

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.



HOW DOES VIOLENCE AFFECT CHILDREN? - NICOLE'S STORY

"I'd have to ring him and say, 'Don't go home, you know what will happen if you go home' ."

My sons saw him beat the crap out of me because they were living with us and there was nothing they could do. My ex was the sort of person that will pour petrol around your house and light it up and stand there and watch you burn. My older boys left, but the younger one was still living with us when he was 18. One time my ex took me out of town. He stole my car and went home and told my son "your mum will walk in with a black eye because I punched her in the head again" - and this poor kid just had to go, OK and walk away.

He got treated like a 5-year-old. He got sent to his room. I wasn't allowed to watch TV with him, he wasn't allowed to come and watch movies with us, he wasn't allowed to cook and he wasn't allowed to touch anything even though it was his house.

He wasn't allowed his own house key. If we weren't going to be home until God knows, all hours of the night, I'd have to ring him and say, "don't go home, you know what will happen if you go home." My ex would make me write horrible messages to my son and I'd get home and my boy would be asleep with his head on the back table in the freezing cold. I'd just have to wake him up and say, "go to bed" because my ex would be standing behind me. My son would look at me and I couldn't do anything.

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HOW DOES VIOLENCE AFFECT CHILDREN? - NICOLE'S STORY

"I would stand up for them, but I would cop it."

I always break, I always give in – my kids hated me for that but what they don't get is that I was so trapped I couldn't run because he knew where they lived, he knew where they all were and I stayed with him to protect my kids. I didn't care what happened to me. When he threatened to hurt them, I would stand up for them but I'd cop it. I'd cop a fist straight in my head.

When I left and went into a refuge I was worried about my boy, even though he was 18. My mum was getting threatening messages from my ex saying that if he doesn't hear from me my son is going to have broken legs, so I had to ring him from the refuge with my support worker there and ask him not to hurt my son.

Nicole, 53, Mandurah

The woman in this story now lives by herself but has reconnected with her children, including her grandchild who she was not allowed to meet when she was in the relationship. She continues to receive support from Pat Thomas House's outreach.

DISCUSSION TRIGGERS

Nicole says her kids hate her for giving in to the abuse and see it as her fault that they weren't protected from her partner's use of violence. Is this common? As a family friend, sympathetic relative or school counsellor, how could these kids be supported?

Fear of children being threatened or hurt by a partner can affect the way the abused parent reacts. Who can help in this situation? What can be done to help someone leave an abusive relationship when they fear their children might be hurt?

You belong to a service club and want to do something to help adolescents who have been affected by family violence. What types of things might be useful?

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN & HELPFUL MESSAGES

There are some practical ways that a friend or family member can support a child exposed to domestic or family violence, in addition to the support received from the mother or primary carer and professional services.

FAMILY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAN AFFECT CHILDREN'S;

- Behaviour
- Development
- Relationships
- Emotions
- Learning
- Thinking
- Physical health

MESSAGES THAT ARE HELPFUL FOR CHILDREN TO HEAR:

It's ok to have mixed feelings about either or both of your parents

I will do everything I can to help you feel safe

It is not your job to fix any problems in the family

Violence is not ok

How you feel is important to me. I can cope with anything you tell me, no matter how bad it is.

It's ok to ask for help

It isn't your fault

It's ok to feel angry or sad. It's ok to cry

Who can help?

Emergency

For emergency & life threatening situations, contact emergency services;

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Urgent

For urgent and 24-hour support contact:

Crisis Care
1800 199 008

Pat Thomas House:
www.patthomashouse.org.au
9535 4775

Kids helpline (24 hours)
1800 551 800

Peel Youth Services
pys.org.au

Peel Youth Medical Services
www.facebook.com/PeelYouthMedicalService
1800 007 339

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