

## family violence court support

Outreach workers can **support you when talking to the police** or attending court. Outreach workers provide **court support** at Sunshine, Werribee and Melbourne Magistrates Court.

Outreach workers can:

- ♦ Help you understand what happens in court;
- ♦ Provide information on court processes and legal options;
- ♦ Help you fill in forms (e.g. the application for an Intervention Order)
- ♦ Support you while you are at court; and
- ♦ Provide information and refer you to other support services e.g. lawyers.

## information and referral

The outreach worker can refer you to a range of other services for help. These include centres against sexual assault, children's services, free or low-cost counselling, refuges, housing services, financial counsellors and services for men who use violence and wish to change their behaviour.

If your first language is not English, the worker can use an interpreter and find other services in your own language.

## how to contact us

A family violence outreach worker can be contacted on **9689 9588**.

### OUTREACH SERVICES

|                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Footscray</b> | Women's Health West          |
| <b>Melton</b>    | Djerriwarrh Health Service   |
| <b>Werribee</b>  | Werribee Support and Housing |

## after-hours support

If you need emotional or practical support because of family violence outside working hours, you can contact our after-hours service through Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service on **9322 3555** or **1800 015 188**.



# Family Violence Crisis Outreach Service



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**Supporting women and their children to live free from family violence**

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Phone **9689 9588**  
or visit our website at  
[www.whwest.org.au](http://www.whwest.org.au)

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## our service

Women's Health West is committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of women in Melbourne's diverse western region.

The family violence service provides crisis and short-term support to women and their children to become safe from violence.

## what you can expect

All of our work is based on recognition of the human rights of women and children who may be experiencing family violence.

Women's Health West is a women-centred service. Our priority is to support you to gain more control in your own life. Talk to our workers about what you can expect from our service.

**Family violence is a crime. Never believe that the violence is your fault.**

## you have the right to be safe

First it's important to see the abuse for what it is - behaviour that hurts you. It isn't an expression of love or care.

People use abusive and violent behaviour to get their own way and to control you. This behaviour is often only used against you, and possibly your children, not at work or at the sporting club and often not in public. It is important to realise that you are not responsible. It is not your fault. You have the right to live without fear and abuse and to go to the police and report the crime.

The next step is to seek help, information and support for you and your children to live safely and free of abusive behaviour.

## what is family violence?

Family violence can include a range of behaviours that are not always physical:

**Physical assault** - Kicking, slapping, choking or using weapons against you. All threats of physical violence should be taken seriously.

**Sexual assault** - Any non-consenting (not fully agreed to by both partners) sexual act or behaviour, rape, forced compliance in sexual acts, indecent assault, and forced viewing of pornography.

**Coercion and threats** - Your partner saying they will do something to hurt you, the children, or property if you do not do what they want.

**Intimidation** - Making you afraid with looks, actions and gestures. Strictly defining the roles in the relationship.

**Using children** - Threatening to take the children or to report you to child protection agencies. Using contact visits to harass you or forcing children to relay threatening messages.

**Isolation** - Controlling what you do, who you see or talk to. Smothering you with attention so you can't have contact with others.

**Psychological, emotional or verbal abuse** - Insults, threats or other abuse designed to degrade or denigrate you, including threats to your children.

**Economic abuse** - Controlling and withholding access to family resources like money and property.

## how we can help

Below are some ways we can help you. Many people use a combination of supports before finding something that works and is safe for them.

**Just talking it through with someone else** can help you see the situation more clearly. Friends and family can be of vital support. You can talk to our workers about your situation.

An outreach worker will help you develop a **safety plan** and decide on steps to keep you and your children safe. This plan is especially important if you are leaving, planning to leave or telling the other person about your intentions because it can be a dangerous time. Carefully consider the idea of leaving as it may result in increased threats, violence and watching over you.

Our workers can provide crisis support if you decide that change is needed. This includes **emotional and practical support** with income, accommodation, counselling and support for your children.

You will also be provided with **information about your legal rights and options**. Family violence is a crime. You have a right to report the violence to police. You may not have to leave the family home to be safe. An intervention order excluding the violent person from the family home may be the right option for you.

**You and your children have the right to live free from violence and fear**

**PLEASE CALL THE POLICE ON 000 IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER**