

Support groups



Family violence and sexual abuse support groups run in most areas throughout Victoria. In this section you will find details on current support groups by region.

Family violence groups for:

- › Women
- › Mothers and their children
- › Indigenous women and children
- › Parents of abusive adolescents

Sexual abuse groups for:

- › Adult women
- › Young women
- › Adult men
- › Mothers, carers and non-offending parents
- › Partners of offenders
- › Abuse in church communities

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Family violence groups

Women

Brunswick / Coburg

Looking Forward—Merri Community Health runs an empowerment group for women who are living in, or have left, an abusive or hurtful relationship. Childcare available. Contact Cass: 9355 9950

Craigieburn

Dianella Community Health runs groups at its various locations.

- › **Looking Forward**—An exploration-based group for women who are living in, or have left, an abusive relationship. Contact Dianella Counselling Intake: 9302 8803

Epping / Lalor / Mill Park / Thomastown / Whittlesea

Anglicare Plenty Valley runs several groups. Contact Andrea on: 9465 0322 or Helen on: 9483 2401

- › **Looking Forward**—a support and discussion group for women living in, or who have left, abusive or hurtful relationships. Free childcare.
- › **Parenting After Violence**—information sessions for women dealing with the effects of parenting after (or during) family violence.

Arabic-Speaking Women's Group—for Arabic women looking at healthy relationships. Run by inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence. Contact Elham: 0438 042 228

Hoppers Crossing

Connections—for women who are living in, or who have left, an abusive or

Group Facilitators

Please tell us if you are running a new group, if group details change, or it is no longer running.

Contact DVRCV on 9486 9866 or dvrvc@dvrvc.org.au

hurtful relationship. This group focuses on the aspects of life that sustain people through difficult times. In a safe and respectful environment the group supports women to reconnect with preferred ways of living and hopes for the future. Contact CoHealth, Mercedes: 8398 4157, Yvonne: 8398 4295 or Cara: 8398 4156

Making Connections Multicultural Women's Group—a group for women to share stories and make friends. Topics of discussion include: life in Australia, resilience and wellbeing, social isolation, building strength and confidence and respectful relationships. Facilitated by Intouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence. Contact Jennifer Dawson: 0410 740717

Heidelberg

Living Well—for women who are, or who have been, in a hurtful or abusive relationship. Contact Banyule Community Health: 9450 2610 or 9450 2000

Melbourne CBD

Indian Women's Support Group—Monthly meetings held across Melbourne. Contact Dr Iata Satyen via email: lata719@gmail.com or Facebook: www.facebook.com/IndianWomensSupportGroup

Melton / Caroline Springs

The Melton Community Health Centre runs two groups. Contact Intake: 8746 1100

- › **Becoming Free (Melton)**—a structured, time-limited group for women who have experienced family violence. Runs every Tuesday from 10.00am to noon

- › **Becoming Free—Better ways of Living (Caroline Springs)**—a support group for CALD women who have experienced family violence runs every Friday from 10.00am to noon

Plenty Valley

Keeping Safe, Strong & Smart—a six-week women's group to support those who have experienced family violence and to assist in recovering and rebuilding. Contact Plenty Valley Community Health Intake: 9409 8724

Preston / Reservoir

Women Standing Strong—a support group for women who have experienced hurtful or abusive behaviour in relationships. Contact Darebin Community Health: 8470 1111

Sunbury

Moving On—for women who have been affected by family violence and are still in the relationship or have left. Contact the Intake Worker, Sunbury Community Health: 9744 4455

Sunshine

Opening the Doors—for women who have experienced violence and abuse. Contact Relationships Australia: 8311 9222

Mothers and their children

Broadmeadows / Craigieburn

Supported playgroup for children under 6 years and their parents. Singing, reading stories, laughing and running around in the playground. Bookings essential. Contact: 9309 9433 or 9386 2876

Deer Park

Rhythm and Rhyme—eight-week group for children (0–4 yrs). A non-judgemental and safe environment for families to develop healthy attachments. Facilitated by Community West. Contact the Family Programs Worker: 9363 1811 or the Neighbourhood House on 9360 4851

Come Chat—a weekly drop-in meeting for women facilitated by Community West. Contact: 9360 4851

Epping

Play and Grow supported play group—Anglicare Plenty Valley facilitate a playgroup for families with complex needs who live in the city of Whittlesea and have children up to the age of 4 years. Contact Andrea: 9465 0322

Lalor / Broadmeadows

Parenting After Violence—information sessions for women dealing with the effects of family violence. For further information contact Rita at Anglicare Lalor: on 9465 0322 or Margarita at Anglicare Broadmeadows on 9301 5200

Outer West

Bright Futures North and West—therapeutic music and creative arts for children (8–12 yrs) who have experienced homelessness/family violence. Transport available. North West Regional Children's Resource Program: www.homelesskidscount.org or contact Coordinator, Merri Outreach Support Services, Talia Barrett: 9359 5493

Thomastown / Thornbury

Darebin Koorie Kids Playgroup—VACCA facilitates a supported parent playgroup for children and their families to gather with other Koorie families. Contact Vickianne at VACCA: 8388 1891

Western suburbs (rotated)

SPLASH—Safe Place for Laughter, Art and Sharing: therapeutic arts for children (8–12 yrs) and their mothers who have experienced family violence. Contact Nadine, Women's Health West: 9689 9588

West Heidelberg

Shine and Grow Supported Play Group—children's play group facilitated by CPS and Berry Street through Banyule Community Health for children under primary school age and their parents/care givers. Designed for families in vulnerable circumstances who may have experienced family violence and other issues. Contact Miriam: 9450 4700

Indigenous women and children

Elizabeth Hoffman House Aboriginal Women's Services—runs groups supporting women and their children. Contact: 9482 5744

- › Ongoing support group for women who have experienced domestic violence and an ongoing group for mothers and their children

Parents of abusive adolescents

North metro

TARA (Teenage Aggression: Responding Assertively)—workshop for parents who have an adolescent behaving violently at home. Get strategies to reduce violence and improve relationships. Contact: 9450 4700

Sexual abuse groups

Adult women

Melbourne metro

CASA House—offers several facilitated eight-week support groups throughout the year for women who have had counselling and would like to meet other survivors of childhood sexual assault. Contact: 9635 3610

North metro

Northern CASA—runs groups for women and men who are victims/survivors of sexual assault or abuse. Contact: 9496 2240

West metro

West CASA—groups throughout the year for women who are interested in meeting others and moving on from childhood and/or adult sexual abuse. Run by experienced facilitators who ensure a safe environment. Contact the Duty Worker: 9687 5811

- › **Strength to Strength**—supportive and informative for women who have experienced family violence and sexual abuse in their lives.
- › **Women Gathering**—for adult women who have experienced child sexual abuse.

Support groups



Family violence groups

Women

Box Hill

Making Connections Chinese Women's Group—for women to share stories and make friends. Topics include: life in Australia, healthy relationships and self-care. Facilitated by Intouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence. Contact Christine: 9413 6500

Single Mums Program—the Lifecare Women's Centre facilitates a holistic day program for single mums coming out of relationship breakdown, domestic violence and other issues. Facilitated by qualified staff, childcare provided. Contact Program Coordinator, Laura Baxter: 8847 4968

Doncaster

Living Free—a group for women who have experienced past abuse. An eight-session program using art and creativity to explore your experience of family violence. Facilitated by Doncare. Contact Susan or Andrea: 9856 1500. An intake assessment may be required. Other groups provided during the year include:

- › **Protective Factors**
- › **Moving Beyond Trauma**
- › **Reclaiming Self: Self Respect**—an eight-week art therapy group

Ferntree Gully

Holding It All Together—for women who are currently experiencing and/or have experienced family violence. Contact Knox Community Health intake worker: 9757 6200 or 9757 6258

Kew

Women Making Choices—a program for women who have been in, or are currently in, relationships where their experience is a feeling of powerlessness, as a result of experiencing a range of controlling and abusive behaviours. Program runs Tuesday evenings. Contact: 9261 8727

Lilydale

Finding Me Being Free—eight-week educational family violence support group. Childcare is available. Contact Family violence counsellor, Inspiro: 9738 8801

Anglicare Lilydale runs several support groups throughout the year. Contact Intake Worker: 9735 4188

Mitcham

Mitcham Community House

› **Strategies for Change**—short courses are offered Wednesday mornings during school terms. Courses include:

- My Life, My Choice
- Reclaiming and Rebuilding

Low-cost childcare available. For more information, contact: 9873 4812

› **Women's Discussion and Support Group**—"Women working together" is a peer mentoring and support group for women. It provides an unstructured community-based open forum for women, offering facilitated peer support and strategies for change in a safe and non-judgemental environment. Offered Thursdays 11.00am-1.00pm during school terms. Contact: 9873 4812

Mothers and their children

Australian Childhood Foundation—children's counselling and group work. Contact: 1800 176 453 or 03 9874 3922

Ashburton

Cool Kids—a therapeutic group for primary school-aged children who have experienced homelessness and family violence. Contact Camcare Family Services: 9809 9108

Lilydale

Mums Guiding Kids Forward—an eight-week group for mothers who have experienced family violence. This group aims to assist mums to gain additional skills and strategies to meet the challenges of parenting children who have experienced family violence. Contact Sonia Tomasiello at Anglicare Lilydale: 9735 4188

Parents of abusive adolescents

Box Hill

Breaking the Cycle—a group for mothers, fathers, step-parents and carers whose adolescents are abusive and/or violent in the home. An opportunity to discuss all issues and learn new skills to better manage challenging situations. Support and strategies to help your son/daughter become more responsible and respectful. Contact Meridian Intake at Anglicare: 9896 6322

Sexual abuse groups

Adult women

Ringwood East

Eastern CASA runs several groups. Contact the Duty Worker: 9870 7310

Regular groups are also offered for adult survivors of child sexual assault and parents whose children have been sexually assaulted

Surrey Hills

Support groups run in conjunction with the Anxiety Recovery Centre on the first Wednesday of every month from 6.30pm to 8.30pm for women who have experienced child abuse. Women outside of the area welcome to attend. Contact Tabby Dougall, Holistic Counsellor: 0422 646 021 or go to ARCVIC website: www.arvc.org.au

Adult men

Adult Male Survivors Group—contact the Duty Counsellor, Eastern CASA: 9870 7310



Family violence groups

Women

Cardinia / Casey – Berwick, Narre Warren, Cranbourne

Birds of a Feather—creative arts therapy and support group for women who have experienced family violence. Share stories, support one another and form new friendships. Contact Chloe at Windermere Narre Warren: 9705 3200

Healthy Relationships, Healthy Women—educational group exploring violence in relationships. Encourages women to share their experiences in a safe environment. Contact Southern Victims Assistance & Counselling Program (VACP): 9705 3200

Keeping It Together (KIT) Program—educational, supportive program. Assists women to improve assertiveness & conflict resolution skills, while enhancing awareness of self-esteem and self-care. Contact Casey North Community Information Support Service (CNCISS): 9705 6699

City of Monash

Women Reclaiming Their Lives—for women who have experienced, or are living with, violence and abuse at home. Childcare available. Contact the Intake Worker: 1300 552 509

Hastings / Mornington / Rosebud

Good Shepherd Family Services—domestic violence groups throughout the year. Held in Hastings, Mornington and Rosebud. Contact Intake Worker: 5971 9454

Sandringham / Frankston

Making Choices—for women who have experienced family violence and who wish to learn how to regain control over their lives. Contact the Intake Worker, Family Life: 8599 5433

St Kilda

Women's Support Group—eight-week therapeutic support group for women who have experienced family violence, run in conjunction with the Salvation Army. Contact Simone or Megan from Inner South Community Health: 9525 1300 or Salvation Army Intake: 9536 7797

Windsor / Inner South and Dandenong / Outer South

New Beginnings—supportive eight-week group for women who have experienced family violence. Helps women identify the effects of abusive relationships and progress towards new beginnings. Contact Connections in Windsor: 9521 5666 or Dandenong: 8792 8999

Mothers and their children

Carrum Downs / Pakenham

Beyond the Violence—eight-week program for the non-violent parent and their children. Parents' sessions and children's sessions run at the same time, guided by trained facilitators. Contact Barbara: 9781 6700, or Karen or Ariane on 5945 2000

Middle south

Emerge Art Therapy Program—for children who have experienced domestic violence, homelessness or disadvantage. Group and individual program: 4410 7016 or tania@emergesupport.org.au

Emerge Peek a Boo program—for infants and their mothers who have lived with family violence. Contact EmERGE: 4410 7016

St Kilda

Super Kids—for children 5–8 years who have experienced family violence. Contact Rosie, Salvation Army Family Violence Service: 9536 7797

Windsor / Inner South and Dandenong / Outer South

The Incredibles—an eight-week program for primary school-aged children who have experienced or witnessed family violence. Through fun and creative activities, children learn about safety and developing self-esteem in a social, supportive environment. Contact Connections in Windsor: 9521 5666 or Dandenong: 8792 8999

Fun Buddies—an eight-week program for mothers and toddlers who have experienced family violence. Offers support in strengthening the bonds of attachment between mother and child in a safe environment. Contact Connections Windsor: 9521 5666 or Connections Dandenong 8792 8999

Indigenous women and children

See details under North West metro

Parents of abusive adolescents

City of Monash

Who's in Charge?—for parents/carers of young people (8–18 yrs), living in the City of Monash, who are violent or defiant. Contact Emily or Libby, Monash Youth & Family Services: 9518 3900

Narre Warren

Who's in Charge?—eight-week educative group for parents or carers of young people (10–20 yrs) who are violent or defiant. Contact Duty Worker at Connections Uniting Care: 5990 8400

Prahran / South Melbourne

Who's the Boss?—group for parents or carers of young people (10–18 yrs) who are abusive towards them. Contact Inner South Community Health: 9525 1300

Sexual abuse groups

Adult women

SECASA runs the following groups:

- › For women who have had some counselling but would like to meet others facing similar issues. Run throughout the year across the region. Contact Sue or Chris: 9954 9850
- › **Art Group**—for women who have experienced sexual abuse and are, or have been, clients at SECASA. No previous experience of painting required. Facilitated by artist Anne Riggs. Ceramic project on grief and loss to follow on from painting group. Contact: 9928 8741

Support groups

Adult men

SECASA—a caring and confidential environment for men to discuss topics such as dealing with the past, family, ways of coping and nurturing ourselves. Group runs when there are sufficient numbers throughout the year. St Kilda, Dandenong, Pakenham, East Bentleigh, Frankston, Cranbourne and Rosebud areas. Contact: 9928 8741

Partners of offenders

Dandenong

SECASA—for women whose partners have been sexual offenders. Groups run when sufficient numbers and can be held in alternate locations within the South East region. Contact: 9594 2289



Hume

Family violence groups

Women

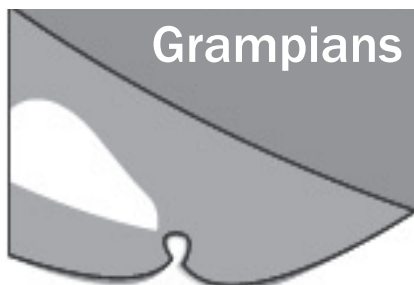
Albury / Wodonga

KNOTS—women who have experienced, or are still experiencing, domestic/family violence. Contact the Albury Wodonga Women's Centre: 02 6041 1977

Who can I call for help?

Safe Steps: Family Violence Response Centre
Ph: 1800 015 188 (toll free)
or www.safesteps.org.au

1800 RESPECT: national helpline for domestic violence and sexual assault
Ph: 1800 737 732
or www.1800respect.org.au



Grampians

Family violence groups

Women

Ballarat

For women who have experienced an abusive relationship. Contact Ballarat Community Health Centre: 5338 4500

WRISC—can also provide groups in Daylesford, Bacchus Marsh and Creswick. Contact: 5333 3666

Sexual abuse groups

Adult men

Ballarat CASA—for current/upcoming groups contact the Duty Worker (1.00–5.00pm): 5320 3933



Barwon South East

Family violence groups

Mothers and their children

Geelong

Minerva Community Services facilitates groups for women who have experienced, or are living with, violence and abuse. Contact: 5224 2903

Sexual abuse groups

Adult women, young women & adult men, mothers, carers and non-offending parents

Geelong

Barwon CASA—offers therapeutic counselling groups on an 'as needed' basis. Contact: 5222 4318

Warrnambool

South West CASA—offers groups for adult victims of sexual assault, when sufficient numbers. Contact: 5564 4144



Loddon Mallee

Family violence groups

Women

Bendigo

Centre for Non Violence—groups for women, children and parents. Contact: 5430 3000 or toll free 1800 884 038

Sexual abuse groups

Adult women

Mallee area

Mallee Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit—for details of groups and support for survivors of sexual assault contact: 5025 5400

Statewide

Abuse in Church Communities

Bethel Centre—service for people who have been abused within the Uniting Church. Groups in sufficient numbers. Contact: 9859 8700
email: bethel@victas.uca.org.au
<http://bethel.victas.uca.org.au>

Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence—A service offering confidential telephone and website support, information and referrals. Provides faith-based support programs. Email: help@jewishtaskforce.org.au or phone: 03 9523 2100

National

Abuse in Church Communities

Broken Rites—support for survivors of church-related sexual abuse.
National hotline: 03 9457 4999
Mail: PO Box 163, Rosanna VIC 3083
<http://brokenrites.alphalink.com.au>

Know More

A national service that can provide free legal advice and information for members of the public to explore their legal options in relation to child sexual abuse in institutions. Free advice line: 1800 605 762

Online

Our Place

www.our-place-online.net

Online forum for anyone dealing with, or thinks they may be dealing with, verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual or financial abuse. Created by & for people dealing with abusive behaviour and its consequences

A Cry For Justice **cryingoutforjustice.com**

For anyone dealing with domestic abuse in a Christian context. Most readers are survivors of domestic abuse. Blog comments moderated for safety and to minimise triggers. Includes comprehensive list of secular and Christian resources

Gathering support: Safety for women

Our new *Gathering Support: Safety for women* booklet is back in print



“Our relationships and families are meant to provide us with love, support and a sense of safety. But there are many women and children in Australia who live with someone who hurts, frightens or controls them.

That is not okay.

If you are afraid of a partner, a family member, or someone else, there are steps you can take to help keep you and your children safe.

Fully revised and updated, this 32 page booklet includes comprehensive information on keeping safe if you're separating, how the law can help, technology safety advice and safety planning.

Booklets are \$1.00 each.
Purchase at: shop.dvrcv.org.au