

Forms of Family Violence?



Family violence
takes many
forms



CREATING FEAR

Fear is a key element in family violence and is often the most powerful way a perpetrator controls their victim. Fear is created by giving looks or making gestures, possessing weapons (even if they are not used), destroying property, threats- or any behaviour which can be used to intimidate and render the victim powerless.

INTIMIDATION

Includes smashing things, destroying possessions, handling of weapons, using intimidating body language (standing over, angry looks, raised voice), hostile questioning of the victim, or reckless driving of vehicle with the victim in the car. It may include harassing the victim at their workplace either by making persistent phone calls or sending text messages or emails, following to and from work or loitering near the workplace.

VERBAL ABUSE

Using words as a weapon to cause fear. This may include screaming, shouting, put-downs, name-calling, swearing, using sarcasm or ridiculing, demeaning religious beliefs or ethnic background.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Behaviour such as pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, hair-pulling, punching etc. and may or may not involve the use of weapons. It could be threats to destroy or actually destroying prized possessions. It could involve locking the victim out of the house, using sleep deprivation and harming significant others including pets.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Behaviour that deliberately undermines confidence leading to the belief that the victim is stupid, a bad parent, useless or mentally unwell. This type of abuse humiliates, degrades and demeans

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the victim. The perpetrator may make threats to harm the victim, significant others, to take the children or to commit suicide. The perpetrator may use silence and withdrawal as a means to abuse.

SOCIAL ABUSE

This involves isolating the victim from social networks and supports either by preventing contact with family or friends, or by verbally or physically abusing them in public or in front of others. It may involve continually putting friends and family down so they slowly disconnected from their support network.

FINANCIAL ABUSE

The perpetrator takes full control of all the finances, spending and decisions about money so the victim is financially dependent on their partner. Also can involve denying access to money, forcing to live on inadequate resources, and demanding they account for every cent spent. This type of abuse is often a contributing factor for victims becoming 'trapped' in violent relationships.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Any unwanted sexual behaviours. This may include forced sexual contact, rape, forcing to perform sexual acts, forcing to have sex with others or forcing to watch pornography.

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOURS

Dictating what the victim does, who they see and talk to, where they go, keeping them from making any friends or from talking to family or having any money of their own. This can include preventing from going to work, not allowing them to express their own feelings or thoughts or to make decisions.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Ridiculing or putting down beliefs and culture, preventing from belonging to, or taking part in, a group that is important to spiritual beliefs or practising religion such as a church.

SEPARATION VIOLENCE

Often after the relationship has ended violence continues. This can be a very dangerous time for the victim because the perpetrator may perceive a loss of control over the victim and may become more unpredictable. During and after separation is often a time when violence will escalate leaving the victim more unsafe than previously.

STALKING

Sometimes the victim is stalked by the perpetrator either before or after separation. Stalking includes loitering around places they are known to frequent, watching them, following, making persistent telephone calls and sending mail or emails including unwanted love letters, cards and gifts etc.