

# ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE TO PARENTS



A resource booklet for parents and carers



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# INTRODUCTION

Adolescent violence to parents is a serious issue. Anecdotal evidence suggests it is increasing.

Adolescent violence can be perpetrated against mothers, fathers, siblings and carers by daughters and sons. There are many reasons why it occurs. These include children witnessing or experiencing family violence and repeating their fathers' abusive and violent behaviours toward their mothers, parenting styles, adolescents' reactions to traumatic events or conflict, adolescent mental health or drug and alcohol issues and other contributing factors. Sometimes there is no apparent reason why it happens.

This booklet provides a resource for parents who experience violence from their adolescents. It helps parents identify violent behaviours, suggests strategies for dealing with adolescents and provides a contact list of services and agencies that can help parents deal with the traumatic situation they find themselves and their families experiencing. We hope it will help to increase the safety and wellbeing of parents and carers, and provide strategies to support them to parent their adolescents in ways that promote caring, responsibility and non-violence.

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# 1. ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE TO PARENTS

Parents struggling with their adolescents' violence are often confused and confronted. It can be hard to find ways to keep everyone safe including the adolescent whose behaviour is posing the risk to positive family relationships and safety. It can be difficult to know how to make things better.

## ***You are not alone!***

- 9% of all family violence incidents recorded by police in 2003-2004, involved parents/step parents who reported violence by a child/stepchild aged 12-24 years.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2006 Victoria Police were called to over 3,500 family violence incidents where children were the perpetrators.<sup>2</sup>
- Adolescent violence often becomes a major problem between the ages of 12 and 17 years.
- Mothers are more likely to be abused than fathers.
- Adolescent violence is not just against parents. Many adolescents are also violent to their siblings.
- Parents experience violence by both boys and girls. It is estimated that approximately 70% of perpetrators are male and 30% are female.
- Adolescent violence exists across all communities, social classes, cultural backgrounds and geographic areas.

# 2. TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Adolescence is the time between childhood and adulthood. It is normal during this time for adolescents to challenge parents and authority as they head towards an independent life. Adolescents will exhibit healthy anger and conflict along the way, which is distinct from violent behaviour.

Violence is not the same as anger. Anger is an emotion; violence is about control and power.

Adolescent violence is any behaviour used by an adolescent in the family to control, dominate, threaten or coerce a parent or sibling. It can include any of the following:

## **Physical**

- spitting, shoving, hitting, kicking
- throwing things, breaking things and punching holes in walls or doors
- bullying or physical violence to siblings
- cruelty to pets
- any action or behaviour that threatens a person's sense of well-being and safety.

## **Emotional, Psychological and Verbal**

- verbal abuse, yelling, screaming, swearing, 'put downs' and humiliation
- verbal intimidation
- emotional and psychological intimidation
- playing mind games
- making threats to hurt or kill themselves or run away, in order to get their own way or to control you and the family.

## **Financial**

- demanding money or things you can not afford
- stealing money or possessions from you, your family or friends
- incurring debts that you are responsible for.

<sup>1</sup> Victorian Council Against Violence (2006). *Victorian Family Violence Database Volume 2 Five Year Report 1999-2004* p. 19, Victorian Government Department of Justice, Melbourne, Victoria.

<sup>2</sup> Victims Support Agency (2006). *Victorian Family Violence Database: Five Year Report*, Victorian Government Department of Justice, Melbourne, Victoria. Cited in WIRE women's information wire information sheet April 2007.

### 3. WHEN TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE

Listen to your own warning bells. You know when things are not right so go with your own feelings and thoughts.

You may have experienced adolescent violence if:

- you feel afraid of upsetting your adolescent and you change your behaviour to avoid it.
- you are 'walking on eggshells' trying to predict your adolescent's wants and needs.
- your adolescent pushes, hits, punches or hurts you or his or her siblings, throws things or damages your possessions or those of other family members.
- your adolescent threatens to hurt you, themselves or others (such as children, family, friends, pets) if you do not meet his or her demands.
- your adolescent ridicules or tries to humiliate or embarrass you, your family or friends.
- your adolescent constantly criticises you and puts you down.
- your adolescent threatens you that he or she will leave home if you do not do what they want.
- your adolescent blames you for his or her behaviour.

### 4. IS YOUR ADOLESCENT DEMONSTRATING VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR?

How do you know if your adolescent is displaying normal adolescent behavior and 'acting out' or being violent?

- Although most people know about family violence and its effects, less attention is given to adolescent violence and its impact on the family. This makes it very hard for parents to recognise their adolescents' behavior as violence and to seek out services that can support them.
- Violence from adolescents is not a normal part of growing up. Most adolescents will 'act out' in some way at some time during their adolescence. When this behaviour is controlling, threatening, or intimidating, it stops being 'normal'.
- It is very important for parents to listen to, and trust their own instincts.
- Adolescent violence is a complex issue, particularly when adolescents have experienced family violence themselves, have suffered grief or loss, or have an illness or disability. Whilst these issues mean adolescents and their families need support, it does not mean that adolescent violence should be excused.

## 5. WHAT YOU MAY BE FEELING

### Denial

- Most parents have difficulty accepting that their child is violent towards them. They may think their child's behavior is part of growing up or dealing with stress. They may think that the behavior is just normal mood swings.

### Despair and isolation

You may feel:

- totally alone and isolated.
- unsupported and solely responsible for your situation.
- you have 'hit the wall' and that nothing can help.
- hopeless and helpless because you cannot bring the situation under control.
- totally unsupported by a lack of available services or information to help you.
- abandoned or undermined by your family and the community.
- despair at not having a harmonious family life.
- you cannot talk or think about anything else but your adolescent.
- your adolescent's behavior is an exact replica of their father's violence to you.

### Fear

You may feel:

- like you are living in fear, both in the present and of what might happen in future when your son is bigger and stronger than you.
- 'unsafe' in your own home.

### Shame and humiliation

You may feel:

- like a failure and experience a great sense of shame.
- confused about where you went wrong and questioning your parenting abilities.
- you are entirely responsible for your child's violent behaviour.
- you are to blame and you are a 'bad' parent.

### Loss

You may feel:

- heartbroken and a huge sense of loss because the child you used to know, love and enjoy, seems to be driving a wedge in the relationship.
- grief if your adolescent has had to leave home.
- sadness that the family is fractured and in conflict.
- the loss of friends and family who do not want or know how to assist you.
- worried the young person will leave home and sever the relationship entirely.

### Relationship stress

- Adolescent violence often leads to arguments between adults in the home, as to how the behaviour should be dealt with. You may have different ideas on what helps or on what caused the violence. This can place enormous stress on family and partner relationships.

- Your relationships with extended family members can suffer because of different family views about the violence, how best to respond and the complex dynamics between you, your partner and other siblings.
- You may feel as though you are constantly 'walking on eggshells' and always conscious of 'keeping the peace' between your adolescent, partner, siblings and other members of your family.
- You may hate it when people give you solutions, as they do not know what you are going through.
- You may feel undermined by your adolescent's other parent who may take your adolescent's side (particularly if you are a sole parent).

### **Loss of trust**

- You may feel unable to trust your adolescent especially when you are not at home to supervise. You may be worried your child may have damaged or stolen property and whether the other siblings are safe. You may find it difficult to leave the home at all.

### **Sibling concern**

- Other children may be affected by their siblings' violence. Many adolescents who are violent to their parents are also violent to their siblings. Siblings may be unsafe because of the violence.

- You may not have the time or energy to give to other siblings because you are dealing with the violent adolescent.
- Your adolescent may also use drugs or alcohol or engage in illegal activities. This may mean their siblings are unsafe or at risk of harm.

### **Health issues**

- You may be depressed or anxious and this may impact on your health and well-being. You may experience insomnia, physical illness and fatigue.

### **Work issues**

- Your worries and anxieties may extend into your workplace where you may find it hard to concentrate.
- You may find that you need to take time off from work to seek support.
- You may experience the additional cost of counselling, legal fees and fixing damage to property caused by your adolescent. This can increase financial pressures.



## 6. POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

It may be difficult to understand why your adolescent is being violent.

Some explanations include:

### Family violence

Adolescents who witness or experience violence to their mother from their father or their mothers' partners may behave in a similar way to the perpetrator. This may still happen if the adolescent was a baby or young child when the violence occurred.

### Social issues

Adolescents may be influenced by the society and culture in which they live.

Some influences may include:

- societal exposure to violence
- ideas about the role of women and sex role stereotyping
- sexualisation of women and pornography.

### Adolescent issues

Adolescents may be violent because they:

- have an over-developed sense of entitlement
- lack respect for women
- have been bullied at school
- have experienced trauma such as war or family violence
- are influenced by their peer group
- misuse alcohol or drugs
- have mental health issues
- have been abused themselves.

### Parenting

Parents may be influenced by their culture or the society in which they live.

Parenting practices that support adolescent violence include:

- feeling you should sacrifice everything, including your own happiness and well-being to make your child happy
- feeling guilty for breaking up the family (if you are a sole parent) and compensating by giving everything to your adolescent
- feeling your child's rights are more important than your own or other family members
- parenting that gives a child too much freedom
- parenting that is authoritarian
- being unavailable to your child (either physically or emotionally)
- conflict in parenting styles so that the adolescent can manipulate his or her parents
- wanting to give your adolescent everything other adolescents have
- parents' own psychological makeup e.g. fear of conflict which prevents parents taking action
- parents' mental health issues such as depression and anxiety which make it hard to stand firm
- parents (particularly mothers) being overly responsible for the emotional well being of family members.

## 7. THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

- It won't go away! Violence generally worsens over time.
- There are no simple answers.
- You are not responsible for your adolescents' behaviour.
- You don't have to know why things are happening to enable change to happen. Even a small change may feel like an improvement in the situation.
- The adolescent will not be able to stop their violent behaviour on their own. With support from others, you can help to facilitate the change.
- All types of violence is inappropriate and physical violence and property damage are criminal offences.
- Violence may not happen all the time. It may occur in cycles or as isolated incidents. Adolescents may apologise after the violence, giving you a false sense of hope that things may improve. They usually need more help to change.
- Violent behaviour is the responsibility of the adolescent. You did not cause the adolescent to be violent. The violence is never an acceptable or healthy way for the adolescent to solve difficulties in their life, their family or community.
- You may find it is difficult to deal with a violent adolescent, as you are the provider and supporter for many of their needs.
- You may not want to report violent behaviour to the police because you are concerned for your adolescent's future. You may not want to compromise his or her life chances and opportunities. You may feel you may not be believed, you may be blamed or may lose family and friends' support if you bring the adolescent to the attention of the police or other services.

Remember that it is better for your adolescent, your family and you if the violence stops. If nothing else works, reporting it to the police may be the only way to stop the violence.

## 8. NEVER THINK THE VIOLENCE IS YOUR FAULT

- Adolescents often blame their parent/s for provoking them or not giving into their demands. Remember the person being violent is always responsible for their behaviour. You are not to blame.
- You have probably tried to talk to your adolescent about their behaviour. Give yourself credit for all the things you have tried.
- We all experience stress and anger, from time to time. However, the adolescent may use these feelings to excuse violent behaviour. It is important to separate your adolescent's feelings from their behaviour. All feelings are acceptable; violence is not!

## 9. BELIEVE AND TRUST YOUR OWN FEELINGS

- Believe in yourself! You know your child and what behaviour is unacceptable. Try not to make excuses for your adolescent.
- If you feel you have to watch your behaviour and 'tread on eggshells' to avoid violence from your adolescent, something is wrong. You are the best judge of this.
- Acknowledge the problem and don't hide from it. Naming what is happening is a good start to taking action.

## 10. TALKING ABOUT YOUR ADOLESCENT'S BEHAVIOUR

There is little community awareness of adolescent violence to parents. This makes it very difficult for parents to speak out about their experience.

- Difficulties for parents may include:
  - feeling ashamed about the violence
  - experiencing violence from the adolescent's father or your ex-partner
  - worrying about being blamed for the violence
  - finding the courage to acknowledge that your adolescent is violent
  - feeling you should be able to deal with it *yourself*
  - excusing the behaviour because your adolescent is going through a difficult time
  - having your experience trivialised, misunderstood, dismissed or minimised by family and friends
  - taking the first step in getting assistance
  - lack of community support for parents in this situation.

# 11. WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOUR ADOLESCENT IS BEING VIOLENT?

- Talk about the violence with someone you trust, such as a friend, family member or counsellor.
- Use the contact list at the back of this booklet to identify services.
- Seek out support services for you, your adolescent and your family.
- Undertake counselling.
- Participate in a support group program.
- If you are at any time in fear for your own or another's safety, call the police. Violence, threats of violence and assault are crimes that can be reported to the police.
- You can contact your local police for advice or call 9247 3722 to be referred to the Family Violence Liaison Officer in your area.
- You may feel that calling the police is totally unacceptable. No parent likes to consider this possibility but the readiness to do so, clearly explained to the adolescent, may indicate you will not tolerate the violence.
- Develop a safety plan for you and your family should you need it.

## PREPARING A SAFETY PLAN

Sometimes an adolescent's violence may mean family members' safety is at risk.

In the event of a crisis, where you may have to leave home in a hurry, it can be useful to have a safety plan in place. Here are a few suggestions for preparing a safety plan.

- Think about where you could go and who could support you if an emergency arose.
- Always carry a list of numbers you would need to call eg police 000, family members, support services.
- Ensure you have access to a phone or mobile.
- Try to keep some money aside so that you can use a taxi, train or bus if needed.
- Keep a spare set of house and car keys in a safe place.
- Ensure other children can use a phone and know emergency numbers.

If you believe your safety or that of your family is at risk, you can apply for an Intervention Order at the Magistrates Court or you can ask the police to apply on your behalf.

- Keep notes or a diary with dates and brief details about the violence. These may be needed in the future if you take protective or legal action.
- Call the services listed at the end of this booklet for more information and to discuss your options.
- As a last resort - although it may be extremely difficult - you can ask your adolescent to leave home. This may be the only way to stop the violence. They may be eligible for support through government programs. It is advisable to have support from others if you take this action so you and your family can be safe.

# 12. HOW CAN FRIENDS OR RELATIVES HELP?

## Emotional Support

If a parent experiencing adolescent violence tells you about it or you suspect they are experiencing difficulties, there are a number of things you can do to support them. These include:

- Don't be afraid to express your concern to them and offer support.
- Be there to listen to them and believe in their experience without minimising, blaming or judging it.
- Listen to, believe and offer practical support to a parent who confides in you about adolescent violence. Ask: "How can I help you?" or "Are there any steps you can take to increase your safety and the safety of family members?"
- Don't criticise their management or lack of management of the situation and don't excuse the violence.
- Be aware that it is a very difficult family situation to be in and reinforce to them that you will be there should they need support.
- Help the parent to understand it is not their fault.
- Support the parent to be confident to make their own decisions and don't tell them what to do.
- Respect their privacy and keep the information confidential unless they give you permission to tell others or you feel someone is at risk of harm.
- Encourage parents to care for themselves and to consider their own needs.
- Stay in regular contact with them to show your ongoing support.

## Practical Support

Providing someone with practical support can help them feel more in control of their situation and better able to make the necessary decisions to start taking control of the family situation. Practical ways to assist include:

- Encourage them to think about safety planning in the event of a crisis.
- Help the parent find helpful resources or information they may need e.g. how to apply for an Intervention Order.
- Accompany them to counsellors or other services.

## What NOT to do

If you are supporting a friend or family member experiencing adolescent violence there are a number of things you should avoid:

- Don't tell them what to do.
- Don't make comments that imply they are to blame.
- Don't try to mediate between the parent and adolescent unless you have been asked to and the adolescent is agreeable.
- Don't confront the adolescent – this can lead to further complications and may increase family conflict.
- Don't give solutions or lecture to parents, as you do not know what they are going through – 'you are not living through it'.
- Getting involved does not mean you have to solve the situation. If someone turns to you for help and support, it means helping them find their own answers. You cannot 'save' them and it is important not to be disappointed if they do not do what you think they should.

## 13. SEEK HELP!

### Support groups

There are many benefits to joining a support group. These include:

- Breaking the silence about your adolescent's violence and reducing your isolation.
- Meeting people who are experiencing the same or similar issues.
- Feeling validated about your experiences.
- Gaining a sense of confidence and feeling hopeful.
- Putting your sense of parental responsibility into perspective.
- Reducing your guilt or shame.
- Empowering you to make changes in your behaviour.
- Developing new ways of thinking and increasing skills for dealing with the violence.
- Increasing awareness of your behaviour and reflecting on your interactions with your adolescent.
- Increasing your communication skills
- Considering ways of parenting that are less likely to escalate the violence.
- Learning parenting strategies that can effect change in your adolescent's behaviour and thinking.
- Reminding you to look after yourself!

## 14. TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE! USEFUL STRATEGIES

The first step in making changes is to acknowledge the behaviour is violent and that you are going to take action to stop it! It is easier to do this with support, such as family members, friends or a counsellor. If you are on your own you can still make changes to stop the violence.

It is helpful to think what might be going on in your adolescent's life that may contribute to the violence. Your adolescent may be having difficulties at school or with friends, may be experiencing loss or grief or be feeling depressed. There may also be no particular reason why your adolescent is behaving this way. There is no excuse for violence, but understanding some of the issues affecting your adolescent may help you to respond in a way that is firm and strong, but also supportive. It is helpful to think about your adolescent in ways that highlight the things you like and love about them and that are separate from the violence.

One way to start positive change is through using consequences.

### CONSEQUENCES

A consequence is a parenting strategy that:

- modifies undesirable or unacceptable behaviour by your adolescent
- helps your adolescent take responsibility for their behaviour and see the effect on others
- is best negotiated with the adolescent (although this may not always be possible) so s/he is involved in setting the rules and therefore clearly understands the outcomes of choosing a particular course of action.

When adolescents are violent there is no negotiation – it is clear that violence is unacceptable.

## How to set consequences

It is best to start making changes when you are feeling strong and if possible, supported by others. Firstly, think about what you expect from your adolescent:

- Make sure you are clear in your own mind about what behaviour is reasonable and unreasonable.
- Write this down to remind yourself. You may decide that it is reasonable for your adolescent to wash the dishes two nights a week. You may decide that it is unreasonable for your adolescent to swear at you when s/he wants something.
- Use 'I' statements - 'I will be very upset if you are not home when you agreed you would be'.
- Clearly state the expectations to your adolescent - "I need you to speak respectfully to me if you want me to drive you to your friends. If you swear at me, I will not be taking you" or "I will not tolerate you breaking possessions. In the future your pocket money will be used to replace broken things".
- Your adolescent may try and negotiate you down – don't feel bullied into changing your expectations. Stand firm!
- Don't start with too many expectations. Two or three related to stopping their violence and behaving responsibly is a good start.
- Explain to your adolescent that you love them but will not tolerate being abused.
- Try to keep a sense of humour!!!

Secondly, think about what consequences you can put in place to support your adolescent meeting your expectations.

- Consequences must be relevant and important to your adolescent.
- Decide how and when you can use these consequences.
- Explain to your adolescent that if they do not meet your expectations you will put the stated consequences into action.

## Some examples of consequences

- Withdrawal of privileges such as internet access, television, iPod or mobile phone use for a certain number of days.
- 'Grounding' in general or stopping your adolescent doing something they want to do like staying the night at a friend's house.
- Cutting back or stopping pocket money or mobile phone use.
- Undertaking a compulsory activity such as extra household chores.

## Remember

- It is often difficult to start using a different approach and it might take some time to implement. Your adolescent may rebel against any new approach, so for a time things may become worse before an improvement becomes evident.
- Your adolescent must know you will follow through any consequences you use.
- Your words lose all impact if the adolescent does not believe you will follow through. If you have been in the habit of making threats that never happen (or only half happen) then your adolescent knows not to take you seriously.
- Ignore the behaviours you can live with. Choose your battles.
- Start with something simple so that you can have a win to begin with.

## Changing your own behaviour

It is important to think about your own behaviour. You cannot expect your adolescent to change his or her behaviour if your behaviour is inappropriate. It is hard to tell an adolescent not to smoke when a parent does! Similarly if you swear at your adolescent or use violence yourself it is highly likely that despite what you say, your adolescent will feel justified to also behave this way.

- Think about how you respond to your adolescent's behaviour – does it make them angrier or calm them down?
- Understand what your adolescent says or does to make you angry – know your own triggers.

- Be quiet and calm – not angry. (This can be hard to do!)
- Don't think about 'winners' and 'losers' – think about building more harmonious family relationships.
- Always treat your adolescent with respect no matter how angry, disappointed or frustrated you are.
- Try to remain verbally and physically affectionate.
- Don't try to win every battle!!!
- Recognise when you are stressed. Think about how stress affects how you parent and communicate with your adolescent.

#### **If you or your family members' safety is threatened**

If you try to make changes and your adolescent's behaviour worsens and you or family members feel unsafe, you need to put safety before using consequences or other strategies. If you are unsafe walk away and leave the home if necessary.

If your adolescent's behaviour escalates it is your right to call the police. Everyone, including parents, has the right to feel safe. Your other children have the right to feel safe too. Calling the police is one of the strongest consequences but it is often one that works. The police will respond in a positive and helpful manner.

## **15. REGAINING CONTROL AND MOVING FORWARD...**

Adolescent violence to parents is still a taboo subject in the community. Breaking through the isolation and secrecy is the first step in restoring and healing the relationship with your adolescent. You can regain some control over the family situation.

Often the adolescent will blame you or others for their behaviour and refuse to take responsibility for their actions. They see it as 'your' problem and usually refuse counselling or other help.

Adolescents need clear and consistent rules and expectations to feel safe and secure. By holding the adolescent accountable for their actions, you are teaching them how to behave and respond appropriately.

By caring for yourself and seeking help you can regain your confidence, work on your own behaviour and responses and effect changes in your adolescent's behaviour.

It may be useful to participate in a group program or individual, couple or family counselling to explore ways to keep you and your family safe, look after yourself and stop the violence.

**The sooner you take action the sooner things will improve.**



# 16. USEFUL SERVICES TO CONTACT

Here are some services that offer assistance to people experiencing violence from their adolescents. If you have any concerns about what is happening in your family, the following services will treat you with respect, ensure confidentiality and provide sensitive, supportive staff to talk things through with you.

## GROUP PROGRAMS - ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE TO PARENTS

Adolescent violence to parents groups provide a supportive environment for parents to share their experiences and learn new ways to parent their adolescents. Many parents find these help to change their adolescents' behaviour.

- **Who's the Boss?**  
Inner South Community Health Service  
ph: 9690 9144
- **Who's in Charge?**  
Cardinia-Casey Community Health Service  
ph: 8768 5147
- **Out of Bounds**  
Peninsula Community Health Service  
ph: 5971 9100

## FAMILY

### Anglicare Victoria

Support for children, young people & families

Cranbourne .....ph: 5991 2200  
Frankston .....ph: 9781 6700  
Rosebud .....ph: 5986 9900

### Casey North Community Information & Support Service Inc

Information, referral, counselling & crisis support  
Fountain Gate .....ph: 9705 6699

### Community Health Services

Family violence counselling, family counselling, young people's services & support groups

Bentleigh-Bayside .....ph: 9575 5333  
Cardinia-Casey .....ph: 8768 5147  
Caulfield .....ph: 9076 6666  
Central Bayside .....ph: 8587 0200  
Greater Dandenong .....ph: 8558 9080  
Inner South .....ph: 9690 9144  
Peninsula .....ph: 5971 9100

### Connections

Child, youth & family support

Cranbourne .....ph: 5990 8400  
Dandenong .....ph: 8792 8999  
Narre Warren .....ph: 9705 3939  
Pakenham .....ph: 5941 6548  
Windsor .....ph: 9521 5666

### Family Life

Support & counselling for families, children & youth

Sandringham .....ph: 8599 5433

### Family Mediation Centre

Services aimed at resolving family conflict

Moorabbin .....ph: 9556 5333

Narre Warren .....ph: 9705 6277

### Good Shepherd (Peninsula) Youth & Family Service

Family support & counselling

Hastings .....ph: 1300 721 383

### LifeWorks

Relationship counselling & education for individuals, couples, families, children & adolescents

Frankston .....ph: 9783 7611

Melbourne .....ph: 9654 7360

### Oz Child

Child, family & youth support

Frankston .....ph: 8796 0000

Child, family & youth counselling

Mornington .....ph: 5975 7644

### Parentline

Telephone counselling, information & referral for parents & carers

Melbourne .....ph: 13 22 89

weekdays 8.00am - midnight

weekends 10.00am - 10.00pm

### Peninsula Youth and Family Services

Crisis service & support for young people, individuals & families

Frankston .....ph: 9784 5000

### Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre

Information, support, referral & counselling for families

Rosebud .....ph: 5986 1285

### Stepfamily Helpline

Telephone crisis support & counselling

Northcote .....ph: 9481 1500

### Victorian Aboriginal Health Service Co-operative Limited (Family Counselling Service)

Counselling for aboriginal individuals, couples, youth & families

Northcote .....ph: 9403 3300

### Windermere Child & Family Services

Support & counselling services for children & families

Narre Warren .....ph: 9705 3200

### WIRE - Women's Information Referral Exchange

Information, support & referral service for women

Melbourne .....ph: 1300 134 130

# USEFUL SERVICES TO CONTACT

## FAMILY VIOLENCE

### **Family Violence Adviser: Victoria Police**

Referral to your local Family Violence Liaison Officer  
Melbourne ..... ph: 9247 3722

### **Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service (IWDVS)**

Information & referral for immigrant women  
experiencing violence  
Melbourne ..... ph: 8413 6800

### **Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence**

Information, referral & telephone support for adults,  
teenagers & children  
..... ph: 9523 2100

### **Southern Victims Assistance & Counselling Program**

Support for victims of violent crime, including family  
violence  
Narre Warren ..... ph: 9705 3200

### **The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRVCV)**

Information & referral to specialist support services  
Collingwood ..... ph: 9486 9866

### **The Salvation Army Family Violence Outreach Program**

Information & support for victims of violent crime,  
including family violence  
St Kilda ..... ph: 1800 627 727

## YOUTH SUPPORT

### **Bayside City Council's Youth Services**

Support & counselling for young people  
Sandringham ..... ph: 9599 4622

### **Centacare Catholic Family Services**

Counselling & mediation for individuals, couples,  
families, children & youth  
Dandenong ..... ph: 9793 2200

### **Chelsea Community Support Services**

Information, referral & support  
Chelsea ..... ph: 9772 8939

### **Frankston Youth Resource Centre**

Information, support, referral & counselling for young  
people  
Frankston ..... ph: 9768 1366

### **Frontyard Youth Services**

Services for young people who are homeless or 'at risk' of  
becoming homeless  
Melbourne ..... ph: 9611 2411  
toll free ..... ph: 1800 800 531

### **Gateway Reconnect**

Support for young people & their families  
Melbourne ..... ph: 9611 2434

### **Glen Eira Youth Services**

Information, referral & support for young people  
Bentleigh East ..... ph: 9579 7963

### **Kingston Youth Information Centre**

Information, referral & counselling for young people  
Cheltenham ..... ph: 1300 369 436

### **Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services**

Information, referral, support & counselling for  
young people  
Hastings ..... ph: 5950 1666  
Rosebud ..... ph: 5986 3585

### **St Kilda Youth Services (SKYS)**

Information, education, training & counselling for  
disadvantaged or 'at risk' young people  
Balaclava ..... ph: 9527 2298

### **Stonnington Youth Services**

Information, support & referral for young people  
Prahran ..... ph: 8290 7020

### **Visy Cares Centre**

Integrated support services for young people  
Dandenong ..... ph: 9793 2155

## YOUTH ACCOMMODATION

### **Hanover Cheltenham (Housing & Housing Support)**

Crisis accommodation & housing support  
Cheltenham ..... ph: 9556 5777

### **Southern Directions Youth Services (SDYS)**

Information & support for homeless youth & youth  
in crisis  
Moorabbin ..... ph: 8531 2000

### **South Port Community Housing Group**

Support for young people who are at risk of being  
homeless  
South Melbourne ..... ph: 9696 1128

### **WAYSS Ltd Emergency Youth Accommodation**

Youth crisis accommodation for young people  
Dandenong ..... ph: 9791 5692  
24 hours 7 days

### **Youth Links**

Support for homeless young people  
Noble Park ..... ph: 9547 0511

## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

### **Albert Road Clinic**

*Mental health services*

Melbourne .....ph: 9256 8311

### **Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

*Covers Port Philip, Stonnington, Glen Eira, Bayside & part of Kingston*

Mon-Fri .....ph: 8552 0555

after hours .....ph: 1300 363 746

*Covers Greater Dandenong, Casey, Cardinia, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula & part of Monash & Kingston*

24 hours 7 days .....ph: 1300 369 012

### **headspace**

*Mental health services for young people & their families*

Highett .....ph: 9076 0599

St Kilda .....ph: 9526 1600

## YOUTH DRUG & ALCOHOL

### **DirectLine**

*Counselling, information, referral & counselling on line*

[www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

Melbourne .....ph: 1800 888 236

24 hours 7 day

### **Family Drug Help**

*Service for families and friends of people who use drugs and alcohol*

Carnegie .....ph: 9573 1780

after hours .....ph: 1300 660 068

### **TaskForce Community Agency**

*Youth & adult drug & alcohol services*

Moorabbin .....ph: 9532 0811

### **The Salvation Army Positive Lifestyle Centre**

*Relationship counselling & drug & alcohol programs*

Dandenong .....ph: 9794 9533

### **Youth Substance Abuse Service (YSAS)**

*Services for young people with problems related to their alcohol and/or drug use.*

*Telephone information, counselling & referral*

YSASline .....ph: 1800 014 446

24 hours 7 days

## CULTURALLY DIVERSE SUPPORT

### **New Hope Migrant & Refugee Centres**

*Support to refugees & migrants*

Frankston .....ph: 8781 5900

Oakleigh .....ph: 9563 4130

Prahran .....ph: 9510 5877

### **South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre**

*Support, information & referral*

Dandenong .....ph: 9706 8933

Narre Warren .....ph: 9705 6966

## LEGAL

### **Court Network**

*Information, support & referral services for court users*

Melbourne .....ph: 9603 7433

### **Family Court of Victoria**

*The Family Violence section contains information about personal safety, useful services, family violence and links to other websites*

[www.familycourt.gov.au](http://www.familycourt.gov.au)

### **Women's Legal Service**

*Women's Legal Service is a state-wide community organisation providing free confidential legal advice, assistance & referral for women*

Melbourne .....ph: 9642 0877

## 1300 + 1800 NUMBERS

**1300 - cost of a local call if using a landline.**

**1800 - free call if using a landline.**

# EMERGENCY NUMBERS

## 24 HOURS 7 DAYS A WEEK

### **Emergency 000**

#### **Lifeline**

*Telephone counselling, information & referral service for people needing emotional support*

**ph: 13 11 14**

#### **Suicide Helpline Victoria**

*Crisis intervention & counselling, support & information*

**ph: 1300 651 251**

#### **Kids Helpline**

*Telephone & online counselling for children & young people*

**ph: 1800 551 800**

#### **Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)**

*Interpreting service for people who do not speak English*

**ph: 131 450**

### **Department of Human Services - Southern**

*Child Protection*

**ph: 1300 655 795**

*Child Protection Crisis Line*

**ph: 13 12 78**

### **National Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Line**

*National counselling & referral*

**ph: 1800 200 526**

### **Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service**

**ph: 9322 3555**

**ph: 1800 015 188**

### **The Salvation Army Crisis Contact Centre**

*Services & support to people in crisis*

**ph: 1800 627 727**