terms such as "I just lost it" or "I snapped"

- "What happens when you snap?"
- "How do you feel about yourself when you lose it?"

- "What happened leading up to it (the violent/abusive incident)?"
"Do you know why you snapped the way you did?"
- "Could you have done something different in that situation instead of losing it?"

When he is no longer denying, justifying, minimising or shifting blame, he will feel guilt in naming his violent behaviours. If judged, e.g. 'you have done the wrong thing, you have been bad', it can magnify his feeling of shame. When feeling overwhelmed with shame, he may not be able to feel guilt or remorse, nor empathy towards others. If he feels supported and not judged, his empathy can be explored, i.e. how his partner/wife/children might feel when he is using violent/abusive behaviours.

Try to elicit a detailed description:

- “What happened leading up to that?”
- “What was going on for you at the time?”
- “How did you feel at the time?”
- “What happened?”
- “How do you think your wife/partner/children felt at the time?”
- “Could you have reacted differently?”
- “If you are in the same situation again, what will you do differently?”

Explore positive and non-violent/abusive attitudes within his personal, community, cultural and/or religious values to assist in restoring his self-esteem, self-respect and dignity.

Questions that encourage self-reflection and desire to change his violent/abusive behaviours:

- “What is stopping you from living in a respectful relationship with your wife/partner?”
- “What is stopping you from being the dad you want to be?”
- “What is stopping you from being the best version of yourself?” “What benefits might you get from living in a respectful relationship?”
- “Who do you look up to and admire? Why do you look up to him/her? And what is stopping you to be more like him/her?”

Exploring positive, non-violent attitudes of the man’s personal, community, cultural or religious values to encourage him to live in harmony with himself and his family?:

- “Growing up, how did you imagine yourself as an adult?”
- “What kind of man/husband/father/partner did you want to be?”

Explore a new identity asking what type of man/husband/father/partner do you want to be/do you want to be remembered for?

Plant seeds to nurture different views about power and control:

- Power over someone: is use of coercion, threats and violence/abuse to obtain/maintain compliance
- Power within oneself: when living authentically with one’s positive values, and having healthy self-esteem and self-respect
- Exercising self-control – and being aware of it - is a far more powerful feeling (try it next time you get an invitation to anger)
- Respect holds an element of admiration, whereas fear does not; fear may provide ‘compliance’ however likely to be short-lived, whereas respect is longer lasting

Ask questions like these:

- “Can you back away from an argument and still be right?” (the answer is yes)
- “If your partner/wife has a different opinion/perspective to yours, does it take away your opinion?” (the answer is no)
- “Can you think of a time where you exercised self-control? How did it make you feel?”
- “What kind of relationship do you want to have with your partner/ wife/co-parent?”
- “Would you rather your partner stays in the relationship out of fear, or by her own choice?”
- “Do you want to be respected or feared by your wife/partner/ children?”
- “How would you feel if you knew/thought your children/ wife/partner fear you?”

- **What kind of relationship do you want to have with your partner and children?**
- **Do you want to be respected or feared by your partner?**

Above from: Hanne Samson 'Invitational Narrative Approach to Working with Men who use Violence/Abuse in their Intimate Relationships' 2020. Note that the above is general information only and not advice. For specific advice see a qualified practitioner.

Avoiding colluding with abusers

Some key strategies when dealing with men who have been violent in their relationships are noted below:

Men often know change is needed. The life they are currently experiencing and the way they are acting is usually not the person they want to be or the life they wish to have.

It is hard to ask for help, acknowledge this.

Ask the client what they want their future to look like and what needs to happen for them to get there.

Re-iterate the only person they can change is themselves.

When working with violent men be wary not to 'collude' with the abuser - they are usually trying to justify, minimise or avoid their behaviour and you may be supporting the violent behaviour or attitudes.

- Be mindful of your own values/beliefs
- Be mindful of how things are interpreted by the client
- Be mindful of your body language e.g. nodding or smiling can suggest agreement

What collusion can look like

- "You were defending yourself"
- "I agree with you"
- "I can understand where you were coming from"
- "I can see why you did that"
- "you're right"
- "she shouldn't have done that"
- Nodding to a statement

As a general rule, avoid affirming what the client says. Instead, say

- "I am listening"
- "I understand that is your belief/opinion"
- "I don't agree, but I am hearing you"
- "I can hear that you are upset by that"
- "I can see that this makes you angry"
- "tell me why you think that"
- "why do you feel that way"

It is okay to respectfully tell a client that you disagree with them or that their belief/values are not held by everyone.

It is also okay to validate a client's experience, but highlight this as being their experience

- Keep the emphasis on him and his behaviour
- Re-direct conversations where the client is asking for collusion
- Choose not to respond (if appropriate, name this)

If clients cannot identify their use of violence or are not prepared to enter these conversations yet, encourage reflection:

- "What do you think that was like for her?"
- "What do the kids do when the arguments begin?"
- "What did you do in that moment?"
- "What could you have done instead?"
- "Is that the kind of person you want to be?"
- "why do you think you reacted that way? Do you think that reaction was okay?"

If clients cannot identify their use of violence or are not prepared to enter these conversations yet, encourage reflection:

- "When she was threatening you, What did she want you to know or do?"
- "It sounds like a bad experience for you when she hit you; help me understand; what was her motive; what did she want you to know or feel or understand?"
- Sounds to me like someone terrified: what was her motive; what did she want you to do or understand or know, by hitting you?
- "How could you have made the situation different?"
- "For a man who says he loves his kids; the way you're described as behaving must be terrifying them? Help me understand that"



Above from DV Connect - Mensline (2020). Phone 1800 600 636

Men Managing Change

Men Managing Change is a series of one minute videos for people from culturally diverse communities which are ideal to start conversations about building strong and peaceful family relationships. The questions raised are:

ADAPT

How can we build greater love and equality with our partner? When might tradition stand in the way of healthy, equal relationships? How do we adapt?

MAKE IT RIGHT

How can control in a relationship be violence? What can we change so that one partner does not dominate the other? When might strong be wrong?

KEEP CONTROL

How do you control your emotions when there is conflict with your partner?

MOVE ON

What is a fair way to manage money in a relationship? How can we stay respectful after family breakdown? How can people manage their deep sadness after separation? Where can we get help?

'Men Managing Change' Video Playlist



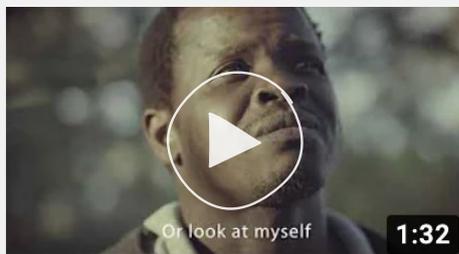
ADAPT - strong men learning about equality



MAKE IT RIGHT - strength and control can be violence...



KEEP CONTROL - wise men avoid family violence



MOVE ON - men staying strong and respectful after...

Healing the Community

Peace-building is an opportunity to heal and restore the community

Restorative engagement

'Restorative engagement' is broader dispute resolution and seeks to heal the harm and restore relationships between a perpetrator, a victim, their respective families and the wider community. The process is grounded in respect, peace, healing, reparation and re-integration.

This approach works only where the perpetrator has accepted they are responsible and accountable for the harm.

'Restorative justice' processes are used in many countries and have proven to be effective as long as victim safety and proper consent is guaranteed (see [UN Office on Drugs and Crime UNODC](#))

RESTORATIVE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Unlike mediation, the facilitator here is not neutral, as responsibility for the harm has been admitted and the victim's needs and preferred outcomes are the main focus



A usual process is a facilitated meeting where the victim describes what happened and its impact, and the perpetrator responds acknowledging this, and their accountability



Participants are encouraged to ask questions, explore emotions, and to work toward an agreed outcome such as an apology and restitution



Participation is usually voluntary and often includes immediate family and community members



If gendered violence is involved, victim safety and autonomy is vital, so strict screening, standards, risk assessment and extensive preparation are required. Specialised training is needed about the dynamics, nature and effects of gendered violence and inequality and to build skills to recognise and oppose domination, victim blaming, denial and minimisation

Spreading Peace-Building

Creatively spread peace-building and violence-prevention messages through our communities.

There are many ways we can spread peace-building messages: through our own behaviour through talking to others, and more broadly through avenues such as social media, posters, publications, events and other actions. There are many creative possibilities.

Here are some key messages, but there are many more you can make up and spread as widely and effectively as you can.

Partners can be equal.

Partners can decide their roles in a relationship. But they should negotiate roles and conflicts from an equal basis. One partner should not dominate and control the other. If there is domination which becomes a form of family violence then that is against the law.

We can **take responsibility for our actions - Violence is a choice**

Violence is a choice – there are better choices. We have the power to choose to change.

Violence doesn't solve problems

Violence doesn't solve problems - Violence causes problems. Violence breaks up families, and harms physical and mental health. There's huge long term benefits in stopping violence.

Violence is not only hitting

Violence is not only physical. It also includes threats, control and intimidation. Violence can be physical, sexual, financial, cultural, spiritual.

You can't justify violence

Some people blame their own violence on others, on lack of self-control, on alcohol, drugs, stress, culture or other things. There are no excuses. Everyone should know that the law in this country is strongly against family violence.

We are all responsible for our own actions. No one "makes" us say or do anything. We have a choice in how we react. With our legal rights come responsibilities to others.

A 'strong man' is not violent

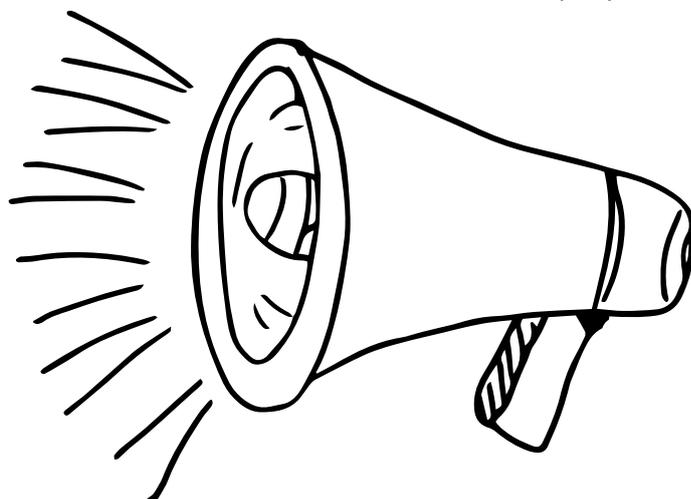
Courage and strength is not physical violence - it is what's inside ourselves and how we face up to problems and work hard to resolve them peacefully.

Violence harms the children as well

Family violence harms children even if they're not being directly abused. Many abused people stay together for the children. The children can end up damaged by the violence, and some will even become abusers themselves.

Discipline of children which is too harsh can be unlawful

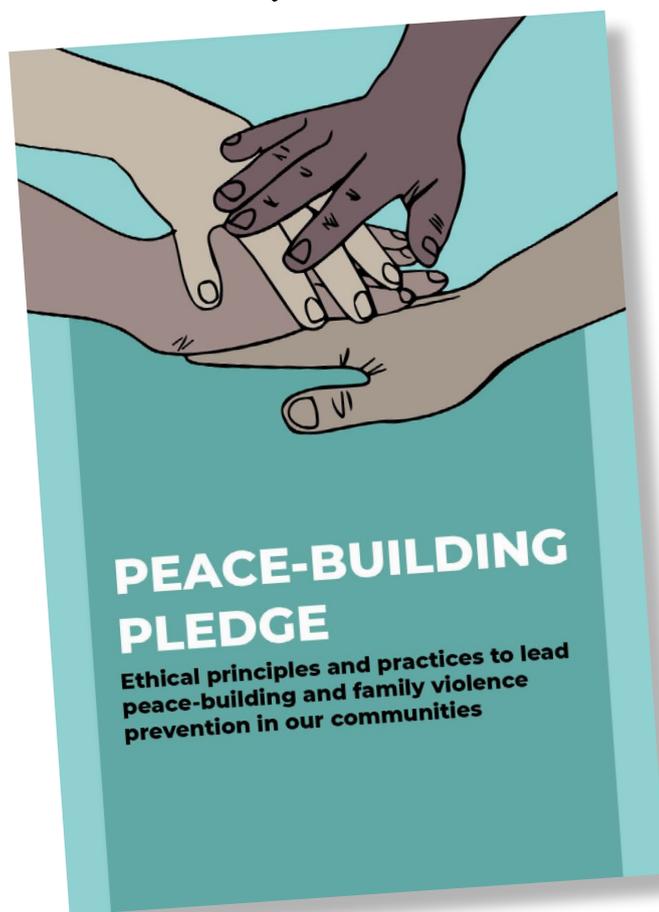
'Reasonable discipline' of children is allowed by the law. Harsh discipline can be child abuse. Child Safety laws are made to try to protect children.



Peace-BUILDER's Pledge

Ethical principles and practices to lead peace-building and family violence prevention in diverse communities

A commitment of principles and good practice to lead peace-building and family violence prevention. See separate document.



Getting Help

1800RESPECT - 1800737 732

Dispute Resolution Services - offered by the Dispute Resolution Branch of the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney General

Domestic Violence Services - Women's Line and Men's Line

DV Connect Womensline - 1800 811 811

Family Relationship Centres - provide information and confidential advice for families at all stages, focusing on mediation to enable parenting arrangements outside the Court system.

Family Relationship Services - are available for married or de facto partners for relationship counselling and for disputes about children or property at any time during a relationship, a separation or once a court case has begun. These can be free or at cost depending on peoples financial situation

Headspace - Youth Mental Health Support

Immigrant Women's Support Service - 07 3846 3490

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

Legal Aid Help in Domestic Violence Court

Legal Aid Information

Men's 'No to Violence' Referral Service - 1300 766 491

Mensline - 1300 78 99 78

Peace Building Training - has been developed with community and religious leaders in partnership with Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS), South Community Hub, Multicultural Australia, Islamic Women's Association of Australia and Dispute Resolution Branch of the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney General. Contact education@rails.org.au or info@schi.org.au

Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) for family violence and visa issues



Keeping Safe

Domestic Violence Help

Have Hope

- You're not alone
- There is support – access it
- You're not to blame.
- There's no excuse for abuse
- Partners should be equals. One is not 'boss' of the other



Friends can Help

- Find a safe time to talk
- Listen and support - Don't judge or blame
- Give contacts for Help Services
- Be part of the Safety Plan



Safety Plan

- Plan who to call, where to go, what to take
- Store contacts under secret names
- Check in daily with someone
- Get neighbour to listen out
- Maybe alert police so they know



DV Help Services

- Confidential
- Will support you
- Will respect your decision
- Will offer free shelter if available
- Won't call police unless there's danger



Help Lines

Kids Help Line

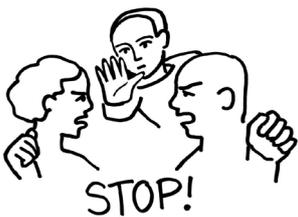


- Call about any problem – any time
- Safety first
- You're not the cause of parent's violence
- Challenging abusive parent may be unsafe.
- DV Connect - 1800 811 811
- MensLine - 1300 78 99 78
- Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800
- Legal Aid 1300 651 188
- Emergency 000
- Relationships Australia 1300 364 277

Legal Help

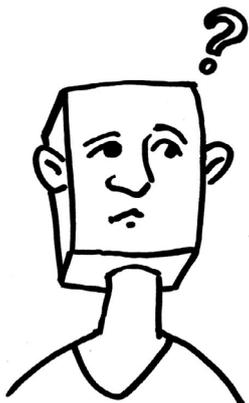


- DV is more than hitting – it's also threats and control
- Children are harmed if exposed to DV
- DV court – closed to public
- DV Protection Order from court:
 - police make application, or
 - self-application – you may get help to make this
- DV order is a strong warning.
 - may say you can still stay together, but no violence
 - may say abuser must not go near you
 - won't give a criminal record, unless abuser breaks order.
 - If abuser breaks order, can be fined or jailed if very serious.
- Law says abuser must be held to account but to be given chance to change if possible



Speak Out

- There's no excuse for abuse
- If you hear or see DV. Make the call
- Disrupt, Interrupt if you safely can



Think about it

- Violence is a choice – there are better choices
- You have the power to choose to change
- Violence causes problems – doesn't solve problems
- Partners in a relationship should be equal
- There's help and support programs

The Family Peace-Building Project

The **'Peace-Building Leaders Toolkit'** and the **'Peace-Building Pledge'** have emerged out of deep collaboration between multicultural service agencies and community leaders since 2017 through a 'Community Conversations' broad consultation, dispute resolution workshops, dialogue around family law and culture, and from intensive family violence prevention training.

The 'Community Conversations' consultation with 27 communities from refugee/humanitarian backgrounds in Brisbane found that most in the community didn't know the full legal meaning of family violence, some accepted family violence as normal, and some men saw the system as threatening their manhood and favouring women. The main reasons given for family violence were cultural, financial and lack of understanding of the law.

In 2020 the agencies and community leaders created a training program which is being continuously developed, covering: Understanding and communicating conflict, violence and the law; The extent and causes of family violence; Ways to prevent family violence; Getting to know and work more effectively with key services; Strengthening skills in working with abusers to promote change and accountability; Resolution and restoration of the community.

The 'Peace-building Leaders Toolkit' and the 'Peace-building Pledge' were developed in collaboration with multicultural community and religious leaders from Brisbane by Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, South Community Hub, Multicultural Australia, Islamic Women's Association of Australia and the Queensland Government, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Dispute Resolution Branch.

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