

## FACTS:

- Male children who have witnessed their fathers being violent to their mothers are three times more likely to be violent within their relationships. (Brinegar 1992:55)
- In approx. 40% of violent marriages, children witness their fathers being violent to their mothers. (Brinegar 1992:55)
- The probability of child abuse in homes where the mothers have been beaten is 129% higher than it is in homes where no marital violence occurs. (Straus, 1979)
- A Victorian study has found that 16% of suspected child abuse and 28% of child physical abuse cases occurred in families where there was domestic violence. (Tomison 1995)
- In Australia there has been an historical separation of domestic violence and child protection issues. This is now the topic of much discussion and in Victoria and NSW witnessing domestic violence is a notifiable child protection issue



**WANT INFORMATION?**

**HELP WITH A PROBLEM?**

**OR..**

**JUST NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE  
ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE BOTH-  
ERING YOU?**

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE HOME  
OR YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO GET  
HELP FROM US**

**IF YOU ARE IN  
IMMEDIATE DANGER OR  
AFRAID, CALL THE POLICE  
ON 000**



Produced by Family Violence Prevention Network—Mallee

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FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION NETWORK

**CHILDREN'S  
COUNSELLING  
&  
SUPPORT SERVICES**

**MALLEE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES**

- **MILDURA** (03) 50 212130—24 HRS
- **ROBINVALE** (03) 50 261651
- **SWAN HILL** (03) 50 331899—24 HRS

## What is Family Violence?

Family Violence is the control of power. Particularly the power of one person over another.

Almost always men are the abusers and women and kids the victims. Sometimes females can be the abuser.

It happen in all kinds of families.

Family Violence is not only being hit, it can be:

**PHYSICAL:** Bruises, Cuts, Broken Bones, burns, throwing and breaking household objects, punching and kicking walls and doors etc.

**SEXUAL:** “Yucky” Touching, Demanding Sex against a Persons Wishes, Rape

**EMOTIONAL / VERBAL:** threats and intimidation, put downs about you body shape and grooming, your ability, self esteem, destruction of self worth.

Making you feel worthless and hopeless.

**SOCIAL ISOLATION:** smothering by being with you all the time and not giving you any personal space or letting you be with or



## What can the Children's Worker offer?

The Children's Worker is available for children and young people aged 3-16 years.

Counselling covers issues such as protective behaviours, dealing with anger, aggression, and conflict. Adjustment to parental separation, divorce, grief and loss, self esteem, assertiveness, expression and identification of both positive and negative feelings and relationship conflict.

### Services include:

- Free and confidential help. Confidentiality is kept at all times, unless there is an immediate safety issue, whereby parents, then other services are notified.
- Information about the effect of Family Violence on children and young people.
- Information on appropriate organisations for referrals (with parental consent).
- Counselling. Personal and telephone counselling. The children's worker can attend school if required for individual counselling with parental consent.
- Advocacy. Talk to other services with you or on your behalf.
- Time. As the number of sessions varies according to individual needs. Counselling may be long term.
- Choice to attend and frequency is at all times decided by the child.

## Effects:

- Children may become withdrawn and afraid or “switch off” as a way of protecting them from the trauma. They learn not to empathise or have feelings. As a way of coping.
- They, in turn may become victim's of bullying at school as they are afraid to assert themselves.
- Family Violence takes away a child's sense of personal safety.
- Children face the psychological choice of whether to feel helpless or may identify with the aggressor.
- They may see themselves as being the protector of their mother and take on the parenting role of younger children.
- Difficulty in concentrating at school ie. wondering about what could be happening at home.
- Have a sense of hopelessness. They may feel they are the cause of the family violence.
- Children who have been exposed to family violence learn this behaviour from their parents, incorporate it in their relationships as children, and carry it over to adulthood — creating intergenerational pattern of violence.

