

## About this brochure

People caring for a child who has experienced violence are often very worried about how that experience will affect the child. Children – regardless of their age – do respond to what's going on around them. However, **the effect on children and their recovery can depend on many things.** You can do a lot to help.

This is one of a **set of brochures** to help you understand and respond to some of the effects of violence on a child.

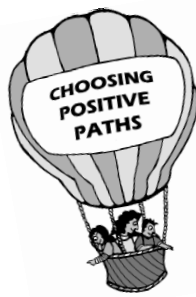
The main focus of the brochures is domestic violence – that is, intimate partner violence – and its effects on children. We also touch on issues of child abuse and other violence experienced by children, usually included in the term family violence.

The brochures talk about children who have experienced violence. This means knowing about, seeing or hearing violence against someone else. It also means being assaulted or abused by family members. All forms of violence in the family affect children.

Mostly the language in the brochures is directed at mothers. However it will also be helpful for other people who are taking on the role of primary carer – fathers, grandparents, aunts, family friends and even foster parents. In this brochure, the phrase 'your child' means 'a child in your care'.

### This brochure contains tips and information about:

- **intervention orders**
- **legal services**
- **getting the most out of legal advice**



# Parenting violence & legal issues



**I**f you or your children have experienced violence, getting some legal advice is important. Many forms of violence are against the law, such as rape and assault. Child assault, including child sexual assault, is also a crime.

**There are many people and services who can help you to be informed about your choices.**

This brochure offers you a range of places to get support and information. It is not a substitute for legal advice from a lawyer or legal service.

If you decide to get legal advice, you will probably have lots of questions and there will be many things to remember. These tips might help you get the most from the people you consult:

- Write down the issues, concerns and questions you have before making contact with a service
- Ask if there is a cost, and what the cost is
- Ask how to get help with paying for the cost
- Ask about the service's policy on confidentiality. Many services are required by law to inform Child Protection Services if they believe your child is being hurt or is in danger of being hurt, and that you are not able to protect them
- If you do not speak English easily, ask if there is a worker who speaks your language, or if they can provide an interpreter
- Ask for the name of the person you are speaking to and what their position is in the service. This is very important if you need to check information, or if you are not happy about how they have helped you
- Take notes while talking with a service
- Take someone you trust along to your appointments. They can give you support and help you to remember what was said afterwards
- Go to a service that deals with violence like the Family and Domestic Violence Outreach Service in your area, or one of the Community Legal Centers in your area (see page 4 for contact details)



# Definitions

# Legal support

## Child Representative

A lawyer who helps the court decide on what arrangements are in the best interests of the child



## Child Representative

**Statewide** Family Court 8600 3777

## Contact arrangements

Arrangements about how and when a child sees their parents

## Contact arrangements

**Statewide** Family Court 8600 3777

**West** Community West  
Children's Contact Centre 9363 1811

**North** Berry Street Victoria  
Children's Contact Service 9434 1488

## Divorce and property settlements

The legal ending of a marriage and how property is distributed after the end of a relationship (for example, the family home or cars)



## Divorce and Property settlements

**Statewide** Family Court 8600 3777

## Family living arrangements

Who the children live with, and who is legally responsible for the children

## Family living arrangements

**Statewide** Family Court 8600 3777

## Contact

Arrangements for the children to see a parent they don't usually live with

## Maintenance

**Statewide** Child Support Agency 131 272

## Mediation

Helps parents work out custody, contact, residency and maintenance for the children

## Recovery order

**Statewide** Family Court 8600 3777

Federal Police 9607 7777  
(if you have a court order) or 9607 7580

## Maintenance

Money paid by the contact parent to the resident parent

## Intervention Orders

**Statewide** Melbourne Magistrates Court 9628 7777

See page 3 for Magistrates Courts in the West and Northern suburbs

**For children** Melbourne Children's Court 8601 6700

## Recovery order

A court order to recover a child from a contact parent who does not return a child as required by the contact arrangements

## Intervention Order Support Services

**Statewide** Womens Legal Service Victoria 9642 0343  
Free call 1800 133 302

**West** Community West 9363 1811  
Werribee 9741 0198

plus other community legal services (Brimbank area – see page 4).

**North** Broadmeadows 9302 3911

Darebin 9489 6321

plus other community legal services (see page 4).

# Other sources of advice



## Aboriginal Services

Aboriginal Family Violence  
Legal Service Victoria 1800 105 303  
Aboriginal Legal Service 9419 3888

Victorian Aboriginal Child  
Care Agency 8388 1855

## Children and Young People

OzChild Youth Advocacy and  
Legal Service (12 to 25 year olds) 9794 5428



## Complaints

If you are not happy about a service  
or a person in a service you can contact:

### Complaints about Lawyers

Law Institute 9607 9311  
Legal Ombudsman 9642 0655  
Victorian Bar 9225 7111

### Complaints about Police

Office of Police Integrity 8635 6188  
Victorian Department and Local  
Governments Ombudsman 9613 6222 or  
Free call (rural) 1800 806 314



## Court Information

Court Network 9603 7433 or  
Free call 1800 681 614

Issues relating to children  
under 16: Children's Court 8601 6700

Information support and referral service:  
Family Court 8600 3777

## Magistrates' Courts

Melbourne Magistrates Court 9628 7777

## Western Suburbs Magistrates Courts

Moonee Ponds 9370 7111  
Sunshine 9300 6200  
Werribee 9974 9300

## Northern Suburbs Magistrates Courts

Broadmeadows 9221 8900  
Heidelberg 8458 2000

Note that not all district courts are open every day,  
please call the other courts in your area.



## Culturally Diverse Services

Refugee Immigration 9483 1144 or  
Legal Centre 9483 1140  
Telephone Interpreting Service 131 450

Victorian Interpreting Translation Service 9280 1955

## Western Suburbs Migrant Resource Centres

Altona North 9391 3355  
Werribee 9742 3900  
St Albans 9367 6044

## Northern Suburbs Migrant Resource Centres

Coburg 9383 6233  
Preston 9484 7944



## Disability

Disability Discrimination  
Legal Service 9654 8644  
Disability Justice Advocacy 9416 3488  
Free call or 1800 808 126

Disability Rights Victoria 9489 2962  
Individual advocacy service 9417 3211

Women's Health West – Sunrise social and  
support groups for women with a disability 9689 9588



## Legal Aid

**Statewide**  
Victorian Legal Aid 9269 0120 or  
Freecall 1800 677 402

**West**  
Sunshine 9311 8611

**North**  
Broadmeadows 9302 2388  
Preston 9478 8844



## Victims Support Agency

**Statewide**  
Freecall 9603 9797  
1800 819 817

## Victims Assistance and Counselling Programs

**West**  
Western Region Health Centre 8398 4178

**North**  
Moreland Community Health Service 9355 9900

# Domestic violence Who can help?



## Reporting a crime

Many forms of domestic violence are criminal. **You have the right to report your experiences to the police.**



## What is an Intervention Order?

An intervention order is a court order made by a magistrate to protect you from violence or the threat of violence. Intervention orders say the person who has been violent or who threatens violence towards you cannot come within 200 meters of where you live or work.

Young people aged between 14 and 17 years can make their own application if the court agrees

You can include children in your intervention order or you can make a separate application for them at the Children's Court.

**If you are ever in immediate danger call the Police on 000**

## Legal Services

This is a list of specialist legal services who can help with domestic and family violence issues. Workers at services have lots of experience and knowledge about violence and your rights. They may also have a good understanding of the emotional issues you might be experiencing.

### Statewide contact

Women's Legal Service 9642 0343 or Free call 1800 133302

### Community Legal Centres in the Western Suburbs

Deer Park	9363 1811
Essendon	9376 7929
Footscray	9689 8444
Flemington and Kensington	9376 4355
North Melbourne	9328 1885
Newport	9391 2244
Wyndham	9741 0198
Melton	9741 1800

### Community Legal Centres in the Northern Suburbs

Broadmeadows	9302 3911
Coburg/Brunswick	9350 4555
Darebin	9489 6321
Fitzroy	9419 3744
West Heidelberg	9450 2000

## Specialist Domestic and Family Violence services

This is a list of specialist services who can help with domestic and family violence issues. Workers at these services have lots of experience and knowledge about family and domestic violence. They can give you support with **emotional, practical and legal issues**, regardless of what you decide to do about your situation. They can also help with parenting issues.

### Statewide contacts

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service **1800 015 188** or **9373 0123**

Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre **9486 9866**

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service **9898 3145**

### Western Suburbs

Women's Health West  
Family and Domestic  
Violence Program **9689 9588**

Western Women's  
Domestic Violence  
Support Network **9312 0960**

### Northern Suburbs

Family and Domestic  
Violence Outreach  
Service **9458 5788**



**For other support about women's issues call WIRE, the Women's Information Referral Exchange on 1300 134 130**