

# RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

**Everyone has the right to feel safe, to be treated with respect, to be valued and feel accepted for who they are.**

## **The problem in Australia - violence against women- facts:**

Family violence is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15 to 44.<sup>1</sup>



1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.



1 in 3 women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.



1 in 4 children have witnessed family violence.<sup>2</sup>

- » 80% of women that experience sexual violence knew their attacker.
- » One woman dies every week at the hands of her partner or ex partner.<sup>3</sup>
- » 25 children die every year at the hands of a family member.<sup>3</sup>
- » The most common form of violence experienced by women globally is intimate partner violence.<sup>1</sup>



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## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

### Learn about the problem

The basic rights that most men enjoy – safety in their home, ability to go out at night, a job free of harassment – are a source of fear for women in much of the world. A common myth is that most violence is committed by strangers. In fact women are most at risk from men they know – husbands, boyfriends, fathers, relatives, employers and caregivers.

### Listen to women and learn from them

The path starts with listening. Who knows better about violence against women than women who experience it? Learn about violence by asking a woman who trusts you how violence has affected her life. Then, if she feels comfortable to talk, sit back and listen.

### Challenge sexist language and jokes that degrade women

Sexist jokes and language help create a climate where forms of violence and abuse have too long been accepted. Words that degrade women reflect a society that has historically placed women in a second-class position. One of the most difficult things for men is to learn to challenge other men.

### Learn to identify and oppose sexual harassment and violence in your

### workplace, school and family

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted sexual advances or sexually-orientated remarks or behaviour that is unwelcome. Flirting and joking are fine if they are both consensual and wanted

### Learn why some men are violent

Men are not naturally violent. There have been societies with little or no violence. Studies over the past century have found that half of the tribal societies studied had little or no violence against women, against children, or among men. Furthermore, even today, in many countries the majority of men are not physically violent. Violence is something that some men learn. Men's violence is a result of the way many men learn to express what it means "to be a man" and how they abuse power in their relationships with women, children and other men.





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## OPTIONS FOR THE BYSTANDER?

- » Ensure your own safety
- » In an emergency, call the police
- » Talk to another friend about your concerns and decide on a response
- » Distract the person whose behaviour is a worry and talk to them later about it
- » Move away from the activity and later apologise to the woman for your friend's disrespectful behaviour
- » Leave the scene and later let the person know you had a problem with the way they treated the person
- » Enlist the help of friends of the person you think is at risk of harm and check that she is OK
- » Confront your friend directly and say that their behaviour is not on
- » Don't do anything at the time but later talk to a woman you know about how you could deal with the behaviour in the future



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Mensline

A service for men with relationship and family concerns

**PH: 1300 789 978**

[www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

### The Line

A campaign aimed at promoting positive behaviours and actions that contribute to respectful relationships

**1800 695 463 (1800 MY LINE)**

[www.theline.gov.au](http://www.theline.gov.au)

### 1800 Respect

For any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of family and domestic violence and sexual assault

**1800 737 732 (1800 RESPECT)**

[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)