



Domestic Violence

every connection matters™



What is Domestic Violence?

According to the Australian Medical Association, "Domestic Violence is an abuse of power. It is the domination, coercion, intimidation, and victimisation of one person by another, through physical, sexual, or emotional means, within intimate relationships."

Domestic violence is recognised as a public health crisis in Australia. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, on average, one woman every nine days is killed by a partner. One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One in five Australian women have experienced sexual violence. One in six Australian women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former partner, and one in four Australian women have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

Supporting Someone Experiencing Domestic Violence

From these statistics, it's likely someone you know is experiencing and/or is impacted by domestic violence. If you suspect an employee, colleague, or loved one is experiencing domestic violence, and you would like to raise your concerns, here are some considerations to support a conversation with them.

Prepare to have a personal conversation, as it can be difficult and may raise strong emotional reactions. Ask yourself, "Am I prepared for distress, upset, and/or anger", "Am I aware I can not fix the situation and/or make decisions on their behalf," and "Am I conscious of my purpose and role in supporting another?". Being prepared in this manner allows you to be present and attuned to the individual and conversation. It also allows you to be curious and interested in what is being shared with you, as opposed to worried and concerned about "what next" or "what if".

Find a private, safe space to raise your concerns.

Share your observations with them. Be conscious of the language you use. Present your observations in a non-judgemental, label-free, and open manner. Sharing your observations is a way of opening up the conversation and gaining greater insight and awareness into their experience and where they are at, as opposed to forcing your opinion, perspective, or needs onto them.

Respect and appreciate they are the experts on themselves, their situation, and their safety. Listen carefully and seek guidance from them as to what support they need from you.

Refrain from giving advice and acting on their behalf. It's important they have a sense of control over their engagement in the conversation and the consequences of their engagement. Safety is paramount and often measured by your response, specifically:

- Do you believe them?
- Are you interested in understanding their world and their experiences?
- Do you respect that they know best about themselves?
- Do you appreciate that their choices and actions serve to keep them and their loved ones safe?

Provide knowledge of support available, such as the EAP, and how to access the support, where welcomed.

If you need to upline and/or report any information shared with you, be clear about the need to do so. Ensure to provide an opportunity for them to be active in this, perhaps with your support. If they deny the experience of domestic abuse, do not pressure them to engage further. Simply reiterate the availability of your support.

If you or someone you care about is experiencing domestic violence, the following services may be of support:

Acacia EAP: 1300 364 273
MensLine: 1300 789 978

1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732
Lifeline: 13 11 14

AUS 1300 364 273 SMS 0401 33 77 11
NZ 0800 000 657

www.acaciaconnection.com
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acacia EAP
employee assistance program