

FAMILY VIOLENCE:

The choice is yours!

WHAT WE KNOW

Intimate partner violence is responsible for more ill-health and premature death in Victorian women under the age of 45 than any other of the well-known risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity and smoking. We know that family violence has a significant negative impact on children and other family members. We also know that women are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence and are overwhelmingly more likely than are men to be the victims of this form of violence.

We know that family violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour through which a person seeks to control and dominate another person and can include physical violence, sexual violence, making threats, verbal abuse, name calling and controlling another person's financial and social circumstances.

Family violence affects men too. Some men experience family violence from other men in the family and occasionally from women. Men who use violence often destroy what they really want in their lives – love, intimacy, trust and respect from others, as well as their self-respect.

We know that men can change. We know that with support, men who use family violence can change if they are prepared to take responsibility. By taking responsibility, we can have respectful relationships.

WHAT DOES A RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP LOOK LIKE?

- Being honest
- Taking responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- Supporting the needs of others without ignoring your own needs
- Communicating respectfully by listening attentively and speaking calmly
- Sharing the load and the decision making
- Not needing to have the last word

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The starting point is to recognise that how we behave is a choice that we make. Although we may feel like we “snap” or “just go off”, ultimately we are responsible for our behaviour, the damage it can create and the choices we have made. Like other negative behaviours, we learn to use family violence and because it is learned, we can also learn new behaviours: respect, responsibility and non-violence. There is support available that can help you change.

MORE INFORMATION

Men's Referral Service
www.mrs.org.au
1800 766 491