



INTIMO AWARE

What is Domestic Violence?

A Definition

Domestic and family violence is any behaviour or behaviours used by one person to establish and maintain power and control over another person in the domestic or family situation or relationship, and which causes the victim to live with fear.

It is a form of bullying and is a significant health, social and economic issue for the Australian community.

Types of Behaviour

Power and Control

Domestic violence is not the same as an argument or relationship conflict. A 'fair fight' can never take place if one partner is fearful of the other. Domestic violence is used to maintain power and control over another person. Controlling behaviours such as possessiveness, jealousy, put downs and threats are often evident before a relationship becomes physically violent.

Social Abuse

Isolating from others - restricting social life and making it difficult for to have friends and maintain social contact with family.

Physical Assault

Hitting, slapping, pushing, grabbing, kicking, pulling hair or threatening physical harm, breaking things, punching walls or driving a car dangerously.

Verbal Abuse

Insults, name calling and swearing

Economic Abuse

Taking control of the finances and limiting the amount of and access to money and funds.

Psychological and Emotional Abuse

Constant criticism and put downs, sulking, ignoring, humiliation.

Sexual Abuse

Demands and forcing a person to participate in acts they do not wish to perform.

Incidence

Australia

Due to the sensitive nature of the issue of domestic violence, it is difficult to accurately measure the incidence of domestic violence as it often goes unreported. However in 1996, the Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted a national survey¹, which found that 23% of women who have ever been married or in a de facto relationship has experienced physical violence from a male partner.

Worldwide

Similar results have been reported in New Zealand and other developed countries. According to the World Health Organisation, in every country where reliable, large-scale studies have been conducted, results indicate that between 10% and 50% of women report they have been physically abused by an intimate partner in their lifetime².

References

1/ Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996) *Women's Safety Australia*.

2/ World Health Organisation (2001) *Violence Against Women* Fact Sheet