

Islam and Muslims oppose violence against women.

A Guide for Muslim Women

*For Muslim women who have
experienced family violence and
Muslims who seek to inform
themselves and their community
about a socially responsible
understanding of family violence.*



An Australian Government Initiative



THE AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Equality without Exception



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In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ فَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

*Whoever works righteousness,
man or woman,
and has Faith,
verily, to him will
we give a new Life,
a life that is good and pure.*

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Introduction

The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights

The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights is an organisation of Muslim women working to advance the rights and status of Muslim women in Australia.

We are a non religious organisation because we understand that the diversity of the Muslim community in Australia means that there is not sufficient consensus on critical issues related to the status of women in Islam. This recognition of diversity ensures our accessibility and relevance to all sects, schools and groups within the Muslim community.

As an organisation committed to human rights, we will not remain silent when Islam is used to undermine the status of Muslim women but will intervene in these instances with facts and informed analysis.

Our intent is to challenge cultural hierarchies or any system of monopolisation or exclusion that result in reducing the rights and status of Muslim women.

Our framework of understanding is the international Muslim women's movement for equality and dignity but our action and concern is focused on the local communities in Australia where Muslim women live.

We work for the rights of Muslim women by:

- empowering women's self-determination
- bringing a human rights approach to bear on issues of inequality and disadvantage
- working with individuals, the community, and government to advocate for equality within the Australian context

We aim to inspire positive action by others and aspire to continuously enhance the quality, impact and effectiveness of our work.

Islam and Muslims oppose violence against women

Our Principles

The one foundational principle that informs our approach to our work is that Muslim women's equality is:

- without exception
- without qualification
- without threat

Our Work

Who are we?

In 1991 the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria (The Council) was established by Muslim women for Muslim women. The Council was founded on the belief that meaningful change to the status of Muslim women could be achieved through the improved situation of Muslim women individually and by building their collective capacity.

In February 2011, the Council's name was changed to the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights (the Centre) to better reflect the Council's significant role as a human rights defender. This change recognises the singularity of our voice and work on Muslim women's human rights across Australia.

As advocates of Muslim women's rights, we are in chorus with a multitude of Muslims all over the world supporting a vision of Islam at its most progressive, immediate and pertinent to the challenges Muslim women face. Our work in Australia contributes to the already substantial work on Muslim women's human rights taking place across the world in Muslim and non-Muslim majority countries.

How do we see the world?

For the most part, Muslim women who migrated to Australia did so as heirs of a rich, pluralistic tradition, but also as bearers of significant disadvantage, discrimination and, at times, violence. In the context of our history, Islam has been both a liberating and oppressive force in the lives of women, influenced by the vision and limitations of patriarchal society. Historicising how Islam was understood and brought to bear on the status of women testifies to the diversity and plurality of tradition and practice: there has been not one Islam in which all Muslims have participated, but a multiplicity of Islamic interpretations in which many people have lived.

The pursuit of justice and equality for Muslim women has been present to varying degrees in all historical periods and across all cultures and societies. While this

pursuit has not always resulted in structural and institutional change, it has nonetheless featured as part of Muslim women's history. Today, all over the world, Muslim women are working and mobilising for change.

This global movement for parity is relevant to Australian Muslim women, whether immigrants or daughters of immigrants, because it brings us closer to the challenge of equality in the Australian context, not just equality with Muslim men but equality with all Australian citizens.

How does our world view influence our work?

We take a non religious, non sectarian approach to our work and adopt a social justice lens to Islam when it is used to justify any infringement against women. This allows us to work with all Muslim women. We believe that there is not one view of Islam that represents all Muslims in Australia and, further, that the diversity of Muslims in Australia is a strength.

We believe that Muslim women must be the impetus for change in their status as citizens.

What are the core areas of work we undertake?

We prioritise very practical work for women that improve their lives in tangible and measurable ways. We work with individuals, groups and service providers in the following areas:

- case work, referrals, secondary consultation and outreach
- capacity building
- advocacy
- leadership development
- community based program and service delivery
- policy development
- partnership projects

We have recently established the Australian Institute for Minority Women (the Institute) to operate as the research and consultancy arm of the Centre. The experience of Muslim women as a minority has much in common with women's experiences from other minority groups. The Institute was created because, we believe, the expertise we formed working with Muslim women could be useful to all minority women. As well as providing an insight into the conditions and situations of minorities in Australia generally, the Institute seeks to build an alliance with other minority women in Australia as a gesture of solidarity. The Institute undertakes the following activities:

- research
- publications
- training development and delivery
- consultancy services

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

*They (your wives) are
your garment and ye
are their garments.*

Al-Baqarah 2:187

1. A Guide for Muslim Women by Muslim Women

This small introductory guide has been developed for Muslim women who are experiencing or who have experienced family violence. It is also for Muslim community members who wish to be better informed about the nature of family violence, its impact on victims and the Muslim community as a whole.

The information collected here is based on working with Muslim women on the issue of family violence over the past fifteen years and includes some of our expertise as well as that of other professionals who have undertaken years of research.

Most importantly this guide includes the insights and work of Muslim women living in Muslim countries working on the protection and safety of women, such as Pakistan, Egypt and Malaysia. This guide also relies on the learnings of Muslim scholars of the Qur'an and Sunna to give us some guidance as to Islam's position on the status of women and family violence. The work of these learned scholars emphatically demonstrates that no form of violence against women is acceptable.

The information in this guide was developed within the Australian context and looks at how the legal system in Australia treats the matter of violence within the family. It is important to note that this is only an introduction to family violence; there is a great deal more information and services available to women. We have included a list of services at the back of this guide which can provide assistance, advice and further information if needed. We have also included some information on the legal options if you are a victim of family violence.

This guide is not designed to assist women in crisis. However, a list of crisis services, including police services, has been provided if crisis assistance is needed. If you are in that situation, we urge you to speak to a professional as soon as possible and make sure you have a safety plan.

The impact of violence on women, children and the community is universal. Family violence is everyone's responsibility. Ultimately everyone is affected, whether it is one of our family members who is a victim or the damage caused to children we see in our community, or the economic burden family violence forces us all to carry.

Eradicating family violence is a difficult and long process especially for communities that have migrated to new countries that are significantly different to their own. As communities struggle to make a new home for themselves taboo issues such as violence in the home become even more difficult to address. However, we must not be disheartened or distracted from the urgency of eradicating violence because the suffering of women and children ultimately undermines the integrity of our community. To allow violence in the home is to undermine the spiritual dignity of all Muslims. We hope this small booklet is a useful step toward Muslim women having free and safe lives in their homes, in accordance with their spiritual and human rights.

Where family violence occurs, children are exposed to the many types of abuse. Witnessing violence has a harmful effect on children. According to the Family Violence Protection Act 2008, children have a right to be protected from exposure to family violence

Family Violence Protection Act 2008, Victorian State Government.

2. Understanding family violence

From the day we married nothing I did was ever good enough for my husband. I didn't understand what made him angry or what I was doing wrong. I didn't understand what made him hit me. I kept thinking it was stress, it was money problems, it was me. I told myself that if I changed, became more what he wanted, things would get better. It took me a long, long time to accept that nothing I did would stop my husband beating me and that I was a victim of family violence.

Jamila, 36

The Family Court of Australia, through the Family Law Act 1975, defines family violence as:

'conduct, whether actual or threatened, by a person towards, or towards the property of, a member of the person's family that causes that or any other member of the person's family to fear for, or to be apprehensive about, his or her personal well-being or safety'.

In 2008, the Victorian State Government introduced the *Family Violence Protection Act* to better protect women, families and the community from family violence. The Act includes the most comprehensive definition of family violence in any family violence legislation in Australia. In addition to acts of violence that can be prosecuted by the law, it includes a range of behaviours which can be defined as family violence but are not necessarily criminal offences. The reason for the inclusion of these behaviours is to outline some of the supports that are available to women who experience forms of violence that are not prosecutable by law. It also demonstrates how seriously the government takes violence within families and its recognition of the detrimental impact of violence. We have included some of this information for you below.

What is family violence?

Family violence is any behaviour of one family member that causes physical, sexual or emotional damage to another, or causes her/him to live in fear. Family violence is the hurtful misuse of power and the desire or choice to control a partner, spouse, child or situation.

Family violence happens in families all over the world regardless of financial circumstances or religious background. An act of violence towards a family member is family violence regardless of the cultural or religious background of the person.

Who are the main victims of family violence?

In the majority of situations, family violence is aimed at women by men to physically or psychologically abuse, harm or control them. This includes spouses and ex-spouses. It can also occur in wider family relationships and includes the abuse or neglect of children by adults, the violent behaviour of a child against a parent, and abuse by a child towards his/her sibling/s.

Many terms are used to refer to family violence when it occurs between partners, such as domestic violence, partner violence, intimate violence, spouse abuse and wife beating.¹ It is these forms of violence that are the focus of this booklet.

What behaviours can be described as family violence?

Physical violence is just one way women or other members of the family experience family violence.

1 In the experience of The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights, the vast majority of Muslim women living in Australia have relationships in the form of marriage. Although *de facto* and dating-based relationships exist, cultural and religious proscriptions tend to make them limited in number compared to other communities. This booklet therefore refers to marriage relationships, but the information applies equally to non-marital relationships. Women in non-marital relationships are equally entitled to safe and supportive relationships; hence we strongly urge them to seek support and assistance from us or other support services if they feel they may be victims of family violence.

Examples of physical abuse: pushing; shoving; slapping; hitting; punching; beating; choking; shaking; pinching; biting; restraining; confining; locking up; chaining; breaking bones; assaulting with a weapon such as a shoe, knife or gun; burning; mutilating; and murder or attempted murder.

Sexual violence is the use of physical or emotional force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against her will or to engage in abusive sexual contact and applies to any type of relationship including marriage.

Examples of sexual abuse: forcing a woman to participate in unwanted, unsafe, painful or degrading sexual activity; ridiculing a woman to try to limit her sexuality; controlling her reproductive choices; forcing her to look at pornography; withholding sexual activity in an attempt to punish or hurt her; and pathologising or treating women as immoral or sinful for expressing sexual needs or desires.

Women from non-English speaking backgrounds, especially those on temporary visas, may experience additional forms of sexual violence at the hands of their partners. For example, he may:

- tell her that she is required to have sex with him whenever he wants, as her eligibility for residency or citizenship depends on him
- allege on legal papers that she has a history of prostitution.

Emotional or psychological abuse can involve verbal aggression and behaviours that dominate, demean, torment, isolate or threaten women. This form of abuse is intended to cause emotional pain or distress.

Examples of emotional or psychological abuse: frequently criticising or putting someone down; threatening to hurt the direct victim or one of their loved ones; throwing or breaking objects to frighten the victim; destroying or threatening to destroy personal property and possessions; yelling or screaming; name-calling; embarrassing or making fun of someone within the household or in public; undermining a person's abilities and decision making; excessive possessiveness; saying hurtful things while under the influence of drugs or alcohol; blaming a partner for how the abuser acts or feels; threatening suicide; making a partner remain in the house after a fight, or leaving them somewhere else after a fight to 'teach them a lesson'; making a woman feel that there is no way out of the relationship; taunting her about past relationships; being suspicious and accusing, swearing and verbally abusing; and using children to control her.

Women of non-English speaking backgrounds may experience additional forms of emotional or psychological abuse at the hands of their partners. He may:

- blame her for breaking up their family and community if she leaves him
- call her racist names
- accuse her of abandoning her culture and/or religion
- threaten to harm her family members in her country of origin
- hide or destroy important legal papers such as her passport or the children's passports or birth certificates
- destroy her personal belongings from her country of origin
- convince her that family violence is legal in Australia
- convince her that if she seeks police or court assistance, he will automatically receive legal custody of the children and she will be deported immediately
- accuse her of marrying him only for migration purposes and threaten to or actually report her to immigration authorities
- threaten action that will lead to deportation, and withdraw or refuse to file application papers for citizenship.

Frequently, abusers of immigrant women may also use the children to manipulate them by:

- threatening to or actually abducting the children to their country of origin where women may have no legal entitlement to custody
- threatening to raise the issue of the mother's immigration status in custody cases to undermine her case for custody and divert the court's attention away from family violence.

Financial or economic abuse is unreasonable control over women's or the families' money and other economic resources.

Examples of financial or economic abuse: forcibly controlling all finances; not giving a woman access to money; withholding economic resources such as cash or credit cards; exploiting a partner's resources for personal gain; selling family assets such as the home without a women's permission or awareness; withholding physical resources such as food, clothes, necessary medications or shelter; preventing a woman from working or choosing an occupation; and keeping a woman's income because the man calls himself the 'head' of the household.

Women of non-English speaking backgrounds may experience additional forms of financial violence at the hands of their partners. For example, he may:

- prevent her from learning English and attaining other skills she needs to seek employment
- force her to work illegally
- harass her at work
- prevent her from working
- sell family property or buy property under her name without her awareness or consent, either in Australia or in the country of origin
- steal money she is sending to her home country to support her family.

Social abuse involves controlling women's social activity or their behaviour in the public space.

Examples of social abuse constantly restricting a partner's mobility; placing restrictions on her movements or forbidding her from meeting friends, family and children; frequently checking up on her whereabouts (stalking); making her feel guilty about socialising or going to work.

Women of non-English speaking backgrounds may experience additional forms of social abuse from their partners, often involving the manipulation of cultural taboos. He may:

- write or tell the victim's family lies about her
- embarrass her in front of family and friends
- divulge her family secrets
- cause her or her family to lose face in the community
- prevent her from meeting with people from her country of origin who speak her native language
- not allow her to subscribe to newspapers and magazines in her language
- isolate her from family and other supportive individuals within her cultural community
- prevent, restrict and control her interactions with the English-speaking community
- force her to sign papers written in English that she does not understand.

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ.

*[T]hey treat men's oppression
as if it were the Wrath of Allah!*

Al-Ankabut 29:10

If you are a woman of faith

Spiritual and religious abuse is behaviour which Muslim women and other women of faith have identified and been speaking about for centuries. This form of abuse uses religion to justify, legitimise and normalise abuse and violence.

Examples of religious or spiritual abuse include:

- using religion to dominate, exercise authority and claim superiority in the relationship
- using her religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate her
- preventing her from practising her religious or spiritual beliefs
- preventing her from reading religious books
- ridiculing her religious or spiritual beliefs
- labelling her as ungodly or irreligious if she does not do everything he demands
- forcing any form of religious practice
- forcing her children to be reared in a faith that she has not agreed to

In fact, spiritual and religious abuse is leading some women to believe that any of the above listed forms of family violence are acceptable in their religion.

Where family violence occurs, children are exposed to the many types of abuse. According to the Family Violence Protection Act 2008, this is a form of Family violence.

Family Violence Protection Act 2008, Victorian State Government.

I used to be happy and friendly and I liked being around people. Being married has changed me. I'm in a new country with two young children and a man who hurts me whenever he's in a bad mood or he thinks I'm not listening to him. I have no family here, he won't let me go to classes to learn English and he won't let me visit friends without him. Sometimes I notice I haven't spoken for days except to yell at the kids or tell them what to do. I keep praying for my life to change, but it's been five years and he's getting worse not better. I wish he treated me half as nicely as he treats his friends.

Mouna, 23

3. The impact of family violence

How does family violence affect women?

Women who experience violence may react to and be affected by it in a number of ways.

Some possible reactions women might have are:

- denial and pretending the violence isn't happening
- excusing or justifying the abuse
- blaming herself for the violence
- fear

Some of the reported effects of family violence on mental health:

- chronic depression
- helplessness
- anger
- anxiety and panic attacks,
- chronic pain
- drug dependence²

- eating disorders
- emotional 'over-reacting'
- sexual dysfunction
- sleep disorders
- loss of self-esteem and self-respect (often shown as constantly looking after and pleasing others but neglecting her own needs)
- self-harming and/or suicidal behaviour

Some of the reported effects of family violence on relationships:

- an inability to adequately respond to the needs of children
- lack of trust in others
- feelings of abandonment
- inability to work
- being cut off and isolated from family or friends
- poor relationships with children and other loved ones

2 Many women become dependent on prescribed medication, such as sleeping pills, without realising the impact of this dependence on their health, because it is prescribed by a doctor.

In addition to the physical injuries which may be sustained from family violence, women are also at a higher risk of reproductive problems (miscarriages, still births, infant deaths, health problems in new born babies).

*Family violence is the leading contributor to death,
disability and illness in Victorian women aged
15 to 44.*

*VicHealth, 2004, The Health Costs of Violence: Measuring the Burden of Disease Caused by Intimate
Partner Violence: A Summary of Findings, VicHealth, Melbourne, p.10.*

*Between 2006 and 2007, 74% of women
homicide victims were killed by an intimate partner
or family member.*

*Dearden, J & Jones, J 2008 Homicide in Australia: 2006–07 National Homicide Monitoring Program Annual
Report, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.*

How does family violence affect children who witness it?

Children, even when not direct victims, are affected by witnessing family violence. This has been shown to apply even when children are not in the same room where violence occurs. Depending on their age, they are likely to react in different ways. They may try to intervene to stop the violence, or they may withdraw and feel overwhelmed and helpless.

As a result of what they witness within the family, children can develop a range of emotional, behavioural, developmental, or academic problems, some of which may continue into adulthood.

The range of effects can be categorised according to children's age groups:³

Infants

- sleep and feeding disturbances
- continual fussing and crying
- an inability to be comforted
- being easily irritated or easily startled

Toddlers/Pre-schoolers

- frequent physical complaints
- difficulty going to sleep or frequent nightmares
- frequent tantrums
- clingy behaviour
- not knowing how or when to play
- general sadness
- acting cruelly towards other children and adults.

3 Spilsbury, J.C., L. Belliston, D. Drotar, A. Drinkard, J. Kretschmar, R. Creeden, D.J. Flannery and S. Friedman 2007 'Clinically Significant Trauma Symptoms and Behavioral Problems in a Community-based Sample of Children Exposed to Domestic Violence', *Journal of Family Violence*, Volume:22, Issue:6: Pp. 487-499; Chan, Y and J.W. Yeung 2009 'Children living with violence within the family and its sequel: A meta-analysis from 1995–2006', *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, Volume 14, Issue 5: Pp. 313-322.

School-aged children

(in addition to symptoms experienced by toddlers)

- difficulty concentrating or following instructions
- consistent inability to complete homework tasks, a drop in school performance
extreme shyness or fear of adults
- regressive behaviours such as thumb sucking, crawling, inability to control urination
- bullying, general 'acting out' behaviour, aggression, violence
- trying to please others and trying avoid any conflict in the house
- depression and/or withdrawal

Adolescents

- frustration, rage, anger
- self-destructive or suicidal behaviour
- frequent physical complaints
- drug and/or alcohol abuse
- delinquent behaviour, such as destroying property, stealing, etc.
- cruelty to animals, small children, peers of the opposite gender
- running away
- aggressive/abusive/violent behaviour, use of weapons
- depression, anxiety
- sleep disorders
- eating disorders
- withdrawal from social involvement with peers or family
- low self-esteem
- lack of respect for one (either the victim or perpetrator) or both parents
- accepting of violence in a relationship

4. The Context of family violence

Is family violence related to culture?

Family violence is a universal problem. Research shows that family violence occurs in every country and society around the world, including Australia. It has nothing to do with religion, culture, the region of the world you come from or socio-economic status. It is about power, control, domination and humiliation. It is often linked to men having more power in our society than women.⁴

Why do men use family violence?

Violence is not a natural tendency which men can't control. This is a myth. Most men do not resort to violence towards their partners even when they are under stress, frustrated, angry or under the influence of alcohol. Research from around the world shows that men resort to violence because it is a learned behaviour.⁵ Men who resort to violence do so because they have successfully exerted control and power through violence in the past and no one has stopped them from using it. They may have been reared in a family where violence was used to resolve conflict and disagreements. While conflict and disagreements are normal in relationships, the use of any kind of violence, even when it does not cause injury, is not.

What are the economic costs of family violence?

The World Bank estimates that, on a global level, the damage and costs to health from violence against women aged 15–44 years is comparable to that posed by other risk factors and diseases such as AIDS.

Family violence impacts on the economic well-being of families and communities. Often the threat and fear of violence that women may face outside and within their homes keeps them from seeking employment or, at best, forces them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative work.

4 World Health Organization 2002 *World Report on Violence and Health*, World Health Organization, Geneva.

5 Bandura, A. 1979 'The social learning perspective: Mechanisms of aggression', in H. Toch (ed.), *Psychology of crime and criminal justice*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston; Ganley, A.L. 1998 'Understanding domestic violence', in C. Warshaw and A.L. Ganley, *Improving the Health Care Response to Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Providers*. Online

At other times, the economic independence of working women is viewed as a threat leading to increased male violence.⁶ In turn, this can lead to increases in poverty and unemployment, increasing income inequality and placing greater stress within communities.

Family violence – a community-wide problem or a private matter?

Women are important to the foundation of any community: they not only constitute half the population but are also primarily responsible for the rearing, nurturing and education of young people in the community.

Women exist in a matrix of relationships that extends out from the family to the broader community and its institutions. Abuse of one woman reverberates from one family member to the other – from mother to child, from sibling to sibling, across and into extended families and families of the future. Understood in this way, violence against women in the home cannot be seen as just a private family matter. A decline in the status and well-being of women has consequences for the entire community. Therefore, family violence is everybody's business.

Who is responsible for the violence?

No human being – adult or child – wants, or deserves, to be abused. No human being remains unaffected by the abuse that they experience. No human being consciously gives away their self-worth, integrity, self-respect, and sense of physical and emotional safety and well-being.

It is common for women to be blamed in family violence situations. Often they are even blamed for **provoking** their partners' violence. If they take action, they are often blamed for **breaking up the family**. If they accept the violence, they are often blamed for **allowing it to continue**, especially if it affects the children. It is important to challenge these assumptions by understanding the following:

- Making the decision about what to do in response to family violence is incredibly difficult, and there are many factors and barriers that women must consider in determining what to do

6 World Health Organization 2010 'MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger', Addressing violence against women and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. www.who.int/gender/documents/women_MDGs_report/en/index3.html

- Given the terrible effects of violence on women, children and communities, the expectation that women should be able to keep their families together and silently put up with the effects of violence is both unrealistic and unfair. This leaves the perpetrator free of any responsibility for his violence
- Family violence is always the responsibility of the perpetrator, never the victim. This is because the perpetrator always has the power to choose how he will behave
- Violence does not only occur in situations of conflict; nonetheless, it has often been said that some women only respond to violence and their husbands have no choice but to use violence to make them listen. Obviously this is a problematic statement: it implies that the only form of communication some women understand is physical violence. This would mean that everyone around the woman – her siblings, her parents, her friends, her employer, even her children – would have to communicate with her through violence. We all know that such situations do not exist: what we are really talking about is a man who chooses to use violence to frighten his partner into obedience. Clearly, where an impasse has been reached between wife and husband, a qualified professional who understands the cycle of violence between couples should be sought out. Muslims do have a history of arbitration for couples who cannot overcome conflict in their relationship. There is no shame in seeking assistance to help us deal with conflict humanely and healthily.

There is often a misconception among our communities that it is the **victim's departure**, not the **perpetrator's violence** that breaks down the family and brings harm to the community. Clearly the responsibility for broken marriages and fragmented communities rests with the **perpetrators** of family violence. Men who care about their family and community need to find another method for dealing with conflict.

Family violence and women's rights

Understanding the terrible impact of violence on families and communities, women across the world, including Muslim women, have been actively working towards its eradication for well over 100 years. So devastating is the impact of violence against women and children that the former United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, stated:

Violence against women remains pervasive worldwide. It is the most atrocious manifestation of the systemic discrimination and inequality women continue to face⁷.

Safety, integrity and protection from all forms of violence and abuse are fundamental human rights of all people – men, women and children. The Victorian Government's **Family Violence Protection Act 2008** states 'that non-violence is a fundamental social value that must be promoted' and 'that family violence is a fundamental violation of human rights and is unacceptable in any form'.

The **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women**, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1994, calls on all member states to 'pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women' and to 'exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and in accordance with national legislation punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or private persons'.

A significant number of Muslim majority countries have signed this agreement including: Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Nigeria and Eritrea, to name a few.

⁷ Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, observed 25 November 2005.

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ.

*Those who listen to the Word, and
follow the best (meaning) in it:
those are the ones whom Allah has guided, and
those are the ones endued with understanding.*

Az-Zumar 39:18

5. An Islamic perspective on family violence

My husband always acted like he was the perfect Muslim man in the community. People used to approach him for religious advice. After 25 years of being beaten by my husband, I found out that it was against Islam to be violent to your wife and children. I couldn't believe it at first. But then I began to see evidence of it. In all the time the Prophet (Peace be upon him) was married, never once did he hit his wives. He did not even raise his voice at them or say a harsh word and he was the prophet of God! When there was conflict and upset, he took time out to pray and find peace.

Em Salim, 45

The Qur'an instructs men to treat women well, and strongly condemns men who violate women's rights. With regard to the marital relationship, the Qur'an urges mutual harmony, love and respect between a husband and wife. Islamic teaching directs that women be treated thoughtfully and with care, and at the same time it supports their right to exercise their entitlements and duties just as men do.

Since the Qur'an teaches the principle of the spiritual equality of men and women, it would be contradictory for the Qur'an to teach the principle and practice of inequality between husbands and wives by allowing for any form of violence. The marital relationship in the Qur'an and the Sunnah is described in terms of amity, affection, kindness, mercy, tranquillity, stability and sharing of the burden of family life. Several recorded sayings of Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) strongly support these principles.

For the last century, Islamic scholars have pondered why a religion that so emphatically promotes compassion, kindness, justice and the good treatment of women could condone any form of family violence against them.

These Muslim scholars have concluded that Islam does not tolerate any form of violence between husband and wife or parent and child. Across the Islamic world, separate to all the developments in non-Muslim countries, scholars, women, mosques, governments and community organisations have commenced their work to eliminate violence against women.

This renewed commitment to eliminate violence in the home reflects a deep and profound commitment to Islam.

The Council always recommends that you seek professional assistance for violence. This is to ensure that the person is appropriately trained, understands violence, knows the services available to assist you and, most importantly, can help ensure your safety

Excerpts from the Holy Qur'an

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ .

*O[insan]! We created
you from a single (pair)
of a male and a female,
and made you into
nations and tribes, that
ye may know each other (not that ye may despise
each other).*

*Verily the most honoured of you
in the sight of Allah
is ([the one] who is) the most
righteous of you.*

Al-Hujurat 49:13

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَنَاتِ وَالْقَنَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا.

*For Muslim men and women —
for believing men and women,
for devout men and women,
for true men and women,
for men and women who are
patient and constant, for men
and women who humble themselves,
for men and women who give
in charity, for men and women
who fast (and deny themselves),
for men and women who guard their chastity, and
for men and women who
engage much in Allah's praise, —
for them has Allah prepared
forgiveness and great reward.*

Al-Ahzab 33:35

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

*The Believers, men
and women, are protectors
one of another*

At-Tawbah 9:71

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

*And among His signs is this, that
He created for you mates from among yourselves,
that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and
He has put love and mercy between your (hearts):
verily, in that are signs for those who reflect.*

Ar-Rum 30:21

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

*Live with them on a footing of kindness and equity.
if ye take a dislike to them
it may be that ye dislike a thing, and
Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.*

An-Nisa 4:19

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

وَإِنْ أَمْرًا خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا
صُلْحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ

*If a wife fears cruelty or
desertion on her husband's part,
there is no blame on them
if they arrange an
amicable settlement between themselves; and
such settlement is best*

An-Nisa 4:128

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ

*When ye divorce women, and
they fulfil the term of their ('iddah), either
take them back on equitable terms or
set them free on equitable terms; but
do not take them back to injure them, (or)
to take undue advantage; if anyone does that,
he wrongs his own soul.*

Al-Baqarah 2:231

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

لَا تُضَارُّ وَالِدَةُ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ ۚ

*No mother shall be treated unfairly
on account of her child,
nor father on account of his child*

Al-Baqarah 2:233

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

وَالْمُطَلَّاتِ مَتَعُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ

*For divorced women provision (should made)
on a reasonable (scale).*

This is a duty on the righteous.

Al-Baqarah 2:241

Excerpts from Ahadiths

إنما النساء شقائق الرجال

For women are the twin halves of men.

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 113; Ahmad, 25663. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi, 98)

لا يَقَعَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ عَلَى امْرَأَتِهِ كَمَا تَقَعُ الْبَيْهْمَةُ، وَلْيَكُنْ بَيْنَهَا رَسُولٌ " قِيلَ وَمَا الرَسُولُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟
قال: " الْقُبْلَةُ وَالْكَلَامُ! "

*Anas ibn Malik reported that the
Messenger of Allah said:*

*"None of you should fall upon his wife like an
animal; but let there first be a messenger between
you." "And what is that messenger?"*

His companions asked, and he replied:

"Kisses and words."

(Musnad al-Firdaws Of al-Daylami, 2/55)

Narrated Aisha:

والله ما ضرب الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم بيده امرأة له قط ولا خادما له قط .

*Allah's Messenger
(peace be upon him) never beat
anyone with his hand neither a woman nor a
servant.*

(Sahih Muslim, Book Al Fadail, number 2328)

Ali ibn Abi Talib said:

إذا أراد أحدكم أن يأتي زوجته فلا يعجلها فإن للنساء حوائج.

*If any one of you approaches his wife do not hurry
her until she satisfies her needs as you like to satisfy
your needs.*

Remember that the Prophet's (PBUH) final sermon on women directed men against any form of violence against women. He preached that they be treated with kindness and respect. The Prophet (PBUH) did not raise his voice or hand against any of the women he married or knew.

6. *what can be done?*

Community prevention and support

Family violence damages families and inter-generational relationships, and the development, health and productivity of communities. Collective community impact also means that as a community we are responsible for putting preventative strategies in place to prevent or stop the incidence of violence against women. The Muslim community can do this by:

- rejecting any representation or interpretation of Islam that promotes or condones violence against women or children
- promoting the equality and dignity of women
- promoting and teaching principles of human rights and justice
- providing accurate and sensitive information about the reality of violence in the home
- teaching through instruction and role-modelling that violence is never acceptable
- teaching ways to better express and manage feelings, especially anger and frustration
- developing girls' and boys' self-confidence and self-respect
- teaching empathy and respect for others
- helping those who may have experienced or witnessed family violence to break the cycle of violence and develop healthy relationships
- establishing support services for families experiencing violence or by supporting the work of organisations in your community that seek to eradicate violence

Seeking help – an important first step

It can be difficult to understand and identify family violence. Many women who experience such violence may be confused about their partner's behaviour for a long time before they label it as family violence or take action against it.

Making a decision about what to do in response to family violence is by no means a simple process. They may be afraid of their partner, worried about their financial situation, unsure of how the law can help or what support they can receive from services. They may feel judged by family, friends and others around them and fear breaking up the family.

Having access to information regarding the various options available can help women make an informed decision about what to do to keep themselves and their children safe. Whatever decisions women make, being able to talk to, get support from and discuss options with someone – whether a trusted friend, family member or professional worker – is an important first step.

We have included a list of services which can provide different forms of assistance should women be considering seeking advice or leaving the relationship.

National services: For wherever you are in Australia

Police or Ambulance

Telephone: 000 (emergency for police or ambulance).

Family Relationship Advice Line

Telephone 1800 050 321 – a national telephone service established to assist families affected by relationship or separation issues is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday, and 10am to 4pm on Saturday (Eastern Standard Zone), except national public holidays. For more information about family relationships and the Australian Government's Family Relationships Services visit www.familyrelationships.gov.au

LifeLine

Telephone counselling (general). Telephone 131 114 or visit www.lifeline.org.au

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

Free 24 hour phone access to an interpreter in your own language. Telephone 131 450 or visit www.immi.gov.au/tis

Kids Help Line

Telephone counselling for children and young people, Freecall Telephone 1800 551 800. Email and web counselling available. Website: www.kidshelp.com.au

Australian Childhood Foundation

Counselling for children and young people affected by abuse. Telephone 1800 176 453 (toll free nationally) or (03) 9874 3922 or visit www.childhood.org.au

Relationships Australia

Support groups and counselling on relationships, and for abusive and abused partners. Telephone 1300 364 277 or Victoria (03) 9261 8700 or visit www.relationships.com.au

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA)

Provides an online information and referral directory to help women with disabilities to find services and organisations that are available to assist them. Telephone Tasmania (03) 6244 8288 or visit www.wwda.org.au

Legal protection and safety: Calling the police

Victoria Police are committed to responding to and taking action on any family violence incident reported to them. Essentially, Victoria Police will manage safety by attending as quickly as possible, initiate a criminal prosecution (when sufficient evidence exists), assist in securing an intervention order against the perpetrator when appropriate (see more details below), make referrals to specialist support services and provide general advice and information to the family.

You can inform police about abuse and violence by telephone, or by going to a police station. If you fear any form of violence, try and remove yourself to a safe place before contacting police. Whatever the circumstances might be, the quickest way of getting help from police is by dialling '000'. After connecting to the police operator, you will be asked some questions about what has happened. This will help get police to get to you as quickly as possible, if that is what you need.

If there is enough evidence to show that violence has occurred, the police can lay criminal charges against the perpetrator. Evidence can include a doctor's report of injury or psychological distress, police observations of violence, photographs of any physical injuries or property damage, evidence from someone who saw or heard the

violence, and, importantly, the woman's own statement. It is a criminal offence if the perpetrator is stalking (for example, by following the woman, harassing her over the phone, or keeping the woman under constant watch). Police will arrange the services of an interpreter if you request one. Very often a policewoman is available to assist: however, this can not be guaranteed, especially in an emergency.

Police emergency number: 000

Services available in Victoria

There are many professional services around Victoria that can support women in making informed decisions about possible courses of action and to help them meet their needs. These services can provide information; weighing up the 'pros and cons' of various options; and respond to other immediate needs, such as support and counselling, legal aid and safe accommodation. These services maintain strict confidentiality. These services provide information and do not judge women whether they choose to stay in a relationship or leave – the ultimate decision about what action to take always lies with the women themselves.

Please note that the following is not an exhaustive list of all support services in every state.

24 hour Crisis Support

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria (24 hour crisis support)

24 hour crisis telephone support service. Provides information about options and developing a safety plan, referral to safe accommodation (refuge) for women experiencing abuse in their relationships. Visit www.wdvcs.org.au

Telephone (03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188 (toll free for country callers)

Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault

Crisis support, counselling, information for people who have been sexually assaulted as adults or as children. There are Centres Against Sexual Assault in regions across Victoria. Visit www.casa.org.au

Telephone 1800 806 292 (24 hours) for immediate support and to find your local CASA

Child Protection Crisis Line

24 hour contact number to report concerns of child sexual abuse.

Telephone 131 278 (toll free throughout Victoria)

Assistance and Support

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service

For immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence. Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.

Telephone (03) 8413 6800 or 1800 755 988 or visit www.iwdvs.org.au

Women's Information and Referral Exchange

Information, support and referral for women.

Telephone 1300 134 130 (9am–5pm). Visit the Women's Information Centre: 210 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, 10:30am–5pm Monday to Friday or visit www.wire.org.au

The Action Centre

General and sexual assault counselling, referrals and medical services for young people. Telephone (03) 9660 4700 or 1800 013 952 (free call for country callers) or visit Level 1, 92–94 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne or www.fpv.org.au

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

Information and referral to local services and support groups. Telephone (03) 9486 9866 9am–5pm Monday to Friday or visit 292 Wellington St Collingwood or visit www.dvrcv.org.au

Victims Referral and Assistance Service

Provides victims of crime with access to counselling, referrals to support services and information about legal and financial assistance. Telephone 1800 819 817 (toll free throughout Victoria)

Domestic Violence Outreach Services

These services assist women and children who are enduring family violence, or escaping from violent partners. They provide practical support and information about safe accommodation options, obtaining legal advice, accessing financial entitlements, referrals to counselling and other services. Support workers specifically for children may be available through your local service.

Metropolitan Domestic Violence Outreach Services

Eastern Region Telephone: (03) 9870 5939

Northern Region Telephone: (03) 9450 4700

Southern Region Telephone: 03) 9536-7777
or 1800 627 727 (After hours general crisis line)

Mornington Peninsula Telephone: (03) 5971 9454

Western Region Telephone: (03) 9689 9588

WAYSS Frankston Telephone: (03) 9781 4658

WAYSS Cranbourne Telephone: (03) 5990 6789

WAYSS Rosebud Telephone: (03) 5982 2863

WAYSS Dandenong Telephone: (03) 9791 6111

WAYSS Narre Warren Telephone: (03) 9703 0044

Rural/Regional Domestic Violence Outreach Services (Victoria)

Geelong Telephone: (03) 5224 2903

Warrnambool Telephone: (03) 5561 1934

Shepparton Telephone: (03) 5823 3200

Mildura Telephone: (03) 5021 2130

Bendigo Telephone: (03) 5443 4945

Swan Hill Telephone: (03) 5033 1899

Legal Advice

Federation of Community Legal Centres

These centres can provide details of the nearest community legal centre and intervention order court support services. Telephone (03) 9652 1500 or visit www.communitylaw.org.au

Women's Legal Service Victoria

For women in Victoria who are in need of legal advice, information or referral, irrespective of income or assets. Legal Advice Line Telephone (03) 9642 0877 or 1800 133 302 (toll free for country callers)

Court Network

Provides support, information and referral for people regarding the court process through a telephone helpline.

Telephone (03) 9603 7433 or 1800 681 614 (toll free for country callers) or visit www.courtnetwork.com.au

Victorian Legal Aid Telephone Information Service

Provides free legal information service.

Telephone (03) 9269 0120 or 1800 677 402 (toll free for country callers) or visit www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

These centres can provide details of the nearest community legal centre and intervention order court support services. Telephone: (03) 9652 1500 or visit www.communitylaw.org.au

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria

Provides assistance to victims of family violence and sexual assault and works with families and communities affected by violence. Telephone (03) 9244 3333 or 1800 105 303 (toll free) or visit www.fvpls.org

Men's Referral Service

The Men's Referral Service is an anonymous and confidential telephone service provided for men by men. It provides a central point of contact for men who want to stop their violent or abusive behaviour towards their family members.

Telephone (03) 9428 2899 or 1800 065 973 (toll free throughout Victoria) 9am–9pm Monday to Friday or visit www.mrs.org.au

Mensline Australia

Mensline Australia is a confidential and professional support service for men who are dealing with family and relationship difficulties, particularly surrounding family breakdown or separation.

Telephone 1300 789 978 (24 hours) or visit www.menslineaus.org.au

Applying for a Family Violence Intervention Order in Victoria

www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/1831.htm

An Intervention Order is a court order with special conditions that helps protect you (and if applicable your children) from future violent and/or abusive behaviour. If you believe there is a danger of the violence happening again, you can apply for an intervention order at a Magistrate's Court. Once the violence has been reported to police they are obliged to take out an intervention order on the victim's behalf 'whenever the safety, welfare, or property of a family member appears to be endangered by another' (Victoria Police Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence)

To prevent further violence, an intervention order can include conditions which may mean removing the perpetrator from the home and stopping them from coming near you, your work, or places where you regularly go. A magistrate can make the conditions on the order to suit your current and ongoing family circumstances. For example, conditions can be made where you and your children may stay living in the house and the perpetrator is ordered to leave and stay away; or you may both continue living in the same house but the perpetrator is still prohibited from assaulting, threatening, otherwise abusing family members and damaging property and so on. This can apply even if you are living in a place which is rented in the perpetrator's name.

If the person disobeys (or 'breaches') the intervention order, it is a criminal offence and must be reported to the police as soon as possible. If there is enough evidence it will result in police laying criminal charges against the perpetrator for breaking the order. Remember, having an Intervention Order does not mean that the violent person has a criminal record – it is only if they disobey the order that a court can convict them of committing a crime.

In cases where urgent protection is required, the court can issue an interim (or temporary) order even if the violent person is not there in court. In the absence of the 'respondent' (court language for the person who has been violent) but requires the presence of the 'aggrieved family member' (court language for the person seeking to be protected by the interim order). If the respondent does not attend court, as quickly as possible after the magistrate has granted the order, police must meet with the defendant and give them a copy of the interim order.

If the defendant can not speak English, police should use a professional interpreter and in any event explain the conditions of the order, the consequences of breaching the order and impress the importance of attending court for the 'full hearing' (court language for when the application is heard and a final decision is made on granting the full protection order). The interim order will last until the final protection order goes to court.

The aggrieved family member must attend the final court hearing. An intervention order can be issued even if the respondent is absent from the court, provided he has received proper notice of the court date. At a court hearing in the Magistrates Court, the magistrate can consider in evidence your story, any witnesses to the violence, including police, photos, written material and doctor's reports of injuries. The magistrate must also consider the respondent's version of events. The magistrate will then decide whether to grant the order, and what conditions will be placed on it to help protect you.

The respondent can appeal against the making of an intervention order or any terms of an order. Unrelated to an appeal, if circumstances change, any party can apply to have the order varied, revoked or extended by the Magistrates' Court.

The Council recommends that if you think you might need an intervention order you should get assistance from an experienced worker. This may be a lawyer, a specialist women's support service provider, a social worker or police. Remember, getting an intervention order is a civil, not a criminal process. In other words, neither party gets a criminal record as a result of a court granting an intervention order.

In addition to Intervention Orders police can now issue a Family Violence Safety Notice.

These notices can be issued by a Sergeant of Police or a higher ranking officer outside of court hours including over weekends and public holidays. Safety Notices contain conditions that are similar to family violence protection orders including:

- prohibiting the perpetrator from committing family violence against the protected person

- removing and excluding the respondent from attending at the family home
- barring the perpetrator from approaching or being near the protected person.

Essentially, Safety Notices must be heard at a magistrate's court within 72 hours of being issued. In addition to providing immediate protection, the Safety Notice serves as an application for a Family Violence Intervention. At the hearing, the Safety Notice hearing, the court will decide whether ongoing protection is needed and, if so, an intervention order will be made to ensure ongoing protection of the victim(s). If the respondent does not attend the Safety Notice hearing, the victim(s) are still protected by the Safety Notice until the Interim Protection Order is served on the respondent.

Services in other states

The above list covers information about services and intervention orders in the state of Victoria only. For information on how to obtain intervention orders in other states, please contact the police and community services in your state. Interstate or New Zealand intervention orders are enforceable in Victoria, if they have been registered with the principal registrar of the Magistrates' Court in Victoria, which is located at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court.

Domestic Violence Services in other States and Territories

New South Wales

NSW Police Domestic

Violence Line Telephone
1800 65 64 63 (24 hour
telephone support) or TTY
1800 671 442

Rape Crisis Centre Telephone
(02) 9819 7357 or
1800 424 017 (24 hours)

**Immigrant Women's Speakout
Association** For migrant and refugee
women who are victims of violence:
Telephone (02) 9635 8022
(9:30am – 5:00pm)

Victims of Crime Support Line 24 hour
telephone information, support and
referral for victims of crime. Telephone
(02) 8688 5400 (metro.) or
1800 633 063 (toll free) or TTY
(02) 8688 5575.

Northern Territory

**NT Police Domestic and Personal
Violence Protection Unit** Telephone
(08) 8948 0110 (Darwin) or
(08) 8951 8859 (Alice Springs)

Domestic Violence Counselling

Service Telephone
(08) 8945 6200 (Darwin) or
(08) 8952 6048 (Alice Springs)

Crisis Line General (24 hours)
Telephone 1800 019 116

Sexual Assault Referral

Centre (24 hours) Telephone
(08) 8922 7156 (Darwin) or
(08) 8951 5880 (Alice Springs).

ACT

ACT Domestic Violence & Protection Order Unit Telephone
(02) 6207 1874

Domestic Violence Crisis

Service (24 hours) Telephone
(02) 6280 0900 (crisis line) or
TTY (02) 6247 0893

Canberra Rape Crisis

Centre (24 hours) Telephone
(02) 6247 2525.

Western Australia

WA Police Family and Domestic

Violence Unit Telephone
(08) 6217 8300

Women's Refuge Group Telephone
support, referral to safe
accommodation. Telephone
(08) 9227 1642
(9:00am – 5:00pm)

Crisis Care Unit 24 hour crisis support
for violence, child protection, suicide.
Telephone (08) 9325 1111,
1800 199 008 or TTY
(08) 9325 1232

Sexual Assault and Referral

Centre 24 hour phone and face-
to-face counselling. Telephone
(08) 9340 1828, 9340 1820 or
1800 199 888 (toll free for
country callers)

Women's Refuge & Multicultural

Service Outreach support for
immigrant women who are victims/
survivors of domestic violence.
Telephone (08) 9325 7716

The Women's Domestic

Violence Helpline Telephone
(08) 9223 1188 or
1800 007 339 (24 hours)

Legal Aid, Domestic Violence Legal

Unit Telephone (08) 9261 6254,
1300 650 579 or TTY
1800 241 216.

Queensland

Queensland Police Domestic Violence

Telephone Service Telephone
1800 811 811, or TTY
1800 812 225

Brisbane Rape & Incest Survivors

Support Centre Telephone
(07) 3391 0004 or
1800 242 526 (toll free for
country callers)

Immigrant Women's Support Service. Support for immigrant or refugee women victims of

domestic violence Telephone
(07) 3846 3490 (domestic violence)
or (07) 3846 5400 (sexual
assault)

Statewide Sexual Assault

Help Line Telephone
1800 010 120 (7:30am–midnight)

South Australia**Domestic Violence Crisis**

Service Telephone and face-to-face counselling and referral to safe accommodation. Telephone
1300 782 200 (24 hours)

Crisis Care After-hours crisis support for violence and abuse, suicide risk and child protection. Telephone
131 611 (4:00pm – 9:00am)

Domestic Violence Helpline Telephone
1800 800 098 (24 hours)

Women's Information Service

of South Australia Telephone
(08) 8303 0590 or
1800 188 158.

Tasmania**Domestic Violence Crisis**

Service Monday–Friday
9:00am – midnight and 4:00pm – midnight on weekends. Telephone
(03) 6233 2529 or
1800 633 937 (North) or
1800 608 122 (Statewide).

Family Violence Response

& Referral Line Telephone
1800 633 937 (24 hours)

Sexual Assault Support

Services Telephone
(03) 6231 1811 (Hobart and Southern), (03) 6334 2740 (Launceston), (03) 6431 9711 (North West) or (03) 6231 1817 (24 hours).

Muslim Women's Organisations

If you would like to speak to a Muslim women regarding family violence please contact the following organisation. Please note that the organisations listed do not necessarily endorse the views represented in this booklet but will provide information, referral or support in the event of family violence.

Victoria**The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights**

Telephone (03) 9481 3000.

New South Wales**United Muslim Women's**

Association Inc. (MWA) Telephone
(02) 9750 6916, for migrant and refugee women who are in crisis also telephone: (02) 9750 6916.

Western Australia**Muslim Women's Support Centre of Western Australia Inc. (MWSC)**

Telephone (08) 9451 5696.

South Australia**Muslim Women's Association of South Australia**

Telephone (08) 8212 0800.

The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights

Telephone: (03) 9481 3000

Facsimile: (03) 9481 3001

Email: reception@muslimwomenscentre.org.au

Web: www.ausmuslimwomenscentre.org.au



THE AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Equality without Exception