



awareness & safety

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Beryl Women Inc.

P 02 6230 6900

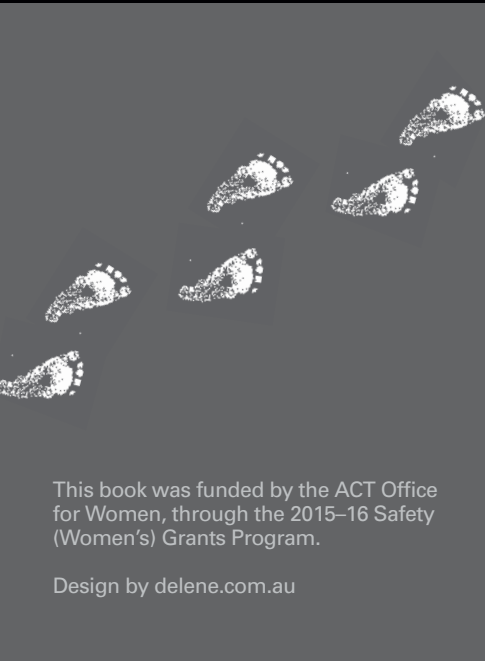
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Artwork by a child at the Refuge.



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Design by [delene.com.au](http://delene.com.au)



## Beryl works on Ngunnawal land

We wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the land we work on.

We pay our respects to the Elders both past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. We remember that the land we work on, was and always will be traditional Aboriginal land.

## Introduction

Beryl Women Inc. operates within a feminist framework and aims to empower women and children to live a life free from violence and abuse.

Beryl provides a professional, accountable, trauma-informed specialist DV service, which is based in social justice and feminist principles, and recognises and fosters cultural diversity. Beryl has an ongoing commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, and women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in crisis.

## Getting support



Not everyone understands domestic violence and the dynamics which occur in an abusive relationship. Be aware of individuals who are dismissive of your needs and concerns or discount or minimise your experiences. Trust your instincts and if you do not relate well to the person or feel they are not taking your issues seriously seek support elsewhere.

Many women seek support and information from their GP or from other community based agencies that provide counselling.

Counselling or attending a group can assist you to understand your experience of violence and the effects of violence on you and your children. Counselling, however, cannot help you to change him or identify strategies to stop him being violent.



# What is Domestic Violence?

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**Threats and Intimidation:** are ways to try and control you and make you feel powerless and afraid, including destroying possessions, following you, threatening to suicide or harm/ take the children.

**Verbal abuse:** Includes, swearing, shouting, put-downs, name-calling, and using sarcasm to destroy your sense of self.

**Physical abuse:** Includes pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, strangulation, hair-pulling, punching etc. and can involve the use of weapons including guns, knives or other objects.

**Emotional abuse:** Behaviour that deliberately undermines your self-esteem and confidence, leading you to believe you are stupid, 'a bad mother', useless, going crazy or are insane.

**Social abuse:** Includes isolating you from your social networks or supports either by preventing you from having contact with family and friends or by verbally or physically abusing you in public or in front of others. It may be continually putting friends and family down so you slowly disconnect from your support network.

**Economic abuse:** Results in you being financially dependent. It includes being denied access to money, including your own, demanding that you and the children live on inadequate resources. It can also include being forced to sign loans and being responsible for debts that you have not incurred.

**Sexual abuse:** Includes a range of unwanted sexual behaviours including forced sexual contact, rape, forcing you to perform sexual acts that cause pain or humiliation, forcing you to have sex with others, or causing injury to your sexual organs.

**Cultural and Spiritual abuse:** Includes ridiculing or putting down your beliefs and culture, preventing you from belonging to, or taking part in a group that is important to your spiritual beliefs, or practising your religion.

**Separation violence:** Often after the relationship has ended violence may continue, this can be a very dangerous time for you because the perpetrator may perceive a loss of control and may become more unpredictable. During and after separation is often a time when violence will escalate leaving you more unsafe than previously.

**Stalking:** Includes loitering around places you are known to frequent, watching you, following you, making persistent telephone calls, emails, texts and sending mail including unwanted love letters, cards and gifts.

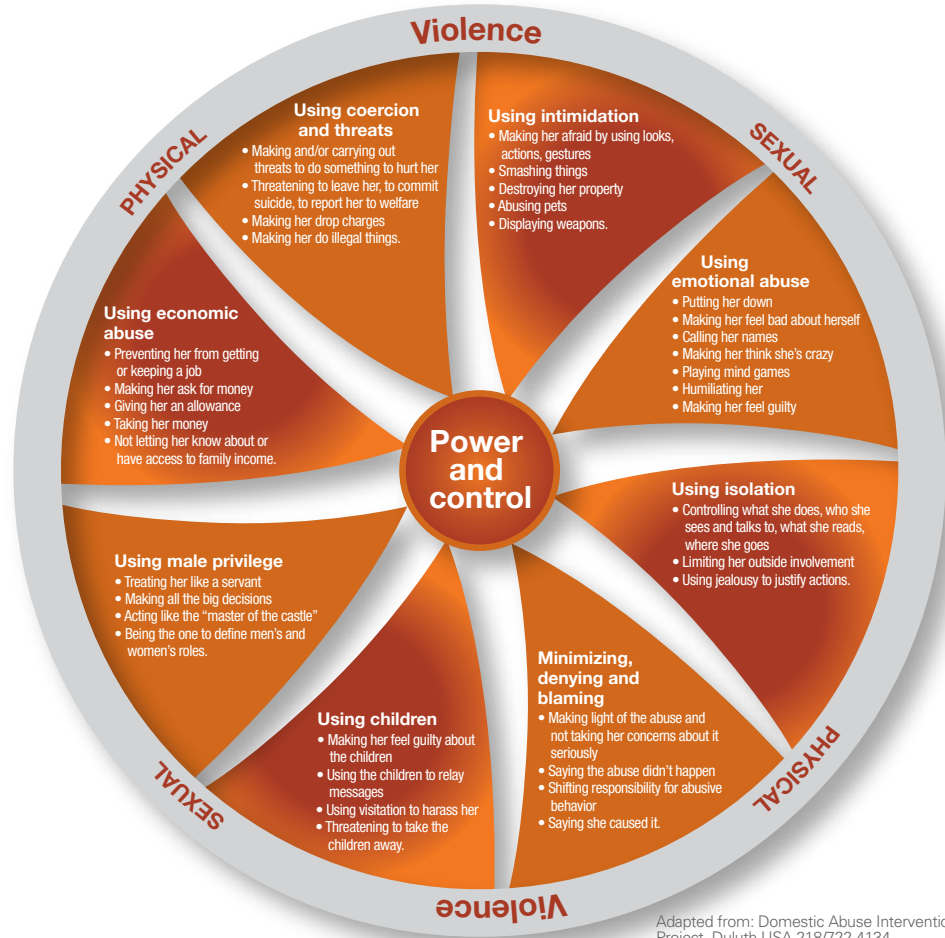
**Cyber Abuse:** The use of social media, emails or technology to stalk abuse or intimidate you. It might include posting pictures, videos or information about you.

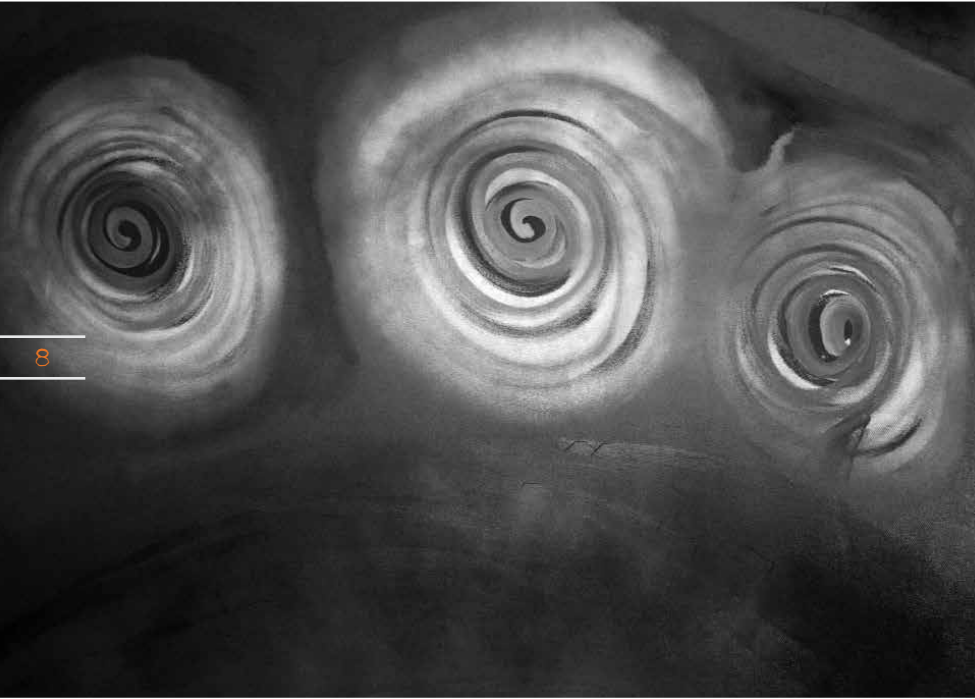
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# Power & control

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Domestic violence generally occurs as a pattern of behaviours that are linked by power and control. This means that one person in the relationship intentionally and deliberately rules by fear, suppresses the others free will, intimidates, coerces and threatens to or actually does harm to the other, as a way and means to control or have power over them.





Painting 'Ocean Dreaming' by Maurice Shipp.

## Effects of domestic violence

Domestic violence can have a significant impact on your health and well-being both in the immediate and longer term, continuing even after the relationship has ended. The psychological consequences of violence can be as serious as the physical effects.

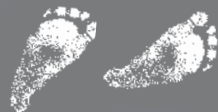
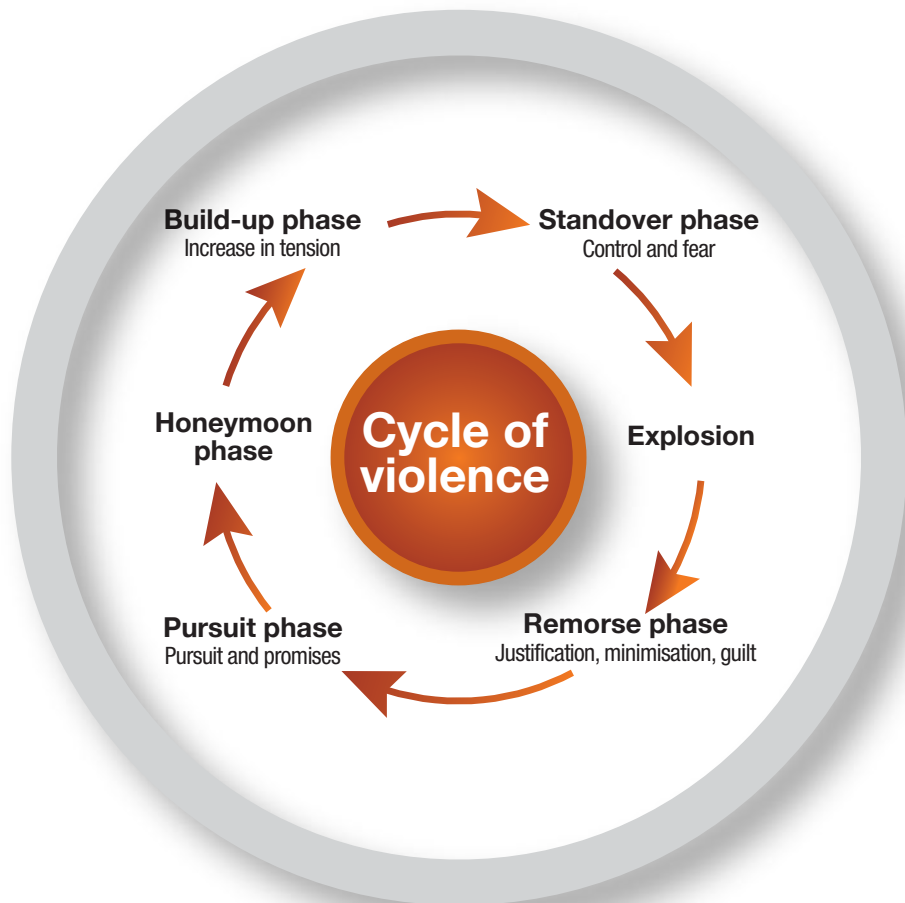
They may include:

- physical injuries—such as cuts, scrapes and bruises, fractures, dislocated bones,
- hearing or vision loss,
- miscarriage or early delivery,
- sexually transmitted diseases,
- stress related illnesses,
- depression,
- anxiety
- sleep disturbances,
- confusion,
- low self esteem,
- concentration difficulties,
- feelings of helplessness,
- alcohol and substance use/ misuse,
- hypervigilance, and
- difficulty making decisions.

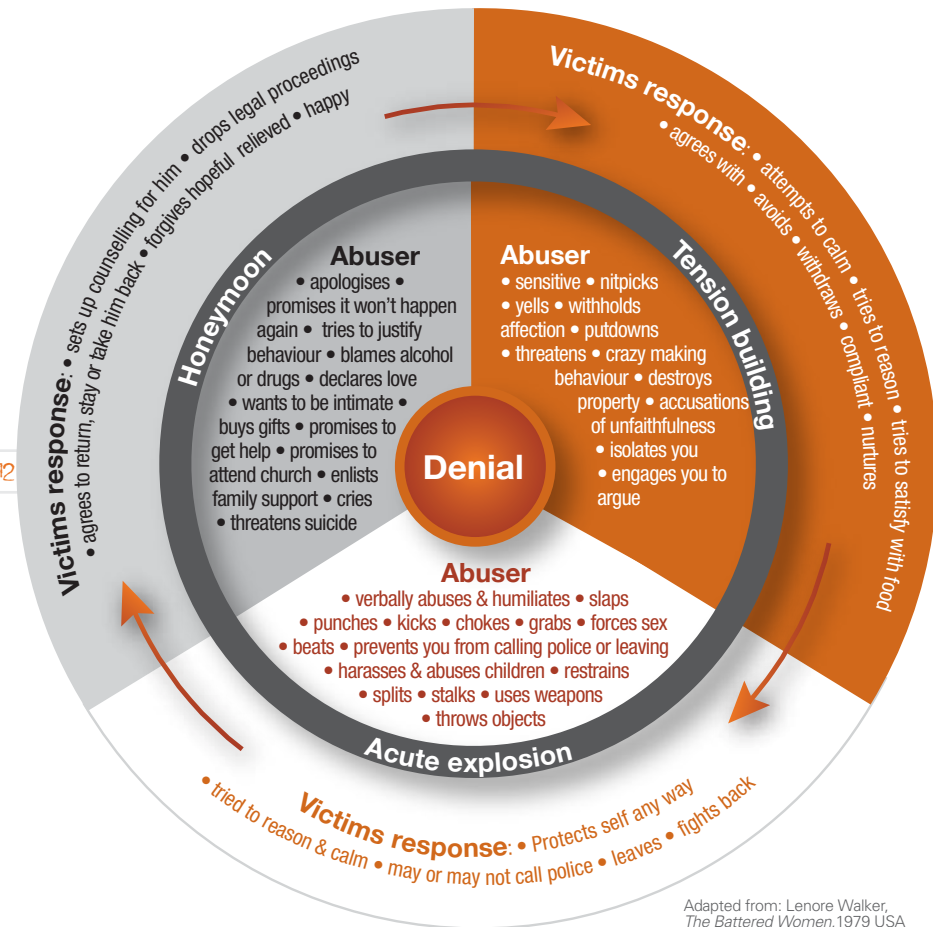
# The cycle of violence

Many people who experience domestic violence describe the abuse that they endured as happening in a cycle, meaning that there seems to be a pattern that occurs.

Not all women experience the cycle of violence in the same way and a cycle can take place in a day, a week or over months. Some people may experience some stages of the cycle or not at all.







Adapted from: Lenore Walker,  
The Battered Women, 1979 USA

**The Build-up phase:** Tensions escalate, abuse increases and behaviour is often volatile and unpredictable.

**Stand over phase:** The perpetrators behaviour escalates. You may feel frightened, that you are walking on egg shells and that anything you do will only worsen the situation.

**Explosion:** The explosion stage marks the peak of the violence or violent episode.

**Remorse phase:** The perpetrator may feel ashamed or remorseful about what they have done. They may retreat from the relationship and/or attempt to justify their actions.

**Pursuit phase:** In this stage the perpetrator may promise that they will never be violent again. They may become attentive, making promises to change or seek help, give gifts and seek your commitment to the relationship and to them. They may try to rationalise their behaviour, blame work or other stress, or offer to make changes or stop using drugs or alcohol.

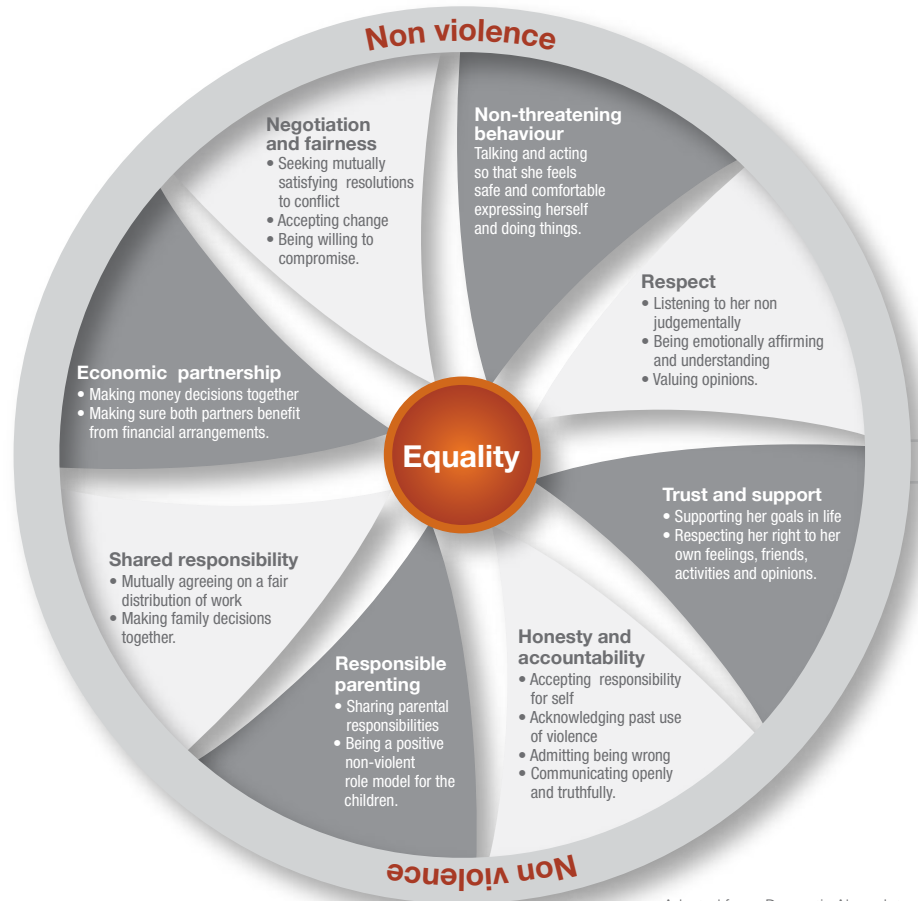
**Honeymoon phase:** Both the victim and perpetrator in the relationship may now be in denial about the abuse and may have re-committed to the relationship. They may both choose not to consider the possibility that violence may occur again. After some time the honeymoon phase will end and the cycle will begin again.



# Healthy relationships

In a healthy relationship power is shared equally between both parties, neither partner has to be in control of the other. Trust and love is built by equality between the couple.

Both parties feel comfortable, safe and are treated with respect; there is never abuse or violence in the relationship.



# Effects of domestic violence on children

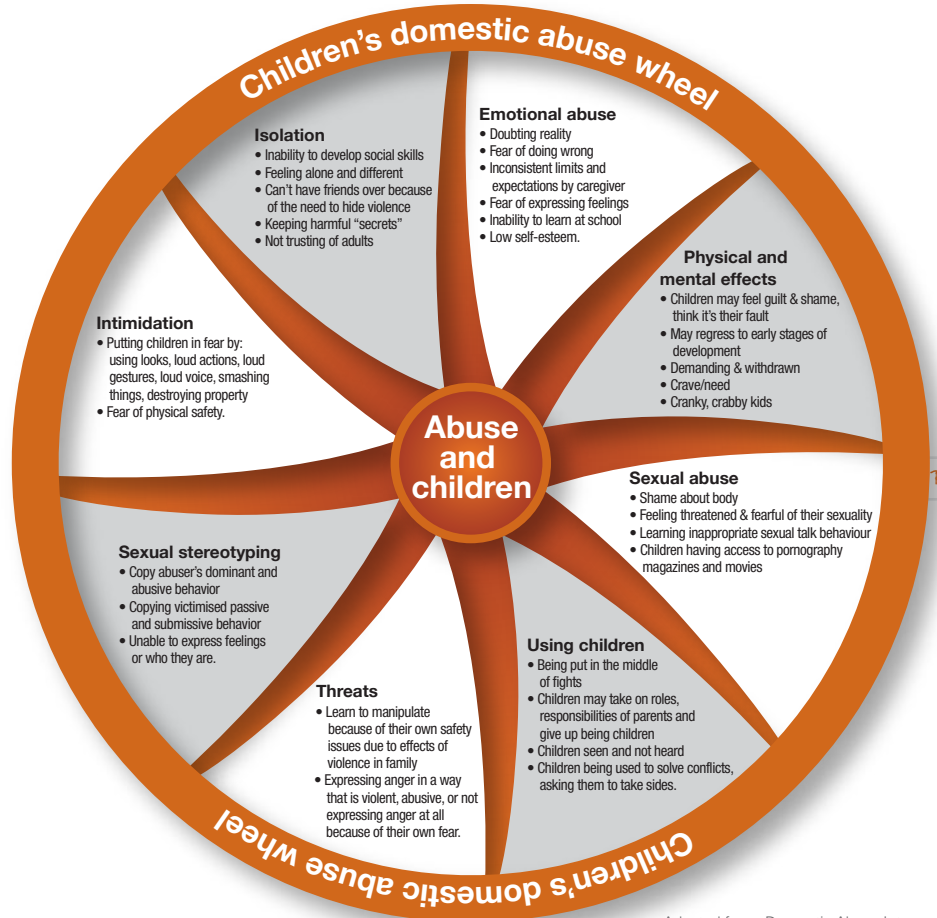
The effects of domestic and family violence are experienced by all family members. Children who witness violence experience the same fear, intimidation and threat to their safety that you experience.

Children can be witnesses to violence, experience the violence and may be co-opted into perpetrating violence. Studies show that children who witness domestic violence are more likely to:

- Display aggressive and/or socially inappropriate behaviours
- Have diminished self-esteem and self-worth
- Have poor academic performance, problem solving skills and concentration
- Show emotional distress, phobias, anxiety or depression
- Have physical illness or concerns

As a consequence of the violence they may:

- Avoid having friends over in case violence occurs
- Be distrusting of adults
- Feel guilt, shame and feel responsible for the violence and for stopping it
- Learn inappropriate behaviours
- Copy the aggressive behaviour of the perpetrator
- Learn to comply, keep quiet and not express feelings
- Learn to keep secrets and 'keep up appearances'.



## Impact of domestic violence on parenting

When domestic violence occurs in a family there is an impact on the mother and child relationship. As a mother your confidence in your parenting abilities and your connection with your children may have been negatively affected.

The way that you mother and nurture your children may have had to change in order to keep your children and yourself safe.

In order to rebuild your relationship with your children you can:

- Work at keeping the channels of communication open by being present and listening to their concerns
- Let your children know that you love them
- Take time to do fun things as a family
- Model non-violent problem solving techniques
- Reinforce positive behaviours
- Encourage and support your children if they want to get counselling
- Design a safety plan with your children.

## Leaving a violent relationship

After living with domestic violence your self esteem and self-confidence may be low. Women may leave and return a number of times before they are able to leave permanently.

It is important to realise that leaving does not always mean you will immediately become safe. In fact you may be in the greatest danger from your partner's abuse at the time of separation. Any attempt to leave should be planned with the safety of you and your children in mind.

It is important to remember that whilst the challenges may seem overwhelming, many women have been able to leave abusive relationships and go on to have safe, healthy, happy fulfilling lives for themselves and their children.



For many women leaving a relationship does not mean the end to the violence and abuse. The violence may escalate and can take on different forms.

It is important to understand that whilst you can take steps to avoid violence, you cannot stop the violence. The only person who can do that is the person who is violent.

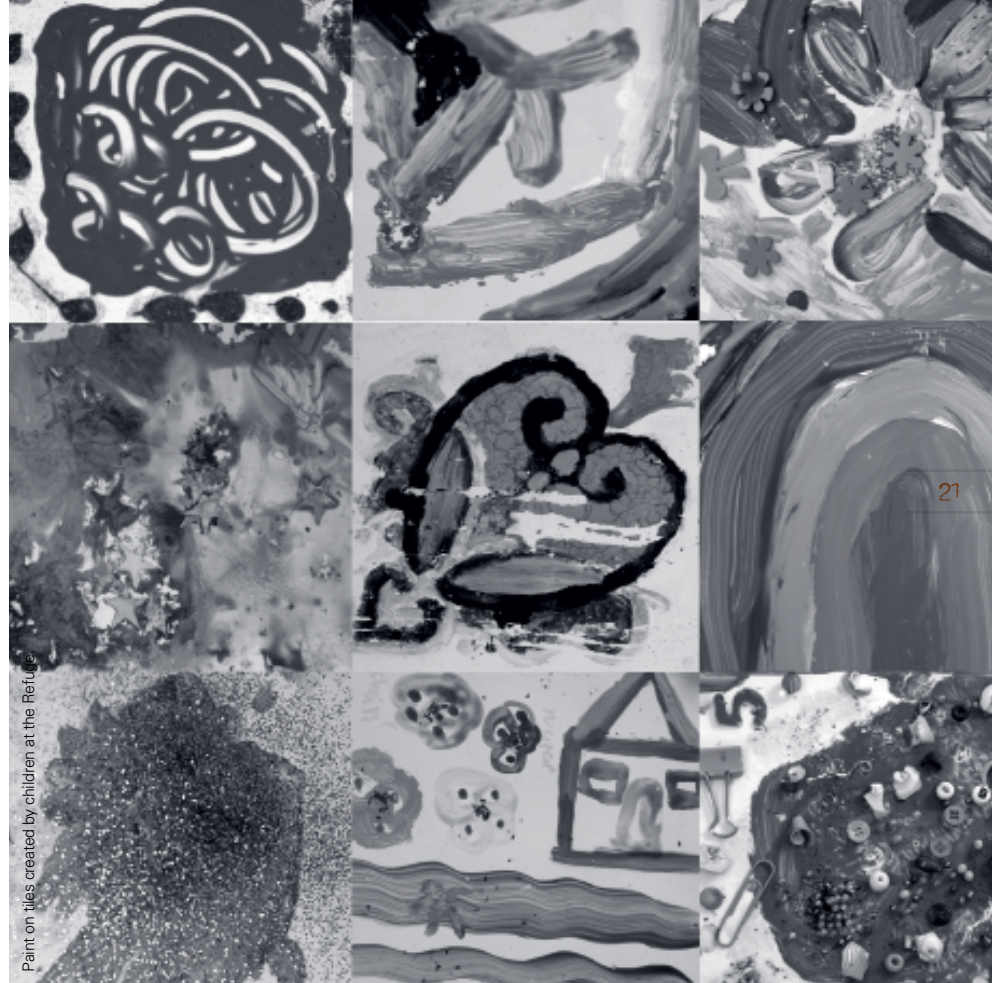
## Safety planning

If you have decided to leave or have already done so, it is important that you have a safety plan to assist you and your children to be and stay safe.

If you have left it is always important to review your safety plan and ensure that it is still relevant to you and your circumstances.

For your safety plan to work it is vital you don't let your partner see the plan, but it is a good idea to talk about it with someone you trust that is close to you.

Your partner may have a sense that something has changed, or may be about to change. It is important that you attempt to keep to your usual routines and activities.



Paint on tiles created by children at the Refugee

## Before you leave:

- Plan where you could go to be safe such as friends, family or a women's refuge. Always try to take the children with you.
- Only tell friends and family you are sure you can trust of your plans.
- Arrange your transport in advance, a lift from a friend or book a taxi
- Ask your GP to carefully note any evidence of injuries on your records.
- Keep a small amount of cash to make emergency calls, key cards, house keys, essential medications and important papers together in a place where you can get them quickly or have someone else retrieve them. You may wish to have a copy of these left with someone you trust.

- If you do leave you can request police to accompany you back to the house to retrieve your personal possessions. Do not put your safety at risk to retrieve property or possessions.
- Make a list of personal papers and items you need to take with you.



## Some items to remember...

- Birth certificates for yourself and children
- Marriage certificate
- Domestic Violence Protection Order
- Family Court Orders
- Passports for yourself and children
- Drivers licence
- Insurance policies
- Taxation, employment and
- Income documents
- Centrelink card or number
- School Records
- Medicare card or number
- Bank account numbers and statements
- Bank Cards, cheque books, credit cards
- Department of Immigration & Citizenship documentation
- Medical records
- Medication
- Leases or mortgages
- Car registration papers
- Jewellery
- House keys
- Phone numbers in case you cannot take your phone

# Refuge Accommodation

Once you have made the decision to leave, contact Beryl Women Inc on **02 6230 6900**. They can discuss short-term and long-term accommodation options available for women who experience domestic and family violence in the ACT.

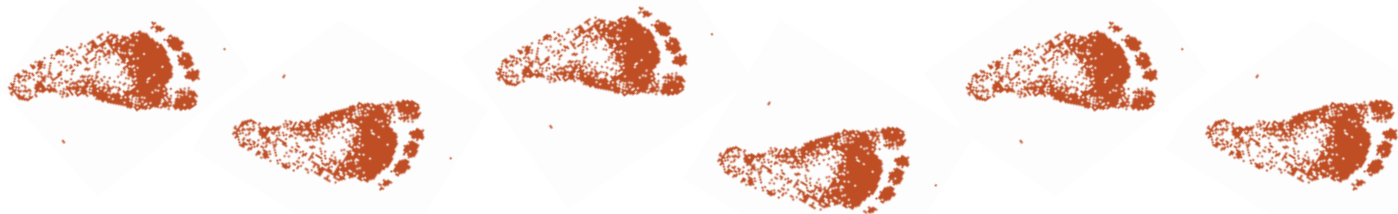
For emergency accommodation because of domestic and family violence, contact the Domestic Violence Crisis Service on **02 62800900** (24hr) to discuss your options.

## Specialist DV services

Refuge accommodation is crisis accommodation. Beryl Women Inc. has available a combination of accommodation styles which range from *share* accommodation to *stand alone* properties and all are fully furnished.

We provide culturally appropriate support to women from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to women from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Beryl provides a range of support services to women and their children who have experienced domestic/family violence. We assist women and their children to remain safe, minimising risk wherever possible. We support you to start a journey of healing free from violence, while also addressing your emotional and practical needs and the issues arising from the violence.





## After you have left

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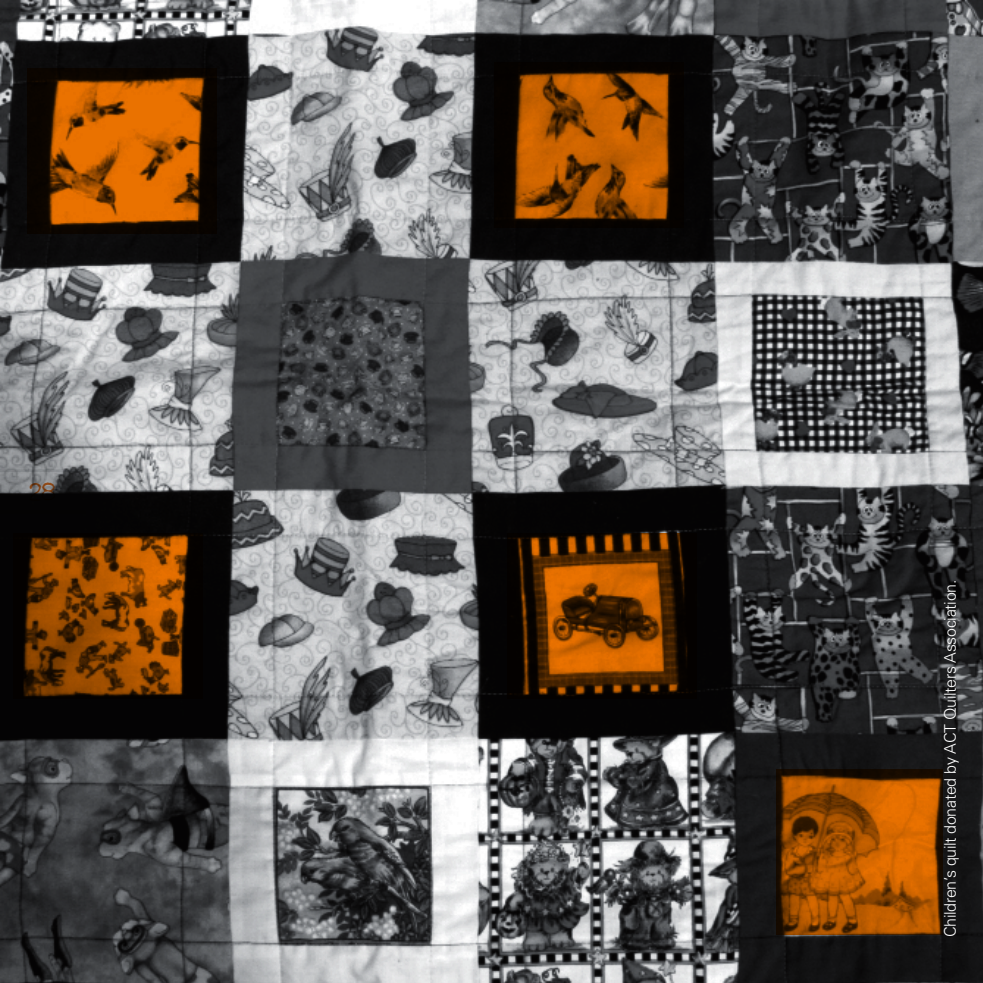


- Do you have a current Domestic Violence Order? Are the conditions relevant to you and your current situation? Do you need to have it amended or varied? If it is from another State in Australia or New Zealand and you want it to be recognised in the ACT, you will need to have it registered in the ACT.
- Inform your children's school and/or child care centre who has permission to collect your children. If you have family court orders a copy may be left with the school.
- Arrange for your mail to be redirected to a post office box instead of your new address if you have moved.
- Consider reviewing your banking and postal arrangements.
- If possible try not to frequent places where you used to go. Use different shops and banks to those you used previously.
- Increase security on your house or unit

- Plan for extra safety between where you park your car and entering your home, e.g. an automatic garage door opener, safety lighting or removal of shrubs or trees in the area.
- Change the locks on your house and ensure the windows are secure. Have security chains fitted to all entry doors and make sure they are used at all times when the door is answered by you or your children.
- Arrange for your phone line to have calling number display/caller id and arrange for a private unlisted number.
- Keep a mobile phone with you at all times and pre-program any numbers you might need in an emergency; including the Police and DV Connect (1800 811 811 — 24 Hour Refuge Referral Line).
- Vary your travel routes to and from work.
- Tell neighbours that your partner does not live with you and ask them to call the police if he is seen near your house or if they hear an assault occurring.
- Tell your employer if you have a protection order and ask for your telephone calls at work to be screened.
- If your ex-partner breaches the protection order, telephone the Police and report the breach. If the Police do not help, contact your advocate or a legal service for assistance to access support with making a complaint.
- Contact the Australian Electoral Commission and ask for your name and address to be excluded from the published electoral role.
- Contact Centrelink or the Family Assistance Office to notify them of your change in circumstances.
- Attend a woman's domestic violence support group or counselling to help you grow stronger and understand what has happened to you.

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Children's quilt donated by ACT Quilters Association.

## Safety...

### Maintaining your privacy and safety

#### Keeping your new location private and undisclosed

For some women who have left a violent relationship may choose to keep their new contact details private. This may increase their sense of safety and security.

If this is what you want, it is important that you explain this to all the people that you share your new details with and ask that they respect your need for privacy.

You may choose to use a post office box address for your mail and on documents. You can also apply to have your address withheld on the electoral role.

## Making your home more secure

There are a number of general security precautions you can take to protect you and your property.

### Keys

- Never leave spare keys outside your home (eg. in pot plants)
- Don't have personal details such as your name, address and telephone number on your keys
- If someone contacts you saying they have found your keys, ask them to drop them at a police station

### Windows and doors

- When returning home, it's always good to have a look around before opening the front door to ensure no one is watching you
- If your windows are fitted with locks, ensure you use the locks when going out and at night.

- If no locks are in place, put wood dowel in windows to stop them being slid open.
- Check that you have locked your door when you go out and when you return home, especially when you are at the back of the house.
- Do not leave messages on the front door. It lets people know whether you are home or not.
- Don't have parcels delivered to your front door, use a PO Box, this provides additional security
- Keep cash and valuables out of sight
- Always check your peep hole to identify anyone at your door
- If possible, have deadbolts installed on all external doors
- Place sliding bolts on man holes so it can't be accessed by the roof

### Yards, gates and cars

- Make sure you keep the yards secure by ensuring all gates are shut and/or locked. The rear and sides of homes are often targeted because of low visibility
- Ensure you always lock your car when you leave it.
- When you get into your car, it's always a good idea to check that no one is in the back seat. Then lock the car once you are in the drivers seat.
- Keep any valuables out of sight

If you are renting a public housing property, request a security up-grade under their Domestic and Family Violence Policy, the Domestic Violence Crisis Service or Beryl Women Inc. can assist you in this.

## Staying safe on social media

Keeping your details and whereabouts restricted can be difficult especially if you use social media to share information or photos.

To avoid unintended sharing of information about you on social media such as Facebook:

- Do not have location services switched on in your phone or ipad or any other device that you use to photograph, make calls or send messages
- Ensure your privacy settings are set appropriately on Facebook so that you cannot be tagged in photos without your permission and your posts shared to people you do not want
- Revisit privacy settings weekly or monthly as these features are updated regularly

- Do not accept friend requests from people you do not know or do not know well
- Speak to people that you are friends with on Facebook and tell them what you want and block people who are not willing to meet your requests
- Logout every time you access Facebook and do not share your passwords with anyone
- If you are really concerned, take a break from Facebook for a while
- If you have children or teens using social networking or gaming websites, talk to them about whom to friend, help adjust their privacy settings and be aware of their online activities.
- Consider creating a new profile using non-identifying information and an image such as a flower, a sports team logo or other image as your profile picture

## Safety tips for smartphones

Your mobile phone is an important safety device. We suggest you have your phone fully charged and with you at all times. However, your phone can also be used to track your location, to listen in on your conversations and to eavesdrop on your text messages and emails.

### Some tips to help you stay safe:

- Lock your smartphone and do not give the PIN to anyone.
- Turn off the GPS (location settings) on your phone and Facebook.
- Turn off Bluetooth on your phone when not in use.
- Avoid buying or using a 'jail-broken' phone as this phone will be more vulnerable to spyware.

- Talk to close friends and family members; ask them to have their phone on standby in case of an emergency call. You may want to have a 'safe' word/phrase to let them know you're in trouble.
- Memorise the numbers for Beryl Women Inc: 6230 6900 and Domestic Violence Crisis Service: 6280 0900, and those of your close friends and family members.

Remember, your phone is usually the first casualty in a violent struggle. If you got to a pay phone, would you be able to phone a friend?

Smart phones with internet capability are the most vulnerable to being used to spy and monitor you. Spyware can be installed on a smart phone with relative ease and will enable another person to track calls,

location, conversations, emails and browsing history. Spyware can also turn your phone into a microphone, allowing the perpetrator to hear everything you're saying... even with the phone turned off.

If you are concerned that your phone has spyware installed take the phone to your telephone service provider and ask them to investigate for you.

If you do want to be certain that a conversation is not recorded or overheard you should remove the battery, if possible, from the phone or leave it at another location.

Old fashioned mobile phones without internet capability are still available and cheap and allow you to receive and make calls and are not able to be tracked or hacked.

If you suspect that your partner is monitoring you, DON'T suddenly change your phone or computer habits. For example, don't erase your entire browsing history on your computer. Instead, you can browse for jobs, housing or DV support in 'incognito' mode, meaning that internet sites you visit will not show up on your history. You can temporarily go 'incognito' by pressing **CTR SHIFT N** on your computer.

## Choosing to stay and being Safe

You and your children's safety is extremely important regardless of whether you choose to leave or stay in the relationship. Women make the decision about staying in or leaving relationships for many different reasons. Some women may choose to stay in a relationship as they consider it to be the safest option.

A specialist Domestic Violence service can work with you to increase your safety while you are still residing with your partner. The service will be respectful of your choices and if you seek support you will not be pressured to do anything that you are uncomfortable with.

The service will work with you to plan for the safety of you and your children and to understand the

dynamics of a relationship in which domestic violence occurs.

It may be helpful to think about and develop a safety plan in advance so that if at any time you decide to leave, you are prepared.

For your safety plan to work it is vital you don't let your partner see the plan, but it is a good idea to talk about it with someone you trust that is close to you.

It is important to understand that while you can take steps to avoid violence, you cannot stop the violence. The only person who can do that is the person who is using violence.

## Safety plans

Make a plan to assist you to avoid serious injury during a violent incident. Some of the following may help.

- If possible leave the situation
- Know the easiest escape routes from the house doors, windows etc.
- Plan where you will go in advance.
- Have a safe place to stay organised in advance.
- Identify a neighbour you can ask to call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your house. Develop some sort of a code or signal between you so that they will know you are in danger.
- Teach your children to phone 000 and practice what to say.

- Have the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Crisis Service number 02 6280 0900 memorised or in a place that is easy to find. This service provides refuge referral and 24 hour support.
- Call the Police as soon as it is safe to report the incident. The police can also support you to access safe accommodation for you and your children.

Children may also need a simple safety plan so they know what to do when domestic violence is occurring, this could include:

- Warning children to stay out of the adult conflicts.
- Decide ahead of time on a safe place the children can go when they feel unsafe.
- Teach children how to use police and other emergency phone numbers.
- Making a list of people the children can trust and talk to when they are feeling unsafe (neighbours, teachers, relatives, friends).

## Acknowledgements:

This booklet is based on material from:  
*The Purple Book* created by the Domestic Violence Prevention Center Cold Coast Inc;  
*Safety Planning Around Technology* by the Domestic Violence Crisis Service Canberra;  
and *A guide for Survivors of Domestic Violence or Dating Violence* from WESNET.

Beryl Women Inc.

