

## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence may be experienced within families, marriages, defacto relationships and lesbian relationships. It may be inflicted on adults and children alike. Domestic violence consists of a range of behaviours and may include:

- \* Verbal abuse such as insults, name-calling, put-downs and constant criticism
- \* Emotional abuse such as making threats, humiliating you privately/publicly, isolating you from family, friends and social contacts
- \* Smashing or destroying your personal belongings or property, or harming pets
- \* All forms of physical violence including pushing, slapping, hitting, punching, etc.
- \* Taking away access to money
- \* Driving unsafely when you are in the car
- \* Intimidating/controlling behaviour
- \* Sexual harassment, rape

## What are the effects of Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence impacts on women in different ways, including:

- \* Feeling powerless, afraid, depressed, humiliated, withdrawing from others
- \* Taking away your fundamental human right to feel safe
- \* Feelings of anger, frustration, anxiety, grief, sadness and loss
- \* Minimising/denying the violence is occurring
- \* Feeling like you've tried everything and nothing works

- \* Feeling worthless, not valued, low self-esteem, lacking confidence
- \* A sense of shame and embarrassment
- \* Afraid to tell others, shutting down to keep the violence hidden
- \* Being made to feel responsible for the violence, feeling that you deserve it
- \* Worried about your financial security
- \* Confused because sometimes your partner is loving and kind
- \* A sense of failure about the relationship
- \* Afraid of continued violence and harassment if you leave
- \* Feeling guilty about leaving, or scared of coping alone

## Domestic Violence Hurts Children too!

In homes where domestic violence occurs, children suffer emotional and psychological abuse whether or not they are being physically abused themselves. Witnessing domestic violence may impact on children in a range of way, including:

- \* Taking away a child's fundamental right to feel safe
- \* The child becoming withdrawn and fearful
- \* The child having difficulty relating to others, or being unable to concentrate at school
- \* The child blaming themselves for causing the perpetrator's anger
- \* The child taking on the responsibility of protecting others
- \* The child may suffer post-traumatic stress, feeling helpless and overwhelmed with anxiety

## Never Think His/Her Violence is Your Fault

- \* You may believe you are equally responsible for your partner's violence, but you are not to blame
- \* All relationships face struggles and difficulties, we all experience stress and anger, but violence and abuse is never the answer to resolve difficulties or differences. Your partner is committing a crime every time he/she is violent or abusive. A violent and abusive partner makes the choice not to control his/her violence.

## How you may have coped until now ...

- \* You have to be careful about what you say, when you say things and how you say them
- \* You've tried to talk to him/her about his/her violence and abuse, with little change occurring
- \* You've given up doing anything likely to upset him/her
- \* You reduce and minimise your needs, thoughts and feelings to accommodate him/her and keep the peace
- \* You adapt your behaviour to what he/she says and wants
- \* You've tried to make agreements or set boundaries

***You have a right to be yourself in the world!***

## What does Kara House do?

Kara House was initially set up in 1975 by CO.AS.IT (Community Assistance Italian) as a refuge for Italian Women escaping domestic violence. In 1988, Kara House broadened its services by becoming an independent incorporated body providing domestic violence services to women of all nationalities. Kara House now provides a domestic violence outreach service.

### The service includes:

- \* Someone to talk to and obtain strictly confidential support
- \* Information about your legal rights such as intervention orders, property rights, court orders and, if applicable, child support payments and child contact visits
- \* Advice about income/financial support available
- \* Help accessing housing options
- \* Material aid where applicable
- \* Kara House also provides specialised support to women of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds

## REMEMBER

*Domestic Violence is a Crime!*  
*You are not to blame for the abuse or violence!*  
*You have a right to be safe!*  
*You have a right to live a life free of abuse and violence!*

Call Kara House Domestic Violence Outreach Service on

**Freecall: 1800 900 520**

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Our Support Workers are available to meet with you confidentially at our offices, or at a convenient location such as a café or place of your choice.



**Kara House Inc.**

Incorporation No.: A0016757C

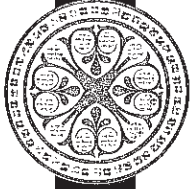
P.O. Box 308, Burwood, Victoria 3125

**Freecall: 1800 900 520**

Email: [karahouse@infoxchange.net.au](mailto:karahouse@infoxchange.net.au)

### Other useful telephone numbers:

*Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria*  
Phone [24 Hrs]: (03) 9322 3555 or Toll Free 1800 015 188  
*Police Emergency Number*  
Phone: 000



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**Domestic  
Violence  
Outreach  
Service**

*... providing*

*support services*

*to women and*

*children*

*experiencing*

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