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# N E S A

## FAMILY VIOLENCE PROJECT



● TOOLBOX TALKS  
● KIT FOR MANAGERS  
● AND TEAM LEADERS

# Disclaimer.

All information in this kit was current at the time of publication, 23 August 2017. Users should be aware that changes to policy and to the service landscape may be ongoing, but the fundamental principles presented in this kit remain relevant.

This kit refers to web-based content from a range of external providers for further reading. Wherever possible, sources have been selected that are funded by Australian, State or Territory governments. NESA gives no guarantees as to the accuracy of the material hosted on third-party sites.

This guidance is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of employment services providers' obligations. This kit must be read in conjunction with employment services providers' obligations and any relevant guidelines or reference material issued by Department of Employment under or in connection with employment services.

This kit is not a substitute for legal advice.

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# How to use it.

This kit contains the scripts and resources for you to deliver six peer-learning discussions on different topics related to family violence as it affects job seekers. Each session follows a [GENERAL FORMAT](#), and can be run in 10-15 minutes, so that they can be added as agenda items to your regular team meetings. You might have other ideas about how to conduct these peer-learning sessions, such as during induction training or at a staff training day. That's fine, too. Just remember that the best way to see this learning translate into practice is to keep reinforcing it, so if you do try to cover several discussions in one session you should plan to revisit the information again later. A good idea might be to use part of your general induction to tell your staff about the Toolbox Talks and the resource kit, and show them where to access material for any of the Talks they might have missed out on.

These Toolbox Talks have been designed to be led by a team leader or a manager. This is so that staff understand that the content being presented is endorsed by your organisation. This doesn't mean you have to read the script word for word or deliver the entire session solo; you can invite input from all team members and might choose to delegate particular tasks in the delivery of each session. You may recognise that you have some team members who are particularly skilled or experienced in working with clients experiencing family violence, who may be in a good position to share their skills and knowledge through delivery of parts of these Talks.

There are six Toolbox Talks, but after the first one they can be done in any order. You might know of a current issue affecting several job seekers on your team's caseload.

If that is the case, prioritise that Toolbox Talk and its Team Action Plan. Come back to the other Toolbox Talks at a subsequent session; you never know when some of these other issues might also arise for your team.

Most of the Toolbox Talks provide links to other material; either resources that have been developed through the NESA Family Violence Project or from an external source. This should help your team identify what resources are available to support their clients, and how they relate to what they have learned. Family violence is a big and complex topic, so further reading is sometimes recommended, but never required in order to be able to meet the learning outcomes for each session.

**GENERAL FORMAT**  
Refer to page 8



# Key pointers.

## PREPARE FOR YOUR TOOLBOX TALK



Before each session, prepare for your toolbox talk. Make sure you:

- have copies of case study handouts – these are able to be printed double-sided with the case study and questions on the front and the answers on the back.
- have checked any of the linked content so that you can explain how it relates to the topic and how your team can use it.
- know your organisation's internal policies, any employment services providers' obligations set out by the Department of Employment and any legislative requirements on any of the issues that are flagged in the discussion, such as incident reporting, work health and safety, etc.

# Key pointers.



Be aware that some of your staff may have personal experience of family violence, either currently or in the past, and that discussion of this topic in the workplace could be difficult for them. Ensure that all staff feel supported, without feeling they have to disclose any part of their own experience. Offer debriefing and/or access to your Employee Assistance Program to any staff who feel upset by the material, in accordance with your organisation's policies. The 1800Respect (1800 737 732) national hotline is also available to provide information to assist workers who wish to discuss any issues related to supporting people experiencing violence.

Don't assume that a staff member who has personal experience of family violence will be great at spotting it or reacting to it in others. If a staff member is too distressed by these talks to participate, firstly ensure their safety and wellbeing, then consider other ways to support them in learning this material and providing service to clients. [THIS VIDEO](#) from Futures Without Violence can also give you some ideas for good practice in supporting an employee who is experiencing violence.

**FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE VIDEO**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdNbnUAVFT4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdNbnUAVFT4)

# Toolbox Talks: The general format.

## Why are we talking about this?

Each session starts with this question, so that the immediate relevance to your team's day-to-day work is made clear at the outset.

## What do we need to know?

Each session starts with this question, so that the immediate relevance to your team's day-to-day work is made clear at the outset.

- ⊕ There is less focus on statistics and more on key elements of good practice.
- ⊕ You might like to revisit these points with your team in other settings to keep them front of mind, such as during supervision or case reviews.

## What does it mean for our clients?

Each Toolbox Talk has one or more case studies (depending on the topic) that the team can read and then discuss. These are included as a handout attached to each Toolbox Talk.

- ⊕ It is suggested that you print copies for your team to work from during the meeting.
- ⊕ You can choose whether to break your team into smaller groups, or to work through the case study all together.

Case studies are based on real examples given by providers, but have been altered to protect individuals privacy.

Learning points are highlighted in the case study.

- ⊕ Ask your team to consider the questions posed.
- ⊕ Guidance for team leaders is included around how to manage this part of the discussion.

## What will we do as a team?

Each Toolbox Talk provides a suggested action plan for your team to follow on from the discussion and build on what they have learned.

- ⊕ As a group, you can decide which actions to follow and who will do them, or you can come up with your own actions based on your team's specific circumstances.
- ⊕ Family violence is a heavy topic. It's a good idea to end each discussion by giving your team a sense that there is something they can do about it.



# TOOLBOX TALK 1

---

INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY  
VIOLENCE

## INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ Today we are having an introductory discussion about family violence. It is going to give us the foundation for the peer-learning sessions, or Toolbox Talks, that we will be holding over our next few team meetings.
- ⊕ It's important to talk about family violence because it might affect many of our clients. All of the Toolbox Talks have been designed specifically to help us think about how we can best support job seekers who are experiencing or have experienced violence.

### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ Family violence can affect anyone. While it's most commonly perpetrated by men against women, it's also true that men, women and non-binary people can be perpetrators or victims. Anyone can be a perpetrator or victim regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, location, cultural background, employment status, sexuality, age, disability or relationship status. In our work, we need to meet each client where they're at, so we need to make sure we don't assume anything about them based on their gender or any other characteristics.
- ⊕ When we talk about family violence we are also including domestic violence and intimate partner violence. Each of these definitions has a specific meaning, but in general we're looking at actions which are violent, threatening, coercive, controlling or intended to cause the family or household member to be fearful. **It can include physical, verbal, emotional, sexual or psychological abuse, neglect, financial abuse, stalking, harm to an animal or property, restricting the victim's spiritual or cultural participation, or exposing children to the effects of these behaviours.** You can see that it's much broader than physical violence, and that's because different perpetrators can use many different means to intimidate and control their victims. People affected by family and domestic violence can live in fear for themselves and their family, even when they've left a violent relationship.
- ⊕ A lot of work is done by the [DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES](#) to support and inform people experiencing family violence of their options, but that doesn't mean we as employment services providers don't also have a role to play. Quite often, a person experiencing violence might not disclose for some time, until they feel they can trust the person they are working with. If that happens in the context of employment services, we become "first responders" and need to make sure that we help our client feel safe and supported, even if it also means that we'll be referring them to the Department of Human Services or another service for more specialised help. This approach to working with people who are experiencing or have experienced violence or other forms of abuse is sometimes called a "trauma informed approach." You don't have to be a family violence specialist or a social worker to help a person feel supported after they have made a disclosure to you.

## INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

- ⊕ Experiences of family violence affect employability, and so have a direct impact on our ability to place job seekers in sustainable roles. Many people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence cycle in and out of employment, and might have employment gaps. This is true for victims as well as perpetrators, and either of these could be in our client group.
- ⊕ Over the next few Toolbox Talks we'll get into these issues in more depth. We'll also talk about the specific ways that jobactive and other employment services programs can support job seekers experiencing family violence, your wellbeing when you support these clients, and specific issues that arise when clients from certain cultural or other social groups experience family violence.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

You could check in with your team at this point and see if they have any priorities for the next Toolbox Talk, and decide the order that you will go through them together.

### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence)

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you have printed enough copies of the case study before you start the session.

## What does it mean for our clients?

In every Toolbox Talk that we do, there'll be a case study like the one that we're about to look at. These are all based on real stories from jobactive providers, but none of them are a direct re-telling of a specific client's story, and will apply more broadly to job seekers in other employment services programs for the most part.

Let's read the story of Mandy on the handout, and then go through the discussion questions together. Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you're not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect confidentiality of any clients whether or not they might have experienced family violence.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to remind staff about your organisation's policies and resources around staff wellbeing if they have found this discussion challenging or upsetting. You could also consider notifying HR that your team will be discussing family violence, in case any of your staff want to talk to someone but feel uncomfortable discussing their concerns with you.

## INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

### What will we do as a team?

Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.

When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

#### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet.

### Suggested activities.

Find out who our local specialist domestic and family violence service is, so that we know who we can call if we ever need advice on how to help one of our clients;

Order some "Family and Domestic Violence: It's Time to Say Enough" brochures from the [DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES](#) that we can display in our waiting area, so that clients know that we take family violence seriously;

Find out more about trauma-informed approaches from the [BLUE KNOT FOUNDATION](#), the Commonwealth Government's [MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ONLINE DEVELOPMENT](#) portal, or the [NSW EDUCATION CENTRE AGAINST VIOLENCE](#);

Check our internal policies and procedures so that as a team we're clear on what we need to do if we're working with a client experiencing Family Violence;

Read the [KEY FACTS ON FAMILY VIOLENCE](#) and consider how they might relate to the people that we are supporting.

**MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ONLINE DEVELOPMENT** [www.mhpod.gov.au/assets/sample\\_topics/combined/Trauma\\_and\\_Mental\\_Health/objective2/index.html](http://www.mhpod.gov.au/assets/sample_topics/combined/Trauma_and_Mental_Health/objective2/index.html)

**NSW EDUCATION CENTRE AGAINST VIOLENCE** [www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au/online-shop/posters-cards/trauma-informed-approach-to-dvrs-a1-poster/](http://www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au/online-shop/posters-cards/trauma-informed-approach-to-dvrs-a1-poster/)

**KEY FACTS ON FAMILY VIOLENCE** Refer to Resource 8

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES** [www.humanservices.gov.au/community/order-products](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/community/order-products)

**BLUE KNOT FOUNDATION** [www.blueknot.org.au/ABOUT-US/Our-Documents/Publications/Practice-Guidelines](http://www.blueknot.org.au/ABOUT-US/Our-Documents/Publications/Practice-Guidelines)





# Toolbox Talk 1

## Case Study Handout

### M A N D Y

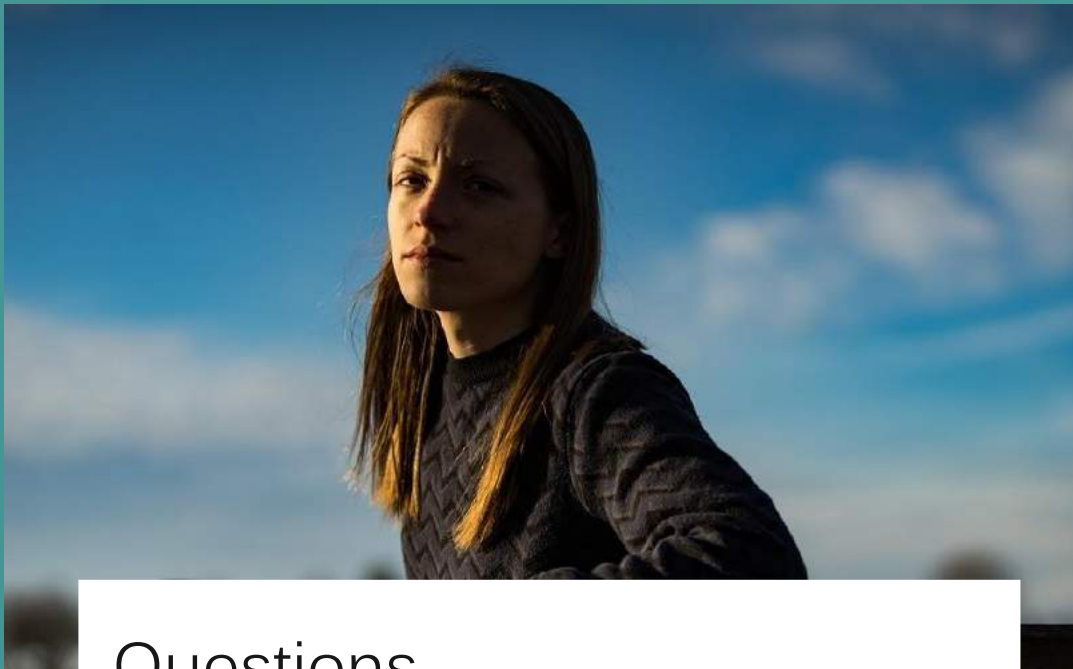
Mandy is a 29 year old single mother of two children, Nate (8) and Paul (5). Since Paul started school this year, Mandy is now looking to re-enter the workforce. She does not have much employment history, as she has not worked since Nate was born. Before that, she was completing a qualification in Business Studies and working in office administration. Once she became pregnant, the boys' father, Simon, told her that she wouldn't need to work anymore because he would look after their family. Mandy and Simon separated two years ago, but are still in contact to arrange access for the boys and their father.

You have been working with Mandy for two months. She has been early to all of her appointments and has seemed very engaged in working with you to create a Job Plan that will work for her. She is keen to get back into office administration as the first step on the road to her returning to her studies and becoming an Office Manager.

At today's appointment, you noticed that she seemed apprehensive about the placement option that you told her about. This was a surprise to you, because up until now she has seemed very keen to start work. When you asked her what her concerns were about the placement, she said at first that she didn't think she would be able to handle the commute. When you proposed solutions to the commuting issue, she stated that she still didn't feel this placement was right.



## TOOLBOX TALK 1



### Questions

- 1 There could be a lot of other reasons that Mandy might not feel right about this placement, but thinking about our discussion on family violence, what might some of those reasons be?
- 2 If Mandy and Simon are separated, does that mean that she should be able to move on from whatever might have happened in their relationship? Why might she still be concerned now?
- 3 What would you do if you were working with a job seeker who seemed apprehensive or fearful about a particular placement?

# Answers

1 There are many reasons why Mandy might not feel right about a particular job. In a family violence context, she could be worried about Simon harassing her at work, her workplace not being able to protect her from Simon turning up, having a public-facing role, being in a location where he might be able to find her, being in a role where he might see her talking to other men, having to work hours that upset his access to the children, or another issue that is specific to the workplace.

2 In fact, post-separation is commonly a time when family violence can escalate, as the perpetrating partner tries to increase their control over the victim. We'll learn more about this in the [TOOLBOX TALK ON VICTIMS AND WITNESSES](#).

It may be that Simon is being increasingly abusive on the occasions when he's in touch with Mandy, such as to arrange access. From the case study, we can also see that he had some strong views about gender roles in the family, so he could be actively trying to stop Mandy from working so that she and the boys remain dependent on him.

TOOLBOX TALK ON VICTIMS AND  
WITNESSES

Refer to page 17



## INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

3 We can't jump to the conclusion that every job seeker who turns down a job is a victim of family violence. What we can do is talk to our clients about concerns they have, and involve them in trying to find solutions.

In this case, it might not be appropriate for us to ask Mandy if she was experiencing violence unless she had given us other reasons to suspect it. We can still keep communication lines with her open, so that she knows she can trust us if she feels ready to ask for help later. This would be consistent with the trauma-informed approach. In the meantime, we can also talk to her about the kinds of jobs or workplaces that would feel right for her, and suggest ways that her potential employers might be able to be flexible with duties, hours of attendance, time to attend appointments and so on.

If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.





# TOOLBOX TALK 2

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## VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE



### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ We need to talk about victims and witnesses of family violence because there is a high likelihood that we are supporting them on our caseload. They might have experienced violence in the past and still be struggling with its effects, or they might be experiencing violence currently.
- ⊕ We're talking about both victims and witnesses because we might have responsibilities to act in certain ways, such as making child protection notifications, depending on our client's situation.
- ⊕ It's also important to think about how employment services and your role can support a victim or witness of family violence. Today we will think about ways that we can support a victim, including to stop cycling through unemployment. We will also have a talk about the limits of our professional role, and which other services we might need to refer to or call on for our clients to get specialist help.

### What do we need to know?

- ⊕ As we discussed in the [FIRST TOOLBOX TALK](#), victims of family violence can be of any gender, and can have any familial relationship to the perpetrator. The majority of victims are women and intimate partner violence is the most common form of family violence. Lots of victims' services work from a perspective that family violence is a gendered crime, but they can still help you if you need to find support for someone experiencing another form of family violence.
- ⊕ The experience of family violence can be incredibly stressful and distressing for the victim. They may feel shame, hurt or fear, and may find that these feelings interfere with their ability to concentrate on tasks in other areas of their life. They may feel responsible for the violence, which may be as a direct result of the perpetrator blaming them for it, and could feel as though they need to 'walk on eggshells' to prevent another incidence. In addition, they may feel the need to protect others in their family from the perpetrator.
- ⊕ In Australia, about 40% of all incidents of family violence are witnessed by children<sup>2</sup>. The impact of witnessing violence can be traumatic, and many children experience trauma associated with living in a home characterised by violence, even if they don't directly witness it. That's why in some states and territories exposure to family violence must be reported to child protection services. There's information in the resources attached to this kit about [MANDATORY REPORTING AND CHILD PROTECTION](#) in each state and territory. Beyond mandatory reporting, you can make a report or notification about a child you're concerned about even if your concern doesn't meet the mandatory reporting threshold or you're not a mandatory reporter. **It is safer to over-report than under-report.** There are some tips on [WHAT TO SAY](#) to your client if you think you need to make a report in the resources attached to this kit.



## VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

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- ⊕ So why don't victims just leave? There can be many reasons. Because family violence is about control, the victim and possibly also the witnesses are in a position where they have less power than the perpetrator, and the act of trying to leave may be made very difficult by the amount of control the perpetrator has over the victim's life. A victim's access to money and other resources could be limited by the perpetrator, who could also work actively against the victim receiving support from friends, family or services. The impact of violence on the victim can also lead to feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth, which can affect employability and the ability to earn money to fund their escape. Some victims may be fearful of seeking help because the perpetrator could find out; they might monitor the victim's phone calls and texts, or might go through the victim's bag and find pamphlets or other information. For these reasons, it's often important to involve or consult with a [SPECIALIST DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE](#) when providing support to a victim, to ensure that the strategies you use will help the victim stay safe.

There are other reasons that a victim may stay with a violent perpetrator. They may be planning to leave but the time might not be right yet. Or they may not wish to leave. A victim can love a perpetrator and believe in their promises that they will change. The [CYCLE OF VIOLENCE](#) can mean that many victims and perpetrators experience good times together between violent incidents, known as a 'honeymoon phase,' and a victim may hold onto the hope that the good times will return. In cases of escalating violence, the cycle may accelerate, with less time between explosions and with shorter or non-existent honeymoon phases. Victims in this scenario may be incredibly fearful of upsetting the perpetrator, or may have difficulty understanding that the violence is not their fault.

- ⊕ In our role, we must respect the victim's choice. A good strategy is to keep communication about the violence open, and keep offering information about options in case something changes for the victim. Most victims will appreciate the fact that you didn't just forget about the violence after the first time they turned down an offer of assistance, and that you recognised that it's a significant and ongoing part of their experience. The tip sheet on [WHAT TO SAY](#) gives some pointers around how to have this conversation in a respectful way that keeps your client engaged.
- ⊕ A common pattern for victims of family violence is the effect that it can have on their employability. A person who's currently experiencing violence may find the stress of their home life has a significant impact on their ability to concentrate at work, which could be exacerbated if the perpetrator regularly contacts them during their shift or has made threats to come to their workplace and make trouble. In addition, the impact of the violence could lead to absenteeism through the need to seek medical attention, conceal injuries or attend court dates.

## VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

- ⊕ Workplace support for concepts like domestic violence leave is still new in Australia, and many victims who have come to employment through a service like jobactive may be reluctant to disclose what is going on at home to their employer. An employee experiencing violence who either doesn't seek or doesn't receive support from their workplace could end up resigning because the stress of dealing with the violence plus work is too great, or could lose their job because of perceived issues with their attendance and performance. This is why we see victims of family violence cycle through unemployment. Putting in the right supports early in their journey with us could help to break that cycle, and could help the victim achieve financial independence and freedom from violence. For example, we may be able to offer Post Placement Support to provide further assistance to job seekers once they have entered employment.

**TOOLBOX TALK 1** Refer to page 12

**MANDATORY REPORTING** Refer to Resource 2

**WHAT TO SAY** Refer to Resource 6

**SPECIALIST DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE** Refer to Resource 1

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you have printed enough copies of each case study before you start the session.

## What does it mean for our clients?

- ⊕ This topic has two case studies, Melissa and Trevor. We can split into two groups to discuss and then report back, or we can work through both as a whole group. Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you are not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect confidentiality of any clients whether or not they might have experienced family violence.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

**RE MELISSA** - The examples given at question three are general ideas for good practice, but your team structure may mean that particular members have different ways that they would respond to this case study, depending on their role (e.g. employment consultant, case manager, psychologist, etc).

**RE TREVOR** - The intention of question three is to get the group thinking about what personal qualities they might display that help clients feel trust. Team members might share examples that they have seen from each other's practice here too.

It is a good idea to remind staff about your organisation's policies and resources around staff wellbeing if they have found this discussion challenging or upsetting. You could also consider notifying HR that your team will be discussing family violence, in case any of your staff want to talk to someone but feel uncomfortable discussing their concerns with you.

## What will we do as a team?

- ⊕ Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.
- ⊕ When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet

## Suggested activities.

Read more and report back about the victim experience at the [DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTRE VICTORIA](#);

Look on [1800RESPECT](#) for useful contacts and referral options;

Find out about our local family violence interagency network and nominate a team member to attend;

Learn more about the cycle of violence at the [BRISBANE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE](#) or [PENRITH DV HELP ONLINE](#);

Read about [SAFETY PLANNING](#) and the kinds of work that a family violence worker or social worker can help a victim with;

Review the Dawn House [SAFETY PLANNING BOOKLET](#) to understand the steps our clients might need to take (note, all contacts listed in this booklet are for the Northern Territory only, we might need to find equivalent contacts for our state or territory)

Consider what assistance, including post placement support we could provide to assist job seekers to maintain their employment.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTRE VICTORIA**  
[www.dvrcv.org.au/stories](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/stories)

**1800RESPECT** [www.1800respect.org.au/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/)

**BRISBANE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE**  
[www.bdvs.org.au/resource\\_files/bdvas/IR\\_5\\_Cycle-of-violence-factsheet.pdf](http://www.bdvs.org.au/resource_files/bdvas/IR_5_Cycle-of-violence-factsheet.pdf)

**PENRITH DV HELP ONLINE** [www.dvhelppenrithregion.nsw.gov.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=107](http://www.dvhelppenrithregion.nsw.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=107)

**SAFETY PLANNING** [www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/staying-safe-understanding-safety-planning/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/staying-safe-understanding-safety-planning/)

**SAFETY PLANNING BOOKLET** [www.dawnhouse.org.au/safety-planning-booklet](http://www.dawnhouse.org.au/safety-planning-booklet)

## Toolbox Talk 2

### Case Study Handout

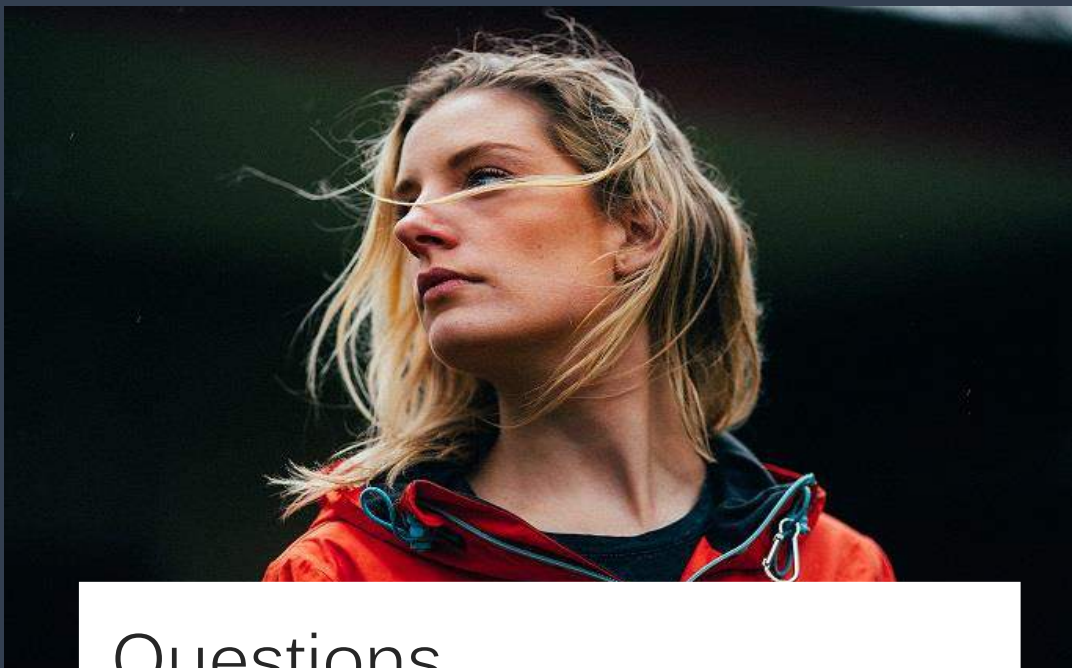
#### MELISSA

Melissa is 35 years old and was recently referred to you. Her employment history includes work across several jobs in office administration, hospitality and retail, generally with a few months' gap between each job. Melissa completed Year 12 seventeen years ago, and has a Certificate IV in Food and Beverage Operations. She has no other disclosed barriers to employment.

At each appointment she has attended so far, she has presented as committed to working and has told you that she wants to set a good example for her teenage daughter. She comes across as highly organised. At times she seems chatty and slightly anxious.

In today's appointment, Melissa has combed her hair over her face and is more withdrawn than usual. She agrees to everything you suggest, and only gives short answers to any questions that you ask. She avoids eye contact with you. At the end of the appointment, her partner Gary is waiting for her at the door. Afterwards, you notice that she has left the printed information that you gave her behind.

## TOOLBOX TALK 2



### Questions

- 1 Melissa is experiencing family violence. What were the clues in her story?
- 2 Why do you think her presentation was so different today?
- 3 How will you conduct her next appointment? What do you need to do between now and then?



## Answers

- 1 There were several clues in Melissa's story that she might be experiencing family violence. Taken in isolation, most of them would not be enough to lead to a suspicion of violence on their own, but together they build a picture. This is what a lot of our work with victims may be like.

Some of the signs that Melissa is a victim of violence were: her employment gaps despite no known barriers to employment; a demeanour that is highly diligent and slightly anxious (this could be a sign of hypervigilance, which is a common response to traumatic stress); her changed presentation including efforts to conceal parts of her appearance; her withdrawn presentation, as though she just wants to get the appointment over with; the fact that she has been escorted to her appointment and her partner has remained on site; her decision to leave the support information you gave her behind, which could have been so that Gary would not find out what you had talked about.

- 2 We can only go from the information presented in the case study, but that is similar to the way that we can only base our assessments of what is happening for our clients on what they present to us. Based on what we can see here, it seems likely that Melissa and Gary have had a recent violent explosion in their cycle of violence. Whereas prior to this the tension may have been building and Melissa's hypervigilance may have been a part of her attempt to keep everything together and prevent another outburst from Gary, it seems that today's appointment has happened soon after an outburst. It is also possible that another outburst may be on its way, as Gary's attendance at the appointment could indicate that he is trying to control Melissa in some way. He may also be trying to stop her from seeking help or reporting his behaviour.

- 3 Because Melissa's changed behaviour at the last appointment gave us a strong reason to suspect that she was experiencing family violence, we must ask her about this, and depending on her answer we may need to refer her to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) and possibly make a child protection notification. The [WHAT TO SAY](#) and [WHAT TO DO](#) tip sheets attached to this resource can help us use the right words and ensure that we are working in a trauma-informed way, and the resource on [CHILD PROTECTION IN EACH STATE AND TERRITORY](#) can give us guidance on whether or not to report (remembering that it is always better to over-report than under-report if we are concerned). In preparing for the next appointment, you should ensure that you have the support you need from your manager, and prepare information that you can share with Melissa about her options, even if she tells you that there is no violence.

If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

**WHAT TO SAY** Refer to Resource 6

**WHAT TO DO** Refer to Resource 6

**CHILD PROTECTION IN EACH STATE AND TERRITORY** Refer to Resource 2

## VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

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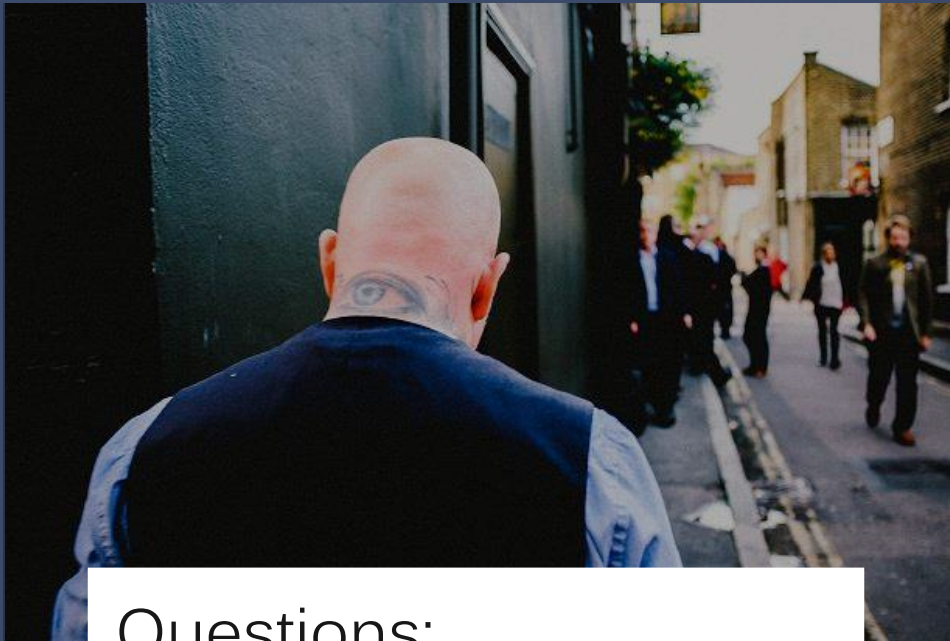
### TREVOR

Trevor is 46. He has been a client of your service for two years – none of his job placements last long enough for him to be exited. He is a qualified engineer, but was laid off when the local plant closed six years ago and has not had stable employment since.

You took Trevor's case over from another worker about three months ago, and in that time you have managed to build a good rapport with him. Last month, he told you that he thinks the real reason he can't maintain a job is because his home life is so stressful. Since then he has mentioned a few things about the way that his wife, Monique, talks to him and makes him feel small and ashamed. He has also told you that she sometimes yells until she is hoarse.

In today's appointment, Trevor seemed more agitated than usual. When you ask him if anything is wrong, he tells you that he can't take Monique's abuse anymore. He says he doesn't know what to do because he can't leave her, but fears that if he stays he may "lose it" and do something he may regret.

## TOOLBOX TALK 2



### Questions:

- 1 How do you need to respond to Trevor? (clue: he is a victim, not necessarily a perpetrator, but he has made a serious statement to you as his worker about his fear that he may become violent if things do not change)
- 2 What referrals could you make that might keep both Trevor and his wife safe?
- 3 What is it about you that helped Trevor feel he could open up and trust you with his story?



## Answers

1

Hearing a client say they are worried about harming themselves or someone else is always serious and needs to be treated as such. You would need to tell Trevor that you are taking his statement seriously, and then ask him some follow up questions to assess the level of risk to both Trevor and Monique and determine what you need to do next. The tip sheet on [WHAT TO SAY](#) and the flow chart on [WHAT TO DO](#) are both resources that can help you do this.

Remember, in this scenario Trevor is a victim of family violence and he is speaking out of fear and frustration. It's important to continue to work with him in a trauma-informed way and to avoid blaming or criticising him. The fact that he's told you this means that he's asking for help, so you need to reinforce for him the fact that you'll work together to get that help. You could also tell him about the other people that you're going to involve in getting that help, whether that includes your manager, another service or the Police.

You will also need to document your response to Trevor, including any referrals that you make.

If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

WHAT TO SAY Refer to Resource 7

WHAT TO DO Refer to Resource 6



## VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE



2

A good point of contact when finding supports for a person in this position is your local specialist family and domestic violence service. Some services only work directly with women, but even if that's the case they will be able to help you find the right support for Trevor as well. [1800RESPECT](https://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/) or the [STATE-WIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINES](#) can also offer consultation to workers, to help you plan how you will support Trevor and find out what other local supports are available.

Since Trevor has disclosed that he is experiencing domestic violence, you should refer him to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance, and to other services appropriate to his current needs. Depending on Trevor's answers when you ask him for more details about his thoughts about killing his wife you might also call the Police on 000. If you do need to do this, the best option is to involve Trevor in making the call so that he can maintain a sense of control over what is happening following his disclosure.

3

This question gives you an opportunity to reflect on what you do well as a worker and how you build trust and rapport with your clients. Talk with your team about good examples you've seen in each other's practice.

**1800RESPECT** [www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/](https://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/)

**STATE-WIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINES** Refer to Resource 1

**JOBACTIVE GUIDELINES**

<https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/mutual-obligation-requirements-and-job-plan-guideline>



# TOOLBOX TALK 3

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PERPETRATORS OF  
FAMILY VIOLENCE

## PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ Perpetrators have rights to service through our program. Some of them may not disclose to us, but some might, particularly if they have a protection order in place which affects their employability.
- ⊕ We need to remember when we are working with perpetrators of domestic violence that we must treat them with the same respect as any other client. This does not mean that we condone their violent or abusive behaviour, towards family members or anyone else.
- ⊕ An important part of reducing and preventing family violence is holding perpetrators accountable for their actions. There are ways that we can do this within jobactive and other employment services programs.

### What do we need to know?

- ⊕ Perpetrators of family violence don't all fit within one stereotype. Perpetrators may exhibit difficulties with anger management in other areas of life, or they could be highly functional in settings outside the home. Perpetrators can be any gender, and can be violent or abusive towards partners, children, parents or other family members, as well as pets, or they may perpetrate against only one person. Their behaviour can impact other family members and witnesses.
- ⊕ Perpetration is about control. As such, perpetrating violence can involve a range of controlling or coercive behaviours such as emotional blackmail, threats, withholding money, stopping the victim from seeing friends or other family, stopping the victim from accessing support and more. Even if there is no physical violence, any of these behaviours can amount to family violence.
- ⊕ There are many factors which can contribute to a person becoming a perpetrator of domestic violence. Some of these include similar issues to the non-vocational barriers to employment that many of our clients face, such as mental health disorders or a history of trauma. This does not mean that all people with these issues will become perpetrators of family violence or that all perpetrators will face these types of barriers. In our work, it is important that we never appear to accept a perpetrator's reasons for continuing violence.

## PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

- ⊕ One factor that is highly associated with violent perpetration is unemployment. In domestic homicides<sup>3</sup> in Australia, over 50% of offenders are unemployed. This is likely due to extreme stress associated with the offender's self-image as an unemployed person; they may feel like a failure, like they are unable to provide for their family, and in men who identify strongly with gender roles they may feel emasculated.
- ⊕ An employment outcome for a perpetrator or would-be perpetrator can be one of the best protective factors against family violence. We can have a direct role in prevention if we can support job seekers who are perpetrators or who are at risk of perpetrating to gain sustainable employment in jobs where they feel valued. We can develop Job Plans that address vocational barriers as well as non-vocational barriers which might also be contributing to their violent behaviour, such as behaviour-change programs, anger management, counselling or psychology.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you have printed enough copies of the case study before you start the session.

## What does it mean for our clients?

- ⊕ Let's read the story of Eddie on the handout, and then go through the discussion questions together. Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you're not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect confidentiality of any clients whether or not they might have experienced family violence, including perpetrators and witnesses.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Make sure your team knows the correct avenue for debriefing within your organisation, whether it's through line management, HR, Employee Assistance Program or another mechanism.

## What will we do as a team?

- ⊕ Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.
- ⊕ When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet.

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<sup>3</sup> Domestic homicide is the term used to describe murder that occurs in a context of domestic or family violence. This is family violence at its most extreme, and while most cases of family violence will not escalate to this point, the association between unemployment and extreme forms of family violence should be considered. There were 1,088 domestic homicides in Australia in 2010-2012 ([Australian Institute of Criminology](#)).





### Suggested activities.

Read up on the perpetrator experience, tips and specific challenges for providers working with perpetrators at [NO TO VIOLENCE](#) and [MENSLINE](#);

Look at [1800RESPECT](#), [MENSLINE](#) and [MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE](#) for useful contacts and resources;

Find out about local referral options for perpetrators, contact our local specialist family violence service to find out where they would refer male or female perpetrators for help to change their behaviour;

Review our policies and procedures on client support and freedom from abuse to see if they address the needs of clients who are perpetrators of violence, without condoning violence;

Order posters and brochures from [MENSLINE](#), [MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE](#) and [1800RESPECT](#) that we can display in client common areas to show that we do not condone violence but can work with perpetrators who are ready to ask for help.

**NO TO VIOLENCE** [www.ntvmrs.org.au/training-resources/publications/](http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/training-resources/publications/)

**MENSLINE** [www.mensline.org.au/](http://www.mensline.org.au/)

**MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE** [www.ntvmrs.org.au/](http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/)

**1800RESPECT** [www.1800respect.org.au/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/)



## Toolbox Talk 3

### Case Study Handout

#### EDDIE

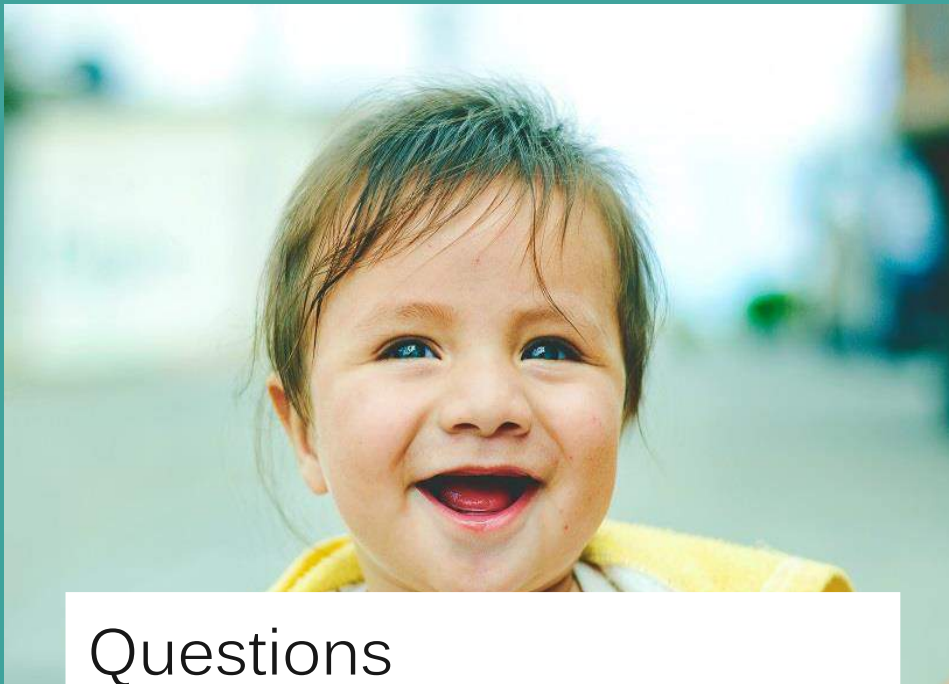
Eddie is 25 years old and lives in his parents' home with his girlfriend, Keira, and their baby daughter, Danae. Eddie completed Year 10 nine years ago and has attempted to get a trade twice, but both times struggled with the course requirements at TAFE. Since withdrawing from his builder's apprenticeship five years ago, Eddie has held a series of labouring jobs, but has often had gaps between them. Currently, Eddie, Keira and Danae are supported by family payments, as Keira will be on maternity leave from her job as an Assistant in Nursing for another four months.

Eddie has come to the jobactive program because he wants to find stable employment now that he is a father. In his appointments with you so far, he has spoken in very loving terms about Keira and Danae, and has also talked about his sense of pressure to "be the provider."

In today's appointment, Eddie tells you that the ongoing wait to land a job is getting to him. He says he has been getting increasingly stressed, the more applications he puts in that go nowhere. He says the stress is making him do "bad things." You suspect that he might be referring to risk-taking or self-harming behaviour, so you ask him to explain what he means. That's when Eddie describes the pattern of violence that he has been perpetrating against Keira, telling you that it started when she was pregnant and has been getting worse. Eddie tells you that when his mum tried to step in the other day, he shoved her so hard that she fell against a wall.



## TOOLBOX TALK 3



### Questions

- 1 It seems like Eddie has a strong sense that his difficulty getting a job is the major factor behind his violent behaviour, because the longer he stays unemployed the worse it gets. How would you respond to him if he told you this?
- 2 With Eddie ready to disclose his status as a perpetrator to you, there is a good opportunity now to start engaging him in supports that will help him end his violent behaviour. What activities might you put in his Job Plan to assist with this?
- 3 In a scenario like this, what do you need to do to manage risk to Keira? What about other family members?

## Answers

1

Remember that we need to treat Eddie with respect as our client. Hearing that a person you are working with is being violent can be very challenging, but in that moment the important thing to do is affirm the fact that Eddie has told you. This is an important step in his getting help to stop the violence.

You might say something like, 'I'm glad you have told me this, because it means we can work together to help you find a way to stop.' Using this kind of statement tells Eddie that you will support him but that you do not condone his behaviour. You can then talk to him about how his Job Plan can be altered to put the right supports in place for him, and explain that a service that specialises in working with perpetrators of domestic violence can help with the psychological aspects of his behaviour while you focus on the practical side of securing a job placement.

If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

2

There are a range of supports that can help a person who wants to change their controlling behaviour and stop violence. The Employment Fund could be accessed to fund mental health, family counselling or anger management services. Some of the best-known supports are telephone hotlines that can provide advice and counselling, such as [MENSLINE](#) and the [MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE](#). These are some of the main services because, even though we know that people of any gender can perpetrate violence, we also know that the perpetrators in the majority of cases are men. Other options include referrals to group anger management programs or counselling, and these can have a range of different eligibility criteria. [1800RESPECT](#) can also help locate appropriate services.

## PERPETRATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE



While it didn't happen in this case study, some perpetrators may be excluded from their homes if the victim applies for a type of intervention order that allows this. This is the victim's right and we would support this action. If we are working with the perpetrator as our client, a constructive response may be to assist them to find new accommodation and remove any major stressors associated with the relocation. They will still likely be angry and/or ashamed about the intervention order, but meeting their immediate needs and then returning to a focus on the task of getting them a job can help redirect the client to improving their situation and stopping violence.

3

There are some differences in each state and territory as to what we can and can't do, as well as what we should and shouldn't do, for Keira, Danae and Eddie's parents. The resources attached to this kit include information about [DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTING, CHILD PROTECTION](#) and [ELDER ABUSE](#) for each state and territory.

As a general rule, following a disclosure of domestic violence it is good practice to ask if anyone will be at immediate risk of harm at the end of your appointment. The resources attached to this kit give you tips on [WHAT TO SAY](#) as well as [WHAT STEPS TO TAKE](#) depending on your client's answers.

MENSLINE [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE [www.ntvmrs.org.au/](http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/)

1800RESPECT [www.1800respect.org.au/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/)

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTING Refer to Resource 1

CHILD PROTECTION Refer to Resource 2

ELDER ABUSE Refer to Resource 3

WHAT TO SAY Refer to Resource 6

WHAT STEPS Refer to Resource 7





# TOOLBOX TALK 4

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FAMILY VIOLENCE AND THE  
JOBACTIVE PROGRAM



### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ We need to make sure that we are meeting all of our contract requirements and legal obligations when we are supporting a person experiencing family violence.
- ⊕ We should be thinking about the best ways to use the resources available through the Government's employment services programs, including jobactive to support the people that we work with.

#### NOTE TO PRESENTER

While this Toolbox Talk applies specifically to jobactive, some of the content will apply more broadly to job seekers in other employment services programs. Check the relevant guidelines, speak to your manager or contact the Department of Employment for more information.

### What do we need to know?

- ⊕ We know that experiencing family violence can have a significant impact on a person and their employability. The [TOOLBOX TALK ON VICTIMS AND WITNESSES](#) looks at some of the ways that maintaining work can be difficult for a person experiencing violence. For some people experiencing violence and the associated stressors, attempting to look for work while the violence is ongoing can be very difficult. For this reason, we may refer a job seeker to the Department of Human Services, where a social worker can grant exemptions from mutual obligations where appropriate for any job seeker who is experiencing violence. An exemption must be granted for any job seeker experiencing violence who is a principal carer parent. For other job seekers, this determination is made on a case-by-case basis.

Also under the Mutual Obligations Guideline, a job seeker who has not been exempted from mutual obligations may still have their required number of job searches reduced.

In developing a Job Plan, we can include activities that will help a person leave violence, remain safe in their home, or end their violent behaviour. All of these could be considered relevant goals in removing a person's barriers to employment, so Job Plans can include activities that work towards these goals. This could include referrals to specialist family violence or sexual assault services, counselling or other mental health services, group support, anger management, housing or crisis accommodation, or activities that will support the client to maintain safety so that their future job placements can be sustainable.

The Employment Fund can also be used to support a jobactive job seeker to purchase items that will support their safety as a step towards achieving and maintaining a job, if the violence was identified as one of their major difficulties in finding and keeping a job.

A particular category that may be relevant to many job seekers experiencing violence is clothing, as they may not have access to or control of finances, may not feel entitled to spend money on themselves, or if leaving violence may not be able to take many possessions with them at the moment when they do leave.

Other items might include driving lessons if a job seeker has previously been prevented by the perpetrator from learning to drive, mobile phone and phone cards, medical expenses as they relate to violence, which could include gap fees, professional services (including psychologist or allied health professional) or restorative work following injury if this is a genuine barrier to seeking work.

Rent and crisis accommodation can also be funded, with some special allowances for people experiencing family violence – they may access this more than once per unemployment period. As with all other job seekers, this item should only be reimbursed through the Employment Fund if all other avenues have been exhausted. Given the time-critical nature of requests for assistance such as this, it will likely not be adequate to attempt to refer a client to public housing which typically has long waiting lists. Referrals to refuges and other crisis accommodation should be attempted. You should also explore informal accommodation options such as friends or relatives, remembering that many victims have been cut off from their friends and family as a part of the abuse.

Relocation assistance through the Employment Fund does not apply to a person leaving violence, unless they are also taking up a job in a new area. While this may be a possibility for some job seekers who are using a new job in a new area as part of their strategy to leave violence, it should not be thought of as a funding option for any clients for whom a job in a new location is not part of the current plan.

If a job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance and to other services appropriate to their current needs. Where there is suspicion of family or domestic violence you should refer to **RESOURCE 6: RISK ASSESSMENT – WHEN TO ASK, WHAT TO SAY** and **RESOURCE 7: SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN**.

- ⊕ This is something that we as a team all need to keep on top of: we have resources in this kit which give us a list of possible **INDICATORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**, and it's important that we don't trivialise some of these indicators or fall into a pattern of waiting to see a certain number of indicators all together in a client before we decide to act. It's true that a lot of the indicators could be present in a client for reasons other than violence, such as mental health concerns or drug and alcohol abuse, but this doesn't have to stop us asking our clients if violence is also a part of their story. As you can see in the **WHAT TO SAY** tip sheet, it's always better to ask and to let your client know that you respect their answers but might ask again if you see something else that concerns you.

If you ask a client and they do disclose that they are experiencing violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance, as well as and to other services appropriate to their current needs. Wherever possible, it's best to involve your client in making that referral so that they can feel that they have some control and a sense of empowerment, rather than feel that "the system" is making decisions for them. It is also a good idea to provide the client with expectations around what is involved in the referral process.

## NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you have printed enough copies of the case study before you start the session.

## What does it mean for our clients?

- ⊕ This topic includes two different case studies: Pauline who is planning to leave violence and Aaron who has recently left. Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you are not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect confidentiality of any clients who might have experienced family violence.

## NOTE TO PRESENTER

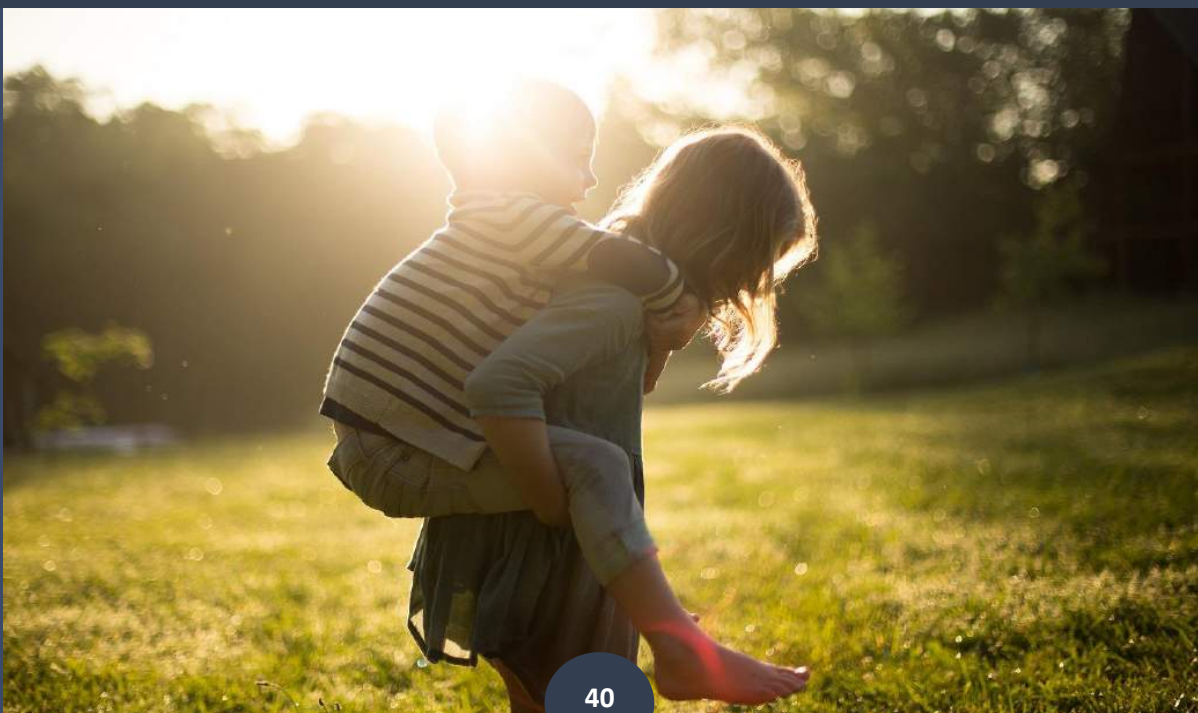
Make sure you know your organisation's policies on incident reporting and work health and safety so that you can give correct advice to your team here.

## What will we do as a team?

- ⊕ Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.
- ⊕ When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

## NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet.





### Suggested activities.

Review the jobactive, or other relevant employment services program, guidelines if anything we've discussed today is unclear;

Reach out to our local Department of Human Services (Centrelink) manager re collaborative work around referrals to their Social Workers for clients who disclose violence;

Update our team processes/resource books about the kinds of referrals we can make or employment fund uses we can support to reflect the wide range of needs;

Review our child protection policy to make sure it aligns with our state or territory requirements as well as giving advice for reporting when not mandated to do so;

Surf the [ASK IZZY](https://www.askizzy.org.au/) site to find out about the wide range of supports a client might need if they are about to leave their home due to violence, and look at which services are in our area;

Read up on [SAFETY APPS](https://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/common-questions/apps-for-your-mobile-phone/) that victims can use to call for emergency assistance, put safety plans in place, gather evidence in preparation for court, and more.

**ASK IZZY** [www.askizzy.org.au/](https://www.askizzy.org.au/)

**SAFETY APPS** [www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/common-questions/apps-for-your-mobile-phone/](https://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/common-questions/apps-for-your-mobile-phone/)



## Toolbox Talk 4

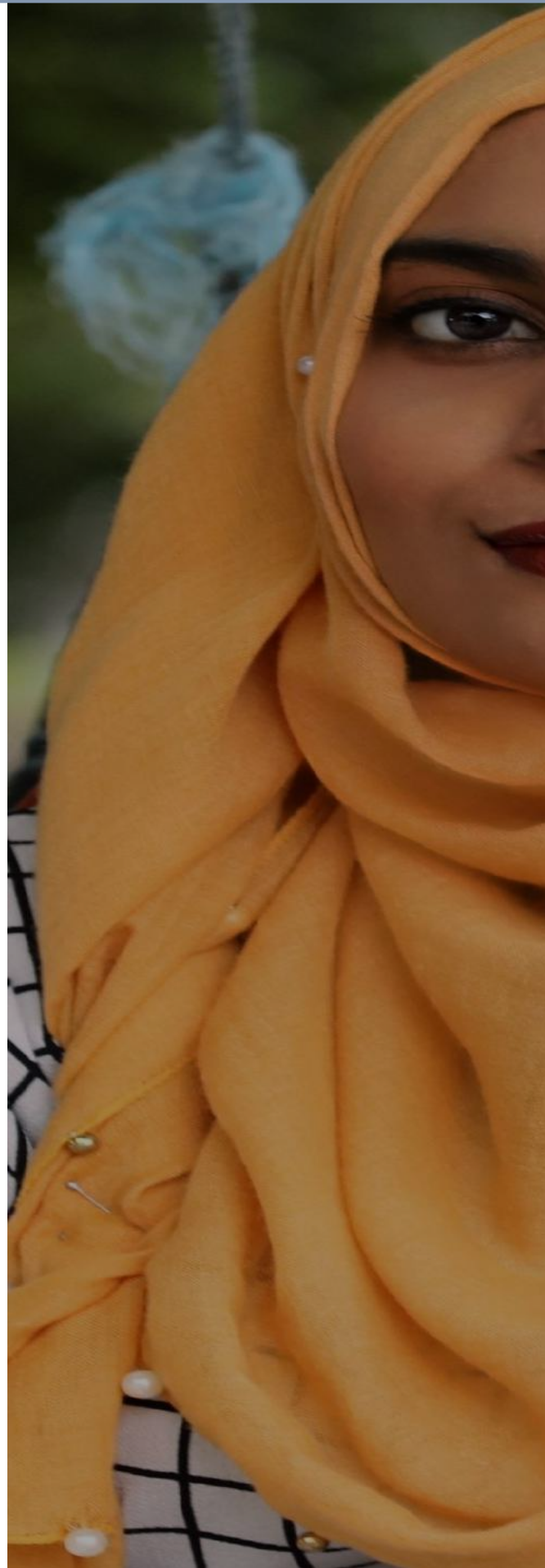
### Case Study Handout

#### PAULINE

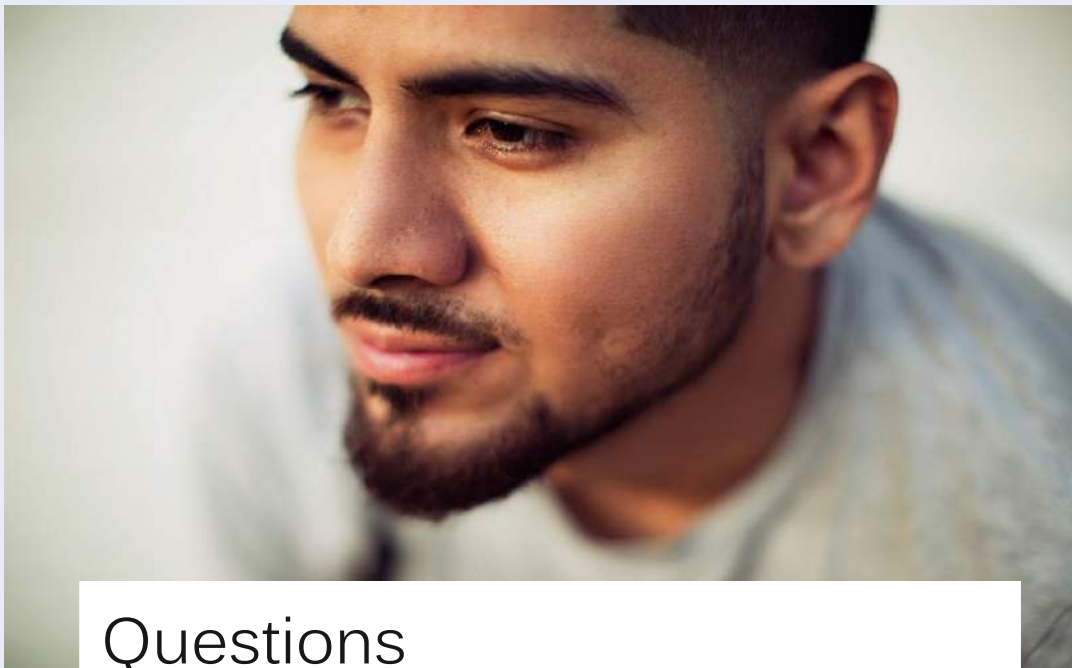
Pauline is 52 years old and has been your client for six months. Pauline has an adult son, Adam. Adam lives with Pauline part-time and can be violent towards Pauline. You were aware that Pauline was experiencing family violence when she was first referred to your service and has received a two week exemption from the Department of Human Services due to major personal crisis. You are now working with her to devise a Job Plan that includes working with a specialist family violence counsellor, because Pauline sees getting out of her current situation with Adam as a key part of addressing her non-vocational barriers to employment.

Pauline has worked with her counsellor, Rowena, to devise a safety plan and more recently to start planning to leave the situation with Adam because they have decided that staying in her home will not be an option for Pauline. With Pauline's consent, Rowena contacts you to talk about the plans.

Rowena will help Pauline to find refuge accommodation when she is ready, and once she has left the home they will work together to apply for a protection order. Rowena is looking for some other material and practical supports that other services in Pauline's life might be able to provide. Pauline needs a new phone because she suspects that the one that Adam set up for her has a tracking device, and will also need some assistance to understand cyber-safety. Pauline has also said that she will not be ready to leave her home until she can be sure that her beloved cat will also be safe.



## TOOLBOX TALK 4



### Questions

- 1 How could you structure Pauline's current services from jobactive to give her the best chance to be able to move quickly when the time is right?
- 2 What parts of Pauline's plan to leave violence could you help with? Can you see any other needs that Rowena might not have flagged?
- 3 For the purposes of getting out of the current violent situation, Rowena is Pauline's key worker and she is taking the lead in coordinating Pauline's supports. Would you refer Pauline to any other services?



## Answers

1 Pauline is in a situation where she needs to be able to respond quickly to changing circumstances. We need to think about ways to help Pauline during her exemption as well as consider whether we need to discuss changes to her Job Plan following her exemption. As part of this we should make sure our approach offers her the best possible range of supports to prepare her to get out of her home when the time is right. Her work with Rowena could be part of this, as could assistance to link with other relevant professional services.

The main thing is to assure Pauline that you will be able to be responsive as her circumstances change. Some people might prolong leaving violence because they think they will lose their services and support when they do. Talk to Pauline about how quickly you will be able to change her Job Plan and/or access the Employment Fund when needed.



2

Pauline and Rowena will work together to find crisis accommodation, but we don't know what refuge she might be placed in or what their conditions are. It might be appropriate to use the Employment Fund to cover her board at the refuge, or to discuss what other financial arrangements Rowena has been able to source for this. The Employment Fund can also be used to purchase a basic mobile phone and new phone card for Pauline so that she can have a handset to keep in touch with you and the other people involved in her Job Plan, as well as be kept safe from Adam.

Pauline mentioned the safety of her cat being an important consideration for her. We know that this can be a common barrier to victims leaving violence, as they fear the perpetrator may harm or kill their animals. Emergency pet accommodation services exist in most states and territories, and can be located through [ASK IZZY](#). Ask Izzy also provides links to a range of other service types that people who are at risk of homelessness might need, including food programs, personal hygiene, legal assistance and more. It can also be downloaded as an app, so clients can use it themselves.

3

If Rowena is Pauline's key worker for the purposes of getting her out of her violent situation, she will be trying to coordinate Pauline's supports so that she has all the resources that she needs without being overwhelmed. Together with Pauline you might identify another service that would be helpful. If that happens, it's a good idea to keep Rowena in the loop, with Pauline's consent.

ASK IZZY [www.askizzy.org.au/](http://www.askizzy.org.au/)





### Case Study Handout

#### AARON

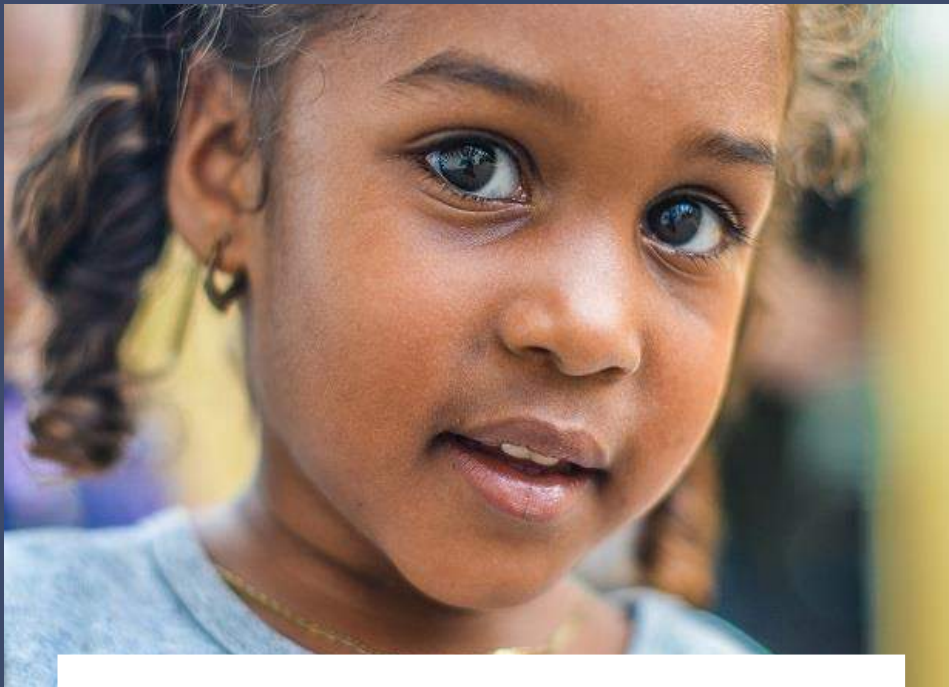
Aaron is a 37 year old single father, who lives with his five year old daughter, Chloe. They recently moved together into a friend's granny flat because Aaron had made the decision to leave a violent relationship with Chloe's mother, Kat. Aaron is considering what Family Law action he might take regarding custody of Chloe, but for now he and Kat have made informal arrangements for Chloe to live with Aaron and see Kat twice a week. Sometimes Chloe doesn't want to go.

Staying at their friend's place has meant that Chloe didn't have to change schools so soon after starting, and it was easier than trying to find a refuge that would take a man with a child. It also means, though, that they are still living in the same neighbourhood as Kat. Aaron has seen her at the shops several times, where she has become abusive. On two occasions where Chloe didn't want to see Kat, Kat has driven up and down the street outside their new place shouting.

Aaron has decided that he needs to seek a protection order against Kat. He is working with a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer at the local police station to understand what his options are. Aaron is worried that he has no legal grounds on which to stop Kat taking Chloe from school one day, and fears she might try to do this as a way of retaliating against him for leaving her.

Because all of this has happened quite suddenly, Aaron has only just informed you of his change in status. He is now a Principal Carer Parent under the jobactive guidelines.

## TOOLBOX TALK 4



### Questions

- 1 Given Aaron's change in status, what actions do you need to take according to the Mutual Obligations Guideline? Are there other actions that you need to take under state or territory law?
- 2 If Kat turned up to one of Aaron's appointments with you, what would you do?
- 3 Can you think of supports that might help Aaron now, so that he will be in a better position to secure a job later?



CHILD PROTECTION  
Refer to Resource 2

## Answers

1

Under the Mutual Obligations Guideline, you must apply for an exemption for Aaron because he is a Principal Carer Parent and refer him to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance. You can make other referrals as well as this.

In terms of other state and territory laws, refer to the tip sheet on [CHILD PROTECTION](#) to find out if there is anything you must do, since you suspect Chloe has been witness to the violence and may still be distressed by Kat's behaviour now. Remember, if you're not mandated to report about Chloe's exposure to violence but you are concerned about her wellbeing, **you can report anyway**. It's always better to over-report than to under-report. A child protection report doesn't necessarily mean Chloe will be taken into care if she's safe in the care of her father, but it may provide a further avenue for Aaron to get support. Child protection caseworkers can refer Kat to appropriate services, too.

2

If Kat shows up at an appointment, it's best to start by asking Aaron what he wants to do about it. He may ask you to help him leave via another exit, may ask you to have Kat removed, or he may feel able to leave the premises without any intervention. Kat's behaviour is also a factor in how you respond here. If she does anything that would prompt an incident response according to your organisation's policies, you should follow them.

3

An important part of responding to family violence is responding holistically and giving hope, rather than only addressing safety needs, for example. Ask the team to think of all the pathways into employment that Aaron could follow and what wide range of activities and supports for him and Chloe could assist this. Some ideas might include using housing referrals to support Aaron and Chloe to move into stable accommodation without Kat knowing the location, preparing Chloe to attend out of school hours care through 'have a try' arrangements with the school, referring Aaron to a group or a private practitioner to build on his parenting skills in preparation for the changes that will come with his return to work, and so on. At a minimum, you must refer Aaron to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) Social Worker.



# TOOLBOX TALK 5

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## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ To reinforce where your role as a jobactive, or other relevant employment services program, staff member begins and ends.
- ⊕ To ensure your legal obligations are clear.
- ⊕ To ensure you know what your options are for support.

### What do we need to know?

- ⊕ We need to be realistic about how much expectation we can put on staff to provide support in an area where they don't have specialist skills and knowledge, such as family violence. At no time are you expected to work beyond the limits of your role, but when supporting people experiencing multiple vulnerabilities is a core part of your job it can be difficult to define where those limits are.

Think of it this way: our job is to address a person's barriers to employment, which may include family violence, through connecting them to the right supports, and it's our obligation to act in a way that keeps people safe if their safety is threatened. Responding to family violence as an employment services worker means getting the right supports in place early, through Job Plans and referrals, and reporting to Department of Human Services (Centrelink), police or child protection authorities when needed. To support all of this work, we need to ensure that we work in a trauma-informed way that will support clients to trust us enough to share their experience. This includes making appropriate referrals.

- ⊕ If a job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink). This is partly to ensure that the right payments can be made (including testing eligibility if not already on an income support payment) and exemptions granted, or updating their Job Seeker Classification Index (JSCI) assessment to reflect the information on family violence which may result in re-streaming for a person who isn't eligible for an exemption. It is also to provide support by someone with specific skills and experience in responding to family violence. In some cases, the social worker may consider that the severity of the disclosed family violence is a significant longer-term barrier to work that requires referral for an Employment Services Assessment. This process can be done through our contacts with our local Department of Human Services (Centrelink) office, or failing that through the social work referral line on 132 850. According to the [JOBACTIVE MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS GUIDELINES](#), we should also make other referrals for support as relevant, starting with the [NATIONAL, STATE OR TERRITORY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINES](#).

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- ⊕ So what do you do if you're pretty sure a client is experiencing violence, but they haven't told you about it? You ask them. This can be a very uncomfortable experience for you as workers, particularly when it is not a conversation you have had to have with a client before. But it's important to ask, as your client may be waiting for that one opportunity to disclose to someone who's showing that they are willing to listen. Acting on suspicion and asking a **direct question** about whether a person is experiencing violence has been shown to be one of the most critical factors in supporting a person to seek help, as many victims and perpetrators alike are ashamed of the violence and many may not know that help is available. Studies have found that the vast majority of clients who have been asked about their experience of violence have been glad that the question was asked<sup>4</sup>, whether or not they were experiencing violence themselves, as long as they felt safe to tell the worker or service about it and did not think they would be shamed or put at greater risk<sup>5</sup>.

The **WHAT TO SAY** resource sheet attached to this kit will give tips around how to have these conversations, and we will also look in more detail at this in today's Toolbox Talk.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's very important in today's topic that you are able to describe the support mechanisms that are available for your team when responding to family violence, such as briefing and debriefing around a difficult conversation, emotional support for staff who are affected by the violence their clients are experiencing, consultation with specialist staff, managers or interagency partners, etc. Staff may also want to know about your organisation's approach to safety planning for staff faced with **OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE**. Take a few moments to describe all this to your team, according to your organisation's policies and practices.

**JOBACTIVE MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS GUIDELINES** <https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/mutual-obligation-requirements-and-job-plan-guideline>

**NATIONAL, STATE OR TERRITORY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINES** Refer to Resource 1

**WHAT TO SAY** Refer to Resource 6

**OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE** [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/9554/WS\\_MIA\\_OCCUPATIONAL\\_VIOLENCE\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/9554/WS_MIA_OCCUPATIONAL_VIOLENCE_WEB.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Spangaro J.M., Zwi A.B., Poulos R.G., Mann W.Y.N. 2010. *Who Tells and What Happens: disclosure and health service responses to screening for intimate partner violence*. *Health and Social Care*, 18 (6), pp 671-680.

<sup>5</sup> Trevillion K., Hughes B., Feder G., Borshmann R., Oram S., Howard L.M. 2014. *Disclosure of domestic violence in mental health settings: a qualitative meta-synthesis*. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 26 (4), pp 430-444.

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you have printed enough copies of the case study before you start the session.

### What does it mean for our clients?

- ⊕ This topic has only one case study. The main aim is to get the team to brainstorm and practice ways of raising their suspicion with the client. Let's look at Tali's story and then discuss how we would start a conversation with her. Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you are not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect confidentiality of any clients who might have experienced family violence.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

Ensure you are able to explain your organisation's policy on confidentiality if asked. In general, there should be a way for staff to seek assistance from a manager or colleague when handling a case such as this. Some organisations' policies differ on whether this should be done without disclosing the identity of the client.

### What will we do as a team?

- ⊕ Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.
- ⊕ When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet.

## Suggested activities.

- ⊕ Set up a team support mechanism so that we know who to talk to when we've had a difficult conversation with a client or need to debrief;
- ⊕ Agree to practice our skills in direct questioning, using the [WHAT TO SAY](#) resource as a guide to help us become comfortable in holding these conversations;
- ⊕ Check to make sure that our internal policies and procedures align with our contractual requirements with the Department of Employment and any legal obligations;
- ⊕ Read up more on interviewing techniques when responding to family violence at the [DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTRE VICTORIA](#) (includes guidance around asking people who you suspect might be perpetrating violence).

## Toolbox Talk 5

### Case Study Handout

#### TALI

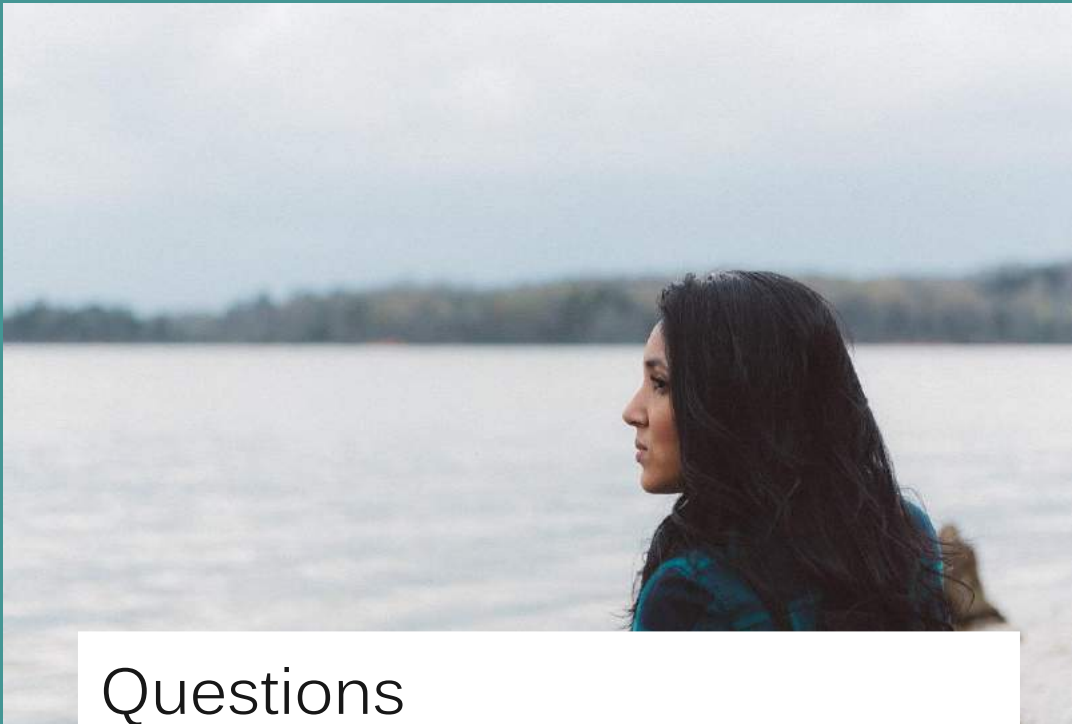
Tali is 21 years old. She lives with her boyfriend Wayne at Wayne's mother's house; they have been seeing each other for five months and living together for four months. Prior to that, Tali had been couch surfing at a few friends' houses since she moved to the city to try to find work. She has a Certificate III in Make-Up that she obtained in her home town, but has only had intermittent cash-in-hand jobs since qualifying.

Tali referred herself to your service when she arrived in town, and as you've worked together you have identified that her main non-vocational barrier to employment is her anxiety. You have arranged two work experience placements for her, and she has found both hard to manage, but she remains committed to finding a job that she can do well so that then she and Wayne can get their own place.

In your past few appointments with Tali, you've had a sense that she has been 'dropping hints' about something. She seems to allude to getting things wrong with Wayne, and feeling pressured to be the perfect girlfriend so that she can keep her place to stay. A couple of times she has started to tell a story about her home life being reasons for feeling stressed about her work experience placements, but then has trailed off and not been responsive to your questions about it. Last fortnight you noticed that her knuckles on one hand looked grazed. In today's appointment, Tali seems very withdrawn and appears to be sitting uncomfortably. At this point, you're sure there is some kind of violence or abuse in Tali's life and you know that you need to ask her about it.



## TOOLBOX TALK 5



### Questions

- 1 What are some ways that you could start a conversation with Tali, to let her know that you are concerned for her and are willing to give her the time that she needs to tell you what is going on?
- 2 What are some important things to make sure you tell Tali as part of this conversation?
- 3 Taking turns, practice opening the conversation and saying these things to the person sitting next to you now. When it is your turn to play Tali, think about how the conversation makes you feel.



## Answers

1

It's important that we keep our questions direct, because we know that vague questions don't help victims talk about violence. Questions like "Is there anything you want to tell me?" are easy to answer with a "No", either because the victim is ashamed to disclose when they don't know what your response will be, or because they don't understand that you are asking about family violence.

Sometimes it helps to share some of your observations with a victim, so that they understand why you are asking this question and also to signify that you have noticed something about their experience and that you care for their wellbeing. In Tali's case, you could say "You seem to be physically sore today, and I noticed last time that you had grazed knuckles. Has someone been hurting you?", or "You've told me a few things about Wayne's expectations of you and how you worry about getting things wrong. What happens when you don't do what he wants?" Then follow up with a direct question such as "Do you think you're experiencing family or domestic violence?", or "Are you experiencing violence at Wayne's place?"

Note that it's OK to name the suspected perpetrator in this context, but you should avoid statements that sound like you are judging him. "Is Wayne hurting you?" is a clear question that can be answered simply. "Is Wayne being a bit of a dead-beat?" is unclear in its meaning and could also put Tali on the defensive, as she may feel loyal to Wayne even if he is perpetrating violence against her. Keep any statements about Wayne focused on his behaviour, not on him as a person.

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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2

Depending on what Tali tells you, and what plan you put together to support her, there may be a lot of things that you need to talk about over your next few appointments. In this very first conversation, there are five key messages that you need to get across:

- i. The violence is not Tali's fault.
- ii. Violence is never OK.
- iii. She was right to tell you.
- iv. You will help her find the right supports, starting with a referral to Department of Human Services (Centrelink), and you will support her choices about what she wants to do.
- v. What you discuss will remain confidential unless someone is at immediate risk of being hurt or if children are at risk.



# TOOLBOX TALK 6

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## FAMILY VIOLENCE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS





### Why are we talking about this?

- ⊕ Experience of family violence is different for everyone, and some groups of people face additional complexities when they experience violence.
- ⊕ When we try to support a person who is experiencing violence who comes from one of these groups, we might need to think differently about their support needs or the types of referrals that we can make.
- ⊕ We should also use this time as an opportunity to check in with ourselves and notice if we have any prejudices which might stop us from supporting a client properly. Think about what you could do to identify and constructively manage your bias to ensure job seekers are serviced appropriately and effectively.

### What do we need to know?

- ⊕ This is a starter discussion; you will need to come back to other resources on this topic if one of your clients from one of these groups may be experiencing violence.
- ⊕ Key groups that may require additional considerations when receiving a service can include Indigenous people, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (with refugees and asylum seekers as a subgroup), LGBTIQ+ people, youth, male victims, and people with disability. This is not an exhaustive list, and you may find in your work that you're supporting someone who doesn't belong to one of those groups but who has a specific experience of family violence that means their support needs are different. That's OK, because we can tailor our supports to each individual job seeker anyway. If you're supporting someone experiencing violence and not sure what the right way to support them is, you can always ask them. You can also consult with a [SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE](#).

**SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE** Refer to the Resources section of this kit

- ⊕ As we've said, each person's experience of violence is different and each of these groups may have different additional needs in the way that we support them. Some general principles in working with any of these groups are:
  - To recognise diversity within a group. Not all Aboriginal people or all gay people or all Muslim people are the same. Tailoring a service to the needs of a member of any of these groups should always start with the needs of the individual person; we then look at their social or cultural context to give us further prompts as to how we can help. It is a good idea to engage in reflective practice regularly, and to notice for ourselves any assumptions we might be making about any of our clients being 'the same as' other people from their culture or background;
  - To understand the concepts of intersectionality and multiple disadvantage. Thinking about our clients through these lenses means understanding that belonging to different groups, such as being Indigenous and a woman or being from a CALD background and having a disability, can compound the disadvantage or discrimination that a person faces, particularly if their identification with one group marginalises them within another group that they identify with (such as being gay and part of a culture that does not accept homosexuality). It also reinforces the need to work with each person as an individual;
  - To work at all times from a strengths-based perspective. Recognising the strengths and skills of the victim in remaining engaged with our service despite what they are going through at home, as well as tapping into the strengths and resources of their communities, is a great way to provide support that is respectful, that empowers the victim to make informed choices about their situation and to ensure that their needs are met in a holistic way that minimises the need for them to re-tell their story multiple times while also minimising the risk of people facing multiple disadvantage falling through the cracks.

### NOTE TO PRESENTER

This topic includes a case study for each of the above-mentioned social and cultural groups. It is not necessary to try to go through all of these in one session. You could choose two or three that are most relevant to your team's current caseload, or you could work through them all over a few team meetings.

## What does it mean for our clients?

- ⊕ This topic has several case studies so that we can start thinking about the different needs of different groups. Let's look at some of them and then discuss how we would support these job seekers. In each one, we need to acknowledge that we're dealing with a single scenario, and that other people representing these groups may have different needs and experiences.
- ⊕ Before we start the discussion, I want to remind you all that this is a workplace and that you are not obliged to talk from your own experience at any time. We also need to ensure we protect the confidentiality of any clients who might have experienced family violence.
- ⊕ **Answers: all cases**
  - Remember that your response always needs to put your client at the centre as an individual. We are looking at specific vulnerable groups in the community through this exercise as a way to understand what might be going on for the people in the case studies, and the people like them who are on our case load in real life. Your starting point should always be to tell them that you believe what they are telling you about their experience, and that you want to work with them to find the right solution.
  - The [FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN](#) attached to this kit is designed specifically for providers to use when thinking about what supports to link a client with. It includes some pointers for where to start when working with particularly vulnerable groups, but we will probably need to do some of our own research about the range of supports in our local area.
  - Avoid telling your client that you know what their experience is like or making generalisations. Remember, that every person experiences family violence uniquely, and your client is the expert in their experience, not you. It is also important not to let an assumption that it's different for a particular group get in the way of carrying out your contractual or legal obligations as an employment services provider or mandatory reporter (where relevant).

**FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN** Refer to Resource 7

### What will we do as a team?

- ⊕ Let's talk about what we can all do as a team between now and the next Toolbox Talk. We've been given some ideas of actions that we can take, but we can also come up with our own.
- ⊕ When we're developing our action plan, let's make sure we nominate a person or people to each task and that we agree when they can report back to us all.

#### NOTE TO PRESENTER

It's a good idea to keep a record of this plan, either as part of your team meeting minutes or as a separate action sheet.

### Suggested activities.

- ⊕ Make connections with local services for these specific groups;
- ⊕ Contact national and state-wide services to understand what supports they offer;
- ⊕ Consider what we might be able to change about the physical or personal aspects of our service environment that will help people feel safer;
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence [FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS](#);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [PEOPLE FROM CALD BACKGROUNDS](#)  
(note: when you are working with a person from a CALD background, you might need to do some more research about issues and services for their specific culture);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [REFUGEES](#);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [LGBTIQA+ PEOPLE](#);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [YOUNG PEOPLE](#);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [MALE VICTIMS](#);
- ⊕ Learn more about the experience of family violence for [PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY](#)

#### INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

[www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/domestic-and-family-violence#toc0](http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/domestic-and-family-violence#toc0)

#### PEOPLE FROM CALD BACKGROUNDS

[www.nifvs.org.au/resources/nifvs-resources/cald-resource/](http://www.nifvs.org.au/resources/nifvs-resources/cald-resource/)

**REFUGEES** [www.startts.org.au/media/Resource-Working-with-Refugees-Social-Worker-Guide.pdf](http://www.startts.org.au/media/Resource-Working-with-Refugees-Social-Worker-Guide.pdf)

**LGBTIQA+ PEOPLE** [www.anothercloset.com.au/](http://www.anothercloset.com.au/)

**YOUNG PEOPLE** [www.dvrcv.org.au/help-advice/young-people](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/help-advice/young-people)

**MALE VICTIMS** [www.dvrcv.org.au/help-advice/young-people](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/help-advice/young-people)

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY** [www.pwd.org.au/issues/preventing-violence.html](http://www.pwd.org.au/issues/preventing-violence.html)





# Toolbox Talk 6

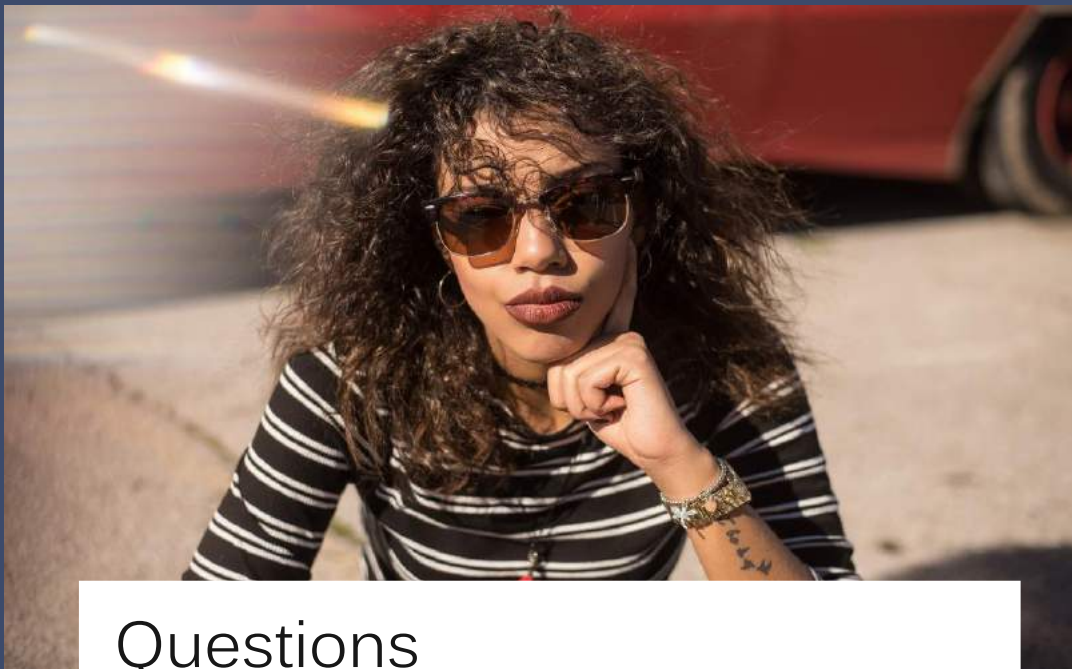
## Case Study Handout

### ROBYN

Robyn is 43 years old and a proud Indigenous woman. She has four adult children, and her daughter Sarah (22) and grandson Corey (3) live with her. Robyn wants Sarah to start working part-time once Corey starts school, and is keen to get a job herself before then. Robyn wants to work in a caring profession, but doesn't have any qualifications apart from life experience.

Corey's father is Patrick. He has been barred from the home since Sarah and Robyn together took out a protection order against him. Patrick is also a client at your service, working with a different Employment Consultant. So far, they have never had appointments on site at the same time. Robyn tells you she is still worried about what might happen if they do see each other; she tells you that the community talks and that he knows that she attends the service.

### TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions

- 1 What do you know about Indigenous people that might make Robyn's experience of family violence or your approach to helping her different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Robyn's needs? How can you tap into her community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Robyn, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?

## Answers

1

Indigenous Australians experience much higher rates of family violence compared to the non-Indigenous Australian community. An Aboriginal woman is five times more likely to experience violence and 35 times more likely to be hospitalised due to injuries from family violence than her non-Aboriginal peers. This does not mean that violence is part of Indigenous culture; it is not.

There is no one cause of family violence in Indigenous communities, but the role of inter-generational trauma following dispossession of lands and the Stolen Generations is a significant factor. In addition, high rates of unemployment, poverty, incarceration, over-crowding, poor health and low access to services within Indigenous communities can compound the range of stressors which can lead to family violence.

The low access to services is an important factor for us to consider. One effect of the successive government policies that led to the Stolen Generations is a high level of fear or distrust of social services among Indigenous people. In addition, the mainstream services that are available may not feel culturally safe for Indigenous people to use them, however job seekers should be advised that these services exist and are available to them.

2

When dealing with an issue such as family violence, it is important to connect with an identified Indigenous worker or service who can provide you with cultural guidance or help your client feel supported in a culturally appropriate way. There might be a specific Aboriginal Family Violence Worker in the local area, and if there is you should talk to Robyn about whether she consents to you making a referral and working together with that service. It's important to gain Robyn's consent for a referral, just like for any client, but you also need to be aware of the impact that family groups within the community can have on an Indigenous person's willingness to access a particular service. If Robyn tells you that she does not want to work with a service because of family connections, talk to her about other services that she is willing to work with.

3

We need to be mindful that there is a child involved in Robyn's case, and that referring her to welfare style services may bring up fears about child protection involvement. You cannot make promises to Robyn about what another service may or may not do, but you can support Robyn to understand that she is acting protectively for both Sarah and Corey by getting Patrick out of the house and seeking support. You can also talk to Robyn about the support that you will continue to provide and reinforce that all of the services involved in the response to her family violence will work together.





## Toolbox Talk 6

### Case Study Handout

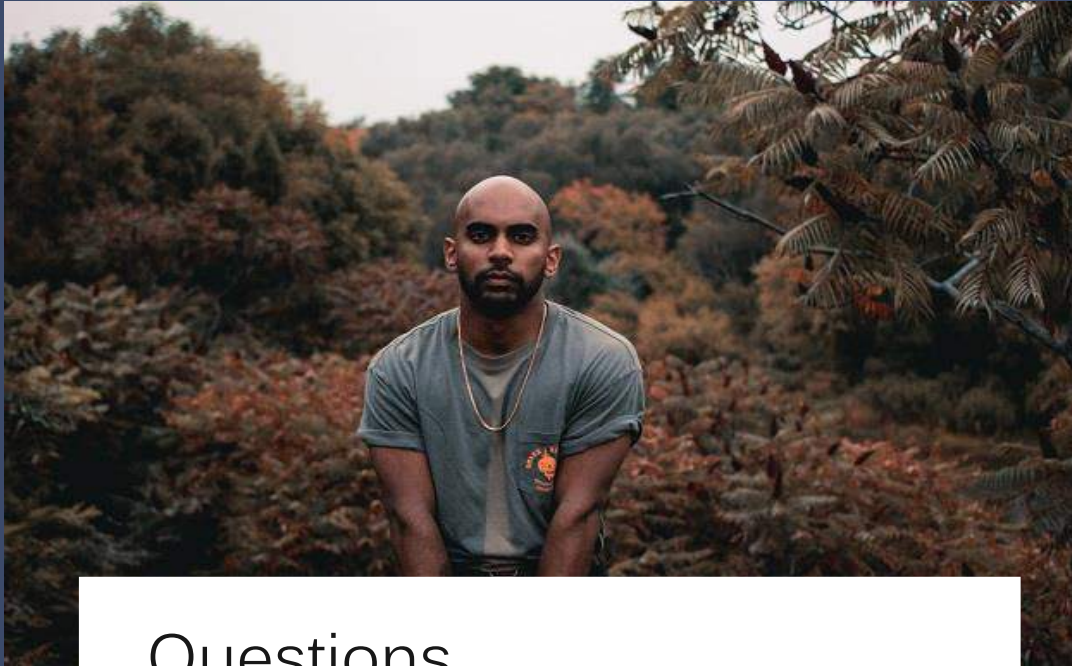
#### REKHA

Rekha is a 28 year old woman. She migrated to Australia from India six years ago when her family arranged for her to marry Ravinder. Rekha found that there was a lot to adjust to about Australian life at first, but now has a close group of friends that she met through her prayer group. Rekha has been referred to your service as she has mutual obligation requirements for the payment that she now receives.

Rekha tells you that she is not happy about having to come to the service as Ravinder has told her that he does not want her to work; her role is to make the home. When you explain to Rekha that she has to participate in your service as a condition of her payment, she tells you that it is not her payment and that Ravinder controls their finances. It was so that she could receive this payment that he decided she should become a citizen. You ask Rekha what she thinks about this and she tells you that it makes her unhappy. Later she tells you that she is frightened that she cannot support herself in her new country.



## TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions

- 1 What do you know about Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people in Australia that might make Rekha's experience of family violence or your approach to helping her different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Rekha's needs? How can you tap into her community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Rekha, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?



### Answers

- 1 We need to remember that this is just one case study, and that there is great diversity both among and between CALD groups in Australia. For the purposes of today's exercise, we are looking at a fictional Indian community, but there may be many other cultural groups in our area that we will also work with.

Broadly speaking, CALD people and communities in Australia may have different norms about a range of things that may affect how you work with them on a sensitive issue such as family violence. This could include norms about whether it is appropriate to talk to a stranger about family matters, different understandings of the role of community services in supporting individuals and families, cultural rules about women's business and men's business, or values which preference the needs of the family over the needs of an individual within it.

In addition, recently arrived and first generation communities may have limited understanding of the service system and legal frameworks that support people experiencing family violence in Australia. You may need to take on an educative role to explain how employment services can provide assistance and information on other support services that Rekha can access, or to tell Rekha that violence is a crime in Australia and that she is not responsible for it.

2

As we've seen in the last question, recent arrivals may not have a good understanding of the service system and so may not be connected to any other services. In addition, people from communities that have not been long established in Australia may have only a few services available that are specific to their culture. If a person is linked into their community in some way, though, we may be able to work with them to find links to the right services.

In this case study, Rekha has a group of friends that she has met through prayer group. One possibility may be to ask her if any of her friends are connected to services that she could tap into. If Rekha is unwilling to share this personal information with her friends, another option could be to talk to someone at the prayer who might be connected to services. For example, in Melbourne, [JAGRITI](#), a family violence service for Indian women, connects with them by word of mouth through having a relationship with all of the relevant religious organisations in the Western Suburbs. Something similar could exist for other CALD groups in our area as well.

If you are working with someone from a CALD group that is not heavily represented in the area, or if your client tells you that they do not wish to use their own networks to access support, you could contact the local Migrant Resource Centre for general advice and to hear about whether they run any group programs that could be a fit for your client. Sometimes people find that a service that caters to people from a mix of cultures meets their needs better as they do not have to worry about information that they share at the service getting back to their community or partner.

3

As with any client, you should avoid trying to use informal networks to find support for Rekha without her express consent. In emerging communities, a person who is accessing an employment service may already be easy to identify, and you could risk letting other community members know that Rekha is frightened and experiencing financial abuse. If this gets back to Ravinder there could be serious consequences for Rekha. Instead, always involve Rekha in deciding who you will talk to for advice, support or referral.

JAGRITI

[www.facebook.com/Jagritiasocialawakening/](https://www.facebook.com/Jagritiasocialawakening/)





## Toolbox Talk 6

### Case Study Handout

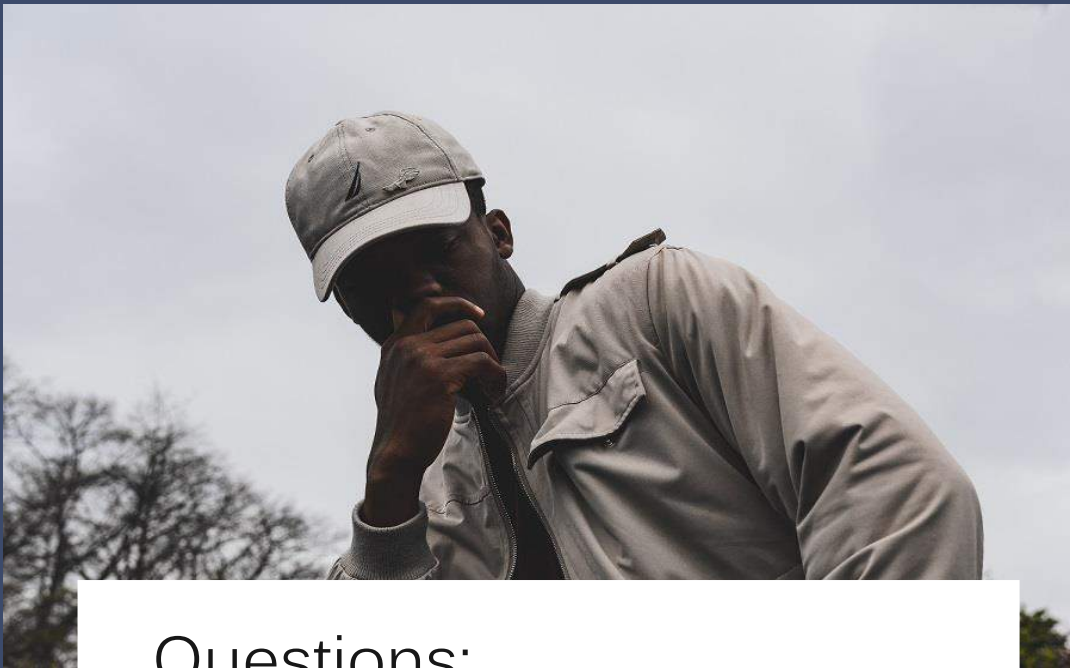
#### A D U T

Adut is a 39 year old Dinka woman from South Sudan. She arrived in Australia with her husband Chol and their children Amer (13), Deng (10) and Aker (9) as special humanitarian visa holders three years ago, after nine years in a refugee camp in Ethiopia. In coming to Australia, they were able to be reunited with Chol's sister-in-law and her four children. Many other members of their family, including Chol's brother, were killed in the civil war. Since arriving in Australia, Adut has been trying to learn English and become part of her local community, while also supporting her family through the transition and coming to terms with her own past trauma.

Having completed 800 hours of English language training through the Skills for Education and Employment program, Adut is now ready to look for work. She tells you that she is glad to go out to work now that her children are old enough, as she wants to ensure that she and Chol together can give them the best opportunities they can, and that in Australia there are many good jobs. Adut tells you that when they were living in the camp she was forced to provide sexual favours to help her family survive, and that when she complained about this Chol would beat her.



## TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions:

- 1 What do you know about refugees that might make Adut's experience of family violence or your approach to helping her different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Adut's needs? How can you tap into her community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Adut, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?



### Answers

1

Like many refugees, Adut has experienced significant trauma in the events both leading up to leaving her own country and in the time that she spent in transit in the camp, all while trying to raise and support her family in precarious circumstances. Family violence was one element of this. Her traumatic response is likely to be highly complex and she may have had minimal if any mental health intervention up until now. Trauma can have lasting effects on a person's ability to concentrate, learn and work, and can lead to a range of poor health outcomes including mental health issues as well as physical ailments. In this case, we don't have evidence that Chol has continued to beat Adut in the time since they left the camp, but this does not mean that their relationship is not still characterised by control, nor that Adut should be "over" her past experience of violence. She is also continuing to care for her traumatised children.

As Adut has disclosed that she is experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer her to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance and to other services appropriate to her current needs. A Social Worker may decide that the severity of Adut's trauma is a significant longer-term barrier to work that requires referral for an Employment Services Assessment. While she tells you that she is keen to work, it's appropriate to ensure that she gets the psychological and practical support required to address her trauma before attempting to secure employment.

It's important in your own work with Adut to avoid re-traumatising her as much as possible: don't ask her to re-tell her story if she does not wish to, avoid asking too many questions and coming across as interrogative, and reinforce to Adut that you are there to help.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

2 The case study on Rekha's story gives some insight into approaches to link with CALD communities, and you could apply the same principles to tap into the local Sudanese community in Adut's case, with her consent. In addition, it is important to help her connect with a service that addresses her trauma and other aspects of her experience as a refugee in a culturally safe way. This might be through a bi-cultural worker or service that the local Migrant Resource Centre can help you locate.

Be very mindful of protecting Adut's confidentiality when making referrals such as these. Many refugees may be unfamiliar with the concept of confidentiality and may not understand what you are going to do with their personal information – they may be fearful that it will fall into the hands of their persecutors, even now that they are in a safe country. This could be a barrier to you making referrals if you cannot help Adut to understand. You may need to explain the concept of confidentiality, and also explain to Adut what her rights are if she feels there has been a breach.

3 We saw in this case study that Adut has completed 800 hours of English language lessons, but we need to remember that these lessons took place in a context where she may have had significant difficulty concentrating and learning. As a female refugee, it is also likely that she had minimal education in her home country and so may not be literate in her native language. This could be a further barrier to her learning English. So it's possible that even after her lessons she still requires an interpreter for some conversations.

Under no circumstances should you ask one of Adut's children to act as her interpreter when discussing her trauma or experience of family violence. Such a conversation could be very distressing for the child, who has their own traumatic history. Further, Adut would likely self-censor to protect her child from hearing the full details that she might otherwise have shared with you.

Nor should you ask Chol to act as an interpreter for Adut. Chol's role as a perpetrator in this scenario means that it would be dangerous poor practice on the part of the organisation to put her in a position where he was responsible for interpreting what was being said. Chol may censor your questions as well as Adut's answers, and there could be serious consequences for Adut if he asks her to explain why you were talking about violence with her.

In cases of family violence, you should always use a professional interpreter rather than a family member. You can book an interpreter to attend in person via the phone through the [TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE \(TIS NATIONAL\)](#). The Employment Fund is available through jobactive to pay for the interpreter fee. We can consider a bulk purchase arrangement for interpreting fees if our caseload shows a demand for it.

**TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE (TIS NATIONAL)** [www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Agencies/Help-using-TIS-National-services](http://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Agencies/Help-using-TIS-National-services)





## Toolbox Talk 6

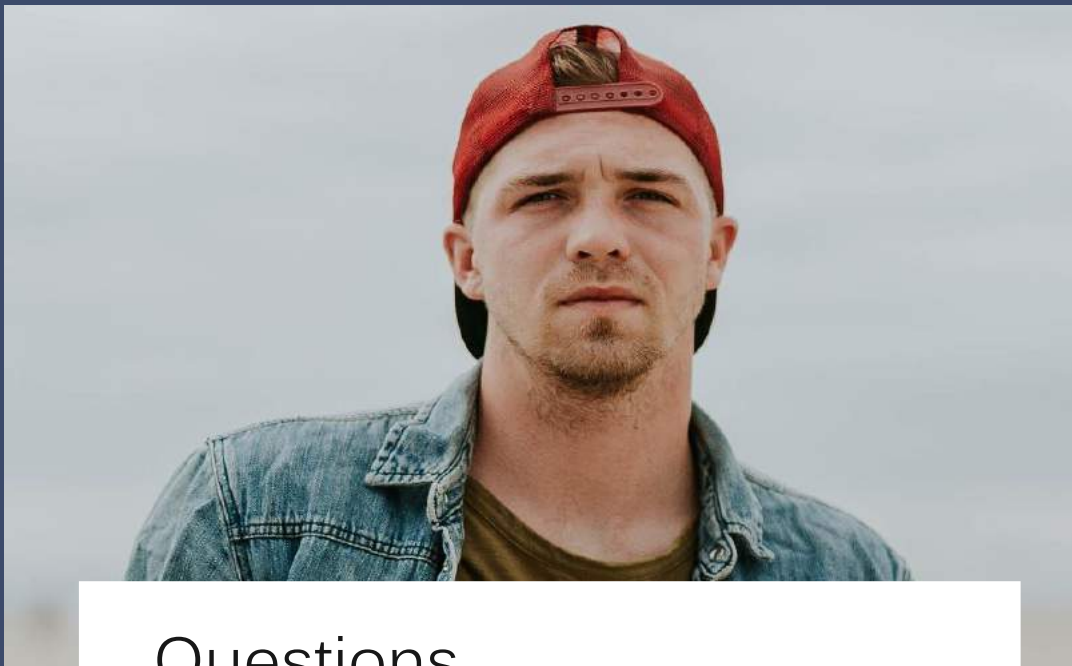
### Case Study Handout

#### TROY

Troy is 34 years old and has been living with his partner, Ian, for six years. They met when Troy was still working for a small parts manufacturer, but he was made redundant two years ago and hasn't been able to find stable employment since. Troy is well-skilled in his trade as a Fitter and Turner, and has undertaken further courses in 3D design and printing. He tells you that his confidence took a blow when he lost his job, and that he feels that this is the main barrier to his being able to find a job now. He says it's hard to put himself out there when the competition for jobs means there will always be a more confident candidate.

Troy also tells you that he has experienced discrimination in the past as a gay man in his line of work. When you ask about how he handled it, he tells you that some bosses have been more supportive than others. He tells you that there is a lot that he has had to hide for fear of being bullied. Almost as a throwaway line he says "Imagine if the bullies found out about the basher at home."

### TOOLBOX TALK 6



#### Questions

- 1 What do you know about LGBTIQ+ people that might make Troy's experience of family violence or your approach to helping him different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Troy's needs? How can you tap into his community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Troy, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?

# Answers

- 1 Family violence occurs in LGBTIQ+ relationships at about the same rate and level that it does for heterosexual relationships<sup>6</sup>, but there are some things that are unique about LGBTIQ+ relationships which can make the experience of family violence different.

Many LGBTIQ+ people have experienced fear and discrimination in connection with their identity and sexuality, and for many the process of 'coming out' may have been very difficult. For some, the choice not to be 'out' with all people in their life can become a source of control for the perpetrating partner, such as threats to tell workmates as a way to get the victim to do what the perpetrator wants. In addition, because most information about family violence is directed at heterosexual relationships, there are misconceptions about family violence for LGBTIQ+ people which can hinder help-seeking, such as the incorrect belief that family violence can't happen in LGBTIQ+ relationships or a lack of knowledge about where and how to get support. Being part of a small, close-knit LGBTIQ+ community, particularly in rural areas, can also make it hard for a victim to seek help when the perpetrator shares the same circle and may be acting to isolate the victim from friends or community venues and events.

- 2 As we saw in the previous answer, local LGBTIQ+ communities can be close-knit. In all cities and most major towns there are services that specialise in providing health care and/or social support services to LGBTIQ+ people, and they would be a good first point of contact. In Troy's case, as for all male victims of family violence, you may find there are fewer services available for him. Contacting **MENSLINE** can gain access to counselling support for men anywhere in Australia, and they may be able to help find other state-based or local supports. **1800RESPECT** may also be a good starting point.

- 3 Avoid playing into stereotypes about LGBTIQ+ people. As we've discussed, this is a group whose needs aren't often considered when talking about family violence, so it is important to ensure that Troy is supported to understand that his experience of family violence is real and not his fault. Similarly, even if there is a direct disclosure of sexual violence, it is important not to characterise the violence in a manner that emphasises Troy's sexuality. What is important is that his partner is perpetrating a form of violence against him, sexuality is irrelevant.

**MENSLINE** [www.mensline.org.au/](http://www.mensline.org.au/)

**1800RESPECT** [www.1800respect.org.au/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/)

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<sup>6</sup> [Australian Institute of Family Studies](http://www.aifstudies.org.au/)



## Toolbox Talk 6

### Case Study Handout

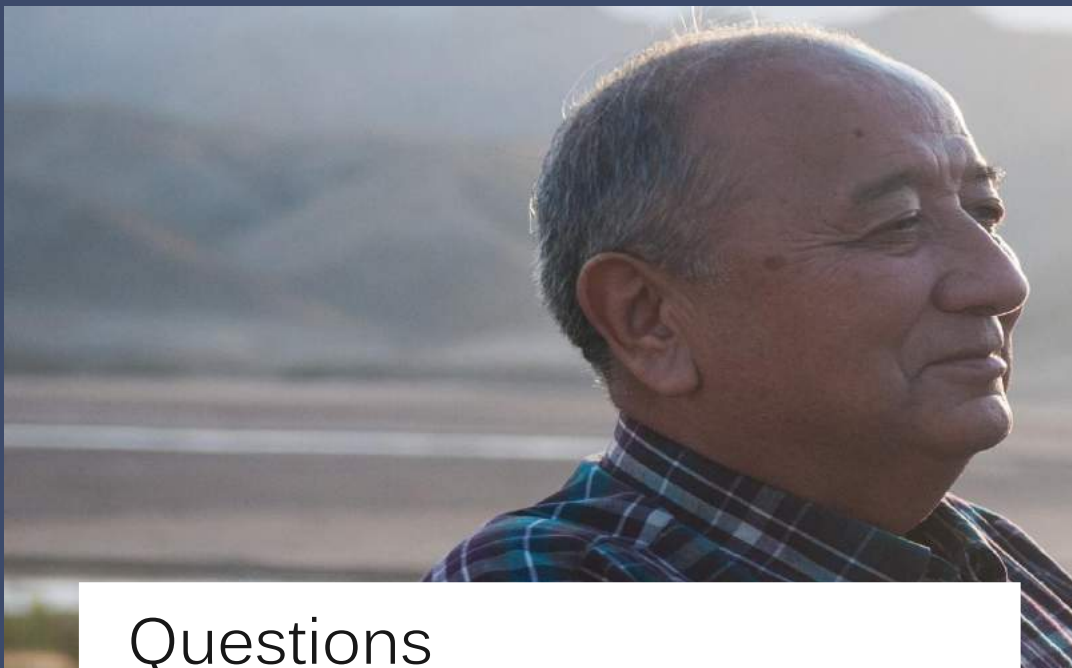
#### ELLIE

Ellie is 17 years old and has recently joined your employment services provider. Ellie struggled at school and left as soon as she could. She wants to work and to have a career, but is looking for a pathway that won't involve further study. When you talk to her about getting a trade she says that the theory component would probably be too heavy for her.

Ellie lives at home with her parents, Daryl and Leanne, and her younger sister, Maddie (15). Ellie says that getting out of home is her main motivation for getting a job, and that she wants a stable job so that she will be able to bring Maddie with her and support her to finish school. You ask Ellie why she thinks Maddie's education is her responsibility, and Ellie tells you it's because neither of them can feel safe while they are still living with Daryl and his temper. She says that he frequently yells and breaks things, and that the rest of the family is scared.



## TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions

- 1 What do you know about young people that might make Ellie's experience of family violence or your approach to helping her different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Ellie's needs? How can you tap into her community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Ellie, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?

## Answers

- 1 The key thing to notice about Ellie is her age. She is not a legal adult – in some states and territories she would be considered a child, in others she is a young person. At 15, her sister Maddie is considered a child in all jurisdictions. This flags the need to consider whether a child protection report needs to be made. In other Toolbox Talks we have mentioned the fact that you do not need to be a mandatory reporter to make a child protection report if you have concerns, and it is always better to err on the side of caution by reporting if you are unsure how serious the risk to a child or young person is. A report would be appropriate in this case. It would also be best practice to tell Ellie that you need to make a report, and to give her the option of participating in the reporting process. The resource sheet on [CHILD PROTECTION](#) gives more guidance around this.

Though it's not covered in this case study, we need to be aware that young people can experience violence with their romantic or sexual partner as well. This can be made difficult for young people who are in a first or early relationship and do not understand what is and isn't OK or normal in a respectful relationship. Young people who have grown up in homes characterised by violence can be especially vulnerable to this.

- 2 Where a job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance, and to other services appropriate to their current needs.

Making a child protection notification in Ellie's case may result in a response and support from child protection authorities, but this is not guaranteed. Finding a youth worker to support and mentor Ellie through the process of deciding and preparing to leave violence could be a valuable option. Many youth services have workers experienced in supporting at-risk young people to find stable accommodation, and many also have workers who can support a young person who is experiencing family violence. Some services also offer family counselling, though it would be important to leave the choice to access a service such as this to Ellie, as she may not feel safe confronting her father even in the context of a professional service.

- 3 Particularly in relation to the child protection element of this case, it's important not to make promises to Ellie that you can't control or keep. You **can** tell Ellie that you will keep working with her regardless of the action that the child protection authority may take.

It's important with young people not to assume that they know much about family violence, or respectful relationships. Young people learn a lot from their peers, but this information is not always accurate – inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour might be normalised by the peer group. Helping a young person to access good [INFORMATION ABOUT SAFETY, RESPECT AND THEIR RIGHTS](#) can help them see that violence is never OK.

**CHILD PROTECTION** Refer to Resource 2

**INFORMATION ABOUT SAFETY, RESPECT AND THEIR RIGHTS**

[www.au.reachout.com/Tough-Times/Bullying-Abuse-and-Violence/Abusive-relationships?gclid=CPOp8vuSgtlCFdgRvQodiZ8Krw](http://www.au.reachout.com/Tough-Times/Bullying-Abuse-and-Violence/Abusive-relationships?gclid=CPOp8vuSgtlCFdgRvQodiZ8Krw)



## Toolbox Talk 6

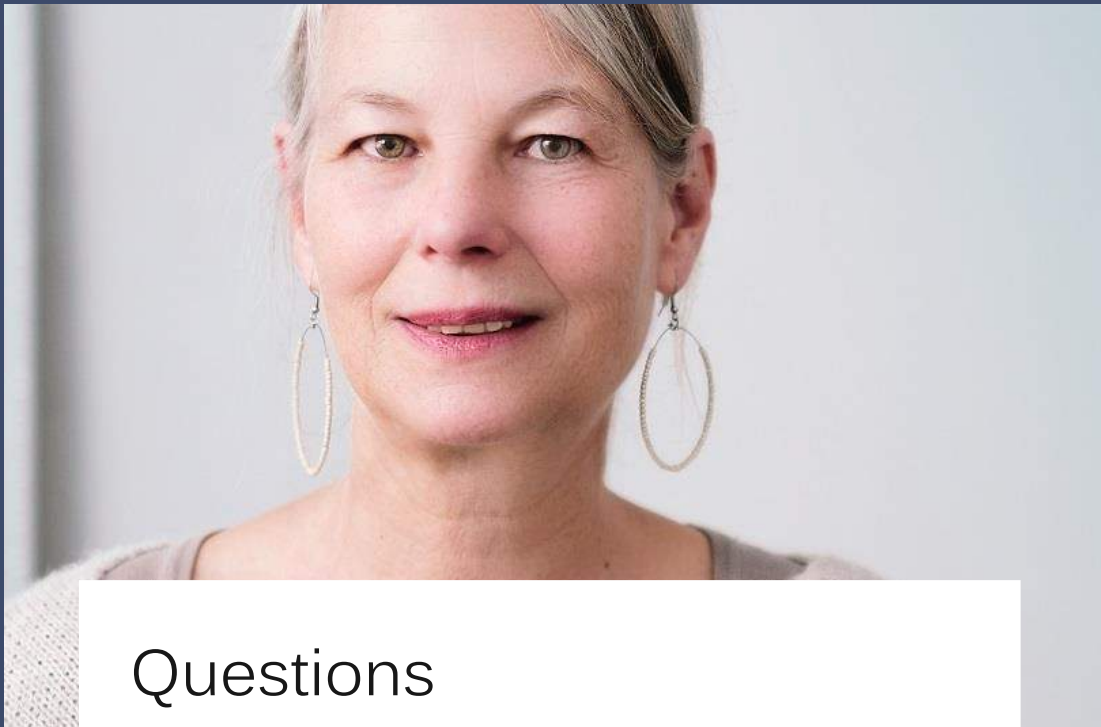
### Case Study Handout

#### SEAN

Sean is 56 years old and lives with his wife, Mollie. Their son, Cameron, was born five months ago. Sean was delighted to be able to spend time at home with his son when he was first born, and would love to be able to keep doing so, but he is also increasingly feeling that he really needs to get back into work to support his family. Sean used to work as a clerk for an accountancy firm, but was made redundant as part of a merger seven months ago. He is keen to get back into similar work.

Sean has gone for several interviews since starting with jobactive, but hasn't been successful yet despite his skills and experience. Following one interview, the recruiter contacted you to say that he had seemed 'spaced' and unable to understand the questions that were being asked of him. At your next appointment you ask Sean about this. He tells you that he just couldn't keep his mind on the conversation after the row that he had had with Mollie that morning. In frustration, he tells you he doesn't know how he'll ever get a job again when she makes him feel so small.

## TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions

- 1 What do you know about male victims of family violence that might make Sean's experience of family violence or your approach to helping him different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Sean's needs? How can you tap into his community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Sean, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?





## Answers

- 1 The misconception that only men perpetrate violence and only women are victims is still common. It's true that the most common form of family violence is male to female, but this does not mean that men cannot also be victims. The difficulty for male victims can be that their experience is made 'invisible' by the fact that much discussion of family violence focuses on violence against women. Because of this, a male victim may not see what is happening to them as violence, or may know this is it violence but may be fearful of speaking out. Strong gender norms in some sections of society can lead to men fearing that they will be ridiculed if people find out that they are being victimised, and that they will be seen as 'weak' or 'less of a man.'

It's important for Sean to feel that he has done the right thing by telling you. You should tell him that you believe him and that the violence is not his fault, just as you would following a disclosure from any victim. You should also give him options for further support, such as helping him to call [MENSLINE](https://www.mensline.org.au/) or the [MEN'S REFERRAL SERVICE](https://www.ntvmrs.org.au/), so that he understands that there are services available for him and that he does not have to stay 'strong and silent' while dealing with this distressing time.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

- 2 In addition to community values not understanding the impact of family violence on male victims, because the prevalence of this type of violence is lower there are fewer services available that you can link Sean in with. A good approach to finding local services is to call your [\*\*STATE OR TERRITORY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE\*\*](#). You can also contact your local specialist family violence service and ask whether they provide services to male victims. If they don't, they should still be able to help you link with another service or they can give you guidance on what to do within your own role.
- 3 Sean has already told you that his experience of family violence makes him feel small, and as we have seen male victims can often fear being judged for their perceived lack of manliness. As such, it's very important for you to ensure that the way that you work with Sean does not belittle him or make him feel disempowered. Employment services have rules and processes that you will need to work within, but it's important throughout to ensure that Sean feels he has choices and a sense of control over what happens to him and to his son. You can do this by explaining Sean's options to him and allowing him to choose the course of action wherever possible. To support Sean, you should refer him to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance, and to other services appropriate to his current needs. You can involve Sean directly in making any referrals and ensure he has any information that he needs to understand this part of the process.

**STATE OR TERRITORY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE** Refer to Resource 1





## Toolbox Talk 6

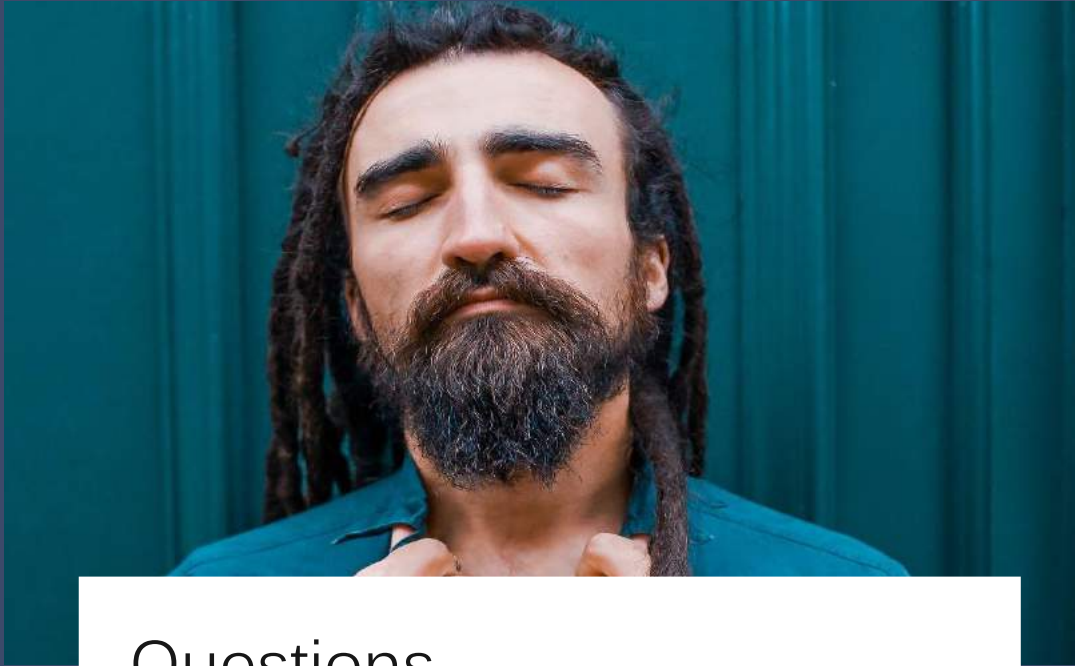
### Case Study Handout

#### JUDY

Judy is 40 years old. She lives in a share house with her boyfriend, Andrew, and their housemate, Patricia. The three of them used to live together in a supported accommodation unit with three other people, but now they rent their home privately and receive drop-in support twice a week from a local disability service provider. Judy has food handling experience from previously working for an Australian Disability Enterprise. You are now working with Judy to find a job in food service.

In today's appointment, Judy appears to be upset about something and is muttering a lot under her breath. She is also wearing a big coat even though it is hot outside, and you know that Judy does not usually require any support to dress appropriately. When you ask her if anything has upset her today, she shouts 'No! I didn't do anything wrong and he should stop pushing me.' You ask her who she is talking about, and she tells you it is Andrew.

## TOOLBOX TALK 6



### Questions

- 1 What do you know about people with disability that might make Judy's experience of domestic violence or your approach to helping her different?
- 2 Where would you go to look for supports that are the right fit for Judy's needs? How can you tap into her community?
- 3 Is there anything you should avoid doing when supporting Judy, or someone else from this group who is experiencing violence?



# Answers

1

People with disability are among the most vulnerable to violence, abuse and neglect within our community. Up to 90% of adults with intellectual disability have experienced sexual assault<sup>1</sup>, and many people with disability experience other forms of violence as well<sup>2</sup>. In addition to family members and housemates, people with disability may also be abused by service providers and other carers. In 2015, a Parliamentary Inquiry into violence, abuse and neglect of people with disability found that this violence is frequently ignored or normalised because “people with disability are painted as being ‘less than’ in Australian culture”<sup>3</sup>. Community misperceptions about whether or not a person with disability can understand what is happening to them, can act as a credible witness in court or has the same rights as other citizens can lead to under-reporting of violence, failure to put protections in place, and little or no consequences for perpetrators.

When working with Judy, we need to respect the fact that this is likely to have been part of her life story to date. When Judy experiences violence from Andrew, she may be being re-traumatised from past experiences of violence or abuse. Andrew may also have an abuse history, but this does not excuse his choices to perpetrate violence and the violence has never been her fault. We need to help Judy to understand this. We may need to consider whether Judy requires access to information in a different format, such as giving her [INFORMATION IN EASY ENGLISH](#) or another [FORMAT THAT SHE CAN ACCESS](#).

Another person with disability may fear disclosing violence because they rely on the perpetrator for aspects of their day to day care, health and safety. A perpetrator who is also a carer can have extremely high levels of control over the victim's life, as they can withhold vital care as a punishment if the victim does not do what they say. If a job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance, and to other services appropriate to their current needs. You will still need your client's consent to do this. Some states and territories also have processes for [REPORTING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY](#).

## FAMILY VIOLENCE FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

- 2 There's a lot changing in disability services in Australia over the next few years while the NDIS rolls out. Judy may or may not be an NDIS participant, and WHERE SHE LIVES will affect when she might become eligible for the scheme. If Judy is an NDIS participant, you can find out if she has a SUPPORT COORDINATOR, and then get them to arrange an urgent Plan Review given her current circumstances. If Judy is not an NDIS participant – which is more likely as the scheme will only offer individual plans to people whose needs are above a certain threshold – you should check to see if there are other services involved in her life and see if she is willing to have you talk to them about the violence. You should at least try to talk to the drop-in support agency that has been coming to her home.

Regardless of the services in Judy's life, linking her in with a DISABILITY ADVOCATE is a good idea. Because we know that people with disability have historically not had their rights to freedom from violence and abuse respected, an advocate will be well placed to help Judy understand those rights and choices.

- 3 Remember that even though Judy may have a disability, she is still an adult with the same rights as any other client and the presumed capacity to make her own decisions about her life. Judy may require information to be shared with her in other ways and may take longer with some things, but we must not assume that she is incapable of deciding what to do about her relationship with Andrew, nor try to make the decision to leave for her.

**INFORMATION IN EASY ENGLISH** [www.wdv.org.au/documents/Voices%20Against%20Violence%20Paper%20Seven%20Easy%20English%20Summary%20%28PDF%203MB%29.pdf](http://www.wdv.org.au/documents/Voices%20Against%20Violence%20Paper%20Seven%20Easy%20English%20Summary%20%28PDF%203MB%29.pdf)

**FORMAT THAT SHE CAN ACCESS** [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/accessible-goods,-services,-facilities-and-events/accessible-information-products/using-and-providing-accessible-formats](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/accessible-goods,-services,-facilities-and-events/accessible-information-products/using-and-providing-accessible-formats)

**REPORTING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY** Refer to **Resource 4**

**WHERE SHE LIVES** [www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/fact-sheets-and-publications.html](http://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/fact-sheets-and-publications.html)

**SUPPORT COORDINATOR** [www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h86/h2e/8799398101022/Starting-your-plan-with-a-Support-Coordinator-PDF-158KB-.pdf](http://www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h86/h2e/8799398101022/Starting-your-plan-with-a-Support-Coordinator-PDF-158KB-.pdf)

**DISABILITY ADVOCATE** [www.disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/](http://www.disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/)

# RESOURCES

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## Resources.

All of the resources developed as part of the NESA Family Violence Project are contained in the following pages. Stand-alone copies of each resource are also available on the [NESA WEBSITE](#) and through the Provider Portal and [LEARNING CENTRE](#).

Most have been designed as two-pagers and quick reference guides. You might encourage staff to keep hard copies at their desk, to save the online versions as a favourite in their browser or to print copies for display in either staff common areas or client-facing areas at your service.

Talk with your team about the best way to use these resources in your specific work context.

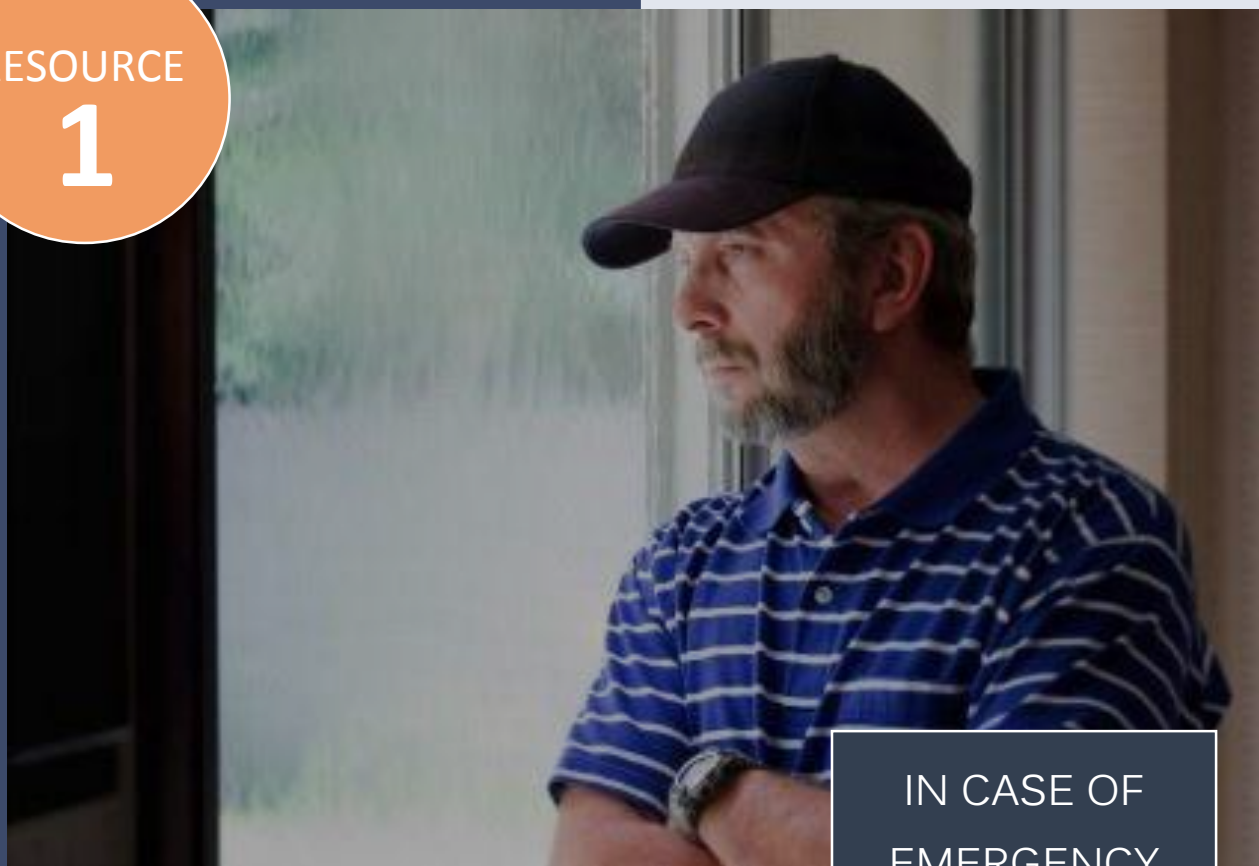
**NESA WEBSITE** [www.nesa.com.au/practitioners-toolkit/](http://www.nesa.com.au/practitioners-toolkit/)

**LEARNING CENTRE** <https://ecsnaccess.gov.au/sites/learningcentre/EmploymentServices/Pages/home.aspx>



RESOURCE

1



IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
CALL 000

## Responding to domestic or family violence in your state

In case of emergency or if someone is at imminent risk of harm, call 000 and ask for Police.

If a jobactive job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance. In addition, staff **should** refer clients to other national state or territory based supports. Each state and territory has a 24-hour hotline (unless otherwise noted) that you can call for immediate support, as well as for assistance to locate face to face services in your local area. The details for National, State and Territory Hotlines are below.

Staff of employment services providers delivering programs other than jobactive should check the relevant guidelines, contractual obligations and legislation, speak to their manager or contact the Department of Employment for more information.

## RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC OR FAMILY VIOLENCE

### NATIONAL HOTLINES

#### **1800Respect**

1800 737 732

National domestic violence and sexual assault counselling line. Also available to workers.

#### **MensLine**

1300 78 99 78

MensLine Australia is a professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men, including those who are experiencing or using violence.

### ACCESSIBILITY

#### **Translating and Interpreting Service**

13 14 50

TIS can provide telephone-based interpreting for speakers of other languages to access the above services.

#### **TTY and Relay**

Emergency: 106

Non-emergency: 133 677

Provides service access for people who are deaf and hearing impaired

### STATE AND TERRITORY HOTLINES

<b>ACT</b> Domestic Violence Crisis Service 02 6280 0900	<b>NT</b> Northern Territory Police Family Violence Unit 08 8999 0865	<b>SA</b> Domestic Violence Gateway Helpline 1800 800 098	<b>TAS</b> Family Violence Counselling and Support Service 1800 608 122 (only operates 9am to midnight)
<b>NSW</b> Domestic Violence Line 1800 656 463  Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia 1800 424 017	<b>QLD</b> DV Connect WomensLine 1800 811 811  DV Connect Mensline 1800 600 636 (only operates 9am to midnight)	<b>VIC</b> Safe Steps 1800 015 188  InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence 1800 755 988	<b>WA</b> Women's Domestic Violence Helpline 1800 007 339  Victim Support Service 1800 818 988

## RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC OR FAMILY VIOLENCE

### REPORTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In the Northern Territory, all adults are mandated to report cases of domestic and family violence to the NT Police. This includes if someone has been seriously hurt or is in danger of being hurt. You must do this as soon as possible. You may be fined up to \$20,000 if you fail to report and Police find evidence that you should have.

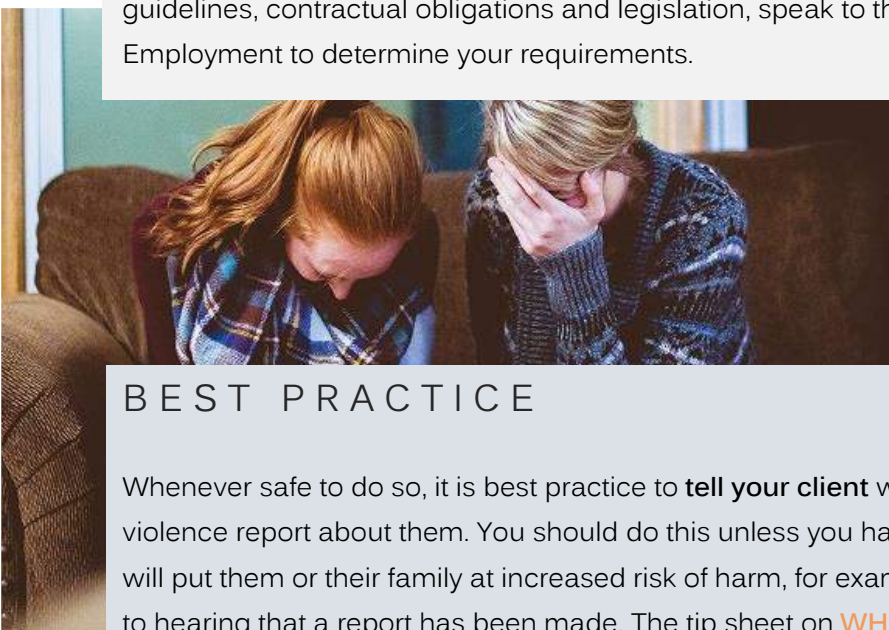
Call 000 if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.

If it's not an emergency, call police on 131 444.

In all other states and territories, domestic and family violence may be reported to child protection authorities. See our tip sheet on [CHILD PROTECTION FOR JOBACTIVE PROVIDERS](#) for more information.

jobactive Providers must also refer any clients experiencing violence to Department of Human Services (Centrelink) Social Workers, either through contact with the local Department of Human Services (Centrelink) office or on 132 850.

Staff of employment services providers delivering programs other than jobactive should check the relevant guidelines, contractual obligations and legislation, speak to their manager or contact the Department of Employment to determine your requirements.



**WHAT TO SAY**  
Refer to [Resource 6](#)

### BEST PRACTICE

Whenever safe to do so, it is best practice to **tell your client** when you are going to make a domestic violence report about them. You should do this unless you have genuine concerns that telling your client will put them or their family at increased risk of harm, for example, if the abuser is likely to react violently to hearing that a report has been made. The tip sheet on [WHAT TO SAY](#) can give some guidance as to how to have this conversation with your client. If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

Whether you tell them or not, you should still make a report if you believe that someone is at immediate risk or if you are a mandatory reporter in this circumstance.

In all states and territories, you have the option to make an anonymous report, though it is generally assumed that people making a report in a professional capacity will disclose their identity so that they may assist police with follow-up enquiries. If you are concerned about the impact that reporting may have on your own safety, discuss your concerns with your manager as soon as possible.

RESOURCE

2



IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
CALL 000

## Child protection in your state or territory

**In case of emergency or if someone is at imminent risk of harm, call 000 and ask for Police.**

Job seekers may be eligible for jobactive from the age of 15. In some states and territories, this means that working for jobactive may involve working with children. This may mean that you are a mandatory reporter/notifier and that you **must** make a report to the child protection authority in your state or territory if you suspect that a child (whether or not they are your client) may be at risk of harm. A summary of what is reportable and whether a jobactive staff member is a mandatory reporter/notifier in each state and territory appears below.

Staff of employment services providers delivering programs other than jobactive should check the relevant guidelines, contractual obligations and legislation, speak to your manager or contact the Department of Employment to determine what you are required to do.

In all states and territories, you **may** make a report of suspect risk of harm to a child even if you are not a mandatory reporter or you are concerned about a type of harm that it is not mandatory to report. **It is always better to over-report than under-report** if you are unsure. You do not need to investigate the suspected harm or prove that it has actually happened in order to report.



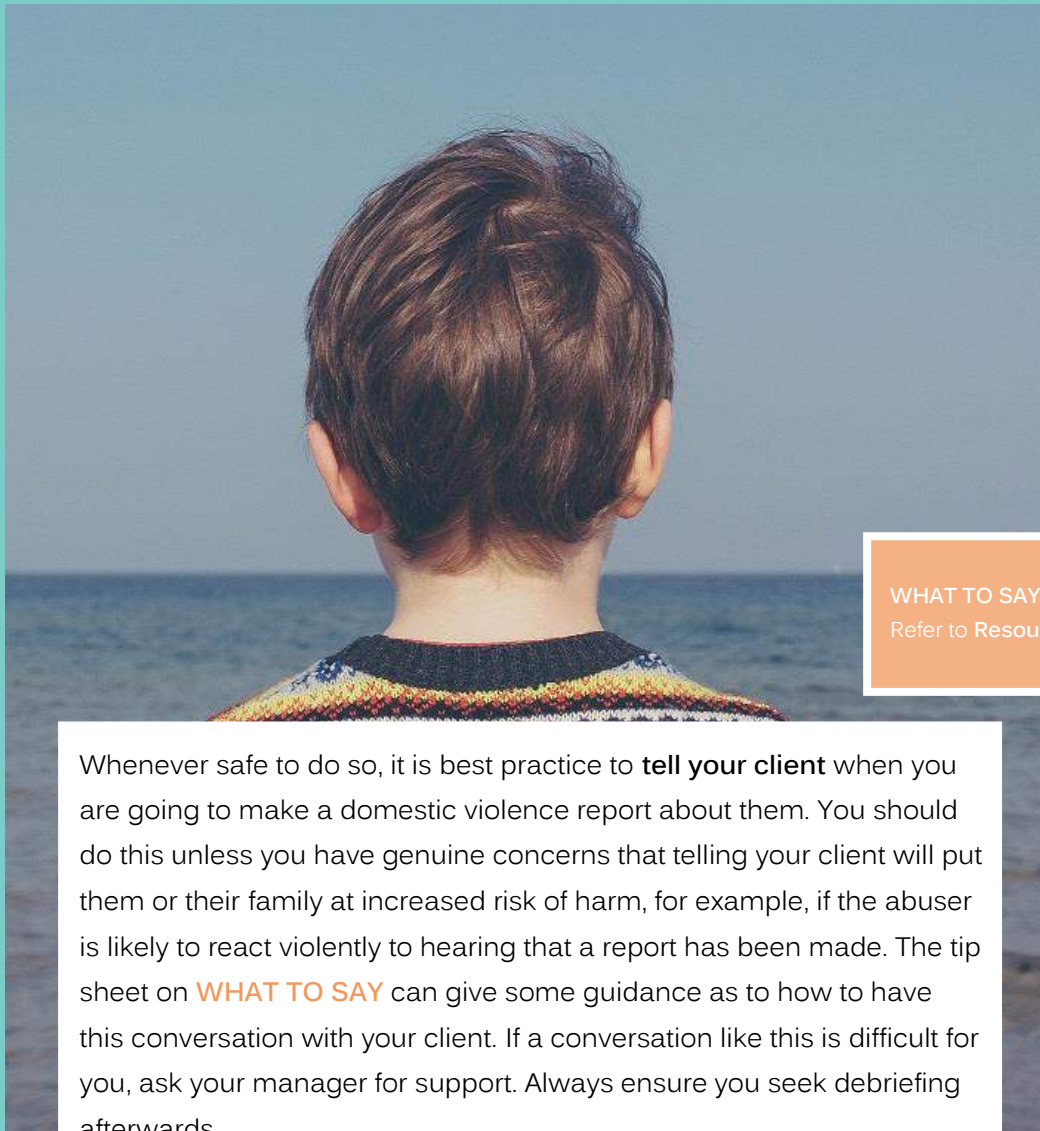
# CHILD PROTECTION FOR JOBSITE PROVIDERS

## STATE AND TERRITORY REPORTING DETAILS<sup>10</sup>

JURISDICTION	ARE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE WORKERS MANDATORY REPORTERS?	REPORTABLE TYPES OF HARM	CONTACT
ACT	Yes	Physical abuse; sexual abuse	1300 556 729 Or <a href="#">online</a>
NSW	Yes	Physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional/psychological abuse; neglect; <b>exposure to domestic violence</b>	13 32 67 Or <a href="#">online</a>
NT	Yes. All adults in NT are mandatory reporters.	Physical abuse; sexual abuse or exploitation; emotional/psychological abuse; neglect; <b>exposure to physical violence</b>	1800 700 250 Or Police: 131 444
QLD	No	Physical abuse; sexual abuse	1800 177 135 Or <a href="#">online</a>
SA	Yes	Physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional/psychological abuse; neglect	13 14 78 Or <a href="#">online</a>
TAS	Yes	Physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional/psychological abuse; neglect; <b>exposure to family violence</b>	1300 737 639 (preferred) Or <a href="#">online</a>
VIC	Yes. All adults in Victoria are mandatory reporters of sexual offences only.	Sexual offence	Police: 000
	No. You are not mandated to report any other types of abuse in Victoria.	Physical abuse; sexual abuse	Business hours: <a href="#">Regional Intake</a> After hours: 131 278
WA	No	Physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional/psychological abuse; neglect	Business Hours: <a href="#">DCP District Offices</a>

<sup>10</sup> These details are correct as at date of publication. Providers should check the currency of the information for their jurisdiction.

## BEST PRACTICE



WHAT TO SAY  
Refer to Resource 6

Whenever safe to do so, it is best practice to **tell your client** when you are going to make a domestic violence report about them. You should do this unless you have genuine concerns that telling your client will put them or their family at increased risk of harm, for example, if the abuser is likely to react violently to hearing that a report has been made. The tip sheet on **WHAT TO SAY** can give some guidance as to how to have this conversation with your client. If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

Whether you tell them or not, you should still make a report if you believe that someone is at immediate risk or if you are a mandatory reporter in this circumstance.

In all states and territories, your identity as a reporter is protected by law. If you are concerned about the impact that reporting may have on your own safety, discuss your concerns with your manager as soon as possible.

RESOURCE

3



IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
CALL 000

## Elder abuse in your state or territory

**In case of emergency or if someone is at imminent risk of harm, call 000 and ask for Police.**

Most states and territories have reporting and support systems in place for cases where an elderly person is experiencing abuse. This can include family violence. Details of elder abuse reporting schemes are summarised below.

## ELDER ABUSE

JURISDICTION <sup>11</sup>	ARE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE WORKERS MANDATORY REPORTERS?	REPORTABLE TYPES OF HARM	CONTACT
ACT	No	Physical abuse; psychological abuse; sexual abuse; financial abuse; neglect; social abuse	Older Persons' Abuse Prevention, Referral and Information Line (APRIL): 02 6205 3535
NSW	No	All serious crimes; neglect; physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; financial abuse	Police: 000 or 131 444
NT	No	Physical, sexual, psychological, financial abuse or neglect from someone in a position of trust	Elder Abuse Information Line: 1800 037 072
QLD	No	Emotional, psychological, financial, physical or sexual abuse, or neglect.	Elder Abuse Helpline: 1300 651 192
SA	No	Mistreatment, abuse, neglect, by someone known and trusted to the person.	Elder Abuse Prevention Line: 1800 372 310
TAS	No	No definition provided	Elder Abuse Helpline: 1800 441 169
VIC	No	Any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust.	Seniors' Rights Victoria: 1300 368 821
WA	No	Financial abuse; physical abuse; sexual abuse; psychological abuse; neglect; social abuse	Elder Abuse Helpline: 1300 724 679

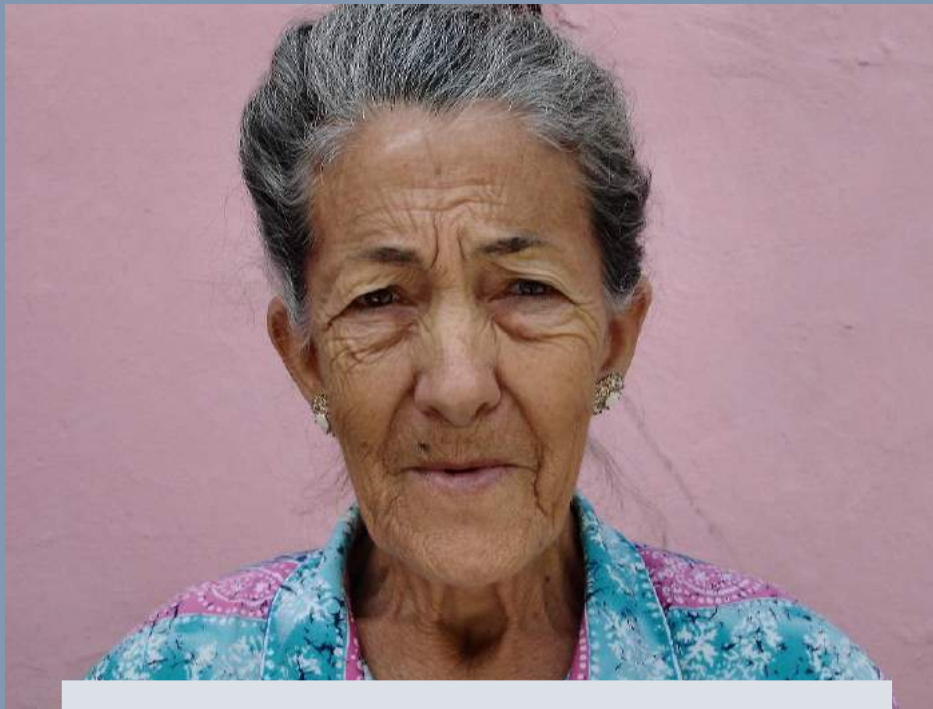
<sup>11</sup> These details are correct as at date of publication. Providers should check the currency of the information for their jurisdiction.



## ELDER ABUSE

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### BEST PRACTICE



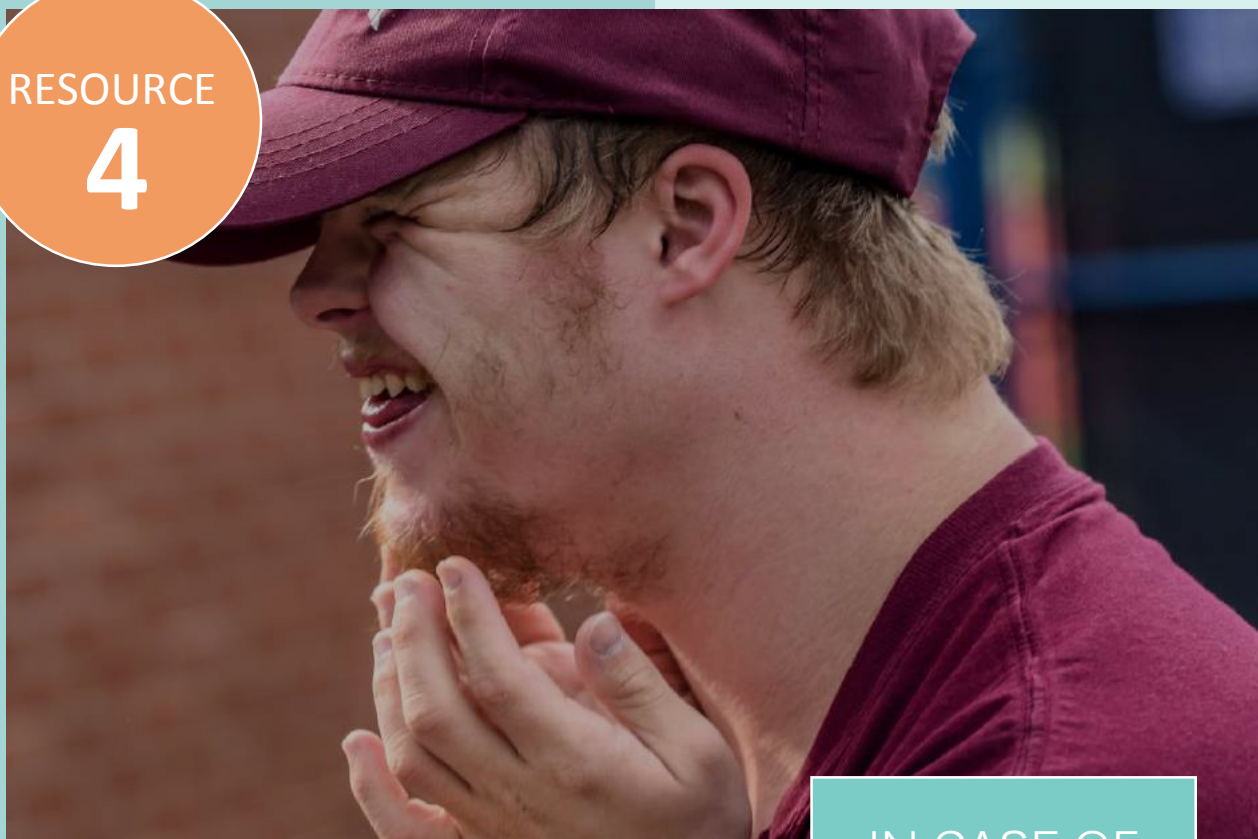
Whenever safe to do so, it is best practice to **tell your client** when you are going to make a domestic violence report about them. You should do this unless you have genuine concerns that telling your client will put them or their family at increased risk of harm, for example, if the abuser is likely to react violently to hearing that a report has been made. The tip sheet on **WHAT TO SAY** can give some guidance as to how to have this conversation with your client. If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

Whether you tell them or not, you should still make a report if you believe that someone is at immediate risk or if you are a mandatory reporter in this circumstance.

In all states and territories, you have the option to make an anonymous report. If you are concerned about the impact that reporting may have on your own safety, discuss your concerns with your manager as soon as possible.

**WHAT TO SAY**  
Refer to Resource 6

RESOURCE  
4



IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
CALL 000

# Disability abuse in your state or territory

**In case of emergency or if someone is at imminent risk of harm, call 000 and ask for Police.**

Some states and territories have reporting and support systems in place for cases where a person with disability is experiencing abuse. This can include family violence. Details of disability abuse reporting schemes are summarised below.

Note that, at this time, NSW is the only state with mandatory reporting of disability abuse, in certain circumstances. As the National Disability Insurance Scheme rolls out across Australia from 2016-2019, work is underway to develop a nationally consistent disability abuse reporting scheme. At the time of publication of this resource, this scheme was not yet in place. The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline acts as a gateway to the range of support and voluntary reporting systems in other states and territories at this time.

## DISABILITY ABUSE

JURISDICTION <sup>12</sup>	JOB ACTIVE MANDATORY REPORTER/NOTIFIER?	REPORTABLE TYPES OF HARM	CONTACT
National	No	The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline offers advice to reporters as to how to locate and access the right supports. It is not a crisis line, and may refer callers to state or territory authorities.	National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1800 880 052
NSW	Only if the person lives in funded supported accommodation	Worker to client abuse; client to client abuse; contravention of AVO; unexplained serious injury	Ombudsman: <a href="#">online</a>

**WHAT TO SAY**  
Refer to Resource 6

### BEST PRACTICE



Whenever safe to do so, it is best practice to **tell your client** when you are going to make a domestic violence report about them. You should do this unless you have genuine concerns that telling your client will put them or their child at increased risk of harm, for example, if the abuser is likely to react violently to hearing that a report has been made. The tip sheet on **WHAT TO SAY** can give some guidance as to how to have this conversation with your client. If a conversation like this is difficult for you, ask your manager for support. Always ensure you seek debriefing afterwards.

Whether you tell them or not, you should still make a report if you believe that someone is at immediate risk or if you are a mandatory reporter in this circumstance.

In all states and territories, you have the option to make an anonymous report. If you are concerned about the impact that reporting may have on your own safety, or the safety of your client and/or family, discuss your concerns with your manager as soon as possible.

<sup>12</sup> These details are correct as at date of publication. Providers should check the currency of the information for their jurisdiction.

RESOURCE

5

# Protection orders in your state or territory

All states and territories have legal frameworks and processes which are designed to protect victims of domestic and family violence from perpetrators. The main differences are:

- ⊕ Who can apply for a protection order/ intervention order/ apprehended violence order;
- ⊕ What types and duration of orders are available;
- ⊕ What restrictions can be placed on a perpetrator;
- ⊕ The grounds on which an order can be made, such as whether there has to be evidence of violence having occurred or whether the victim's fear is sufficient grounds;
- ⊕ The penalties for breaching orders.

At the time of publication, Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments are working towards a national system to have orders made in one state or territory recognised across the rest of the country. Until this is enforced, victims who cross state borders must register interstate orders to have them able to be enforced in other states and territories.





## PROTECTION ORDERS

### INFORMATION-SHARING PROVISIONS

It is important for staff to understand how information-sharing provisions apply in each state and territory. This relates to whether or not you can talk to other agencies if one of your clients is experiencing violence.

JURISDICTION <sup>13</sup>	PROVISIONS
ACT	Police may disclose details of suspected violence to crisis support agencies (this does not include employment services).
NSW	Government, health and support agencies may share information about a victim or alleged perpetrator if it helps coordinate support for the victim, only where the victim gives consent. Only government or health agencies may dispense with consent, and only where the threat is serious.
NT	All adults must report harm, likely harm or serious or imminent threat of domestic violence to police. Failure to do so is an offence. Reporters are protected from civil and criminal liability.
QLD	Information may only be exchanged between the Court and the child protection authority.
SA	If your organisation is bound by the state's Information Privacy Principles, you must give information to a police officer if it is requested for the purpose of locating a perpetrator to serve them a protection order.
TAS	It is not a breach of the Personal Information Act for an agency to disclose personal information for the purpose of preventing family violence. A person who reports suspicion of family violence to police is protected from civil and criminal liability.
VIC	Information about a client's participation in court-ordered counselling may be used in court proceedings, which may be relevant if the counselling formed part of the client's activities.
WA	Government agencies may exchange information to ensure the safety of the protected person or a child. This does not include employment services.

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<sup>13</sup> These details are correct as at date of publication. Providers should check the currency of the information for their jurisdiction.

## PROTECTION ORDERS

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### LEGAL ADVICE

It's important that you don't try to go beyond your role in relation to advising your client about their options as either a victim or perpetrator, as giving incorrect advice could have serious consequences for the victim and any children in their care.

Job seekers may be able to get assistance with their legal issues free through LegalAid if they are eligible. Links to LegalAid in each state and territory are below. The Employment Fund may at the discretion of the provider be used to support a Stream C jobactive job seeker to access legal advice and representation.

### LINKS TO LegalAid IN EACH STATE AND TERRITORY

[LegalAid ACT](http://www.legalaidact.org.au/) - <http://www.legalaidact.org.au/>

[LegalAid NSW](http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/) - <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/>

[LegalAid NT](http://www.ntlac.nt.gov.au/) - <http://www.ntlac.nt.gov.au/>

[LegalAid Queensland](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/) - <http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/>

[LegalAid SA](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au/cb_pages/legal_aid.php) - [http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au/cb\\_pages/legal\\_aid.php](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au/cb_pages/legal_aid.php)

[LegalAid Tasmania](http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au/) - <http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au/>

[LegalAid Victoria](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/) - <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/>

[LegalAid WA](http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/) - <http://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/>

## PROTECTION ORDERS

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### WORKING WITH PERPETRATORS

It is up to the judge or magistrate to decide what conditions they place on an alleged offender as part of the protection order, and this can vary case by case depending on both the victim's and perpetrator's circumstances. Some examples may include:

- ⊕ Exclusion from the victim's place of residence, so that the perpetrator has to find somewhere else to stay;
- ⊕ Exclusions from other premises or within a perimeter around a premises, which may impact job placement options, particularly in smaller towns;
- ⊕ Requirements to participate in counselling or behaviour-change programs, which may be counted towards a Job Plan and activities;
- ⊕ Removal of access to weapons or revocation of firearms license, which may impact job seekers looking for work in a small number of industries.

Providing practical support to the perpetrating job seeker in terms of assistance to locate accommodation and facilitating access to counselling or group programs can help them to comply with the terms of their order. This is somewhere that employment services can work to stop violence.

If a perpetrator does not comply with their order, they may be found to be in breach. Penalties can range across jurisdictions from fines of \$1,250 to \$70,000 and prison terms of seven days to five years. In order to be breached, the victim or the police must present evidence to court, so not all perpetrators who contravene their orders necessarily receive a breach penalty.

### WORKING WITH VICTIMS

It's important to link victims to the right support as quickly as possible, and in this case that can mean helping a victim access [LEGAL ADVICE](#) as well as support to attend court. That support could take the form of:

- ⊕ Negotiating leave from a job placement on court dates;
- ⊕ Arranging child care to facilitate court attendance;
- ⊕ Travel assistance to get to and from court;
- ⊕ Referral to a court support service that can attend the court date with your client;
- ⊕ Making variations to activity requirements where possible to accommodate court attendance.

Talk to your client about the supports that are right for them.

**LEGAL ADVICE**  
Refer to Resource 5

RESOURCE

6

IF YOU  
SUSPECT  
SOMETHING,  
ASK!

## Risk assessment: when to ask what to say

Broaching a sensitive topic with a client can be challenging, even for experienced workers. In the context of family violence, it's important to follow up any suspicions that you have by asking your client. They may be waiting for someone to ask before they feel they can ask for help, and failure to do so could have serious consequences.

Don't wait to be sure before you say anything. **If you suspect something, ask.**



## RISK ASSESSMENT

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### INDICATORS OF VIOLENCE

**A person who is experiencing family violence as a victim might:**

- ⊕ appear nervous, ashamed or evasive
- ⊕ describe their partner as controlling or prone to anger
- ⊕ seem uncomfortable or anxious in the presence of their partner suffer anxiety, panic attacks, stress, depression or psychiatric illness
- ⊕ present with patterns of repeated injury or signs of neglect
- ⊕ give an unconvincing explanation of injuries that they have sustained
- ⊕ have delayed seeking medical help
- ⊕ have recently separated or divorced
- ⊕ have attempted suicide
- ⊕ be accompanied by their partner, who does most of the talking
- ⊕ be reluctant to follow advice have a drug abuse problem, including tranquillisers or alcohol
- ⊕ have chronic headaches, asthma and/or vague aches and pains
- ⊕ have abdominal pain or diarrhoea
- ⊕ have joint and/or muscle pain
- ⊕ have sleeping and/or eating disorders have gynaecological problems and/or have suffered miscarriages
- ⊕ have physical signs of violence such as bruising, multiple injuries, minor cuts, injuries during pregnancy and/or ruptured eardrum

**The following signs could indicate that your client is a perpetrator of family violence:**

- ⊕ use of threats or glares
- ⊕ pattern of damaging property or harming animals
- ⊕ use of humiliation or ridicule
- ⊕ criticism of victim's parenting and threats to take children away
- ⊕ active prevention of the victim from working or leaving the house
- ⊕ minimising or excusing violence, e.g. 'only a slap'
- ⊕ use of victim blame to avoid responsibility for violence
- ⊕ high expectations of victim around sex or housework
- ⊕ control of household finances
- ⊕ expressions of jealousy
- ⊕ threats to harm or kill self or others
- ⊕ history of violent offences
- ⊕ unemployment
- ⊕ anxiety, panic attacks, stress, depression or psychiatric illness
- ⊕ drug abuse, including tranquillisers or alcohol
- ⊕ using 'loss of control' as an excuse

## RISK ASSESSMENT

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### WHAT TO SAY

**Ask a direct question and be clear, so your client knows what you are asking about. For example:**

- ⊕ “I can see that bruise on your chin. Has someone hurt you?”
- ⊕ “Last week you said your partner was angry about you coming here, and now they are outside. Are they controlling or violent towards you?”
- ⊕ “You said you yelled at your partner. Do you think your behaviour towards him is violent or controlling?”
- ⊕ “Are you ever afraid of someone in your family or household?”
- ⊕ “Has someone in your family or household threatened to hurt you?”
- ⊕ “Has someone in your family or household ever pushed, hit, kicked, punched or hurt you?”

**If your client says YES, reassure them of the following:**

- ⊕ “Violence is never the victim’s fault. The perpetrator is accountable for their actions.”
- ⊕ “Violence is never OK.”
- ⊕ “You were right to tell me about this.”
- ⊕ “I will help you find the right supports so that you can decide what to do about the violence, and I will support your choices.”
- ⊕ “What we discuss will remain confidential, unless you tell me that someone is at immediate risk of being hurt or if children are at risk. Then I may need to call the police or child protection services, but if that ever happens I will keep you informed and involve you in making the report if you wish. As a provider, I also need to tell Centrelink about the violence – in broad terms only – so that we can make sure you are getting the right financial support and access to other services. We can also apply to have your mutual obligation requirements suspended or reduced while you go through this.”

**If your client says NO, tell them all of the following:**

- ⊕ “I hear and respect what you are telling me.”
- ⊕ “I might ask you these questions again if something else makes me think you are experiencing family violence because as an employment services provider I have a duty of care for my clients, but it is always your choice to tell me or not.”
- ⊕ “If you want information about family violence you can call 1800Respect (1800 737 732) or find them online. You don’t have to tell me if you are seeking this information.”

# RISK ASSESSMENT

## IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

### ASSESS RISK AND ACT

jobactive Six-Step  
Action Plan Resource

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

Responding to  
Domestic or Family  
Violence Resource

### CHILD PROTECTION REPORT

Child Protection for  
jobactive Providers

If your client tells you they are experiencing family violence, you need to

#### ASSESS RISK AND ACT.

- ⊕ Ask if anyone is at immediate risk, and call 000 if they are.
- ⊕ Ask if your client feels safe to leave their appointment today, and call a DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE if they do not.
- ⊕ Ask if any children are living in the home where the violence is occurring, and seek management support to determine whether you need to make a CHILD PROTECTION REPORT.
- ⊕ You should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance and to other services appropriate to their current needs.

If any part of this conversation is difficult for you, seek immediate support from your manager.

## SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

1.  
ASK

2.  
RESPOND

3.  
ASSESS RISK  
AND ACT

4.  
INFORM

5.  
RESPECT  
CHOICES

6.  
MONITOR  
AND  
DOCUMENT

REPEAT AS  
REQUIRED

RESOURCE  
**7**



## SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

### 1. ASK

Tell your client what you have observed and **ask them directly** if they are experiencing family violence.

If they say yes, follow the steps below.

If they say no, give them [INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE](#) and make a note of your concerns.

**Ask again** next time you see something that causes you suspicion.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE

[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence)

### 2. RESPOND

Tell your client:

- ⊕ The violence is never the victim's fault. The perpetrator is accountable for their actions.
- ⊕ Violence is never OK.
- ⊕ Your client was right to tell you.
- ⊕ You will help your client find the right supports and you will support your client's choices.
- ⊕ What you discuss will remain confidential unless someone is at immediate risk of being hurt or if children are at risk.

### 3. ASSESS RISK AND ACT

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

Responding to Domestic or Family Violence Resource

Ask: Is anyone in immediate danger right now or as soon as this appointment is over?

If yes, call 000 and ask for Police. Encourage your client to remain on site with you and seek support from your manager.

#### CHILD PROTECTION REPORT

Child Protection for jobactive Providers

Ask: Do you feel safe to leave here today?

If no, help your client ring [YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE](#) and ask for immediate support to make a safety plan.

Ask: Are there any children living in the home where the family violence is occurring?

If yes, check the [CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY](#) and seek support from your manager.

Tell: If a job seeker discloses that they are experiencing family or domestic violence, you should refer them to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) for further assistance and to other services appropriate to their current needs. Under other employment services programs you should confirm your responsibility to refer job seekers to the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) and refer them where required or consider other appropriate referrals.

Notify [DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES \(CENTRELINK\) SOCIAL WORKERS](#) as soon as possible after immediate safety needs have been addressed.

#### CENTRELINK SOCIAL WORKERS

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/social-work-services#a5>

## SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

### 4. INFORM

If they are a Principle Carer Parent, tell your client that their experience of family violence exempts them from activity requirements and complete the exemption application through [ESS](#).

If your client is not a Principal Carer Parent, tell them that there are options to apply for an exemption or reduction in activity requirements. Explain the process to them and, if they wish to apply, complete the application through [ESS](#).

Tell your client that you can restructure their Job Plan (if relevant) to ensure that their activities support them to address the violence that they are currently experiencing or their recovery from past violence, while also supporting the goal of getting into work. Tell your client about their options, such as:

- Counselling, through a Family Violence Specialist Service or other counselling/mental health professional
- Group work – either victim support or behaviour change for perpetrators
- Courses that support a victim to build skills in managing their safety, such as cyber safety
- Activities that relate to securing stable accommodation
- Flexibility around days and times for activities to allow for court attendance, etc.

If your client is in jobactive, tell them that the Employment Fund can be used to help access items, support and services that will both address their current experience of violence and support their employment goals. Tell your client about their options, such as:

- Purchasing a phone that the perpetrator can't control, including credit
- Paying for professional services such as counselling
- Paying for crisis accommodation, where all other avenues have been exhausted.
- Post Placement Support.

Tell your client that you believe them and that you will keep working with them, but that some of their needs are best met by other professionals. If your client needs a level or type of support that you can't, shouldn't or aren't qualified to provide, refer them to a Family Violence Specialist Service (your [STATE OR TERRITORY HOTLINE](#) can help you find a local service) and gain consent to keep in touch with their worker so that you can keep adjusting your support if things change. Also talk to your client about whether they have any [SPECIFIC NEEDS](#) because of their culture, sexuality or another reason, and work together to identify the right supports in your local area.

#### ESS

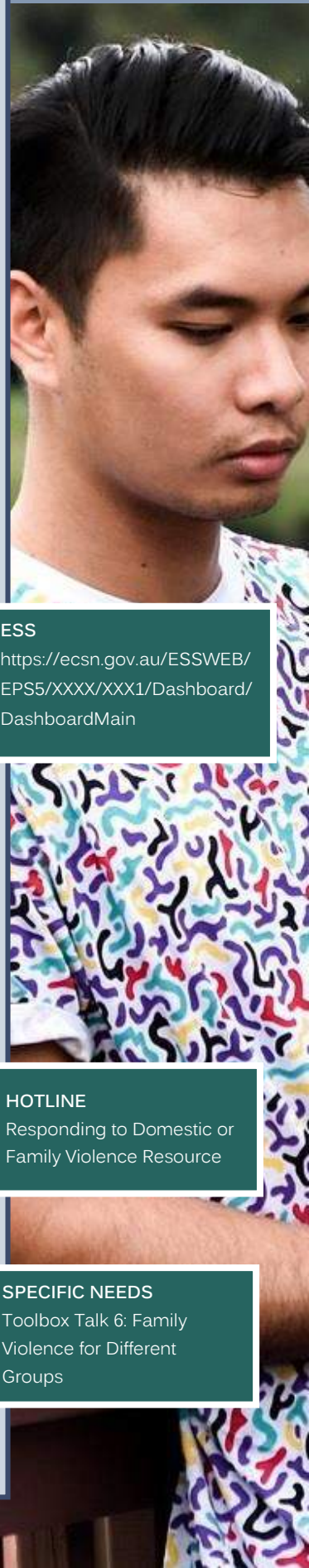
<https://ecsn.gov.au/ESSWEB/EP55/XXXX/XXX1/Dashboard/DashboardMain>

#### HOTLINE

Responding to Domestic or Family Violence Resource

#### SPECIFIC NEEDS

Toolbox Talk 6: Family Violence for Different Groups



## SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

### 5. RESPECT CHOICES

Remember, it's not for you to tell your client what they should do. They understand their situation much better than you do, and they know which options are feasible for them and which options aren't.

#### FOR VICTIMS WHO DO NOT CHOOSE TO LEAVE THEIR HOME...

Give them information about their local Family Violence Specialist Service.

Tell them that they can get help to put a [SAFETY PLAN](#) in place.

Tell them that they may have options to stay home but still [SEEK PROTECTION](#) from their perpetrating partner.

Ask them if there are ways that you can vary your support that will help them to be safer.

Remind them that you can still help them if they change their mind about staying later down the track, but that you respect their choice.

Support the safety of the job seeker by ensuring confidentiality, and ensuring that contact is made in a way that does not expose or put the job seeker at risk, e.g. avoid a text message with an appointment location and time that someone other than the job seeker could access.

#### FOR VICTIMS WHO CHOOSE TO LEAVE (OR ARE PREPARING TO LEAVE)...

Ensure they are linked in with their local Family Violence Specialist Service or refer them if they are not.

Gain consent to work with their family violence worker and any other involved agencies so that you can make sure you coordinate support and can respond quickly when the time comes to leave.

Check to see whether your client has an [ESCAPE PLAN](#), and tell them they can get support from their family violence worker to set one up. jobactive may be able to fund certain items, such as a new phone through the Employment Fund.

Work with other agencies to ensure that your client's needs for accommodation, protection from the perpetrator, essentials such as clothes and food and reduction of any barriers to leaving can be met.

Support the safety of the job seeker by ensuring confidentiality, and ensuring that contact is made in a way that does not expose or put the job seeker at risk, e.g. avoid a text message with an appointment location and time that someone other than the job seeker could access.

#### FOR PERPETRATORS WHO DO NOT HAVE ANY PROTECTION ORDERS IN PLACE...

Remind them that you are willing to work with them, but do not endorse, condone or excuse their violent behaviour. Explain your organisation's expectations around client behaviour, the jobactive guidelines on [SERVICE RESTRICTIONS](#) (where relevant) and broader employment services requirements.

Affirm their choice to stop violence and change their coercive or controlling behaviour.

Talk about what is involved in [BEHAVIOUR CHANGE](#) and which local services are available.

If the client is not interested in a behaviour change program, explore other options for stopping violence which could be included in the Job Plan, such as counselling or anger

#### FOR PERPETRATORS WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED A PROTECTION ORDER...

Remind them that you are willing to work with them, but do not endorse, condone or excuse their violent behaviour. Explain your organisation's expectations around client behaviour, the jobactive guidelines on [SERVICE RESTRICTIONS](#) (where relevant) and broader employment services requirements.

Understand that their participation in behaviour-change programs or other terms of the intervention order may be involuntary – they have to do it even though they may not want to.

Find ways to give them choices, such as which service they want to work with.

Talk about what is involved in [BEHAVIOUR-CHANGE](#) and which local services are available.

## SIX-STEP FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN



### SAFETY PLAN

[www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/staying-safe-understanding-safety-planning/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/staying-safe-understanding-safety-planning/)

### SEEK PROTECTION

Protection Orders Resource

### ESCAPE PLAN

[www.1800respect.org.au/escape-bag-checklist/login](http://www.1800respect.org.au/escape-bag-checklist/login)

### HOW VIOLENT AND CONTROLLING BEHAVIOUR AFFECTS OTHERS

[www.ntvmrs.org.au/](http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/)

### BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

[www.ntvmrs.org.au/get-help/behaviour-causing-problems/](http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/get-help/behaviour-causing-problems/)

### SERVICE RESTRICTIONS

<https://docs employment.gov.au/documents/job-seekers-challenging-behaviours-guideline>

## 6. MONITOR AND DOCUMENT

At the end of every appointment with your client or any follow-up work, include any developments about their experience of family violence in your client progress notes or case notes.

If you think the pattern of violence is escalating, go back to **STEP 3: ASSESS RISK AND ACT.**

Come back to any of the steps in this plan as often as you need to, then follow the process through to Step 6.

### SEEK PROTECTION

Refer to Resource 5



# Family violence in Australia: key facts.

## RESOURCE 8

### GENDER AND VULNERABILITY<sup>14</sup>

1 woman per week is killed by a partner or former partner

1 in 3 women reported experiencing family or domestic violence at some time since the age of 15

Women with disability are twice as likely to experience violence as women without disability

Women 18-24 are twice as likely to experience sexual violence than women in other age brackets

1 in 6 women and 1 in 19 men report intimate partner violence with a current or former partner involving physical or sexual violence. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men report it involves emotional abuse

95% of reported perpetrators of all forms of violence are men

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL<sup>15</sup>

3 women per week are hospitalised with traumatic brain injury caused by intimate partner violence

Aboriginal women are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence

Intimate partner violence contributes to more death, disability and illness in women aged 15 to 44 than any other preventable risk factor, including high pressure and smoking<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN KEY STATISTICS

[www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/family-and-domestic-violence)

<sup>15</sup> IBID

[www.anrows.org.au/sites/default/files/Violence-Against-Australian-Women-Key-Statistics.pdf](http://www.anrows.org.au/sites/default/files/Violence-Against-Australian-Women-Key-Statistics.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> VICHEALTH, BURDEN OF DISEASE CAUSED BY INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey)

# Family violence in Australia: key facts.



## FAMILY AND CHILDREN<sup>17</sup>

300,000 women experience violence from someone other than an intimate partner each year

Family violence accounts for a police call-out on average every two minutes

Children are present in 1 in 3 family violence cases reported to police

58% of victims do not involve the police, and 24% do not seek any advice or support

## COMMUNITY<sup>18</sup>

Community attitudes about violence are changing, but need to keep going:

- ⊕ 21% think domestic violence can be excused if the perpetrator regrets it
- ⊕ 12% think domestic violence can be excused if the perpetrator is under a lot of stress
- ⊕ 11% think domestic violence can be excused if the victim is affected by alcohol
- ⊕ 78% find it hard to understand why victims stay in violent relationships, and 51% think most women could leave if they wanted to

## PREVENTION<sup>19</sup>

Family violence is a fundamental violation of human rights, and one that Australia has an obligation to prevent under international law

Promoting respectful, non-violent and equal relationships can benefit the whole community

<sup>17</sup> AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, PERSONAL SAFETY SURVEY

[www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0)

<sup>18</sup> VICHEALTH, NATIONAL COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SURVEY

[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/2013-national-community-attitudes-towards-violence-against-women-survey)

<sup>19</sup> AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

[www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/family-and-domestic-violence)

# Working with family violence: key definitions.

## RESOURCE 9

### FAMILY VIOLENCE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

When we talk about family violence in this toolkit, we are also including domestic violence and intimate partner violence. Each of these definitions has a specific meaning.

**Family Violence** can happen between people who are in some way related. It can include husbands and wives or other partners, parents and children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and other extended family members, including cultural interpretations of extended family. It doesn't have to occur between people living in the same house. We use this terminology throughout this Toolkit because it is the broadest.

**Domestic Violence** can happen between people who are living together. This usually falls under the category of family violence as well, as most people who live together are families, but it can also occur between people who live together through other circumstances, such as shared accommodation.

**Intimate Partner Violence** can happen between people who are in an intimate relationship, whether living together or not, or who have previously been in an intimate relationship together. Intimate partner violence can involve some dynamics that other types of family or domestic violence do not, given the nature of sexual and other intimacy involved in an intimate relationship.

What all of these things have in common is that they involve 'actions which are violent, threatening, coercive, controlling or intended to cause the family or household member to be fearful'<sup>20</sup>.

Family, domestic and intimate partner violence can include physical, verbal, emotional, sexual or psychological abuse, neglect, financial abuse, stalking, harm to an animal or property, restricting the victim's spiritual or cultural participation, or exposing children to the effects of these behaviours. Different perpetrators can use many different means to intimidate and control their victims.

<sup>20</sup> This definition is taken from the [DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence).  
[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence)



# Working with family violence: key definitions.

## TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Trauma-informed practice, or trauma-informed care, is a way of working with people who have experienced or are experiencing trauma. It is about making sure that the services we provide do not cause any more trauma. Trauma-informed practice helps people feel safe when you are working with them, which means you can provide a better service.

Three key things that workers can do to make sure their work is trauma-informed are:

1. Acknowledging the impact that trauma can have on clients and how this might relate to struggles that they may be having in working with the service;
2. Ask about the trauma rather than waiting for a victim to disclose, and;
3. Respond in a way that shows that you believe the client and that you do not judge them.

For more information, see the Federal Government's **MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ONLINE DEVELOPMENT (MHPD)** site.

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ONLINE DEVELOPMENT  
(MHPD) [www.mhpod.gov.au/assets/sample\\_topics/combined/Trauma\\_and\\_Mental\\_Health/objective2/index.html](http://www.mhpod.gov.au/assets/sample_topics/combined/Trauma_and_Mental_Health/objective2/index.html)

## STRENGTHS-BASED PRACTICE

Strengths-based practice recognises that all people and communities have inherent skills, capabilities and resources that they can use to make their lives better, according to their own choices and priorities. Strengths-based practice comes from a human rights perspective.

When we use strengths-based practice with a client, we respect and honour their ability to take actions in their own lives – including the strength that they have shown in asking us for support. Rather than telling the client what they need or what is good for them, we work with them as a team. We recognise that they are experts about their own situation, and our role is to help them identify and tap into their own strengths and resources as well as the range of supports and resources that are available from our and other services.

More information about using strengths-based practice in a family violence context can be found in the Victorian Government's **FAMILY VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK**.

FAMILY VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK  
<http://www.thelookout.org.au/sites/default/files/Risk-Assessment-for-Specialist-Family-Violence-Workers-Handbook-Practice-Guide-3.pdf>



# Where to go for more information.

RESOURCE  
**10**

## MORE INFORMATION

### CLIENTS

[www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/get-help/)

### WORKERS

[www.1800respect.org.au/workers/](http://www.1800respect.org.au/workers/)

### WHITE RIBBON AUSTRALIA

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/stop-violence-against-women/what-you-can-do/workplace-involvement/>

This resource frequently refers to 1800Respect, the National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service. Its comprehensive range of information and resources for [CLIENTS](#) as well as for [WORKERS](#) is a great place to start for any member of your team who is looking for further reading beyond the materials contained in this kit.

If your organisation wants to take a broader look at HR best practices as they relate to family violence and building a culture that creates a safer and more respectful workplace, [WHITE RIBBON AUSTRALIA](#) has an accreditation program which sets out actions and standards employers can take.

In developing the content of this kit, the following organisations and sites have been key sources:

Ask Izzy

<https://askizzy.org.au/>

Australian Human Rights Commission

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/>

Australian Institute of Criminology

<http://www.aic.gov.au/>

Australian Institute of Family Studies

<https://aifs.gov.au/>

Australian Law Reform Commission

<http://www.alrc.gov.au/>

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety

<http://anrows.org.au/>

Blue Knot Foundation

<http://www.blueknot.org.au/>

Brisbane Domestic Violence Service

<http://www.bdvs.org.au/>

Creative Spirits

<https://www.creativespirits.info/>

Dawn House NT <http://www.dawnhouse.org.au/>

Department of Human Services (Federal)

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/>

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

<http://www.dvrcv.org.au/>

Men's Referral Service

<http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/>

MensLine

<https://www.mensline.org.au/>

No To Violence

<http://www.ntvmrs.org.au/>

Northern Integrated Family Violence Services

<http://www.nifvs.org.au/>

NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence

<http://www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

<http://www.startts.org.au/>

Our Watch

<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>

People with Disability Australia

<https://www.pwd.org.au/>

Reach Out

<http://au.reachout.com/>

VicHealth

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/>

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/>

WA Department of Child Protection and Family Support

<https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au>

**For any queries about how to apply this material to your work within jobactive or other employment services programs, speak to your manager or contact the Department of Employment.**