

Safe families

Feeling loved, safe and secure is very important for our children. It helps them to develop, learn and thrive in life.

ParentLink

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What everyone in the family needs

Everyone in the family needs:

- respect and kindness
- loving care
- people to look out for them and help them.

In a safe, loving home everyone is happier and healthier:

- babies develop better
- children can learn better at school — they don't worry about what's going on at home.

Everyone has the right to feel safe — babies, children, teenagers, adults and elders.

A safe, loving home is important for everyone, especially children.

Violence is not part of our culture.

Violence at home harms everyone in the family.

It is never OK.

Please note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this website may contain images, voices or names of deceased persons in photographs, film, audio recordings or printed material.

Violence affects everyone

- Babies in the womb don't grow as well if mum is stressed.
- Children's brain development can be affected.
- Children can feel worried, scared and alone. They may show signs of stress by becoming very quiet, angry or misbehaving, having aches and pains or wetting the bed. Some children blame themselves for the violence.
- Adults' and teenagers' health, jobs, study and relationships can be affected.

Types of violence and abuse

Violence and abuse includes:

- physical harm
- making threats
- calling people names or putting them down
- taking money — making people pay for things
- stalking, constantly calling or texting
- harassing or bullying online, e.g. Facebook
- controlling who people see and what they do
- not letting people be involved in culture or religion
- making people do sexual things when they don't want to.



ACT
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AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARENTLINK GUIDE

www.parentlink.act.gov.au

How violence happens

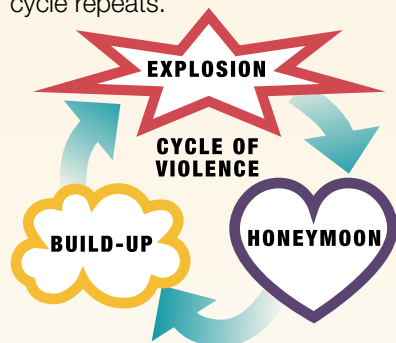
Violence can be from one partner to another, or between other adults. Teenagers or children can be violent to parents, brothers or sisters.

Violence can be big explosions or lots of 'small' acts over time. They can happen often or only sometimes. Violence can happen at home or in the community.

Some violence happens over and over in a cycle. There can be:

- **build-up:** the person gets angry at small things, no matter how hard everyone tries to keep the peace
- **explosion:** they yell, make threats or are physically violent
- **honeymoon:** they say sorry, promise to change and things seem good for a while.

After days, hours or minutes the build-up starts again and the cycle repeats.



This guide's content was produced by Parenting SA, Women's and Children's Health Network.

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Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

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Looking for more information?

What you can do

...if there is violence in your home:

- Call the police on 000 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.
- Make sure children are safe.
- Seek help from services in this guide.

...if you are worried someone is being hurt

- Let them know you are there for them.
- Encourage them to seek help.
- Don't put yourself in danger. Contact a service for help.

...if you are worried about a child:

It can be hard to know what to do if you are worried that a child doesn't seem to have things they need such as:

- food and proper clothing
- going to medical appointments
- going to school every day.

You could encourage the parents or carers to seek help from a service. They might just need a little help to do things differently.

If you are worried about a child's safety, call Child, Youth Protection Services on 1300 556 729.

...if you are worried about your own anger

It can be hard to admit we have an anger problem, or that we are violent or abusive towards people we care about. It's never too late to change. Services in this guide are a good place to start.

Remember many violent and abusive acts are against the law!

Why people stay

It can be hard for people to leave. They might:

- hope the person will stop
- think that gifts and affection mean the person has changed
- fear more harm or retaliation from the person or their family
- think they won't be believed, or people will say it's their fault
- not want to break up the family
- not have anywhere to go
- not have money or help to leave
- have grown up around violence and not see it as a problem. They don't realise it is not normal and not acceptable.

If someone you know is living with violence, work out how you can safely support them to get help from professionals.

If you are in immediate danger call the police on 000



ParentLink—for other parenting guides, online parenting information www.parentlink.act.gov.au

Child and Family Centres—for parenting information and support
www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/childandfamilycentres

Raising Children's Network—covering topics for parenting newborns to teens <http://raisingchildren.net.au>

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation t 6296 8900 www.gugan-gulwan.com.au

Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service t 6284 6222 www.winnunga.org.au

Relationships Australia Dhunlung Yarra Service is dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples t 6122 7100 www.racr.relationships.org.au