

NTV/MRS AND MALE FAMILY VIOLENCE



**commUnity+ Workforce
Development Workshops**

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No To Violence
Men's Referral Service

OUTLINE

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- What is FV?
- Legal Definition (Vic)
- How to Identify FV
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- Change
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PHILOSOPHY

- The Men's Referral Service is **pro-feminist** in its critique of **patriarchy** and traditional forms of **masculinity**, and how this informs gendered imbalance of social **power**
- We are **not gender neutral** with regard to Family Violence and we believe in **men's accountability**, and **responsibility** for their behaviour and choices.

PHILOSOPHY

Our work is based on four core principles

- **Safety** of affected family members (most often women and children)
- The use of violence is a **choice**
- Taking **responsibility** is the first step towards behaviour change
- Men can **change** their behaviour

BACKGROUND

- Victorian *peak body* of organisations and individuals working with men to end their violence and abuse towards family members
- Provides *resources and opportunities* for service providers to enhance their capacity to successfully engage men and hold them accountable for their use of FV
- Provides *training and professional development* services
- NTV runs a specialist counselling and referral service called Men's Referral Service (MRS) which has operated since 1993, originally established in Victoria, but now also services NSW and Tasmania
- MRS receives calls from men, women, family members and agencies to explore male family violence

What is Family Violence (FV)?

- Family violence is a **pattern of behaviour** that is used to hold power and control over a family member or members (most often women and children)
- These behaviours include:
 - Physical violence
 - Sexual violence
 - Coercion and threats
 - Intimidation
 - Emotional abuse
 - Social abuse
 - Minimising, denying, blaming
 - Using children
 - Using privilege
 - Economic abuse

Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)

a) Behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour—

- (i) is **physically** or **sexually** abusive; or
- (ii) is **emotionally** or **psychologically** abusive; or
- (iii) is **economically** abusive; or
- (iv) is **threatening**; or
- (v) is **coercive**; or
- (vi) in any other way **controls** or **dominates** the family member and causes that family member to feel **fear** for the **safety** or **wellbeing** of that family member or another person; or

(b) Behaviour by a person that causes a **child** to **hear** or **witness**, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to in paragraph

How to Identify FV

Intimidation	Smashing /throwing things Punching walls Handling weapons in the presence of victim Recklessly driving with victim in car Harassing victim by phone calls, text, email Loitering around victim's home/work
Verbal abuse	Screaming, shouting, put downs, name calling, ridiculing victim in public or private
Physical abuse	Pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair pulling, choking, using weapons
Emotional abuse	Deliberately undermining victim's confidence, acts that humiliate or demean victim, threatening to harm victim, children, family members, friends, threatening suicide in order to control victim
Social abuse	Isolating victim from social networks and supports by preventing contact or by attacking victim in front of others

Economic abuse	<p>Denying victim access to money (including her own)</p> <p>Incurring debt in victim's name</p> <p>Making significant financial decisions without consulting victim</p> <p>Selling victim's belongings</p>
Sexual abuse	<p>Rape (includes being forced to perform unwanted sexual acts or to have sex with others)</p> <p>Being pressured to agree to sex</p> <p>Unwanted sexual touching</p>
Controlling behaviours	<p>Controlling what the victim does, who she sees, talks to, or where she goes</p> <p>Preventing victim from making friends, talking to her family or having money of her own</p> <p>Not allowing victim to express feelings or thoughts</p> <p>Not allowing victim to work</p>
Spiritual abuse	<p>Ridiculing victims culture or beliefs</p> <p>Preventing victim from taking part in religious, cultural or spiritual activities that are important to her</p>
Stalking	<p>Frequently calling, texting, or emailing victim. Following victim in the street or loitering in places where she is known to frequent</p>

Principles of Working With Men Who Use Family Violence

- SAFETY
- CHOICE
- RESPONSIBILITY
- CHANGE

SAFETY

Risk Assessment

- Risk is based on CRAF and measures risk to victims, not dangerousness of perpetrator

Risk Management

- Danger Situation
- Specific Risk
- Non-specific risk

Partner/ AFM Contact

- Best Practice – When a man has been identified as using violence support is offered to affected family members
- Specialist women services, DHHS
- Resource: thelookout.com

CHOICE

- Increasing emotional literacy (difference between anger and violence)
- Primary and secondary emotions
- Emotional regulation can be an important aspect of behaviour change but there are also many abusive behaviours that do not involve anger and instead involve feelings of entitlement to coerce and control
- Increasing awareness of cognitive processes
- Increasing awareness of situational and social factors that **support** an individual's use of violence
- Denial and minimisation are common presentations
- Many men who use violence do not see their violence as a choice and tend to externalise the causes, it is important to explore the above factors so that men can start to understand their own agency and choice processes in order to start to explore non-violent solutions to their problems

Responsibility

- Once exploration of choice has occurred and some ownership has been taken responsibility can start to be explored
- Responsibility is the first step toward change not the last
- Responsibility involves internalising causes of wrong doing
- Responsibility sometimes involves making amends to affected family members (MBCP emphasises understanding impacts of behaviour)
- Responsibility can take many forms: punishment is often emphasised in criminal justice settings
- MBCP combines punitive and restorative models

Process of Change (non-linear)

- **Engaging:** Here the tension between risk assessment and engagement comes to the fore. Questions can sometimes feel confronting at this initial stage (particularly for clients with trauma histories or shame), however there is a need to identify specific risks that clients' violent behaviour poses. Balancing the need for engagement with understanding the risks certain behaviours represent is crucial.
- **Focusing:** collaboratively identifying change goals - in the case of FV work the focus for change is clear, for workers whose core business is not FV there may need to be some work done to identify FV as a behaviour in need of change. Due to minimising, denial or shame focus is often not shared by client this is where evoking comes in ...
- **Evoking:** promoting change talk, staying away from argumentation, and getting clients to argue for the change that is needed is crucial, workers can tell clients what the right course of action is and clients will soon learn to parrot this, but unless clients internalise this and make it meaningful in their own lives, this change is unlikely to be sustained
- **Planning:** what concrete plans need to be taken to sustain the change and avoid relapse? What safety planning needs to take place?

Recommended Reading

- Devaney, J., & Lazenbatt, A. (2016). *Domestic Violence Perpetrators: Evidence-informed Responses*. Routledge.
- Gondolf, E. W. (2012). *The future of batterer programs: Reassessing evidence-based practice*. UPNE.
- Johnson, M. P. (2010). *A typology of domestic violence: Intimate terrorism, violent resistance, and situational couple violence*. Upne.
- Maiuro, R., & Murphy, C. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivational interviewing and stages of change in intimate partner violence*. Springer Publishing Company.
- Stark, E. (2007). Coercive control: How men entrap women in everyday life..
- ZANNETTINO, L., PITTAWAY, E., ECKERT, R., BARTOLOMEI, L., OSTAPIEJ-PIATKOWSKI, B. E. A. T. A., ALLIMANT, A., & PARRIS, J. (2013). Improving responses to refugees with backgrounds of multiple trauma. *Sydney: Australian Domestic And Family Violence Clearinghouse, the University of New South Wales*.