

# domestic violence

## LEGAL SERVICE

### What is domestic and family violence?

Domestic and family violence is about power and control. It can be behavior that makes you feel scared. You do not need to be physically hurt to have experienced domestic and family violence. It can happen all through a relationship. It can start or get worse at certain times, like after separation, during pregnancy or during court matters. It can happen even if the other person is good or nice to you at other times. The law says domestic and family violence is not allowed.

### Some examples of domestic and family violence are:

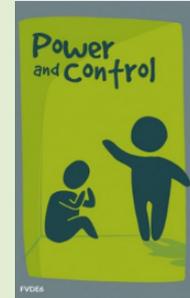
- **Physical or sexual abuse:** this can be punching, hitting, bashing, choking, touching you when you don't want to be touched, or forcing you to have sex or do sexual things you don't want to do
- **Damaging property or hurting an animal:** this can be damaging property you or they own or share or belongs to someone else like a child, hitting walls, throwing things, damaging a car, cutting cables or a phone line, or kicking or hurting a pet
- **Intimidation or harassment:** this can be jealousy, blaming, humbugging, crazy-making, yelling or screaming, threats, unwanted phone calls or messages, making you feel scared, threatening to kill or hurt themselves, stopping contact with family and/or friends, controlling what you can do or say, putting you down, blaming you, saying you will be deported, saying no-one will believe you, threatening to tell someone about your sexual orientation
- **Stalking:** this can be making you feel worried because they follow you, watch you or phone or message you again and again
- **Economic abuse:** this can be controlling, withholding or taking money or property, like a credit card or access to a bank account, closely watching what you spend, stopping you from working or studying, taking your things, or not giving you access to money for you or a child

Threats to do any of the above behaviours, or getting someone else to do those things, are also domestic and family violence.

### Relationships

Domestic and family violence can happen to anyone. It can happen in lots of relationships, like:

- A current or ex-**partner**, married or not married, people can be the same or different genders, and it doesn't matter if there was no sex
- **Family** members, like brothers, sisters, aunties, uncles, cousins, parents, children, in-laws, or a relative in Aboriginal culture
- People who are **living together** or have lived together
- People in a **caring** relationship



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## Effects

Domestic and family violence can have bad effects on you and on children. It can make you worried, stressed or ashamed. It can make your body or mind feel wrong, sick or hurt. It can make you feel hopeless or not feel like doing anything. You may not want to speak to anyone, go to work, or care for family.



## Children

Domestic and family violence can damage babies' and children's growing brains. Children can be affected even if they don't see or hear the domestic and family violence.

Children may be exposed by seeing a parent fight or shout, seeing a parent hurt, seeing damaged property, or knowing abuse is happening. If children are exposed, they may blame themselves, miss school to care for a parent, feel sad or helpless, find it hard to make friends or do schoolwork, or they may copy the abusive person and think violence is normal.

## Get help

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic and family violence, please get help.

- If someone is in danger or needs immediate help, call police on 131 444 or 000 in an emergency
- Call a lawyer for advice about a domestic violence order
- Talk to someone you trust like a friend, family member or support person

These people may be able to help you make a safety plan, stay somewhere safe, or get a domestic violence order.

**You can call us on (08) 8999 7977,  
email us at [info@dvls.nt.gov.au](mailto:info@dvls.nt.gov.au),  
or visit our website [www.dvls.nt.gov.au](http://www.dvls.nt.gov.au)**

**You can also call the Legal Aid Helpline  
on 1800 019 343**

