

There is another story

PEEL SAYS
NO TO
VIOLENCE

STORIES OF HOPE FROM THE PEEL SAYS NO TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

We can all
make a
difference ...



Recognise

behaviour that's causing harm to you or an older person you know.



Listen

to their story, let them know you understand what they are saying and how they are feeling.



Level of urgency

Is it an emergency? What are the threats? Is there a possibility of them hurting themselves or others?



Plan

If at risk, tell them you are concerned and call the Police. If it is not immediately serious, talk to them about a safety plan and where they could go for help.



Refer

Let them know you are there for them and help them find services.



Document

Keep a note of what you have done.



GETTING HELP - MELISSA'S STORY

"There was a woman at work, she knew what I was going through."

When I was in the situation I didn't know where to go. I spoke to friends. There was a woman at work that was my friend and she knew what I was going through. My only getaway was that small part-time job but he'd still come and make sure I was there. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to get out and I was too scared to get out because he was with me 24/7. He controlled my phone, my laptop, everything.

And it wasn't until I went to work one day with another black eye and my friend said to my boss, "We've had enough, we can't - ", because I went in with broken arms, cuts on my face all the time. And it was my boss that took me to the police station. She shut the shop and took me to the police station and sat with me for four hours.

I was terrified because that morning he'd come home drunk to make sure I was home. He had walked me to work and that's the last time I saw him. I had no idea. It was my boss and my workmates that took me to the police station. I didn't want to be there, I wanted to go home because he would kill me. But it was the best thing I ever did.

They took me upstairs to the Victim Support Unit. They're wonderful, they got me a refuge out of town, on the other side of the earth. My 17-year-old son was with us at home. He got treated like a 5-year-old. I wasn't allowed to sit down and talk to him, I wasn't allowed to watch TV with him, I wasn't allowed to cook for him and I wasn't allowed to be a mum. He didn't know I'd gone to the police station.

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and they took me to the police station."*

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GETTING HELP - MELISSA'S STORY

*"Now I've got a duress alarm on my phone, the one time I used it,
they came straight away."*

I had to ring him and get him to stay at a friend's place while I was in the refuge.

The police knew my ex. They knew he was a dangerous man, so police cars were sent to my house before I went because there was a gun in the house. And they all went and made sure it was safe, made sure he wasn't there and then they took me in and helped me get clothes.

I was terrified that he'd come home, even with all the police there I was still terrified. Now I've got a duress alarm on my phone so I just have to ring it, I don't have to say anything, but they track me. The one time I used it they came straightaway, five cars straight up to my house.

Melissa, 38, Mandurah

The woman in this story now lives safely with her youngest child. She received support from her friends, the Police, Pat Thomas House and Allambee Counselling.

DISCUSSION TRIGGERS

A friend has asked you for advice as she is worried about her relationship and its future, and wondering whether she should leave or stay with her partner. How would you approach this?

You have a workmate that you are worried about, but she won't open up and tell you what's been happening. How could you support her and start a conversation?

The Fair Work Commission made a statement in October 2017 allowing unpaid leave for domestic violence to allow employees to deal with the impact of family domestic violence. How could this be managed in your workplace given the need for confidentiality and sensitivity?

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

It can be hard to understand why someone would stay in a relationship if they are being treated so badly. You might think that the abuse is partly her fault because she puts up with it, or that she is weak or stupid if she stays. From the outside, it may seem easier to leave than it actually is. It can be very difficult to leave an abusive partner and can be quite dangerous. The abuse may continue or increase after she leaves.

Many people worry that they will be 'interfering' if they get involved, or that it is a 'private matter'. But it is equally worrying if someone is being abused and you say nothing. Your support can make a difference. It is unlikely you will make things 'worse' by expressing concern.

You don't have to fully understand to be of assistance. All you have to do is give your time and love without being judgmental.

You could be of real help by ...

Help her to plan ...

where she and her children could go in an emergency, or if she decides to leave. If she needs to stay at a secret location, tell her about safe accommodation services (refuges).

Agree on a code word...

or signal that she can use to let you know she needs help.

Prepare an excuse...

to use if she feels threatened and needs to leave

Help her to prepare an escape bag ...

that she can hide in a safe place. If she leaves she will need money, keys, clothes, bank cards, driver's licence, social security docs, medication, birth certificates, passports etc.

Find out how the police can protect her ...

and talk to her about laws that can protect her.

Other ways to protect herself ...

Ring a service for safety advice & legal information.

Who can help?

Emergency

For emergency & life threatening situations, contact emergency services;

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Crisis support

Pat Thomas House
Mandurah

(08) 9535 4775

Counselling

Allambee Counselling
Mandurah

(08) 9535 8263

Peel Community Legal Service

www.peelcls.com.au

(08) 9581 4511

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria
www.dvrcv.org.au
Help & advice

Free toolbox resources

For free resources to share with your community, club or employees, go to;

www.peelsaysnotoviolence.org.au/resources/

All of the stories we share are local stories from local people, shared with the permission of each research participant. Names & images have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

To read the research report, go to;
www.peelsaysnotoviolence.org.au