



# THROUGH BLACK EYES

A HANDBOOK OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IN  
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES  
SECRETARIAT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHILD CARE

# **THROUGH BLACK EYES**

*A Handbook of  
Family Violence in  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Communities*

*by Maryanne Sam*

Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

Published by  
SNAICC

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## DON'T BASH THE LOVING OUT OF ME

Maureen Watson

The party's over and I sit here waiting  
for you to come through that door,  
my guts are all twisted up inside,  
and I'll go through it all once more.  
If there's any female Gods up there,  
why can't they make you see,  
You're bashing your head against a brick wall,  
bashing the loving out of me.  
The good times don't make up for the bad,  
In the beginning I thought they could,  
Sure, we had our fights and arguments,  
But the making up was good.  
Life was a game, till the babies came,  
More pressure and jealousy,  
While you lash out at your emotions,  
You bash the loving out of me.  
You cry to me after, and swear you'll change,  
and you beg me not to leave you,  
But it builds up and then I go through it again,  
So how can I believe you.  
I turn away from the fear in my babies' eyes,  
That everyone but you can see,  
You kill a child's pride in their daddy,  
And bash the loving out of me.  
Some people have to fight from the day we're born,  
But its us women who are black and blue,  
It's our love that gives us strength to carry on,  
Like the love I have for you.  
I live sick with fear of your rages,  
When the violence I dread will break through,  
Don't ever think I'm not pushed to the brink,  
But I don't bash the loving out of you.  
Your enemy is inside of you,  
Deep wounds fester where you can't see,  
Take them out of there, confront them,  
Don't bash the loving out of me.  
You can imprison my body, my heart, and my head  
Kill my spirit, or set it free,  
Don't use emotional blackmail, your feet, or your fists,  
To bash the loving out of me.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO THE 1991 EDITION

A handbook of this nature is not possible without the help of dedicated people. I was lucky enough to have that help. Many thanks go to the Adelaide Domestic Violence Action Group whose own domestic violence manual is the incentive for this one. Special thanks to Cheryl Scaife for her assistance in compiling the intervention, restraining and protection laws for our legal section. Thanks also to Rebecca Strok, Catie Pitman, Helen McLaughlin of the ATSIC Office of Indigenous Women, Lyn Thorpe for the fabulous cover design and other graphics contained in this handbook, Alana Harris for letting us use some of her *Australia's Too Old to Celebrate Birthdays* photographic collection, Cawarra Women's Refuge in NSW, and the SNAICC Executive Committee, especially Nigel D'Souza, Executive Officer.

At the time of researching this handbook little information was available on family violence and child sexual abuse in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, therefore my thanks to Judy Atkinson, Edie Carter, Jane Lester, Beverly Ridgeway, Pat O'Shane and others who had the courage to bring these issues out into the open by providing our Communities with their powerful and thought provoking reports. These were invaluable in the research stage of this handbook.

Finally, I'd like to thank the workers – men, women and a few kids – who have helped make this handbook possible. Thanks for having the courage to speak out. In doing so you give courage to others to do the same, which is the first step to saying 'No' to family violence and child sexual abuse because it really is 'Not our way!'

Maryanne Sam  
January 1991

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO THE 1992 EDITION

The response to *Through Black Eyes* has been overwhelming, which has prompted the idea for this second, updated edition. Therefore, a number of people need to be acknowledged for their contribution to this publication.

To Sandra and Jenni at Dead Set who have been much more than just typesetters, thanks for your guidance and support. Special thanks go once again to the SNAICC Executive Committee, namely Brian Butler, Chairperson, and Nigel D'Souza, Executive Officer, for their ongoing support and encouragement throughout the first and second editions.

Finally, I'd like to thank a very bright and giving young woman, Yolanda Walker, who is responsible for updating this publication. Thanks Yolanda for your 'effortless' work and for keeping intact the spirit of what *Through Black Eyes* was initially all about.

Maryanne Sam  
May 1992

## CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD TO THE 1991 EDITION

Three years ago, when SNAICC held its Annual General Meeting in Alice Springs, reports we received from our member organisations around the country were distressing. These reports spoke of the violence in Aboriginal families and particularly the effect on Aboriginal women and children. Some even spoke of the growing incidence of child sexual abuse in our Communities around the country. Although at the time the problems seemed insurmountable, we decided to do something about it. Over the course of the last three years we have, I am pleased to say, at least prompted a greater discussion about violence in our families and Communities. It is no longer something to hide although there is much more we yet have to do.

Apart from organising a national workshop and producing three posters we set about the production of this handbook, *Through Black Eyes*. It is another element of the contribution we are making to the search for a solution to the problem of family or domestic violence. It is a solution, I might add, that we believe must involve Aboriginal men and indeed cannot work without the support of Aboriginal men, who, I must stress, are also victims in this society.

I would, in concluding, acknowledge and thank all those Aboriginal and nonAboriginal people who contributed their time and effort to the successful conclusion of this handbook. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to Maryanne Sam who I know has put into this final product the kind of love, dedication, attention and hard work that a parent gives to their child. At times the process has been just as painful but I am confident and hopeful that *Through Black Eyes* will be regarded as a landmark in our efforts to eradicate violence from within our families and Communities.

*Brian Butler*  
Chairman, SNAICC

## CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD TO THE 1992 EDITION

More than a year ago when this handbook was first published we had no idea what the response to it was going to be. Having been a taboo subject for so long, both within the general community as well as our own Communities, it was important that the issues of family violence be treated as sensitively as possible and introduced in a way that everyone could relate to.

We believed, and still do believe, that we had a long way to go as far as eradicating violence from our families and Communities but felt that with support from our Aboriginal men we would certainly begin to make some headway and that *Through Black Eyes* would have a major role in contributing to that.

I am pleased to say that *Through Black Eyes* has indeed made headway with overwhelming responses from our communities. Requests for the handbook are increasing and come not only from our Aboriginal and Islander organisations and agencies, but from mainstream schools, universities, libraries, police departments, government departments and resource centres, just to name a few. We have even had inquiries from as far away as New Zealand and the United States.

This increase in demand illustrates the fact that we have been successful in making a positive contribution to our families and Communities. Not only that, but it is a clear indication that our people are gradually becoming more aware of the issues of family violence and are willing to acknowledge the fact that it **does** exist – which is the first step to overcoming the problem.

In the second edition of *Through Black Eyes* we have set about updating its contents, specifically the resource list, and have made changes to certain sections, such as 'Child Abuse' and 'Rape', giving these issues more focus. We appreciate all those people who offered their advice and suggestions with regard to those changes.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge everyone involved in the production of this publication, including Executive Officer, Nigel D'Souza and SNAICC Project Worker, Yolanda Walker who was responsible for putting together this revised edition and who did so with an equal amount of hard work and dedication as that that went into the first edition.

Finally, many thanks to those people who had courage enough to take *Through Black Eyes* into their workplaces or into their homes, the process of eradicating violence in our lives will undoubtedly be a slow one but for as long as people in our communities continue to request resources such as this handbook, we know that that process is not impossible.

Brian Butler  
Chairman, May 1992

# INTRODUCTION

In February 1989 the Secretariat of the National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) convened a national conference in Canberra on domestic violence. At the conference, SNAICC was nominated to carry out a nationwide campaign on domestic violence and to produce this handbook and three posters which carried the themes 'Domestic Violence – Not Our Way' and 'Child Sexual Abuse – Not Our Way'. The aim of the campaign was not only to promote community awareness of the issues but was to be seen as an immediate short-term response to the seemingly increasing incidents of family violence and child sexual abuse being reported by AICCAs and AICCA-type agencies throughout the country.

One difficulty in putting this book together was deciding who the target group would be. Should it be a handbook specifically aimed at workers, the victims or everyone? From the start of research it became apparent that people felt family violence was a Community problem and therefore everyone in our Communities – men, women and children – needed to be made aware of the issues and to be involved in the search for solutions. It then became important to make the language in this handbook as simple as possible so that it was accessible to as many people as possible.

With limited time, as well as finances, it has been impossible to visit every Community to hear every story, but what follows is a fairly general account of the way many of us feel about family violence and child sexual abuse today. For instance, many women do not want their men to go to jail, but they do want the violence to stop and they want their men to take up responsibility for the problem. Our men, on the other hand, feel they have been left out of the family violence issue and always seen in a negative light as the 'perpetrator', the 'abuser', with no resources or support services to help them cope with their problems. Other thoughts expressed in this handbook are for our kids: how do they cope? Although many of us believe kids will always bounce back when confronted by family violence, this is just not true. Our kids are just not coping; this has prompted SNAICC to put together this handbook.

Family violence is widespread in our Communities. While it appears to be on the increase information tells us that this increase is due to the growing number of people who are beginning to report incidences of abuse. It has become important to talk about family violence, to open all the closed doors, to change the attitudes and dispel the myths that have for so long kept many of our people in the dark and alone. We hope *Through Black Eyes* is a positive start to doing just that.

My own hopes for this handbook are a hundredfold: that it serves as an introduction to the issues of family violence and child sexual abuse in our Communities, that it stirs in us a need to do something about these problems as individuals and as Communities. I also hope it helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to understand and cope with the problems they are faced with in their field of work. For non-Aboriginal and Islander workers I hope this handbook gives some understanding of our culture and the problems we face.

For the many victims, who are mainly women, the courage to stand up for themselves. For the men who ultimately are victims, too, the confidence and strength to help save their families. Finally for our kids, a little bit of hope that things can only be better for their future.

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# 1. FROM A DREAMING TO A NIGHTMARE

## *A historical and sociological background to family violence*

Family violence is widespread in our Communities. In fact it is one of the major causes of family breakdown, along with drugs and alcohol. Our women are suffering serious injuries and are fleeing to refuges and shelters in order to get away from the violence. Our kids are running away from home often turning to crime, drugs and alcohol, as well as other substance abuse. Our men are drinking more and more, turning to drugs and gambling as a way of coping with the loss of their families and the deterioration of their traditional roles.

When discussing family violence in Aboriginal and Islander Communities, consider the following:

- How our ancestors lived prior to and after the 'invasion' of 1788.
- The violent history of the establishment of Australia.
- How the last two points have contributed to the breakdown of our family life, and our low socio-economic status today.
- The affect all this has had on our People psychologically, emotionally and spiritually.
- The nature of the relationship between men and women.

Keeping these points in mind, perhaps we can begin to understand this big hurt, stop laying blame and start working together towards overcoming the problem. In this way we may be able to restore the incredible strength that has pulled our People through this past 200 years, that is, the strength of family.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IN AUSTRALIA

*'A spaniel, a woman, and a hickory tree,  
the more ye beat them, the better they be.'*

Centuries ago in Britain the general feeling of the day was that man was the king of his castle and women and

children were his possessions; therefore he had the right to discipline them in any way he saw fit. In fact, popular English sayings like the one above, echoed these feelings and laws existed that supported his 'rights'.

British Common Law stated that a man could beat his wife as long as the object he chose to do it with was no thicker than his thumb. Both judges and police appeared unsympathetic to the wife as victim. One judge stated that he felt it better for all concerned to 'draw the curtains, shut out the public gaze, and leave the parties to forgive and forget'.

Closer to home, as early as the 1900s, police in NSW were directed not to interfere in domestics and that 'husbands should not be taken into custody for minor assaults on their wives'. Again in NSW women charged with killing their husbands were more likely to be convicted than the men who killed their wives, the grounds for this being that he was more than likely provoked into an attack.

As you can see, historically, the law which shared society's view that men and women were unequal has safeguarded man's power over his family; this has worked successfully towards shaping the attitudes of a people, attitudes that were not likely to change but were to remain deeply imbedded in the minds of the white fellas who invaded this country in 1788.



## FAMILY LIFE BEFORE THE INVASION.

In contrast to this world, and more than 40,000 years away, our ancestors – over 500 tribes – inhabited this country. They shared a unique bond with the land, their primary source of food and shelter, and keeper of the spirits. They had established their own laws, customs and ceremonial rights which everyone knew and respected. The family unit was unique in that each member had an equally important role to play. Failure to carry out his or her responsibilities meant that the rest of the family suffered. The men were the hunters, usually tracking down larger animals like kangaroo or emu, while women and children supplied the family with berries, nuts and roots.

While the woman's role of child-bearer was held in high esteem, so too was the role of the men who performed ceremonial rites and guided the young boys through their initiation into manhood. Our children were cared for by the combined efforts of a number of relatives. Traditional cultural values included an emphasis on the extended family, responsibility for the well being of each member of that extended family was shared by all. Our children were brought up in a protected environment where child abuse and neglect were nonexistent.

Although some violence did exist at this time, any one person who caused harm or dishonour to another was usually dealt with by the Elders or other members of the community according to customary law. Nothing to the extent of today's family violence existed.

## THE IMPACT OF THE INVASION

With the coming of the white man in 1788, the tranquillity of our ancestors' lives was replaced by destruction and devastation. The land that was life was forcibly taken from us. Alcohol was introduced, as were diseases against which there was no immunity.

Our women and children were taken away to be raped and used as slaves. Men were hunted like animals, forced into labour, imprisoned, murdered. Many thousands of our People were senselessly butchered and poisoned in an attempt to rid this country of the Aboriginal race.

Throughout their history we were seen to be a major problem for the invaders; in fact several attempts to fix that problem were made, as governments implemented a number of policies. The assimilation policy meant that we were expected to give up our culture and traditions to assume the same manner of living as 'White Australians'. To safeguard this we were put on missions and reserves, given Christianity in place of our own religions, and taught to raise cattle and cultivate the land instead of hunting for kangaroo and emu.

Our children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in 'good, decent, white homes' as another measure of bringing us 'up to standard'. In NSW alone, from 1883 – 1969, close to 6,000 of our children were forcibly removed from their families. Practices similar to this continue today and have destroyed and continue to destroy thousands of our families. At the hands of our oppressors, we endured humiliation, degradation, much pain and suffering. Unfortunately, not much has changed today.

## THE SITUATION TODAY

Every facet of our lives today has been affected by the 'invasion' over 200 years ago. The following facts and figures illustrate this.

### EMPLOYMENT

- Two per cent of our men occupy the top seven occupation groups, in contrast to 35 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.
- Most of our People occupy the poorest paid jobs.
- Our unemployment rate is 15 times the national rate.
- One-third of our People are dependent on government benefits of some sort.

### EDUCATION

- Half to three-quarters of our People at the age of 45 have no formal education.
- Nearly one-quarter of our People between the ages of 25 and 29 have never been to school.
- One-tenth of our young people between the ages of 15 and 19 have never been to school.

### HOUSING

- Over 70,000 – or 31 per cent – of our People are homeless or living in inadequate housing.
- The 1986 census tells us that 6 per cent of our People live in 'impoverished and substandard accommodation', compared to 1.4 per cent of the general population.

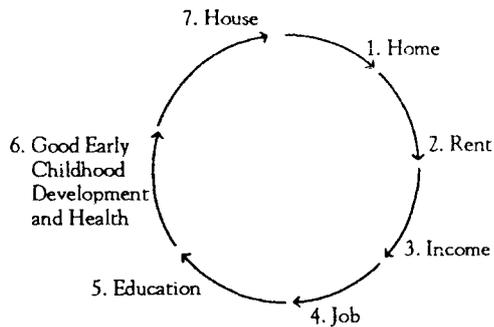
### HEALTH

Although improved with the establishment of our own health and medical centres, our health remains inferior to that of the general population. We deal with diseases that reflect our poor living conditions: eye and ear infections, diseases related to alcohol and drug abuse, malnutrition, diabetes, asthma and STDs.

Also, our infant mortality rate is twice that of the non-Aboriginal population.

## THE SOCIAL CYCLE

Society today appears to revolve around a cycle similar to the diagram below. It is made up of goals people need to reach in order to survive in this society.



If you start from number (1), Home requires Rent (2) which requires an Income (3) which requires a Job (4) and so on.

If any one of the above is removed, then the whole cycle is disrupted. When you consider the statistics on our health, housing, education and employment, you

can see clearly that we have had no chance to successfully complete the cycle and so attain a decent way of life. Can anyone begin to understand the devastating effect all this has had – and is having – on our People physically, spiritually and psychologically? Our history this past 200 years continually illustrates our oppression and the humiliation and degradation suffered by our People. Not only have we been stripped of our land, but of our pride and dignity and everything of importance to us, especially our family.

In losing our traditional roles within the family, we have lost our identity. This manifests itself in a number of ways: anger and frustration, low self-esteem, loss of confidence and self-respect, feelings of isolation and alienation, alcohol and drug abuse, as well as family violence.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE TODAY

Family violence is our big shame. It affects everyone, women, children, men – the whole community. It can happen to anyone, black and white, rich or poor. It is happening in our Communities; the remote areas, bush and town camps, trust areas, reserves, country towns and the big cities. It is no longer just wives who are being abused, but our kids, daughters, grandmothers, aunts, the Elders and some of our men.



*Reproduced with permission from the Alick Jackomos Collection*

## HERE ARE SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ON FAMILY VIOLENCE TODAY

- In most States, over 70 per cent of assaults on Aboriginal and Islander women have been carried out by their husbands or boyfriends.
- In one Community in Queensland, more women have died as a result of violent assault than all black deaths in custody in that State.
- In Tasmania, 99 per cent of family violence incidents are directly related to alcohol.
- In NSW from January 1987– June 1988, 254 cases of assault were reported.
- In Alice Springs hospital, of 155 women reporting for injuries, 109 were the result of violent assault. Seventy-five of these were from town camps, 18 from urban Alice Springs and 16 were from the bush.
- At one time in an Alice Springs shelter, 90 per cent of the Aboriginal women residents were victims of family violence.
- Most cases of assault in remote, isolated areas will probably not be heard of until they become statistics in hospital.
- Up to and over 50 per cent of our kids are victims of family violence and child abuse.
- Many States report that children as young as 3 and 4 are being bashed.
- The NSW Aboriginal Children's Services report that at least 30 per cent of their cases are related to family violence.
- Quite a number of our People going through the court system have been sexually abused or come from a family violence background.
- The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency reports over 2,000 cases on file, 75 per cent of these being related to family violence and child abuse.
- The Western Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency reports that in one month 8 out of 15 cases presenting to the agency were incest related.
- The South Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency reported that of 392 foster children presenting to the agency, 2 out of every 5 were directly related to family violence.
- Recently a survey was carried out on 120 households in the Adelaide Aboriginal Community. Of these 120, 90 per cent of the women and over 84 per cent of the young girls had been raped at some stage in their lives.
- In the general community it is reported that 2 per cent of men are victims of family violence. While no survey has been carried out in Aboriginal and Islander Communities, we do know of a number of incidents where our men have been the victims.
- No statistics to date back reports that our young boys are being raped, though we do know it occurs.
- In the general community 3 in 10 homes are affected by family violence. Although there are no statistics of this sort available in our Communities, information suggests that the rate could be higher.

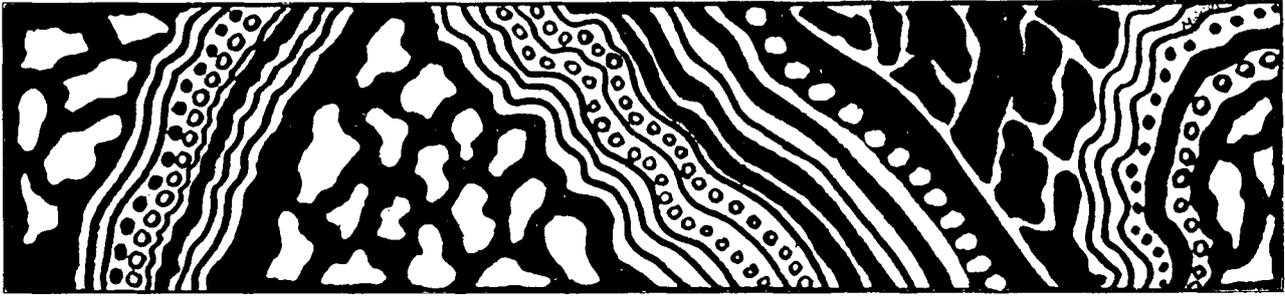
Given these statistics, and what we know about our Ancestors' history, can we really afford to turn our backs and say 'It's not my business'? Family violence is everyone's business; we need to look to our Communities to take up responsibility for this problem.

We are all hurting – the Elders, our men, our women and our kids, especially our kids. They look to us for love and support and guidance. We need to tell them that family violence is not our way! We need to give back to them the old cultural values of respect for themselves and others, of peace, of caring, of looking out for one another and the safety and protection of their families.

For they are the key to the future.  
They are means by which we will be woken from this nightmare!



Reproduced with permission from SA Child Protection Unit



## 2. WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Family violence is when someone in your family abuses you, or another member of your family, in any of the following ways.

### *Physical*

- When you are beaten, bashed, punched, kicked, burnt, bitten, have bones broken or are seriously injured in some other way.

### *Sexual*

- When you are raped, that is, forced into having sex against your will.
- Incest, when a member of the immediate or extended family has sex with you.

### *Verbal*

- When you are called names like 'idiot' or 'stupid', 'fat' or 'ugly'.
- When someone puts you down or makes you feel bad about yourself by something they say.

### *Mental*

- When what someone in your family does or says makes you feel bad, scared, degraded, guilty or ashamed.
- They may play mind games, causing you stress or other emotional problems.

### *Social*

- When you are compared to others, for example, 'Why can't you be like that?'
- When you are put down in front of others in your Community.
- When you are stopped from seeing your family and friends.
- Sometimes you may not be allowed to look at or speak to certain people.

### *Financial*

- When the money you earn is taken from you and kept.
- When any money coming into the family to feed and clothe the kids or pay the bills is taken and spent, probably on grog or gambling, etc.
- When someone in the family steals money or food from Elders, children or other family members because they have spent their money on grog or gambling, etc.
- Financial blackmail, where women who have no income become financially reliant on their partner, often having to beg for money and account for it later.

**Family violence is about control, or the lack of it, and power.**



## A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

It's when everything looks as though it is going right, when the kids have been good and I've managed to get the washing done and sure as I say something nice about him to someone, that's when he will come home drunk and abuse me, turn the table up. Sometimes I have picked a fight with him because I'm so nervous waiting for him to turn on me. I suppose I want to get it over and done with. It's terrible, ah!

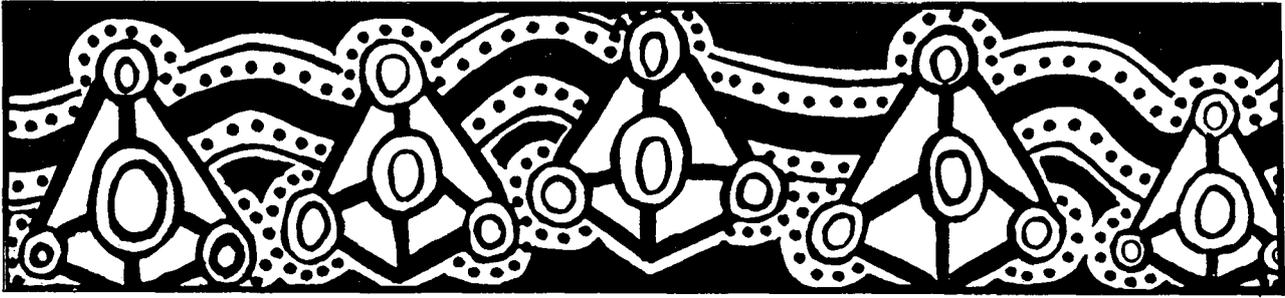
He really doesn't know anything much about kids, like how old they are or what size shoes they take or take them out. It's just him going out as though he has all the rights and we have none; then he has the cheek to get drunk and bash me.

He would say, 'Clean the car and I'll take you for a drive'. The kids and I would do it; all excited we were. Drive all right straight to the nearest pub, and we would have to sit in the car while he big mouthed and got drunk. We were too scared to say a word.

I've tried to talk things over with him, about his job and card machines, that he is taking all the money, but when I start he says, 'You're acting like a big kid. Why don't you grow up?' It ends up in a fight. I'll get punched in the mouth. I feel like killing myself it's just so hopeless. I only want to live a normal life, look after the kids and pay my bills. Why has it got to be like this? I'm sick of it. I feel like getting drunk too. I got a black eye for Mother's Day.

He said, 'Who's gonna give me a job? I can't read or write and even if I could they don't want blackfellas working for them.'





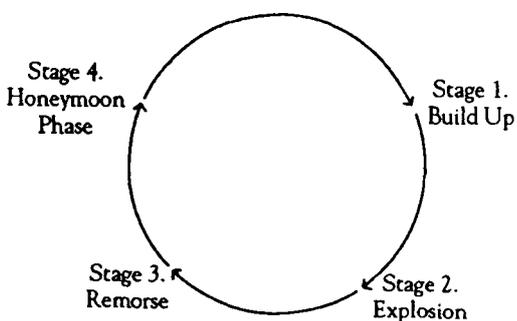
## 3. THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

It is always hard to talk about family violence but once we do, we usually feel relieved. Many health and welfare workers tell us time and time again that the first step to overcoming this problem is by talking about it. What helps is knowing that there are others who are experiencing exactly the same things. You are no longer on your own. It is no longer a 'shame job' but a common problem that needs to be acknowledged, talked about and dealt with.

So, think of someone who you trust enough to talk to, perhaps a friend, family member, doctor, a counsellor at your nearest AICCA, community welfare centre or health worker. You may be surprised to know just how much they do understand.

### STAGES IN THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

Many studies into family violence have shown that there is an order in the events leading up to violence. Although we all have our own experiences, you may be able to relate to some of the following patterns.



#### Stage 1

A number of arguments may take place. It could be over paying the rent or gambling. It could be about his lack of work or too much drink. He may be under a lot of pressure and stress and feel that his partner is either too distant – 'You don't care about me any more', or too close – 'Why do you always have to nag?'.

#### Stage 2

He may start punching or beating his partner, yelling or smashing things in the home. He may use any of the types of abuse described in Section 1.

#### Stage 3

He is usually sorry and ashamed for hurting her. Sometimes he will say things like 'It won't happen again' or 'Don't leave me, I won't be able to cope'; he may even cry.

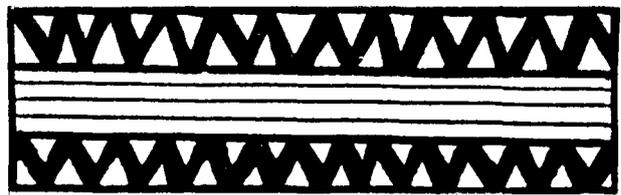
#### Stage 4

This stage is sometimes called the 'honeymoon phase' where everything seems very happy. He makes her promises, does things around the house, gets off the grog for a while, stays home at night instead of going to the pub with his mates; he may even buy her gifts. It is at this stage that he will more than likely seek help.

Sometimes, if his partner does not accept his apology or gifts, he may threaten her. This will either cause her to leave or frighten her into staying. So the cycle continues.

### CAN THE CYCLE BE BROKEN?

What keeps this cycle going is denial, that is saying, 'I do not have a problem', 'It's under control', 'It's nobody else's business'. Denial that any problem exists and denial that they both must take responsibility for the problem. But it can be broken. If you recognise this cycle in your life and want to break it the first step would be to contact a worker or counsellor at your local health or medical service, ACCA, a welfare organization or community centre. (Addresses and telephone numbers are at the back of this handbook.) Remember, talking to someone is the first step to overcoming the problem. You are not alone!





## A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

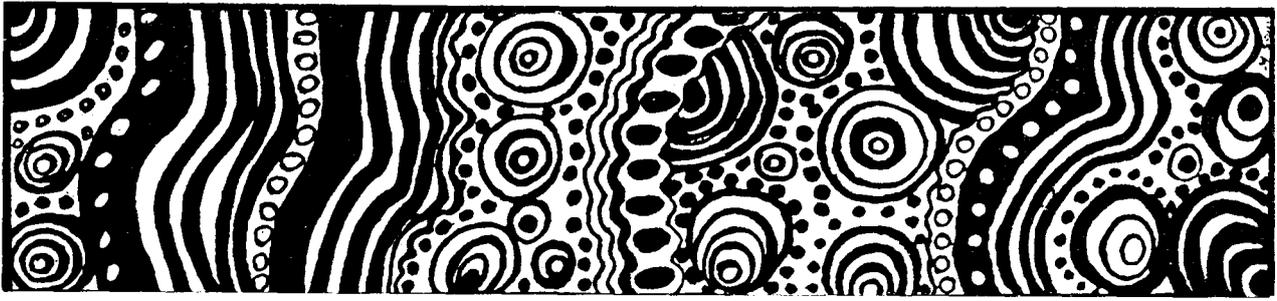
When he first hit me I couldn't believe it. I was so shocked, because he had always been easy going, kind and gentle. He apologized saying it would never happen again. I believed him.

When it did happen again we had just been having a normal fight over something silly, and he broke down and cried saying he never meant to hurt me and he swore he'd never lay a hand on me again. I believed him. But I was wary.

I've lost count of how many other times he hit me after that, but I do know it got worse. It all became a game to him. He knew I'd forgive him each time. He apologized less and less, saying that I was to blame for making him angry. I started to fear him. He sensed it. I'd beg and plead with him to stop. His temper was so bad that in order for peace, I'd agree with him about anything. I lost all my independence, my confidence. I put on weight, I'd walk down the street with my eyes to the ground. I wanted to lock myself away and die.

I don't know what made me get up and leave. I just know that if I didn't, I could have seriously injured him, or myself.





## 4. WHY THE ABUSE?

While there are a number of things that contribute to family violence in our Communities, it is very difficult to pinpoint any one particular cause.

Many people put it down to either alcohol or our low socio-economic status today and the pressures that go with that. Others will say it has to do with the way this society moulds us and expects us to behave. Some will tell you that it is the result of the oppression our people have experienced this past 200 years. All the above are quite valid factors that contribute to family violence – although not excuses.



You may be able to relate to the list of possible causes below.

### SOME POSSIBLE CAUSES

- Anger, due to racism and discrimination felt outside the home.
- Unemployment, lack of education and employment opportunities.
- Alcohol/drugs.
- Poverty, including poor living and housing conditions.
- Low self-esteem.
- Loss of identity within the family, breakdown of the family unit.
- Loss of the land.
- Stress, frustration and depression.
- Outside pressures, from work, from friends, etc.
- Society telling us that men are dominant and that they have rights over their families .
- Loss of morals and cultural values.
- Due to his general bad temper.
- She provokes him through nagging or belittling him, etc.
- The changing roles of men and women.
- Loss of respect for our men, our women, our Elders, our families, ourselves.
- Lack of communication and trust.
- Gambling.
- Individual and Community acceptance of the problem.
- Our acceptance of inappropriate values.
- Lack of support within the legal system.

SOME WOMEN SAY ...



*'I didn't want sex.'*

*'He reckons I nagged him.'*

*'He was drunk.'*

*'He's got a bad temper anyway.'*

*'He reckons I dressed like a slut.'*

*'I give him cheek.'*

*'I didn't have his dinner ready on time.'*

*'He was stoned out of his brain.'*

*'He didn't want me talking to these guys ... he got jealous.'*

*'I really don't know why.'*

*'I guess it's his way of showing me he loves me.'*

*'No reason, he's always done it to me.'*

*'I put him down in front of his mates.'*

*'I told him I was going to leave him and take the kids.'*

*'I told him he was a useless black.'*

*'He was on speed, he didn't know what he was doing.'*

*'He was under a lot of pressure; he couldn't find a job. It just got to him.'*



## SOME MEN SAY ...



'I just felt so bad. She was working and I wasn't. I felt that I was losing control of my home, of my family, and I felt useless.'

'She wasn't looking after the kids properly.'

'Too much grog.'

'When I've been to the pub with my mates and I'm feeling good it just pissed me off because she's onto me about this and that when I get home.'

'I've got every right ... it's my business.'

'I'd been working all day, the place was a wreck. What was she doing all day?'

'I just lost control.'

'Well, my old man used to hit me mum.'

'I was high.'

'I just wanted her to stop and listen to me.'

'She was drinking.'

'I really don't know. I wish I did, but I don't.'

'She just kept nagging.'

'She put me down in front of my mates, I had to show her and them who was boss.'

'I was angry about something else. I don't know, she was just there.'

'She slept with a bloke.'

'She makes me feel as if I'm a failure.'

'I don't think she cares for me any more. I told her she cares for the kids more than me.'

'I didn't have a job, I was depressed.'

'They're always talking and laughing about how they give their women a bit of 'black fella lovin'.'

'She wouldn't do what I told her to do.'

'We weren't getting on for a long time. It just happened.'

'I'm the man of the house. I do as I like.'

'I don't know, she deserved it.'





## 5. HOW DOES FAMILY VIOLENCE AFFECT US?

Family violence affects us in many ways. It is hurting our family life, making everyone unhappy. More of our kids are leaving home, our women fleeing to shelters and our men turning more and more to drink.

Family violence is making us sick, in our bodies and our minds. It has the potential to kill. It is slowly destroying us, our families our Communities and our culture.

Sometimes, when we are confronted by a violent situation we feel lost and very much alone., at times too frightened to talk to anyone about it, often believing it to be something we should be able to handle ourselves. But most people have experienced family violence at some time in their lives. And it affects us all differently.

On the next few pages are lists of feelings some of our men, women and children are experiencing. You may be able to relate to some of these.

### SOME WOMEN MAY EXPERIENCE THESE FEELINGS WHEN CONFRONTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE

- Fear and terror
- Disappointment
- Confusion
- Unsafe
- Stress
- Unhappiness, depression
- Suicidal
- That they are to blame
- Humiliation
- Hatred, anger
- A sense of failure
- Helplessness
- Trapped, aowerless
- That this is normal
- Shame, guilt
- Mistrust
- Hopelessness
- As if they must keep it a secret

### SOME WOMEN COPE WITH FAMILY VIOLENCE BY

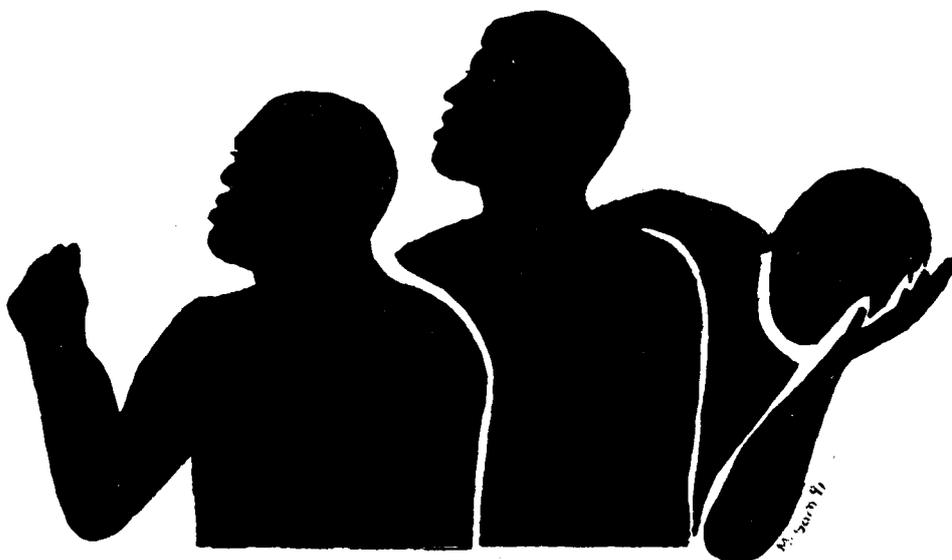
- Drinking alcohol
- Taking pills and other drugs
- Ignoring the situation
- Hoping it will go away
- Accepting it
- Trying to please
- Doing what they are told
- Hitting back
- Leaving, going to a shelter or to stay with family or friends
- Talking to other women
- Looking after the needs of the kids
- Talking to a counsellor, health or community care worker
- Talking to their doctor

SOME MEN MAY EXPERIENCE THESE FEELINGS WHEN THEY CARRY OUT OR HAVE CARRIED OUT AN ASSAULT IN THEIR HOMES

- Guilt and remorse
- That they have to live up to a macho image
- Shame
- Scared
- Powerful, that they need to be in control
- Helpless
- That this is normal
- Frustrated
- That they have a right
- Alone, Abandoned
- Dislike for themselves, Low self-esteem
- That this what is expected of them
- Out of control
- That she is to blame
- They want to stop but can't
- Failure
- Alienation, Isolation

SOME MEN COPE WITH FAMILY VIOLENCE BY

- Drinking alcohol
- Taking drugs
- Going to the pub
- Spending more time away from home
- More anger and fighting
- Placing the blame on the woman
- Placing the blame on other things like work or lack of it
- Spending time with his mates
- Gambling
- Having sex with other women
- Ignoring the situation
- Hoping it will go away
- Joking about it
- Talking to other men in the family
- Going to a drug rehabilitation place to dry out



## SOME KIDS MAY EXPERIENCE THESE FEELINGS WHEN THEY SEE THEIR FAMILY FIGHTING

- Scared, unsafe
- Like running away, neglected
- Confusion
- Unhappiness
- Lost and alone
- Withdrawn
- Anger and hatred
- Nervousness
- Fear
- Restlessness, unstable
- Helpless, powerless
- That violence can solve problems
- Suicidal
- Badly towards one or both parents
- Betrayed
- Sick all the time
- That they are to blame
- Unable to cope
- That this is an accepted part of their lives
- That this is how all women are or should be treated
- Can feel violent or aggressive towards their brothers and sisters, other people or animals
- Anxious

## SOME KIDS COPE WITH FAMILY VIOLENCE BY

- Taking drugs
- Missing school
- Drinking alcohol
- Acting tough
- Sniffing petrol and other substances
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Smashing things
- Running away
- Keeping away from home until the fighting stops
- Committing a crime
- Taking it out on others
- Seeking comfort and support from the extended family





## 6. FAMILY VIOLENCE AND HEALTH

Many of our health and medical services report large numbers of Aboriginal and Islander women presenting with serious physical injuries and severe mental health problems directly related to family violence.

Some physical injuries have included:

- Bruises
- Burns
- Black eyes
- Swelling
- Cut and stab wounds inflicted by knives, axes and other objects
- Welts
- Attempted strangulation
- Unconsciousness caused by head injuries
- Severe bleeding
- Internal injuries
- Miscarriages
- Rape and related injuries
- Infections due to untreated injuries

In Alice Springs Hospital, of 155 women reporting with serious physical injuries, 109 were the result of violent assault. Quite a number of women are suffering these types of injuries over and over again, some on a day-to-day basis. Apart from the obvious pain and potential damage it can do to her body this physical abuse can often lead to mental stress and trauma.

### EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the past many of us have never really considered emotional problems or stress to be a health problem. But mental health problems have been with us for many years.

The invasion over 200 years ago not only brought with it alcohol and disease, but the oppression and physical and mental hardships of those years have left many of us with a number of emotional scars.

We still battle those hardships today in the form of:

- Poor housing
- Poverty
- High levels of unemployment
- Low education attainment
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- High levels of imprisonment
- Discrimination and racism
- Isolation
- Powerlessness
- Lack of economic independence and forced dependence on welfare
- Theft of land, language and culture

### COUNSELLING

Constant physical abuse, along with all other forms of abuse – verbal, social, financial, sexual (as described in Section 2), can have a devastating affect on a person's capacity to cope with day-to-day life. Talking to someone or counselling can help relieve some of that stress and pressure.

While there is counselling available at some health and medical services, workers report that women will usually only attend sessions for as long as the abuse exists at home. Also, not all Communities have access to their own health or medical services. Therefore adequate counselling is not always possible. This is true especially in the remote, isolated areas and where language barriers prevent this from happening.

## HOW ARE OTHER WOMEN COPING?

Many workers tell us that counselling is usually effective when it is done on a regular basis and where follow-up counselling occurs even after the family violence problem has subsided. However, many of our women have turned to other means of coping with the abuse: these include an increased intake of alcohol and the abuse of drugs, including prescribed medication such as suppressants, to help overcome depression, stress and tension. In fact, many women and health workers consider these to be prescribed too freely by doctors, causing many women to become dependent on them.

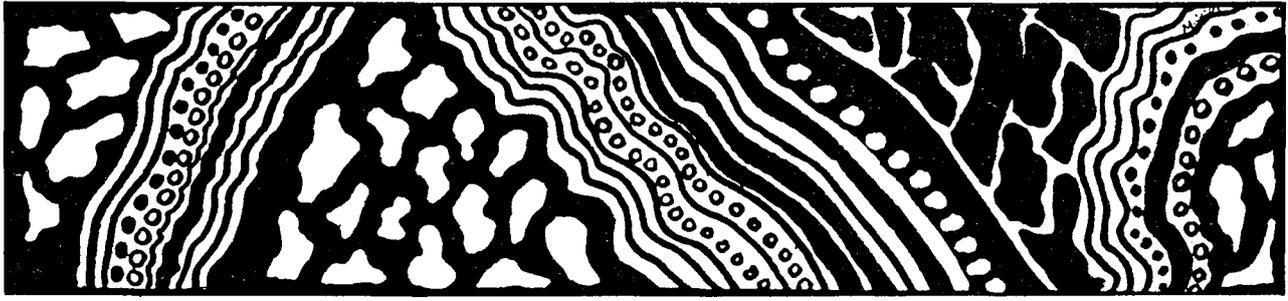
Other aspects of mental health include an increase in the number of women being hospitalized for either long-term or short-term periods, depending on the extent of their problem. Many of the problems experienced have included nervous breakdowns, severe depression, stress and tension, or an inability to cope with day-to-day life because of the violence happening in their homes.

In this latter case, any children are usually looked after by the extended family or, in certain circumstances, placed in voluntary foster care.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

When you consider both the physical and emotional aspects of our health, you can see how these contribute to the problem of family violence in our Communities, and how they continue to affect our mental health. Fortunately some of our health and medical services acknowledge and recognize the dramatic effect family violence is having on our mental health and so have taken up responsibility in establishing relevant counselling and self-help programs. Contact your nearest health or medical centre and enquire about the sort of programs they have available, you may also be able to offer suggestions as to what you want to see happen in the area of your family's mental and physical health. (Health and medical listings are at the back of this handbook.)





## 7. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE HEAR PEOPLE SAY ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE ?

You may have heard people in your community say any of the following, but keep in mind that sometimes what we do hear is *just not true!*

### **'Family violence is just wife bashing'**

This is a common belief within our Communities but the truth is family violence involves the abuse of aunties, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, the Elders, men and kids, as well as the abuse of wives and partners.

### **'She's made her bed, now she should lie in it'**

Once again blame is placed on the victim, who is seen to have brought the situation upon themselves, and in doing so must put up with the consequences. No one has to put up with a violent situation, but with the support of family and friends they should be helped through the crisis and/or out of it.

### **'If our women become educated they won't be subjected to this abuse'**

This is not true. Family violence in all its forms affects people of all professions and occurs in all social classes, regardless of whether we are educated or not.

### **'She must enjoy getting bashed'**

There are a lot of reasons why we stay in violent situations, all of which are quite valid to us, but some people just don't understand these and so assume that we must enjoy it. This is quite false. No one enjoys or deserves being bashed or assaulted!

One factor that has kept family violence thriving in our Communities is other people's attitudes, attitudes that say, 'It's okay to bash', or 'It's blackfella's way'.

*Family violence is not our way!*

### **'Kids aren't really affected by family violence'**

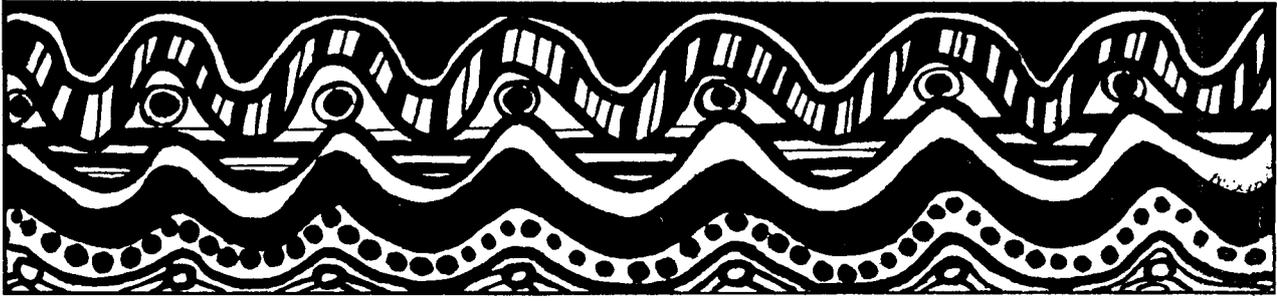
How many times have we heard it said, 'Kids will always bounce back', 'They'll get over it'? The fact is, our kids are suffering enormously: they feel hurt and so turn to drugs, alcohol and other substance abuse. They are running away from home, dropping out of schools and being institutionalized.

Family violence and its affects on kids is a major concern to all AICCAs and AICCA-type agencies throughout Australia, so much so that it has prompted the Secretariat of the National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care to initiate a national campaign on family violence.

### **'It's no one else's business. It's my domestic!'**

Domestics have never been our way. With such a tight-knit kinship system, it is impossible not to be affected by it. Many of us feel it is important to keep our experiences of family violence to ourselves. We do this for a number of reasons: shame, guilt, fear of being singled out, of not being believed, of being threatened, or because we see it as our problem.

It has been hard for many of us to talk about it openly in the past, but if the problem is to be overcome, we have to make it our business. We need to acknowledge it, speak out about it and say, 'Stop the abuse, because it's just not our way!'



## 9. LOOKING TO OUR MEN

We are all the victims of family violence – our women our children, the Elders and our men. Aboriginal and Islander men say, ‘We are hurting too, don’t shut us out!’

What many of our men are feeling at the moment is confusion, alienation and isolation. They do not feel they have any rights over the issue. In the past responsibility for family violence has fallen on our women’s shoulders while society targeted our men as the ‘perpetrators’, the ‘abusers’, the ‘offenders’, the same society that reinforced the attitudes that men had to be macho, insensitive, the ruler of his castle and disciplinarian of his wife and children. These attitudes have only served to widen the rift in our families and Communities, putting more pressure and responsibility on our women and causing our men to feel out of control of their families and their lives.

Gradually attitudes are beginning to change with many Communities acknowledging

- that our men do want the violence to stop
- that our men are a crucial part of the solution
- that we stop pointing the finger and laying blame and
- that we look to our men to acknowledge the problem and accept responsibility for finding solutions to the family violence issue.

### WHAT DO OUR WOMEN SAY ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE AND OUR MEN?

The general feeling amongst Aboriginal and Islander women is that of great hurt. Many women feel their men have deserted them and their families.

- *‘I just wish he could understand how hard it is to look after the kids, feed them, clothe them, worry about how we’re going to pay the gas and electricity bills, pay the rent, when all he does is drink at the pub with his mates. When he finally gets home we usually blue over how he doesn’t help or seem to care what happens to us. Then I wind up getting a belting.’*

- *‘Sometimes I just feel so alone.’*
- *‘I don’t want to leave him. I beg him to listen to what I’m saying so we can do something about it [the beltings]. But he never listens; he laughs in my face or says I’m nagging.’*
- *‘He just come around every pension day, take the money and spend it on grog or whatever.’*
- *‘The last thing I wanted to do was come here [a refuge]. I told him I’d go if he didn’t stop, I told him I’d take the kids with me. But he just didn’t give a — so I had no other choice.’*
- *‘The old grandmother looks after the kids for him and every pension day he’s around there getting money off her to spend on grog.’*
- *‘He just doesn’t care.’*
- *‘Men just aren’t taking responsibility for the problem, they’re leaving it up to the women.’*
- *‘Women are alone on this issue.’*

Other women feel protective towards their men.

- *‘We don’t want them to go to jail. We just want the violence to stop!’*
- *‘Most women have no choice but to put up with the bashings or go to a refuge because they don’t want any trouble for their men.’*
- *‘Some women believe it’s their fault and so make excuses for their fellas.’*
- *‘I couldn’t talk to anyone about it because I didn’t want them to think anything bad about him.’*

While a number of women feel very angry and frustrated with their men, they do acknowledge the pressures put on them today but believe those pressures can no longer be used as excuses for not fighting for the survival of their families on this issue. Aboriginal and Islander women everywhere are looking to their men for leadership and support in the struggle against family violence.

*‘We will stand behind our men on the issue, but they have to first accept that this problem exists in our Communities, take responsibility for it and work with us in finding solutions.’*

**'The relationship will get better, things will change'**

Some of us are told this by our family and friends, even counsellors, in their attempts to encourage us to stay. But waiting and hoping for the relationship to get better will not change it. It can only get worse! We need to start speaking out about it, taking steps to see that it does change – and for the better.

**'Alcohol is the cause of family violence'**

While alcohol is a big problem in many of our Communities, it is still only one factor contributing to family violence. Drinking makes us feel more courageous when carrying out an assault. Family violence still happens in situations where there is no alcohol involved.

**'Abusers are violent in all relationships'**

Most abusers can have good relationships with others outside of their immediate or extended family.

**'Abusers are incapable of loving'**

Most abusers appear to be caring, giving and generous people; this is one reason why a lot of us stay in the relationship. Sometimes the number of good times outweigh the bad.

**'It's part of being black, isn't it?'**

How many times have we heard it said, 'It's their way' or 'It's our custom', when referring to family violence in our Communities? Quite a few of us believe that, traditionally, men had the right to beat 'their' women. But in some areas, if a member of the family deserved punishment, it was usually the responsibility of the Elders or other Community members to carry that out, guided by customary laws.

Today our Elders condemn the practice of wife bashing and other forms of violence. But no one is listening. We have adopted too many of white man's ways – the drink, the drugs, the belief that women and children are men's possessions, and we have come to accept it as our way. This is just not true. *Family violence is not our way.*

**'Abusers are usually no hopers'**

Abusers can be anyone, someone we know and admire in our Communities, someone who is quite successful in their lives.

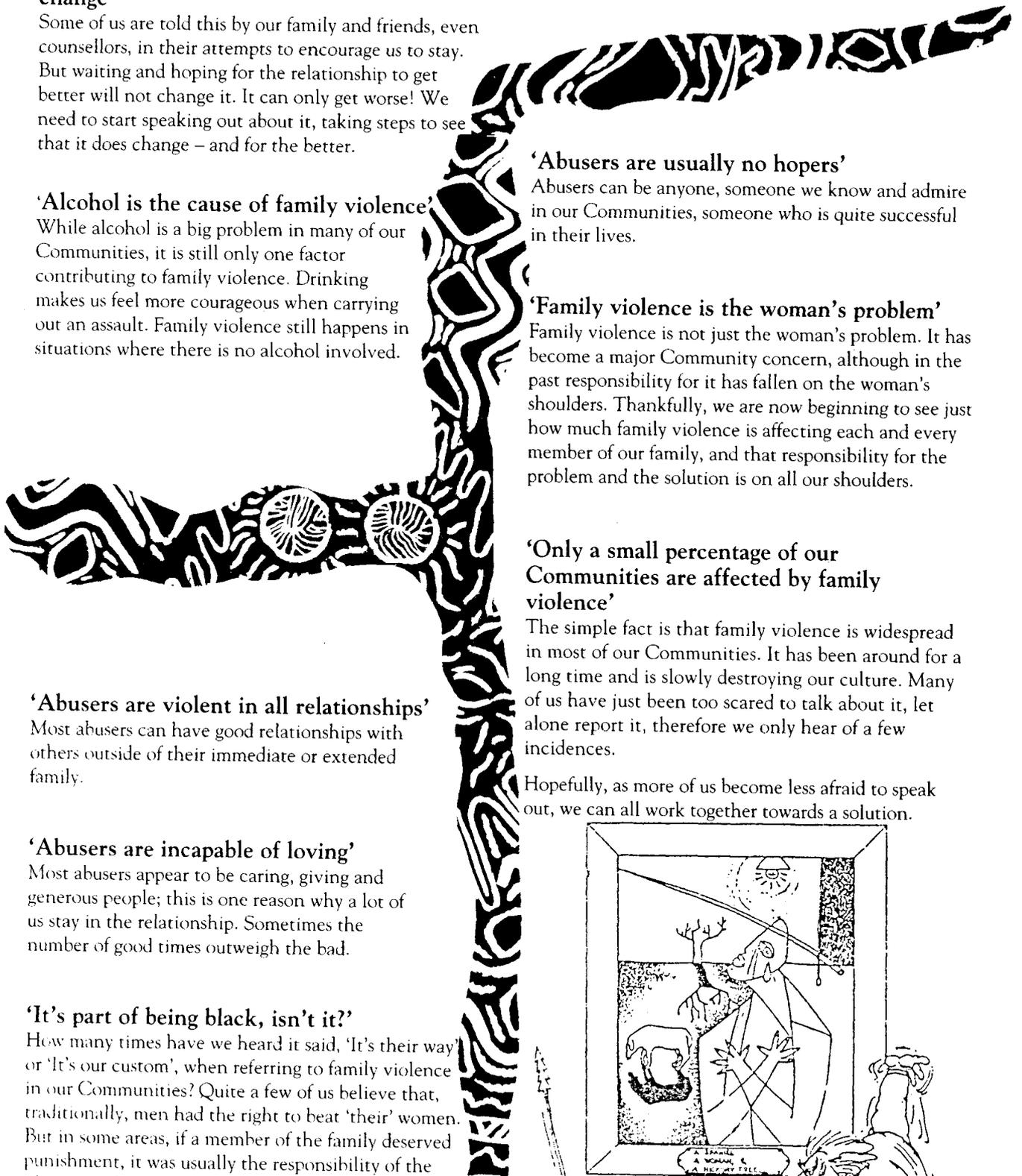
**'Family violence is the woman's problem'**

Family violence is not just the woman's problem. It has become a major Community concern, although in the past responsibility for it has fallen on the woman's shoulders. Thankfully, we are now beginning to see just how much family violence is affecting each and every member of our family, and that responsibility for the problem and the solution is on all our shoulders.

**'Only a small percentage of our Communities are affected by family violence'**

The simple fact is that family violence is widespread in most of our Communities. It has been around for a long time and is slowly destroying our culture. Many of us have just been too scared to talk about it, let alone report it, therefore we only hear of a few incidences.

Hopefully, as more of us become less afraid to speak out, we can all work together towards a solution.



### **'He just does it to let off pressure/steam'**

In our day-to-day struggle as the indigenous people of this country, we are put under an enormous amount of pressure, and sometimes we do need to let off steam, vent our anger and frustration. But we need to keep it in check so that it doesn't cause harm or injury to those close to us. *There's no excuse for abuse!*

### **'She knew what she was getting into'**

Not many of us are aware of the full extent of another person's violent behaviour. In fact, many of us don't find out until much later in the relationship, sometimes too late.

### **'Saying sorry means he's changed'**

While the regret and remorse is genuine, it is not a sign that he has changed. More pressure and stress may build up again and cause further problems.

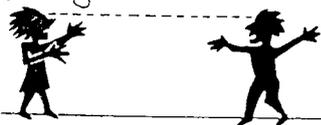
### **'He can't help it, violence runs in the family'**

Family and friends make excuses for him. Regardless of whether or not we have been brought up in a violent background there is no justification for abuse. *Violence is a learned behaviour and can be unlearned.* This myth takes away the abuser's responsibility in doing something positive about their problem.

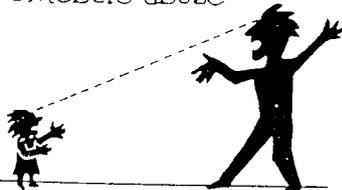
### **'Abuse means he cares'**

Unfortunately, some of us have been brought up with the idea that 'blackfella lovin'' included a bit of a slap up every now and then. This is just not so. Abuse means a lot of pain and heartache for the victim and a lot of problems to overcome for the offender.

An argument



Domestic abuse



*In an abusive relationship there becomes an imbalance. The victim becomes inferior and defenceless to the powerful abuser.*

### **'She can always walk away'**

There are many reasons why we stay in a violent situation: sometimes we are bound by marriage, or are encouraged to stay by family and friends. A lot of the time we just don't have the money to leave or places to go to in times of a crisis. Whatever the reasons, they are valid to us although not quite so obvious to other people. (Refer to Section 8 for further reasons why we do decide to stay.)

### **'He enjoys inflicting the abuse'**

Abusers usually get caught up in a cycle and may get some satisfaction from inflicting the abuse. However, most of the time they get no pleasure from it, often feeling guilt and shame for their actions.

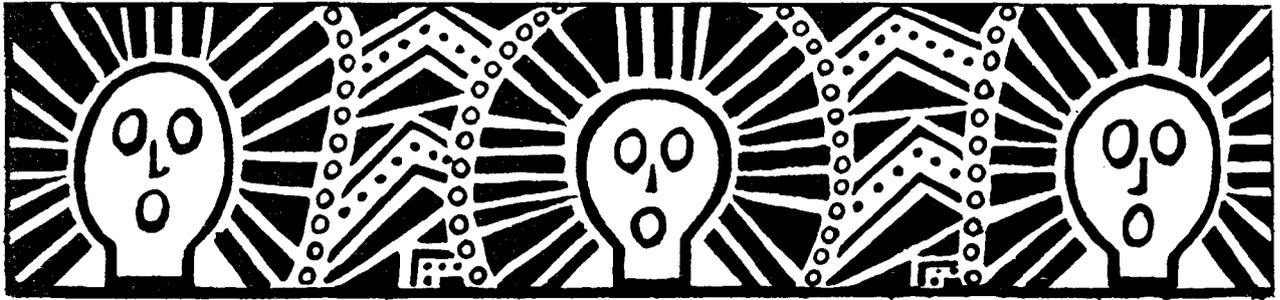


### **'She must have done something to deserve it'**

Some people blame the victim for provoking an attack, either by nagging, put downs or other behaviour. But not all offenders need reason to hit out at their families. Regardless of what brings on the attack, no one ever deserves to be abused.

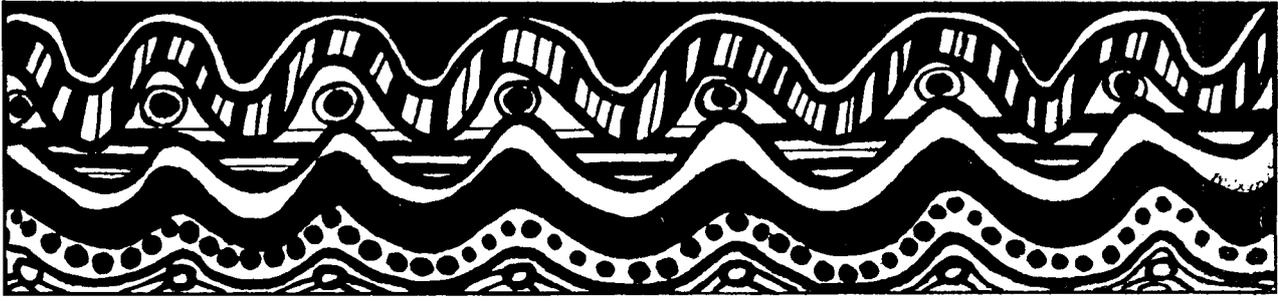
### **'He won't/can't change'**

Everyone of us has the potential to change. Violence is a learned behaviour and can be unlearned. Given that family violence is one of the major concerns in our Communities, it becomes everyone's responsibility to make sure things do change.



## 8. WHY STAY?

- 'Because I loved him.'
- 'I didn't have any money.'
- 'I really thought things would change, or maybe I hoped they would.'
- 'I was too scared. I didn't know where I was going to go.'
- 'I thought I could help him.'
- 'I didn't want anyone to know about it.'
- 'If I left, I'd have to take the kids away from their family and friends.'
- 'If I'd told someone they probably wouldn't believe me, so it was better to stay.'
- 'I felt sorry for him.'
- 'Just the thought of being on my own, I don't think I could have coped.'
- 'I didn't know that what he was doing to me was wrong.'
- 'Why should I leave? It's my home too!'
- 'He's not always like that, he's usually kind and gentle.'
- 'I don't know, I suppose I just don't want to be on my own.'
- 'I always thought that kids needed their father. I was going to leave when they got older.'
- 'He would have been after me. There's just nowhere I could have gone without him finding me.'
- 'I started thinking it was my fault and I had to try harder to make things better.'
- 'He'd start crying, begging me not to leave.'
- 'It meant I'd have to leave my family and friends and go to a city shelter. I wouldn't know anyone, I'd be scared and alone.'
- 'He threatened he'd kill me or the kids.'
- 'I felt it was my responsibility to keep the family together.'
- 'How could I support the kids on a pension?'
- 'He promised he wouldn't do it again. I wanted to believe him.'
- 'My family convinced me to stick it out. They said all men did it to their missus. They didn't think it was too serious.'
- 'He was a good father to the kids.'
- 'My kids asked me to stay.'
- 'It was either this, with financial security for me and the kids, or poverty on the pension'
- 'I didn't have my family's support. I didn't know where to go or who to talk to.'
- 'It was too much for me, too overwhelming to think about.'
- 'It seemed easier to get over a black eye than the thought of having to start over again, on my own.'
- 'There's nothing out here for women to go to like a shelter. I'd have to go from camp to camp to get away from him. He'd probably find me. What I worry about is those other women in the different camps who think I'm after their men. I could easily be bashed by them and have to go to other camps where there was more grog, then I'd be in trouble!'



## 9. LOOKING TO OUR MEN

We are all the victims of family violence – our women our children, the Elders and our men. Aboriginal and Islander men say, ‘We are hurting too, don’t shut us out!’

What many of our men are feeling at the moment is confusion, alienation and isolation. They do not feel they have any rights over the issue. In the past responsibility for family violence has fallen on our women’s shoulders while society targeted our men as the ‘perpetrators’, the ‘abusers’, the ‘offenders’, the same society that reinforced the attitudes that men had to be macho, insensitive, the ruler of his castle and disciplinarian of his wife and children. These attitudes have only served to widen the rift in our families and Communities, putting more pressure and responsibility on our women and causing our men to feel out of control of their families and their lives.

Gradually attitudes are beginning to change with many Communities acknowledging

- that our men do want the violence to stop
- that our men are a crucial part of the solution
- that we stop pointing the finger and laying blame and
- that we look to our men to acknowledge the problem and accept responsibility for finding solutions to the family violence issue.

### WHAT DO OUR WOMEN SAY ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE AND OUR MEN?

The general feeling amongst Aboriginal and Islander women is that of great hurt. Many women feel their men have deserted them and their families.

- *‘I just wish he could understand how hard it is to look after the kids, feed them, clothe them, worry about how we’re going to pay the gas and electricity bills, pay the rent, when all he does is drink at the pub with his mates. When he finally gets home we usually blue over how he doesn’t help or seem to care what happens to us. Then I wind up getting a belting.’*

- *‘Sometimes I just feel so alone.’*
- *‘I don’t want to leave him. I beg him to listen to what I’m saying so we can do something about it [the beltings]. But he never listens; he laughs in my face or says I’m nagging.’*
- *‘He just come around every pension day, take the money and spend it on grog or whatever.’*
- *‘The last thing I wanted to do was come here [a refuge]. I told him I’d go if he didn’t stop, I told him I’d take the kids with me. But he just didn’t give a — so I had no other choice.’*
- *‘The old grandmother looks after the kids for him and every pension day he’s around there getting money off her to spend on grog.’*
- *‘He just doesn’t care.’*
- *‘Men just aren’t taking responsibility for the problem, they’re leaving it up to the women.’*
- *‘Women are alone on this issue.’*

Other women feel protective towards their men.

- *‘We don’t want them to go to jail. We just want the violence to stop!’*
- *‘Most women have no choice but to put up with the bashings or go to a refuge because they don’t want any trouble for their men.’*
- *‘Some women believe it’s their fault and so make excuses for their fellas.’*
- *‘I couldn’t talk to anyone about it because I didn’t want them to think anything bad about him.’*

While a number of women feel very angry and frustrated with their men, they do acknowledge the pressures put on them today but believe those pressures can no longer be used as excuses for not fighting for the survival of their families on this issue. Aboriginal and Islander women everywhere are looking to their men for leadership and support in the struggle against family violence.

*‘We will stand behind our men on the issue, but they have to first accept that this problem exists in our Communities, take responsibility for it and work with us in finding solutions.’*

## WHAT DO OUR MEN SAY ABOUT FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Traditionally our men were the hunters and providers for their families. They had their own initiation and other ceremonial rites, they had their corroboree, story telling and song. Like the whole family, they were at one with the land that not only provided them with food and water and other resources but, importantly, great inner strength and spirituality.

The invasion of 1788 dramatically changed the status of our men within the family unit and in their relationship with the land. While not offering excuses for family violence in our Communities, what follows is a general look at some of the changes a number of our men and women feel have contributed to the low self-esteem, frustration and isolation many men do now experience.

### HISTORICALLY

#### The taking of the land has meant

- No rights as Black men or indigenous people.
- Loss of hunter/provider role within his own family.
- Livelihood taken away, no more hunting, change in diet and living style.
- Our existence completely overlooked, our technology, our way of life, our civilization seen as nothing more than primitive and barbaric.
- Loss of spirituality, sacred sites violated, introduction of a new religion.

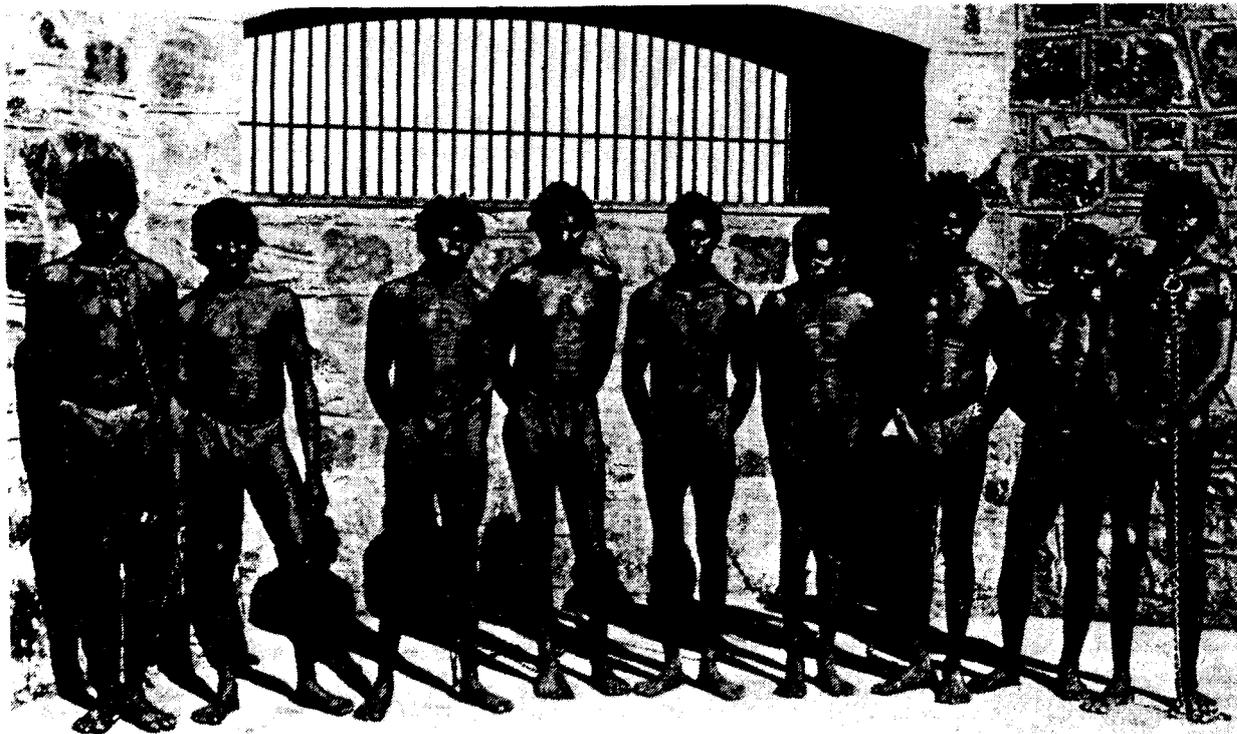
#### The type of oppression – mental and physical – endured

- Forced to live under alien laws and customs.
- Being treated like slaves and second-rate citizens in own country.
- Introduction of alcohol and related problems such as poor health, diseases, family violence, breakdown in family unit, etc.
- Men forced into labour.
- Some methods of getting rid of our men – poisoning, beatings imprisonment, mass murders.
- Women taken away from their men to become mistresses, slaves, domestics to their white bosses.
- Thousands of children forcibly removed from their families and placed in white homes.
- Women denying their men's existence to welfare in order to receive benefits.
- Men witnessing their women being raped, producing children to their white bosses.

### RECENT TIMES

#### His status in today's society

- Society's view of the black fella: lazy, unemployed, drunks, etc.
- Society's view of men in general, telling him to rule his castle, discipline his wife and children, to show no feelings.
- The women's movement and society generally telling women not to put up with him any more.



Source: *Survival*, N. Parbury, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 1988

- The family violence issue out in the open, with some campaigns promoting negative attitudes where he is singled out: 'Don't let him beat you again', 'Step on his head as you leave.'
- Refuges specifically to help women, counselling services and programs available for women.
- Society branding him the perpetrator, abuser, the offender.
- More employment and education opportunities made available to women enabling them to become more independent financially and of their men.
- Most single-parent families today are single mums.
- Governments' inability to understand the needs of the indigenous people of this country.

#### The type of oppression endured

- Racism.
- Discrimination.
- Unemployment, lack of education, lack of work opportunities.
- Abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

While there may be some who believe they have no problem, that hurting their families is their right, more and more of our men are beginning to take a positive stand on the family violence issue.

#### One of the first steps to overcoming the problem is to

- 1 Acknowledge family violence is a problem
- 2 Accept responsibility for family violence.
- 3 Seek family or community help and support.

More and more of our men can see the damage family violence is doing to their women, to themselves and to their kids – especially their kids. Statistics tell us that boys who are brought up in a family violence environment are more likely to become perpetrators themselves. What Black Australian man would wish that pain on his children?

## WHERE CAN OUR MEN START?

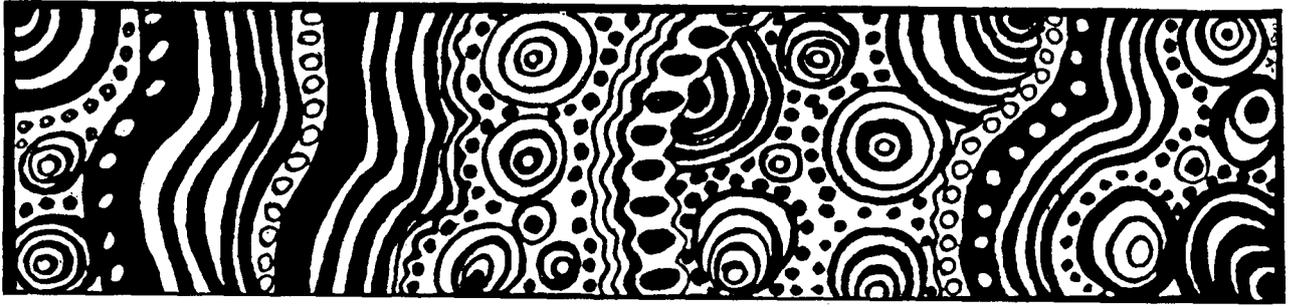
In some areas around the country, task forces and Community organizations have set up men's groups to help tackle the problem. Here are some ideas our men have suggested and others that have already been actioned.

- *Regular mens meetings.* These can occur in existing informal venues such as local pubs or sporting clubs, anywhere men might assemble together.
- *A men's resource centre.* A similar centre to those set up for women. A place with recreation facilities, where programs could be set up to tackle the problem of family violence, as well as programs for work and education skills.
- *A drop-in centre for men* to gather together and talk over the issues that affect them, in both formal and informal settings.
- *A support and guidance centre.*
- *Specialized counselling service for men, by men.* A service that could be set up in your own health or medical service, Aboriginal and Islander child care agency or welfare unit.
- *Personal development programs,* on an individual basis as well as family sessions, which could be set up within the services mentioned or as part of a community development program.
- *Crisis centres for men* before and after the abuse occurs. This centre should include a 24 hour emergency number.
- *Self-help groups.* These need only start with a handful of concerned men in your Community. Approach your health or medical service, child care agency or welfare agency for guidance.
- *Community awareness campaigns.* Funding is available for these types of campaigns. Some ideas for campaigns could include: 'Family violence – We Do Care', 'NOW', 'What Are We Going to Do About It?', or, 'Black Men Unite – Taking Responsibility for Our Families'.
- *More visual aids and written material* directed specifically at men.
- *Men's/boys' camps.* Father-son camps where men can go bush to revive some of their lost culture and family ties.
- *Family camps,* in line with the above, but specifically for families to get away together. We all need to get away from the pressures of everyday life.

If you have any other ideas or are interested in what's happening for our men in your Community, contact your local AICCA, community centre, health or medical service or men's group. (Listings are at the back of this handbook)



Source: *Survival*, N. Parbury, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 1988



## 10. CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is when someone, usually a family member, close family friend or guardian, harms a child in any of the following ways.

### PHYSICAL

- When a child is burnt, scalded, beaten, bruised, shaken, punched or harmed in some other way.

### MENTAL

- When a child is picked on, yelled at, made to feel bad, guilty or ashamed. It is when he or she is subjected to watching or listening to either their parents, or someone else in the family, fight constantly. It also includes favouritism, being rejected and verbal abuse.

### NEGLECT

- Leaving a child on their own.

- Not knowing or caring where they are.
- Not feeding or clothing a child properly.
- Not taking a child to the doctor when they need one.
- When a child is seen to be dirty and unwashed, with poor hygiene, constantly tired and hungry.

### SEXUAL

- When any sexual activity is imposed on a child by an adult, and where the child is unable to change or understand the adult's behaviour because of his or her powerlessness in the situation. (Refer to Section 11 for more information on child sexual abuse.)

Traditionally, our kids were brought up in a safe, protected environment, where they were nurtured and cared for by both the immediate and extended families. In fact, child abuse was non-existent.

This secure environment has gradually disappeared over the last 200 years with the white man's attempts to assimilate our people. We have seen a dramatic breakdown in our family life as our children were

forcibly removed from their parents, as our women were taken away to live as domestics and mistresses to their white bosses, and as our men were murdered, imprisoned or forced into labour.

While these facts cannot be used as excuses for any problems we now face, it is important to acknowledge just how they have contributed to the cultural and family breakdown we now experience.

## WHY DOES IT HAPPEN ?

There are many reasons why child abuse occurs. Much of it has to do with our low socio-economic status today and the enormous pressures that go with that. Some of it has to do with the lack of support and help for a parent or parents who are experiencing personal, financial or work problems.

Here is a list of other possible causes.

- Isolation, where families live in remote areas and have little or no access to support services such as counsellors, doctors, shelters, or advice services. It could also be where a family moves to a new area and has no relations to help look after their children.
- Stress, due to lack of work, poverty, not having enough money to pay the rent or bills or to buy the necessities. It could be due to the racism and discrimination felt outside the home, or overcrowding in the home. It could also be stress due to health problems.
- Lack of support services, parent or parents not sure where to go for help.
- Most people who abuse their children have themselves been abused at some stage in their lives.
- Cultural or family breakdown.
- Alcohol and drugs, which means parents are not able to look after their kids properly. Sometimes parents leave their kids at home to go to the pub. Some kids are left with their extended family, who may be drinking or taking drugs and would not be able to look after the children either. Also, some statistics show that kids are more likely to be abused by someone in the extended family, especially when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Frustration and pressures of day-to-day life.
- Young girls and boys are becoming parents too young and are often unable to cope with the responsibilities and needs of a child or children.
- Exposure to violent and sexually explicit videos, magazines, books, etc.
- Lack of respect for our families, our culture, our kids, ourselves.
- Loss of identity.



Photo reproduced courtesy of *Survival: A History of Aboriginal Life in NSW*, Nigel Parbury, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 1988

## AN EXPERIENCE

*In one case, a child was abused at least every week in her bedroom for five years. She had her genitals fondled, was obliged to perform fellatio on her father and experienced vaginal intercourse from the onset of abuse when she was seven years old. This child was raped an estimated 260 times before she was thirteen years old. Her history of incest is not atypical.*

*'When I was seven it happened every day. He would touch me all over and kiss me passionately on my mouth and body. He was real nice and friendly. I felt rotten and dirty. I was passive when he started doing it but I tried to keep out of his way as much as possible. He would come into my bedroom every night and make me touch him. Occasionally he would threaten me not to tell anyone. By the time I was thirteen, he was having intercourse with me every second night and morning. I was terrified that someone would find out. I felt so guilty.'*

## WHAT SIGNS DO I LOOK FOR?

Sometimes we are not always sure if a child has been or is being abused, and this may prevent us from taking some action. Here are some signs you can look for in a child you think may have been abused.

### PHYSICAL

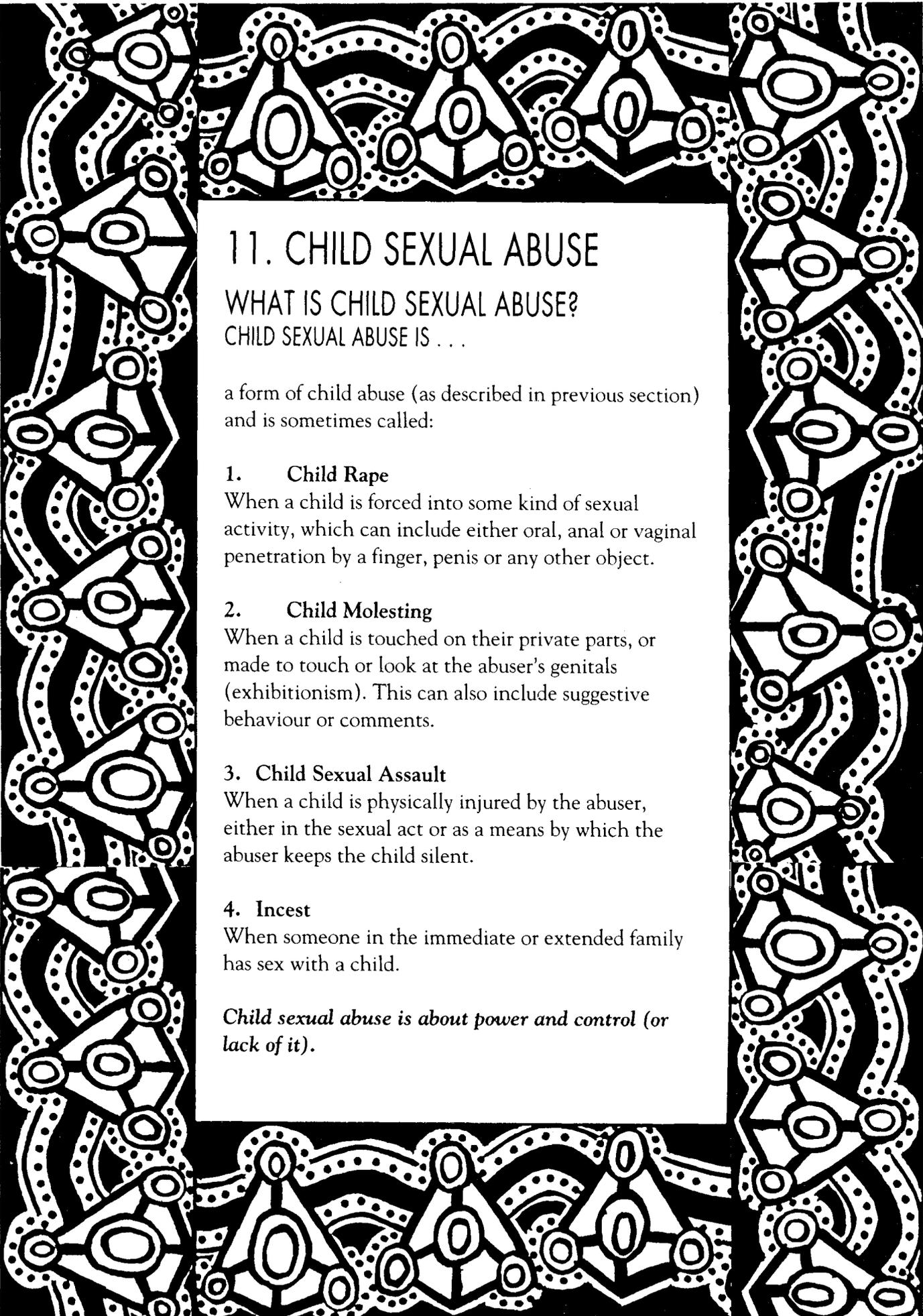
- Genital or anal injury (soreness or irritation).
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Pregnancy.
- Bed wetting.
- Speech loss.
- Some physical injuries.
- Tiredness.
- Crying.
- Inability to eat.
- Attempts to hurt themselves.

## EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS

- Misbehaving at home, school, etc. (more than usual).
- Aggressive, hyperactive, nervous, disruptive, destructive.
- Shy, withdrawn, uncommunicative.
- Avoiding physical contact with certain adults.
- Wary of people.
- Shows little emotion when hurt.
- Depression
- Fearlessness.
- Showing fear of men, of relationships, of being touched.
- Loss of interest in school, including a noticeable drop in achievement.
- Rubbing genitals against adults or objects.
- Playing games that indicate what has happened to them.
- Drawings that show what has happened to them.
- A detailed knowledge of sexual matters.
- Nightmares, being unable to sleep.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Other substance abuse.

## A 14 YEAR OLD SAYS

My stepfather has been having oral sex with me for three years. It started when I was eleven years old. I am now fourteen. I kept running away because I couldn't tell my family, I feared they wouldn't believe me. When my mother went out he would make me have oral sex with him. I ran away and went to my Auntys place and reported it from there. I spoke to the police and the Department for Community Welfare who arranged for me to go and stay with my father who I had very little to do with before. My mother went to court for custody and I am back home again, where no one believes me.



## 11. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

### WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

#### CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS . . .

a form of child abuse (as described in previous section) and is sometimes called:

**1. Child Rape**

When a child is forced into some kind of sexual activity, which can include either oral, anal or vaginal penetration by a finger, penis or any other object.

**2. Child Molesting**

When a child is touched on their private parts, or made to touch or look at the abuser's genitals (exhibitionism). This can also include suggestive behaviour or comments.

**3. Child Sexual Assault**

When a child is physically injured by the abuser, either in the sexual act or as a means by which the abuser keeps the child silent.

**4. Incest**

When someone in the immediate or extended family has sex with a child.

*Child sexual abuse is about power and control (or lack of it).*

Child sexual abuse is our great shame. Not many of us are willing to talk about it or acknowledge its existence, but information tells us that it is happening at an alarming rate to our kids. Abusers are both black and white, including fathers, grandfathers, uncles, stepbrothers, foster parents and brothers. What is more frightening is that most of the time it is happening within our extended families.

Reports tell us that children as young as 3 and 4 years of age are being sexually abused. Our little kids are hurting very badly, living each day in fear and shame as they are silenced by their abusers through threats both verbal and

physical. Children also remain silent for fear of not being believed by their families, friends and community. Some adult women have lived ten, twenty, even thirty years in pain and silence trying to cope with the abuse of their childhood. In fact, many women and kids never cope with their hurt, often turning to drugs, alcohol or pills as a way of easing that pain.

The silence of the victims has bought so much fear and pain into their lives. The silence of families has caused a breakdown in our cultural and moral values, and the silence of the abuser has meant little hope of them getting the sort of help they need.

OFTEN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS BLOCKED OUT OR DISMISSED BY PEOPLE.  
THIS IS DONE IN FOUR DIFFERENT WAYS.

1 EXISTENCE

People say there is no problem and refuse to believe that child sexual abuse exists.

3 SOLUTION

People admit there is a problem but don't think there is a solution.

2 SIGNIFICANCE

People agree that it's happening but don't think it's that big a deal, therefore, there is no need to worry about it.

4 SELF

People are aware of the problem but unaware of what to do about it, so they leave it to the professionals to deal with.

## VICTIMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE OFTEN FEEL

- Unhappy
- Angry
- That they are to blame
- Afraid
- Lack of trust for people
- Dirty
- Betrayed
- That they have to put up with it
- Suicidal
- Pain
- Confined
- Scared of people
- Lost
- Nervous
- Isolated
- Cheated
- Unwanted
- Afraid of not being believed
- They cannot tell anyone
- Aggressive
- Hurt
- Ashamed, guilty
- Like running away
- Unsure
- Sick
- Hate
- That they deserved it
- Powerless
- Shocked
- Wary of people, both men and women
- Trapped
- Lonely
- Worthless
- Withdrawn
- Unloved
- Uncared for
- Depressed
- Powerless to change the situation
- Its is a secret that they must keep
- Nothing, just empty

## VICTIMS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE OFTEN COPE BY

- Giving cheek
- Bad behaviour
- Running away from home
- Taking drugs
- Drinking
- Trying to forget
- Telling someone they know they can trust
- Sniffing glue, metho, petrol and other substance abuse
- **Some never cope**



## HERE ARE SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- A number of AICCAs report children as young as 3 and 4 years of age being abused.
- Western Australian AICCA reports that in 1 month, 8 out of 15 cases presenting to the agency were incest related.
- One Community of 450 people had 12 of their kids in Cairns Base Hospital suffering from sexual abuse and severe neglect.
- It has been found that quite a large number of our people going through the court system have been sexually abused or are victims of family violence.
- Most victims of rape and child sexual abuse never get over their abuse. With counselling they learn to cope.
- Many victims turn to drink, drugs and pills as a way of coping with the abuse, sometimes becoming addicts.
- Most victims will not report their abuse for fear of not being believed, fear of police and fear of repercussions from their community.
- By eighteen, 1 in 3-4 girls and 1 in 8-9 boys will have experienced a form of sexual assault.
- The youngest report of child sexual abuse is a 3 week old baby.
- About 90% of offenders are male.

**A recent survey of 120 households in the Adelaide Aboriginal Community reported the following: 61 cases of child sexual abuse. Findings were as follows:**

### CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- 84 per cent of the victims are female.
- 86 per cent of the abusers belonged to the child's extended family.
- 16 per cent of abusers were the child's biological father.
- 90 per cent of abuse occurred in the home.
- 84 per cent of incidents were not reported.
- 68 per cent did not report the incident for fear of not being believed by their families or agencies.
- 50 per cent ran away from home, were removed or left.

Survey from *Aboriginal Women Speak Out*, Edie Carter, published by Rape Crisis Centre Inc., September 1987

### A 33 YEAR OLD WOMAN SAYS

*'I was sexually abused by my foster father when I was eight years old. The abuse was only happening once in a while for the first three years and it was just tickling, touching, kissing. But as soon as I turned eleven years old, it started happening once a week, whenever I was left alone with him.*

*I talked to my foster mother about what was happening, but she said I was just making trouble. I used to have visits from a welfare woman from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, so I told her but she did not do anything.*

*When I turned thirteen, I was being abused by my foster brother as well. The only thing I could do was fight back. They said I was too violent so they sent me to Hillcrest Hospital. I know now that I was just really confused about what was happening to me and no one believing me.'*

## A 27 YEAR OLD WOMAN SAYS

*'I was abused by my cousin's de facto husband when I was thirteen. They asked me not to report it because I would only make trouble for them. I still have some very bad feelings about what he did. The only way I find myself dealing with it is by drinking, drugs or pills. I have two sons of my own now and I find myself watching anybody who touches them, even my brothers, who I know would not do anything to them. But I am still afraid for them. This has made trouble with my family because I can only talk to them when I am drunk.'*



## ANOTHER 14 YEAR OLD SAYS

*'My mother's boyfriend has been sexually abusing me for seven years. I am now fourteen. It's happening at least once a week, and as I got older sometimes twice a week. My mother would not go out and leave me and my older sister and brother at home with him. He did not seem to worry them, only me. It started off with touching and kissing and finally when I was eleven, he got into bed with me and he had intercourse with me. This went on for three years until I was fourteen. I ran away from home. I have tried to speak to my mother about what was happening, but she seemed to think I was just trying to make trouble for her. So I have never spoken to anyone until now.'*

## WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

Here are a number of things you can do to help a child who has been abused.

- Reassure them that it was not their fault, that it was the abuser who did something wrong.
- Reassure her or him that you believe what they are telling you.
- Reassure her or him that they are now safe and things will get better.
- Try to remain calm; try not to show your anger, hate or unhappiness when the child is around.
- Always let the child talk openly about the incident in his or her own time.
- Do not confront the abuser; he or she will probably deny it or may threaten you or the child.
- Contact an AICCA, Community worker, Department of Community Services and Health, Rape Crisis Centre or health medical service for further advice. (Telephone numbers are at the back of this book.)

If you have been abused as child, remember – it is not your fault. It is not your shame, but the person's who abused you. If you have been or are presently being abused in any of the ways just described, there are a number of caring people who you can talk to and who want to help you. Contact your AICCA, health or medical service, Community welfare worker, or Department of Community Services and Health. (They usually have an Aboriginal and Islander worker who you can talk to. Listings are at the back of this book.)

### **Remember: it's not your fault.**

If you know of or suspect a case of child abuse and are concerned, please contact one of the abovementioned as soon as possible.

*Our children are relying on you.*



## 12. RAPE

### WHAT IS RAPE?

#### RAPE IS ...

- when a woman is physically forced into having sex against her will. It can include penetration either oral, anal or vaginal, by a finger, penis or any other object.

Rape is a life threatening experience. It is a situation where a victim's life and body are controlled by a very hostile person. It is the abuse of intimacy. Rapists can be anyone and their relationship with the victim is usually close. Rapists can also include the unsuspected, such as taxi drivers and police. Reports tell us that women are being raped with objects such as broken bottles and firesticks.

Unfortunately, within the Aboriginal community, rape is kept very quiet, the victims have been silenced by a fear, fear which will haunt them forever. Many women are living up to 30 years in pain and silence, trying to cope with their rape.

Not surprisingly, very few rapes are ever reported by Aboriginal women, usually due to the lack of confidence they have towards the white welfare, legal and justice systems. Silence is also kept for fear of disbelief from their family, friends, Community, police or welfare agencies. Unfortunately, very few Communities are supportive of rape victims. In fact, there have been many incidents where a number of women have been forced out of their Communities because they were seen to be dirty, shameful, having provoked the attack, or lied about it. Women often get accused of being immoral, promiscuous or kinky, or of leading the rapist on.

Aboriginal women are turning to alcohol and drugs to stop the pain. Their everyday lives are threatened by fear. Remember, it is never the victim's fault if she or he is raped, and rape is ALWAYS a crime for which the abuser can be punished.

RAPE IS ABOUT POWER AND CONTROL (OR LACK) OF IT.

A recent survey of 120 households in the Adelaide Community reported on 59 cases of rape. Findings were as follows:

- 92% of the cases were female
- most victims were aged between 21 and 28.
- 88% of victims did not report the rape to the police
- 42% of victims did not report the rape due to fear
- 61% of victims turned to alcohol to try and cope with the rape
- in 27% of the cases the rape took place in the rapist's home

Source: *Aboriginal Women Speak Out*, Edie Carter, published by Rape Crisis Centre Inc., September 1987

## VICTIMS OF RAPE OFTEN FEEL

- Dirty
- Ashamed
- Guilty
- Suicidal
- Afraid
- Betrayed
- Hate
- Angry
- Scared
- That they were to blame
- Hurt
- Pain
- That they have to put up with it
- Shocked
- Powerless
- Confused
- That they deserved it
- That they cannot cope
- Isolated
- Violated
- That they cannot tell anyone
- Scared to be touched
- Nervous
- Depressed
- Aggressive
- Used
- That they cannot cope with other relationships

## VICTIMS OF RAPE OFTEN FEEL LIKE

- Taking drugs
- Taking pills
- Drinking
- Moving away from the situation
- Attempted suicide
- Talking to people, other women or counsellors
- **Most never cope**



*Some girls feel pressured into having sex when they don't want to; they feel like they have no choice about whether to have sex. If this happens, then he is coercing her.*

*Coercion is often rape. There is a very fine line between the two.*

**NO BOY HAS THE RIGHT TO COERCE A GIRL INTO HAVING SEX.**



We have the choice now to break that silence and say 'Stop the abuse!' We can do this in a number of ways, on both an individual and Community level.

### **Individually**

- By speaking out about the rape or child sexual abuse.
- By believing the victims when they tell you about it.
- By re-affirming that the abuse was not their fault.
- By helping and supporting them in any way possible.

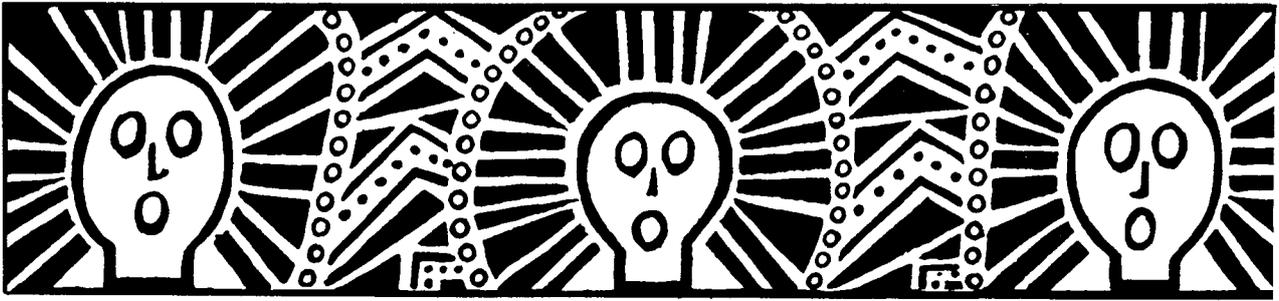
### **Community**

- By acknowledging rape or child sexual abuse as a Community problem and responsibility.
- By condemning rape and child sexual abuse as practices and setting harsh punishment for the abusers.
- By taking it seriously and making it top priority.

- By initiating community awareness programs, preventative action groups, and setting up crisis lines and centres with specialized counselling for both victims and abusers.
- By standing up for our women and children and giving them the support and protection of their Communities.

### **REMEMBER:**

*Rape and child sexual abuse is never the fault of the victim. It is the abuser who is responsible. It is their shame. It becomes our shame if we ignore the situation and do not report these crimes on our women and children.*



## 13. SOME QUOTES

**'We try to counsel and offer options to the women but our workload is so much that we can't always do follow-up.'**

**'I layed low till my eye healed.'**

**'You see two mates fighting and everyone's over there trying to pull 'em apart, but if you see a fella and his missus arguing, everyone stands back.'**

**'We just don't have enough workers to cope with the problem, or skilled ones. We need our workers to be trained but we just don't have the money.'**

**'This 2 km drinking law is forcing the men out to the camps where they drink their grog and beat up or rape the women.'**

**'We men need to talk about it too you know. Why isn't there anything for us? A men's refuge?'**

**'You can buy grog in the local supermarket here.'**

**'What can I do? I feel so frustrated because she's my best friend and he's related to me; it makes it so hard when you work in the Community.'**



**'Most of the women out here just don't realize that what their men are doing is wrong.'**

**'The women that come here are from different tribes and speak different languages. We don't have anyone to interpret.'**

**'We're the only shelter in the area. Women have to come miles to get away from being bashed. They usually go back though. They get scared and miss their families.'**

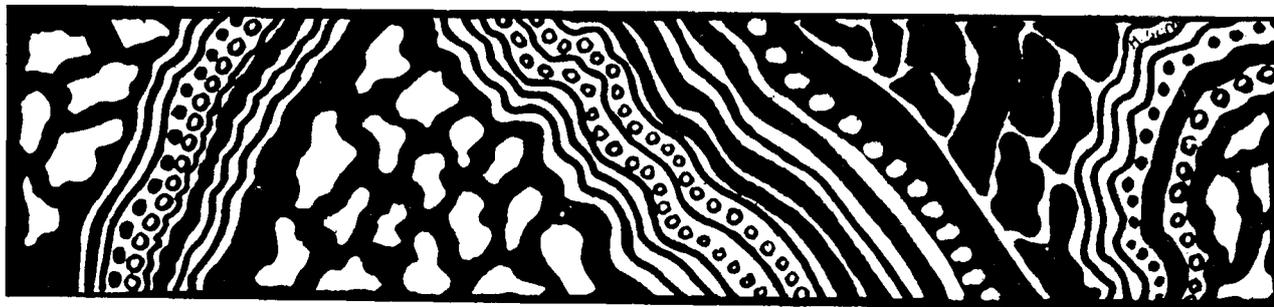
**'A group of women in the Northern Territory set fire to a carload of grog coming into the camp.'**

**'I went to the legal service, and they tell me they can't represent one black fella against another. They wanted to refer me to this white bloke.  
I said, "Forget it".'**

**I hated him, I just hated him when he used to bash mum.'**

**'No, I just keep away 'till it's over. I usually hang out with me mates. Sometimes they'll still be fightin' when I get home later in the morning.'**

**'We're so isolated out here, information on family violence doesn't always reach us.'**



## 14. FOR OUR PROTECTION

### *A Look at the Law*

#### ARE WE USING THE SYSTEM?

Most of the time we do not use the legal system for protection. Aboriginal and Islander women say, 'We do not want our men to go to jail.' But they do want the violence to stop! In fact, in one Aboriginal women's refuge in NSW only two residents have taken court action against their spouses since it was first set up ten years ago.

There are a number of reasons why we do not use the system: basically because it is a white man's system and doesn't take into account the cultural differences of Black Australia. Not only that, but we are faced with the racist attitudes of those who are supposed to protect us and we live constantly with the threat of more of our people dying in custody.

It is only in extreme circumstances where a woman or her children are seriously injured or threatened that the police would be called and the man served with an order or locked up.

While we do not advocate use of the legal system, for all the obvious reasons, are our Communities willing to stand by our women and protect them? If not, then what are the alternatives?

#### POLICE ATTITUDES

Too many of us have had bad experiences with police. While there are a few sympathetic to our cause, there are many who are racist and would enjoy putting a black fella away or, worse, inflicting serious injuries.

Many of our women report that they have been raped and beaten by police while in custody. On reporting her own rape, one woman was asked, 'Did you enjoy it?' by an officer. If police are called to the scene of an assault, they often appear uncaring and unsympathetic. Some have the attitude that family violence is our custom - 'It's their way' - therefore tend not to become too involved in the situation. Many become frustrated at a woman's decision not to press charges

and this can contribute to them not taking the situation seriously.

What they don't understand is that in fear of her safety and the safety of her children, many women do need police protection. But in fear of our men being mistreated and discriminated against while in custody, they cannot lay charges.

Many areas report that police have trouble distinguishing between family fights and grog fights, causing more of our men to be unnecessarily mistreated and sometimes jailed.

Very few police employed in positions of liaison officers, etc., are aware of our history or the social issues we face today. In some States, as little as six hours is spent on Aboriginal studies in an 18 month course at the Academy.

While we have a small number of our People working as police aides, they are still accountable to the system, have limited power and often lose the trust of their family, friends and Community.

Perhaps we could look to our legal services to initiate education programs for police or take an active role in screening those people who take on positions within police liaison units, and others who have a say in our legal lives.



*Reproduced courtesy of Green Left Newspaper*

## BLACK DEATHS IN CUSTODY

Is it any wonder that we do not want to see our people go to jail when the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody tells us that between January 1980 and May 1989, 88 of our men and 11 of our women died while in police, prison or other custody? The table below indicates how many deaths have occurred in each State.

### NATIONAL FIGURES (AT JUNE 1991)

NSW	15
Victoria	3
Queensland	27
Western Australia	32
South Australia	12
Tasmania	1
Northern Territory	9
TOTAL	99

### WHERE DID THEY DIE?

63 per cent	In police custody
33 per cent	In prison
13 per cent	In juvenile detention

### OTHER FACTS

- It is reported that we comprise 14.3 per cent of the prison population Australia-wide.
- In NSW 15 per cent of our kids are wards of the State.
- In Western Australia our kids are being jailed or institutionalized or imprisoned at a rate 33 times higher than non-Aboriginal kids.
- In Queensland 29 per cent of males in custody are Aboriginal.
- Aboriginal women make up 50 per cent of the total females in custody in Queensland.
- In NSW of 25 police liaison officers, only one is a woman. This fact would prevent many women from reporting an assault because in certain instances, for example rape, they would feel more comfortable talking to a woman officer.



## INTERVENTION, RESTRAINING AND PROTECTION ORDERS

Not very many of us realize that family violence is a crime under the law, and there are laws that can protect us from it. If you or your family are being threatened by someone you have lived with or are living with, you can apply for an Intervention, Restraining or Protection Order, depending on what State you live in.

An order is a warning to the offender and prevents them from abusing, harrasing or threatening you or your property. It can last up to 12 months. You, a child, even the police, a solicitor, a welfare worker, friend or relative can apply (on your behalf) at a Magistrate's Court or police station.

If you want to speak to someone about an Order, contact an Aboriginal and Islander Legal Service in your State. Where there are none in your area, refer to other legal aid listings at the back of this book. For now, here are some details that might help you in your decision to apply for an Order.

**Remember:** an Order does not carry a criminal offence. It becomes one only if the Order is broken.

## WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO AN ORDER?

For many women, going to the police, or even thinking about an Order, is frightening. Sometimes, if she does want to press charges against the abuser, the Aboriginal and Islander legal service may refer her to a non-Aboriginal lawyer because of their policy of not representing one black fella against another. This can make women feel very much alone and afraid.

If by chance her case does get to court, she would be very lucky to find a sympathetic judge, one who was not racist or prejudiced against women.

So what are our women doing in place of going to the police and applying for an Order?

### MANY ARE:

- Putting up with the abuse.
- Removing themselves from the situation.
- Moving in with family or friends.
- Taking refuge at a shelter.
- Talking to other women about the problem.
- In remote areas, some women have been known to roam from camp to camp in an attempt to get away from the violence.
- Family involvement, which has included getting brothers, fathers, uncles or cousins to speak to the offender, warn the offender, or injure the offender in revenge.

## WHAT CAN WOMEN DO IN THE FUTURE?

Not many of the women spoken to were happy with the decisions they made when confronted by family violence, but felt they had no other choice. 'The last thing I wanted to do was come here [refuge], but I had no other choice.'

So what are some of the choices women have in future? Many have taken the situation into their own hands, for example, in the Ttop End, a group of women who were fed up with the amount of alcohol being brought into the camps by their men and the high incidence of wife bashing, set alight a car load of grog! Further to this a number of women's groups have initiated speak-outs, meetings and conferences to discuss the problem.

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

### Counselling

Counselling is available at health or medical centres, AICCAs, some Aboriginal and Islander legal services, some Community welfare centres, refuges and domestic violence resource and information centres. (Refer to Resource listings at the back of this handbook.)

### Mediation

Some women may want a third party to talk to the offender on their behalf. This is helpful especially if they are afraid to approach him after an incident, and prevents further incidence of assault.

A mediator can be a friend both parties trust. They could also be a refuge worker, the police, counsellor, doctor, health or Community worker, lawyer or legal aid officer, family aid worker or AICCA worker.

### Criminal charges

Although we do not advocate this, criminal charges remain some of our women's only choice. (For further information, contact your local Aboriginal and Islander legal service or legal aid office.)

## WHAT DO I DO IF I RECEIVE AN ORDER?

If you receive an Order and are not sure what to do about it, you can contact a worker at the Aboriginal or Islander legal service in your State, and they will be able to advise you. Where there is none in your area, contact the nearest legal aid office. (Listings are in the back of this book.)

**Remember:** If you receive an Order, it does not mean that you are going to jail, nor does it carry a criminal offence. It only becomes a criminal offence if the Order is broken.

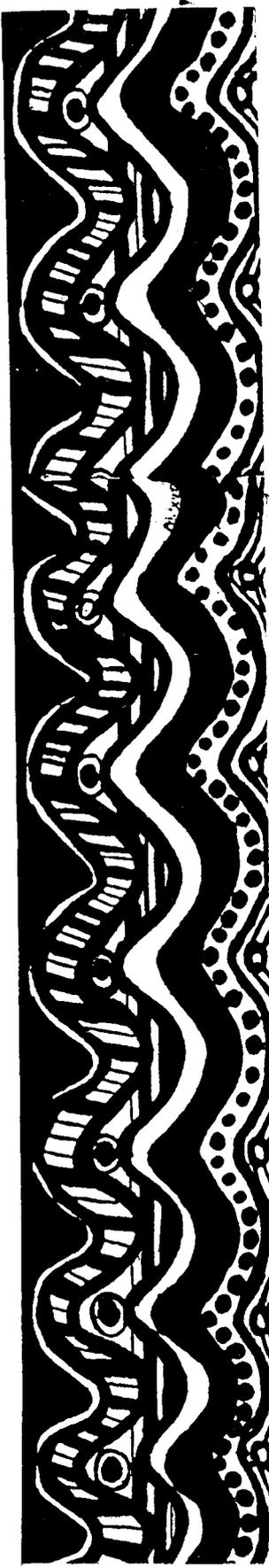
# SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LAWS

## What is a Restraining Order?

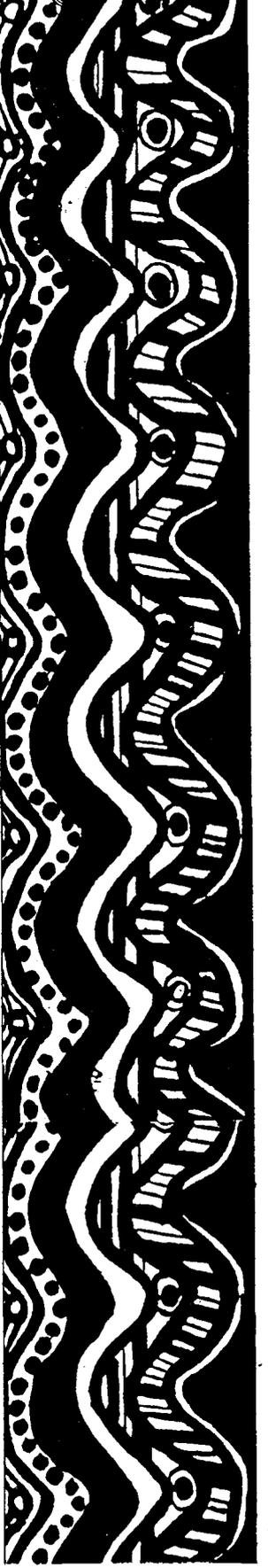
It is an Order from a court that forbids a person from threatening, abusing or bashing you.

## What steps do you have to go through to get a Restraining Order?

1. *Complaint*  
The police or your solicitor will lay a complaint against the offender.
2. *First court date*  
This is usually the date after you go to the police. The Magistrate will read the complaint and decide whether to make the order an interim or temporary order.
3. *How does the offender know?*  
The police hand the Restraining Order to the offender personally.
4. *Second court date*  
You do not need to go to this but you should go to the first.  
  
This is when the other person has to go to court a month later to say whether they agree or disagree with the Order.  
  
If the person agrees it will go through. If they do not, then there will be another court date for both you and the offender.
5. *Third court date*  
You and the offender will need to tell your sides of the story. It will be helpful for you if you have witnesses to back up your side of the story.  
  
The police can help you get ready for the court hearing.  
  
If the offender does not turn up at the second court date then the Order will go through anyway.



# WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LAWS



## **What is a Restraining Order?**

It is an Order issued by a Magistrate against a person to stop being violent or threatening to be violent against you.

## **Who can apply for one?**

Anyone can if they feel someone is threatening or abusing them.

## **Do you need a lawyer to apply for such an order?**

No, but you may have one if you wish.

## **Where do you apply for a Restraining Order?**

At your local court or the Central Law Court.

Tell the Clerk you want to apply for a Restraining Order.

## **Do you have to pay for a Restraining Order?**

It is \$16 for the filing fee, but if you do not have the money, tell the Clerk and you will be able to get the Order without paying.

## **How long does it take for the hearing?**

In the Perth Court – 9.30 the next day usually. In your local court – up to 3 weeks. The Clerk of Courts will tell you when and where to go for the hearing.

# NORTHERN TERRITORY LAWS

In 1989 new legislation was passed in the Northern Territory that covered violence between spouses, information is as follows.

#### **Who does the legislation cover?**

- Spouses – whether married or defacto.
- Spouses under Aboriginal law.
- Former spouses not now living together

#### **Who can apply for an Order?**

You can apply if you are being threatened, hurt or harrassed by your partner, in this case you will be required to attend court. A police officer may apply on your behalf; in this case they will discuss with you wheher you need to attend court.

#### **What does the Order do?**

The Order can stop your partner from harrassing you and your children at school, at work or in the home. In most cases terms of the Order can be left up to you.

#### **How do you apply?**

You can get an application form at the Magistrate's Court Registry. Court staff will help you fill this out if you have any difficulties.

#### **What if you need immediate after hours service?**

You can contact the local police who have the power to make an arrest. They can then contact the local magistrate to get an order on your behalf.

#### **What if you live in remote areas?**

If you are in immediate danger you can apply for an Order by telephone to your local police station

#### **How long does the Order last?**

If you apply for an Order verbally (over the phone as well) it will last up until the court hearing or until such time as the court determines.

#### **What happens if the Order is broken?**

The offender can face up to 6 months jail or pay a \$2,000 fine, or both.

#### **What do you do if you or your partner want the Order stopped or changed?**

An application must be made, either by the person who made the initial application or by the offender

# QUEENSLAND LAWS

*Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989 (Qld)*

## **Who does the Act cover?**

- Marriage partners.
- Ex partners.
- De facto couples, partners or couples, whether living together or separately.

A Protection Order is an Order that seeks to prevent further violence or abuse.

## **Who can apply for a Protection Order?**

- The victim.
- A police officer.
- A social worker, relative, solicitor (with the victim's permission).
- A court can also decide if it is sentencing an offender on criminal charges from a domestic violence situation.

## **How can you make an application?**

At a Magistrate's Court you must fill in an application form. A list of the addresses of the Magistrate's Courts can be found in the Queensland Government section of the White Pages of the telephone directory.

## **Where is the Protection Order made?**

A Magistrate's Court is the court that decides if a Protection Order should be made.

## **What kind of protection does a Protection Order offer?**

- Not to assault the victim.
- Not to come within a certain distance of the home of the victim.
- Not to come to your workplace.
- Not get another person to harass you.
- Not to damage your property.
- Not to behave indecently.
- To give up any firearm or other weapon.

## **How long does a Protection Order last?**

- Up to 12 months.

## **What can you do if you want urgent protection from a violent partner?**

Apply for an Interim Protection Order (similar to other States). You do not require a solicitor at court, although you may have one if you wish.

## **What happens if the offender breaks the Protection Order?**

They can face a penalty of:

- up to 40 penalty units
- twelve months jail
- both of the above.



# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY LAWS



## *Domestic Violence Ordinance 1986 (ACT)*

You can apply for a Protection Order from a Magistrate's Court at the Children's Court building in Childers Street, Canberra City.

### **What does the Protection Order do?**

It stops your partner from hurting you or threatening to do so. It can stop your partner from harassing you and the children at school or work or home.

### **Who can ask for an Order?**

You can ask for one if you are living with someone or if you used to live with someone. It also applies to a child of either partner. You do not have to be legally married.

### **What if you need an Order urgently?**

You can get an Interim Order, which is a temporary Order, if you feel that it is necessary for you and your children's safety.

### **How long does a Protection Order last?**

Up to 12 months. If you need one for longer it is possible to get it.

### **What happens if your partner breaks the Order?**

It is a crime to break a Protection Order. The offender can be arrested. If convicted he or she could be imprisoned for up to 6 months or fined \$2000.

You and your partner can apply to the court at any time to have the Interim Order stopped or changed. If your partner tries to do this you will be able to tell the court if you think this should happen.

*Remember: a Protection Order is not a criminal conviction until it is broken and the court sees fit to convict the offender.*



# NEW SOUTH WALES LAWS

You can apply for an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order if you are afraid that your partner will bash or harrass you.

## **Who can apply for an Order?**

- The police.
- You can, by going to a Magistrate's Court.
- The court may make one itself.

## **What does the Order do?**

The order is a warning to the offender. It tells him to comply with the following things:

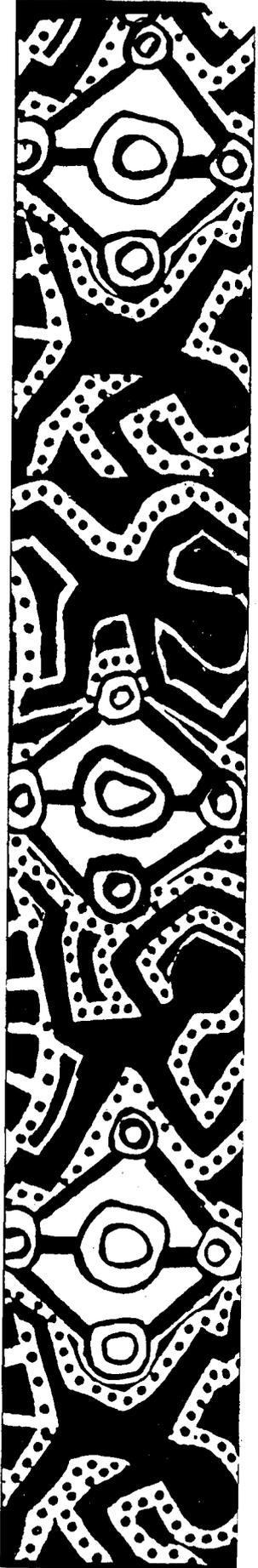
- not to bash, threaten or harass you
- to keep away from the family home or your place of work.

## **What if you are afraid that the person will hurt you before the court date?**

You can ask the court to make a Temporary Order; it will protect you until the main court hearing.

## **What if the Order is broken?**

The offender can be arrested by the police if the Order is broken.



# VICTORIAN LAWS

In Victoria under the *Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987* (Victoria), you are being bashed or threatened you apply for an Intervention Order.

## **What is an Intervention Order?**

It is an order to stop a person who is threatening you or your property. *The violence can be in the form of physical, mental or sexual abuse.*

## **Who is covered by an Intervention Order?**

Anyone who shares or used to share a household with the offender, that is, if you are married, de facto, a former partner, children. You do not have to be living with the person at the time of abuse to apply for an Order.

## **Who can apply for an Intervention Order?**

You can, if you are being threatened, or the following can apply on your behalf:

- the police
- a friend
- a welfare worker.

## **How do you apply for an Intervention Order?**

You can apply for Intervention Order with the Clerk of Courts at the Magistrate's Court. The police will issue a summons to the offender; it will take up to 2 weeks to be heard in court. If you fear that you will be threatened before the court hearing, you can get a Temporary Intervention Order.

## **What is a Temporary (Interim) Intervention Order?**

This Order can be applied for at the Magistrate's Court and granted on the same day without the offender being there.

## **How long can an Intervention Order last?**

Up to 12 months. If you want it to last longer, you will need to apply again at the Magistrate's Court.

## **What can happen with an Order?**

- You can have the offender removed from the house.
- It can be illegal to have the offender come near the house.
- It can prevent the offender from harrasing or getting someone else to harrass you.

## **What happens if an offender breaks an Order?**

It is a criminal offence to break an Intervention Order. The offender can be fined or jailed for breaking such an order. If you want more information or just want to talk to someone about these laws, you can contact you nearest Aboriginal Legal Service or Police Liaison Officer. The phone numbers are in the back of this handbook.

# TASMANIAN LAWS

Under the *Justices Act 1985* (Tas.)

## **Restraint Order**

This places certain conditions on an individual's behaviour and movement so as to protect the applicant from further violence or harassment.

## **How do you get a Restraining Order?**

- At a Magistrate's Court of Petty Sessions.
- Through the police.
- Through a private solicitor (there will be a charge).
- Through legal aid, if you are eligible, at no cost.

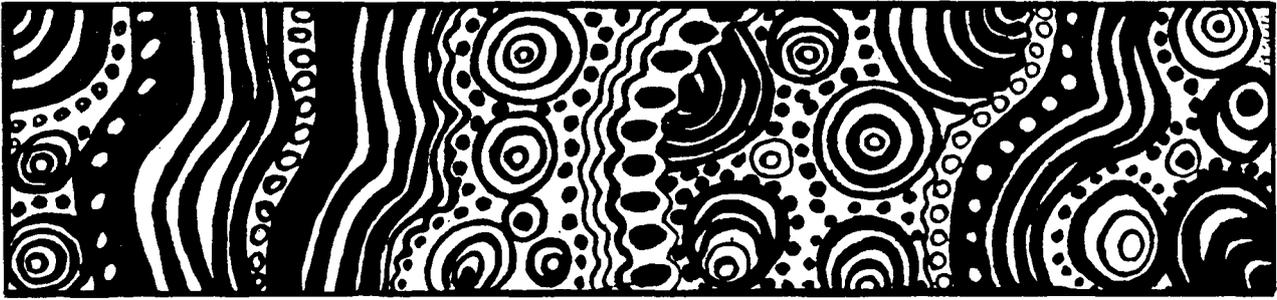
## **How long does a Restraining Order last?**

For as long as the court thinks it is necessary. You should check this.

**Important:** *You need to keep a copy of the Restraining Order with you at all times so you can show it to the police if necessary.*

## **What is an Interim Restraining Order?**

It provides protection while the court action for a Restraining Order is going on.



## 15. WORKSHOP IDEA

Most of the time in family violence situations we tend to take sides: men with men, women with women, and families with their sons or daughters. The following exercise is designed to help you as workers and individuals, look at violence from the perspective of both the victim and the abuser, to help you form unbiased opinions and begin to understand that we all have the potential to become abusers.

### HERE IS AN EXERCISE YOU MAY LIKE TO DO EITHER ON YOUR OWN OR IN A GROUP

1. *Think of a time when you were abused.*

Everyone has experienced some form of abuse in their lives; it could be a minor incident or one that has dramatically affected your life.

Head up a page like this:

WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?—List all your feelings at the time of the abuse.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT DID YOU DO?—List here how you responded to being abused.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. *Now think of a time when you were the abuser.*

WHAT WERE YOU FEELING?—List all your feelings as you carried out the abuse.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHAT DID YOU DO?—List your actions at the time of the abuse.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Did you find the second exercise harder than the first?

You may like to conduct a workshop around this exercise in your place of work.



# 16. SECRETARIAT OF THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER CHILD CARE (SNAICC) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVEY

## Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been designed to gather statistics and information on family violence in Aboriginal and Islander Communities throughout Australia. You may be able to use it to gauge your Community's experience of family violence or to help you formulate your own questionnaire.

1. HOW OLD ARE YOU?

.....

2. SOURCE OF INCOME?

- Pension                       Sickness Benefit  
 Unemployment Benefit     Working

3. WHAT AREA DO YOU LIVE IN? .....

4. WHAT IS YOUR MARITAL STATUS ?

- Married       Single  
 Defacto       Divorced  
 Separated

5. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE? HAVE YOU BEEN SUBJECTED TO ANY FORM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ?

- Sexual (rape, incest, assault)  
 Physical (punching, kicking, bruising, broken bones)  
 Verbal (threats, name-calling, put-downs such as 'idiot', 'stupid', etc.)  
 Psychological (emotional, mental stress, mind games, making you feel scared, guilty, degraded)  
 Financial (keeping the money, your wage and his, never giving you enough to pay the bills, complaining when they aren't paid)  
 Social (comparing you – 'why aren't you like that?', putting you down in public, stopping you from seeing your family and friends)

6. WHO WAS THE PERPETRATOR?

- Father                       Spouse                       Grandfather  
 Brother                       Cousin                       Uncle  
 Close family friend     Other (Who?) .....

7. HOW LONG AGO ?

- Hours     Days     Weeks  
 Months     Years

8. DOES IT HAPPEN NOW?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes             | <input type="checkbox"/> No                                  |
| <i>If yes, how often?</i>                | <i>If no, why?</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily           | <input type="checkbox"/> He's changed                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly          | <input type="checkbox"/> He left                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly         | <input type="checkbox"/> You left                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardly ever     | <input type="checkbox"/> Either he or you sought counselling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)                     |
- .....

9. DID YOU TELL ANYONE?

- Professional (counsellor, doctor, health worker, etc.)  
 Friend     Relative     Clergy  
 No one     Other (specify who)
- .....

10. WHY DO YOU THINK IT HAPPENED?

(Tick as many as you wish)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> He was jealous                | <input type="checkbox"/> He was drunk   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was unfaithful              | <input type="checkbox"/> I provoked it  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> He had a bad day at work      | <input type="checkbox"/> He was unemployed                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We had financial worries      | <input type="checkbox"/> I said the wrong thing                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I nagged him                  | <input type="checkbox"/> His dinner wasn't ready                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The kids upset him            | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't pay the bill on time | <input type="checkbox"/> He's under a lot of pressure                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> He's usually got a bad temper | <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't dress the right way or look the way he wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)               |   |
- .....

11. WHAT EFFECT HAS THIS HAD ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERPETRATOR?

DID YOU LEAVE THE SITUATION?

- Yes     No

12. IF YES, WHAT HELP DID YOU SEEK?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Centre             | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Health Service    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional (counsellor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Legal Service     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Support            | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Refuge or Shelter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Child Care Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refuge (non-Aboriginal)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Aid                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)           |   |

13. WERE YOU AWARE OF THE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO YOU?

- Yes     No

14. HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THEM?

.....  
.....

15. DID YOU FIND THEM HELPFUL?

- Yes     No

HOW?

.....  
.....

16. IF YOU STAYED IN THE SITUATION, WHY?

- Kids                       Finance  
 Nowhere to go         Love  
 Scared                     Not sure of the services available to me  
 My family talked me into staying  
 Other (specify) .....

17. HAVE YOU EVER LEFT BEFORE?

- Yes     No

18. WHY DID YOU GO BACK?

.....  
.....

19. DO YOU THINK THERE IS ENOUGH HELP AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN WHO DECIDE TO STAY?

- Yes     No

20. WHAT SORT OF HELP DID/DO YOU NEED?

- Counselling         Support Groups  
 Programs  
 Other (specify)  
.....

21. HOW DID YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS REACT?

- Supportive/sympathetic         They didn't know about it  
 Didn't believe you                 Convinced you to leave  
 Ashamed                               Helped you to leave  
 Angry                                     Wanted to keep it in the family  
 Convinced you to stick it out     Said 'It's your business, therefore your problem'  
 Act as if it didn't happen  
 Other (specify)  
.....

22. DO YOU HAVE KIDS?

- Yes     No

23. IF YES, HOW MANY? .....

How old are they? .....

24. HOW WERE THEY AFFECTED BY THE VIOLENCE?

(Tick as many as you wish)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scared                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Blamed you                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Problems at school          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Became aggressive            | <input type="checkbox"/> Lost sleep                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Became depressed             | <input type="checkbox"/> Nightmares                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hateful towards you          | <input type="checkbox"/> Left home/ran away          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Begged you to leave          | <input type="checkbox"/> Begged you to stay          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immune/appeared to handle it | <input type="checkbox"/> Hateful towards perpetrator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)              |  |

.....

25. WERE THEY VICTIMS AT ANY TIME?

- Yes     No

26. WHAT TYPE OF ABUSE?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child sexual abuse (incest) | <input type="checkbox"/> Child abuse (other physical) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)             |   |

.....

27. HOW DID YOU REACT?

- Left
- Called the police
- Contacted the Aboriginal Health Service
- Sought counselling from non-Aboriginal service
- Too scared to do anything
- Ignored the situation
- Fought the perpetrator
- Contacted an Aboriginal Child Care Agency or similar service
- Tried to seek help for the whole family
- Wanted to seek help but did not know where to start
- Nothing, because he threatened your/your kids' well-being
- Sent the kids away
- Sent the kids away but stayed yourself

28. ARE YOU AWARE OF WHICH SERVICES ARE IN YOUR AREA TO HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN CRISIS SITUATIONS?

- Yes     No

# 17. RESOURCES

This section contains a list of Aboriginal, Islander and other organisations that will be able to help and advise you and your family.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### AICCAs

Sydney Aboriginal Children's Service  
(02) 699 9835

Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Family and Community Services Centre  
(066) 52 8850

Wiradjuri Aboriginal Children's Service, Wagga Wagga  
(069) 21 2108

Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service, Newcastle  
(049) 61 2423, 69 2911

Tharawal Aboriginal Co-op, Campbelltown  
(046) 28 4837, 26 6892

Murawina, Mt Druitt  
(02) 625 2371

Coolingara, Nowra  
(044) 23 0177

Murawina, Redfern  
(02) 699 9519

Coolingara, Nowra  
(044) 23 0177

Urimbirra Aboriginal Co-op  
(02) 823 7541

### WOMEN'S REFUGES

NSW Women's Refuge Referral and Resource Centre  
Susan Gibbs, Aboriginal Resource Worker  
NSW Aboriginal Women's Refuge Support Group  
(02) 564 2234, 265 9081 (AH)

### ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S REFUGES

Ngala Women's Refuge, Moree  
(067) 52 3727

Yinganeh Aboriginal Women's Refuge, South Lismore  
(066) 21 5187

Warlga Ngurra, Newcastle  
(049) 43 6357

## REFUGES WITH ABORIGINAL WORKERS

### Sydney

Delores Single Women's Refuge, Bondi Junction  
(02) 389 4431

Community Cottage (Blacktown),  
(Aboriginal Child Care Worker only), Doonside  
(02) 621 8253

Elsie Women's Refuge, Glebe  
(02) 660 1371

Devena Women's Shelter, Lane Cove  
(02) 428 4929

Amberly's Single Women's Refuge, Liverpool  
(02) 602 9160

MARCIA, Macquarie Fields  
(046) 28 3034

Lucy's Out West, Mt Druitt  
(02) 657 1657

Marrickville Women's Refuge, Newtown  
(02) 558 1702

Essie Women's Refuge, Rooty Hill  
(02) 625 7503

### Country

Albury Women's Refuge  
(060) 21 8372

Armidale Women's Shelter  
(067) 72 5352

Corner House Women's Refuge, Bathurst  
(063) 31 6665

Warrina Women's Refuge, Coffs Harbour  
(066) 52 4000

Cumbayah House, Forbes  
(068) 52 4146

Grafton Women's Refuge  
(066) 42 4955

Kulkuna Cottage, Griffith  
(069) 62 5369

Inverell Women's Refuge  
(067) 22 4161

Lottie's Place, Wollongong Women's Refuge, Keiraville  
(042) 29 8523

Mountain Women's Refuge, Katoomba  
(047) 82 3674

Lismore Women's Refuge  
(066) 21 2685

Carrie's Place Co-op Ltd, Maitland  
(049) 33 1960

Contrary Mary Co. Ltd, Moruya  
(044) 74 2747

Nydia's Place, Muswellbrook  
(065) 43 4650

Jenny's Place, Newcastle  
(049) 69 4045

Rosa Shoalhaven Women's Refuge, Nowra  
(044) 21 8276

Hastings Women's Refuge, Port Macquarie  
(065) 83 2155

Louisa Women's Refuge, Queanbeyan  
(062) 97 6070

Tamworth Women's Refuge  
(067) 66 5591

Tanderra Women's Refuge, Toronto  
(049) 59 3619

Central Coast Women's Crisis Centre and Refuge Ltd,  
Toukley  
(043) 96 4263

Wagga Wagga Women's Refuge  
(069) 21 3870

## HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICE

### Sydney

#### Head Office

36 Turner Road, Redfern  
(02) 699 5823, 698 1639, 699 2493

Daruk AMS  
29 Mt Druitt Village, Mt Druitt  
(02) 832 1356

### Country

Illawarra AMS  
148 Church Street, Wollongong  
(042) 29 9495

Tharawal AMS  
187 Riverside Drive, Airds  
(046) 28 4837

Brewarrina AMS  
6 Young Street, Brewarrina  
(068) 39 2150

Nowra AMS  
51 Junction Street, Nowra  
(044) 21 5099

Walgett AMS  
37 Pitt Street, Walgett  
(068) 28 1798

Burke AMS  
61 Oxley Street, Burke  
(068) 72 3088

Durri AMS  
51 Smith Street, Kempsey  
(065) 62 4 919

Biripi AMS  
Panfleet Mission, Pacific Highway, South Taree  
(065) 52 2154

Awabakal AMS  
1224 Maitland Road, Islington  
(049) 61 1765, 69 2424

## DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

*There are Aboriginal workers called District Officers at the following.*

### Sydney

#### Gullama Aboriginal Service Centre

Alexandria – (02) 698 4122  
Campbelltown – (046) 25 5911  
Blacktown – (02) 622 3888  
Bondi Junction – (02) 387 4522  
Ingleburn (02) 829 2400  
Liverpool – (02) 602 8044  
St Marys – (02) 673 4777  
Strathfield – (02) 747 5099  
Sydney – (02) 281 7444

### Country

Albury – (060) 41 1755  
Armidale – (067) 73 7255  
Batemans Bay – (044) 72 4678  
Bourke – (068) 72 2188  
Broken Hill – (080) 88 0209  
Charleston – (049) 43 8811  
Coffs Harbour – (066) 51 1422  
Condobolin – (068) 95 2829  
Coonabarabran – (068) 42 2000  
Deniliquin – (058) 81 1711  
Dubbo – (068) 81 1222  
Glen Innes – (067) 32 3155  
Grafton – (066) 42 0597  
Griffith – (069) 62 0210  
Hamilton – (049) 62 1655  
Inverell – (067) 22 0922  
Kempsey – (065) 62 1386  
Leeton – (069) 53 3611  
Maitland – (049) 33 6488  
Moree – (067) 52 9711  
Narrabri – (067) 92 7258  
Nowra – (044) 22 1555

Orange – (063) 61 3299  
Parkes – (068) 62 1422  
Queanbeyan – (06) 299 1111  
Raymond Terrace – (049) 87 1022  
Tamworth – (067) 66 3735  
Taree – (065) 52 1577  
Tweed Heads – (075) 36 6688  
Ulladulla – (044) 55 5204  
Wagga Wagga – (049) 21 7225  
Walgett – (068) 28 1409

## ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS

NSW Department of Health  
Aboriginal Health Unit  
(02) 391 9000

*There are Aboriginal health workers at the following.*

### Sydney

Camperdown  
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital  
(02) 516 6617, 516 6618

Royal Alexandria Hospital (Children's)  
(02) 519 0466

Ingleburn – (046) 29 2100  
Liverpool – (02) 601 2333  
Mt Druitt – (02) 625 6000  
Parramatta – (02) 635 3099  
Redfern – (02) 698 2810, 698 2830

### Country

Albury – (060) 23 0307  
Armidale – (067) 73 4738  
Bourke – (068) 72 2422  
Brewarrina – (068) 39 7832  
Casino – (066) 62 1068  
Coffs Harbour – (066) 52 2000  
Collarenebri – (067) 56 2006  
Condobolin – (068) 95 2446  
Coonamble – (068) 22 1133  
Cowra – (063) 42 1754  
Dapto – (042) 61 4033  
Dareton – (050) 27 4308  
Deniliquin – (058) 81 2955  
Dubbo – (068) 85 8999  
Eden – (064) 96 1436  
Grafton – (066) 42 3933  
Griffith – (069) 62 3900  
Gunnedah – (067) 42 0361  
Inverell – (067) 22 3722  
Kempsey – (065) 62 6066  
Lake Cargelligo – (068) 98 1200  
Lightning Ridge – (068) 29 0609  
Lismore – (066) 21 7261  
Macksville – (065) 68 1366  
Moree – (067) 52 9275  
Moruya – (044) 74 1561  
Naranderra – (069) 59 1166

Narooma – (044) 76 2344  
Newcastle – (049) 26 0200  
Nowra – (044) 217622  
Orange – (063) 62 6422  
Queanbeyan – (06) 297 2266  
Raymond Terrace – (049) 87 3784  
Tamworth – (067) 68 3229, 66 1988  
Taree – (065) 52 2799  
Tenterfield – (067) 36 1166  
Tweed Heads – (075) 36 1133  
Toomelah – (067) 76 2135  
Walgett – (068) 28 1255  
Wee Waa – (067) 95 4033  
Warrawong – (042) 74 0281  
Wilcannia – (068) 45 2039  
Wickham – (080) 91 5832  
Woodenbong – (049) 69 1765  
West Wyalong – (069) 72 2034

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE

### Sydney

#### Head Office

Cnr Cleveland and Abercrombie Streets,  
Chippendale 2008  
(02) 699 9277

131 Botany Road, Waterloo 2017  
(02) 698 7477

St Marys and District Aboriginal Legal Assistance  
178–186 Queen Street, St Marys 2760  
(02) 623 3295

### Country

93 Faulkner Street, Armidale 2350  
(067) 72 9588

Leigh Street, Cowra 2794  
(063) 42 2053

Suites 3–4, 810 Hunter Street,  
Dangar, Newcastle 2309  
(049) 61 5800

1st floor, 133 Prince Street, Grafton 2460  
(066) 42 5298

Shop 2, 88a Keen Street, Lismore 2480  
(066) 21 2117

43–45 Belgrave Street, Kempsey 2440  
(065) 62 6546

5a/142 Monaro Street, Queanbeyan 2620  
(062) 97 9512

100 Balo Street, Moree 2400  
(067) 52 3244

Fox Street, Walgett 2832  
(068) 28 1364

155 Docker Street, Wagga Wagga 2650  
(069) 21 3539

**NSW Legal Aid**  
Advice Section (02) 219 5841

### **ABORIGINAL POLICE LIAISON OFFICERS**

*Can be found at the following police stations.*

**Sydney**  
Redfern  
(02) 690 4637

South-West Region  
(Macquarie Fields)  
(02) 618 2777

Malabar  
(02) 661 7888

#### **Country**

Batemans Bay – (044) 72 4505  
Boggabilla – (076) 76 2222  
Bourke – (068) 72 2555  
Brewarrina – (068) 39 2104  
Coffs Harbour – (066) 52 0299  
Dubbo – (068) 81 3222  
Griffith – (069) 62 1144  
Lismore – (066) 29 9699  
Macksville – (065) 64 7599  
Moree – (067) 52 9499  
Narrandera – (069) 29 2044  
Nowra – (044) 21 9699  
Tamworth – (067) 64 1888, 64 1861  
Taree – (065) 52 1044  
Walgett – (068) 28 1444  
Wellington – (068) 45 1922  
Wilcannia – (080) 91 5000  
Kempsey – (065) 62 6444

*There are Domestic Violence Legal Liaison Officers at your local police station*

### **ALCOHOL REHABILITATION**

**Sydney**  
Del Bryant Hostel  
21 Grantham Street, Burwood  
(02) 744 9872

**Country**  
Brewarrina  
C/- Bethcar Aboriginal Reserve, Kempsey  
(068) 39 2276

Benalong Haven  
South-West Rocks Road, Kinchela Creek  
(065) 65 4880

Mark Ella  
18 Hewlett Street, Granville  
(02) 637 3538

MASH  
2 Greenbah Road, Moree  
(067) 52 2248

### **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY**

*There are Aboriginal Liaison Officers at the following offices.*

**Head Office**  
Sydney – (02) 227 8889

Albury – (060) 23 0733  
Armidale – (067) 73 8388  
Bega – (064) 92 9375  
Blacktown – (02) 830 6451  
Campbelltown – (046) 29 9421  
Cardiff – (049) 54 1357  
Dubbo – (068) 85 8388  
Grafton – (066) 42 0333  
Griffith – (069) 62 0324  
Kempsey – (065) 62 0485  
Lismore – (066) 23 1633  
Liverpool – (02) 827 7383  
Maitland (049) 30 2354  
Maroubra – (02) 344 1339  
Marrickville – (02) 559 0350  
Moree – (067) 52 9346  
Mt Druitt – (02) 625 1441  
Nowra – (044) 29 1302  
Parkes – (068) 62 9306  
Redfern – (02) 930 5328  
St Marys – (02) 673 9333  
Tamworth – (067) 63 1336  
Taree – (065) 52 0733  
Wagga Wagga – (069) 23 1372  
Walgett – (068) 28 1921  
Wollongong – (042) 26 0358  
Wyong – (043) 52 3384

### **COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

Domestic Violence Advocacy Service  
(02) 637 3741

Domestic Violence Service For Offenders  
(02) 569 4184

### **ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS**

Aboriginal Housing Company  
PO Box 83, Chippendale, NSW 2008  
(02) 319 4779

Eastern Zone Aboriginal Housing and Community  
Association  
PO Box 11, Matraville, NSW 2036

### **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

#### **HEALTH SERVICE**

Winnunga Nimmipyah Health Service  
Room G34, Griffin Centre  
Bunda Street, Canberra City, ACT 2601  
(06) 249 7555

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE

7D BM1 Building, City Walk,  
Canberra, ACT 2600  
(06) 257 6011

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal Liaison Officers at central office.*

Contact (06) 267 0333

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Beryl Women's Refuge  
(062) 47 5689

Caroline Chisholm  
(062) 86 2173

Cura Casa  
(062) 81 1583

Doris Women's Refuge  
(062) 41 7028

Lousia Women's Refuge  
(062) 97 6070

Medea  
(062) 95 3323

Toora  
(062) 47 2438

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICE

Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Crisis Line  
(062) 48 7800

GROW  
(062) 95 7791

Incest Centre  
(062) 49 6070

Rape Crisis Centre  
(062) 47 2525

Life Line, Crisis Line  
(062) 57 1111

## LEGAL ADVOCACY AND COUNSELLING

ACT Magistrate's Court  
Senior Deputy Clerk  
(062) 67 2783

Legal Aid Service  
(062) 43 3411

## POLICE SERVICES

Aboriginal Liaison Officer

ACT Police Complex  
(062) 49 7444

Domestic Violence Liaison Officer  
(062) 45 7314

## ACT BOARD OF HEALTH

*(formerly Department of Community Services)*  
(062) 245 4111

## TASMANIA

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICE

*There is an Aboriginal Health Worker available who will  
organise appointments with doctors, etc.*

Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Inc  
(003) 34 4140

### AICCA

Tasmanian Aboriginal Child Care  
Launceston  
(003) 31 6671

### ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE

Tasmania Aboriginal Centre (TAC)  
Warwick House  
249 Elizabeth Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7000  
(002) 34 8311, 34 3955, 34 1405

#### Branch offices

163 St John Street, Launceston, Tasmania 7250  
(003) 31 6966

Suite 4, Brownel Place  
11 Wilson Street, Burnie, Tasmania 7320  
(004) 31 3289

### LEGAL AID SERVICES

Launceston – (003) 31 7008

Burnie – (004) 31 5622

Hobart – (002) 34 6544

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There is an Aboriginal Liaison Officer at this office.*

Hobart Office  
(002) 74 0842

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Hobart Women's Shelter  
(002) 34 7488, 34 6323

Launceston Women's Shelter

(003) 31 6675

North-West Shelter  
(004) 24 7375

Ulverstone Women's Shelter  
(004) 25 1382

Annie Kenny Young Women's Shelter  
(002) 34 6359

## COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**Head Office**  
(003) 32 2101

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICE

**Crisis Intervention Unit**  
Hobart – (002) 30 2529  
Launceston – (003) 32 2379, 32 3101  
Burnie – (004) 31 7766

**Life Line**  
Hobart – (002) 24 0224  
Burnie – (004) 30 2246  
Devonport – (004) 31 7766

**Life Link**  
Launceston – (003) 31 9157

**Sexual Assault Support Service**  
(002) 31 1811

**Family and Personal Counselling**  
(002) 23 6041

**Women's Information Service**  
(Aboriginal Worker)  
(002) 34 2166

**Service for Offenders**  
MOVE  
(002) 24 0101  
SHE (for women)  
(002) 23 7775

## POLICE SERVICE

General Assistance  
(002) 47 7100

## REMOTE AREAS SERVICE

**Crisis Intervention Unit (by appointment)**  
Hobart – (002) 30 2529  
Launceston – (003) 32 2379, 32 3101  
Burnie – (004) 30 2246, 30 5211

**Women's Information Service**  
(008) 001 377 (toll free)

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Inc.  
c/- Post Office, Flinders Island, Tasmania 7255

## VICTORIA

### AICCAs

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
4 Brunswick Place, Fitzroy 3065  
(03) 419 7899

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Victorian Aboriginal Health and Dental Service  
186 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy 3065  
(03) 419 3000

Gippsland and East Gippsland Medical Service  
Dalmahoy Street, Bairnsdale 3875  
(051) 52 5089

Rumbalara Medical Service  
Mooroopna 3629  
(058) 25 2333

Murray Valley Medical Service  
14A Perrin Street, Robinvale 3549  
(050) 26 3353

Central Gippsland Medical Service  
9 Buckley Street, Morwell 3840  
(051) 34 1323

Koori Health Unit  
8th Floor, Health Department Victoria  
555 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000  
(03) 616 8045

### Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers

*There are Aboriginal workers at the following hospitals.*

#### City

St Vincent's Hospital  
Victoria Parade, Fitzroy 3065  
(03) 418 2211

Royal Children's Hospital  
Flemington Road, Parkville 3052  
(03) 345 5522

Mercy Hospital, Maternity Wing  
Clarendon Street, East Melbourne 3002  
(03) 411 0261

#### Country

Ballarat Base Hospital  
Sturt Street, Ballarat 3350  
(053) 32 1771

Eaglehawk and Long Gully Community Health Centre  
Seymour Street, Eaglehawk 3556  
(054) 46 8800

East Gippsland Hospital  
Day Street, Bairnsdale 3875  
(051) 52 3333

Echuca Hospital  
Francis Street, Echuca 3564  
(054) 82 2800

Geelong Hospital  
Ryrie Street, Geelong 3220  
(052) 26 7111

Goulburn Valley Base Hospital  
Graham Street, Shepparton 3630  
(058) 32 9444

Latrobe Valley Hospital  
Ollerton Avenue, Moe 3825  
(051) 27 3333

Mildura Base Hospital  
13th Street, Mildura 3500  
(050) 23 0111

Portland and District Hospital  
Bentninch Street, Portland 3305  
(055) 23 1033

Robinvale Hospital  
Latje Road, Robinvale 3549  
(050) 26 3703

Swan Hill District Hospital  
Splatt Street, Swan Hill 3585  
(050) 32 1111

Warragul West Gippsland Hospital  
Landsborough Road, Warragul 3820  
(056) 23 2221

Warrnambool and District Hospital  
Ryot Street, Warrnambool 3280  
(055) 64 9400

Wimmera Base Hospital  
Baillie Street, Horsham 3400  
(053) 82 0111

## VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL CO-OPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

*Visiting doctors or health workers may be found at the following.*

Ballarat Aboriginal Co-op  
105 Eyre Street, Ballarat 3350  
(053) 31 5344

Central Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op  
9 Buckley Street, Morwell 3840  
(051) 34 1323

Cummeragunja Aboriginal Community  
Barmah 3639  
(058) 69 3221

Dandenong and District Aboriginal Co-op  
64 Stud Rd, Dandenong 3175  
(03) 791 4475

Dja Dja Wrung Aboriginal Organization  
Bendigo 3550  
(054) 42 3875

Echuca Aboriginal Co-op  
225 Pakenham Street, Echuca 3564  
(054) 82 3075

Framlingham Aboriginal Trust  
Purnim 3279  
(055) 67 1003

Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op  
Bairnsdale 3875  
(051) 52 5089

Goolum-Goolum Aboriginal Co-op  
Horsham 3400  
(053) 82 5033

Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-op  
Warrnambool 3280  
(055) 62 9792

Healesville Aboriginal Co-op  
Healesville 3777  
(059) 62 5089

Lake Condah Aboriginal Co-op  
Heywood 3304  
(055) 27 1403

Lake Tyres Aboriginal Trust  
Lakes Entrance 3909  
(051) 56 5554

Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-op  
14A Perrin Street, Robinvale 3549  
(050) 26 3353

Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-op  
Mooroopna 3629  
(058) 25 2333

Sunraysia and District Aboriginal Co-op  
104B Eighth Street, Mildura 3500  
(050) 23 0895

Swan Hill and District Aboriginal Co-op  
87 Chapman Street, Swan Hill 3585  
(050) 32 2964

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op  
20A Forster Street, Norlane 3210  
(052) 77 0044

## ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

Galliamble  
10 Mitchell Street, St Kilda 3182  
(03) 534 1602

Jumburra Recovery Centre  
372 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875  
(051) 52 2040

Toolamba Valley Halfway  
Murchison Road, via Shepparton 3630  
(refer Valley Recovery Centre)  
(058) 21 6117

Valley Recovery Centre  
Channel Rd, Shepparton 3630  
(058) 21 6117

Winja Ulupna  
C/- 10 Mitchell Street, St Kilda 3182  
(03) 534 1602

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

### City

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service  
11 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy 3065  
(03) 419 3888

### Branch offices

Lionel Rose Hostel  
76 Buckley Street, Morwell 3840  
(051) 34 1763

Robinvale  
14A Perrin Street, Robinvale 3549  
(050) 26 3242

Rumbalara Co-op  
Shepparton 3630  
(058) 25 2333

## ABORIGINAL POLICE LIAISON OFFICERS

*These officers can be found at the following police stations.*

### City

Kenny Saunders (not an officer) – (03) 481 6718  
Northcote – (03) 481 1122

### Country

Bairnsdale – (051) 52 0500  
Ballarat – (053) 37 7215  
Morwell – (051) 34 2811  
Portland – (055) 23 1999  
Shepparton – (058) 21 5755  
Swan Hill – (050) 32 2022  
Warrnambool – (055) 62 1111

## POLICE SERVICES

General Assistance (03) 11444

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal workers at the following offices.*

### Head Office

Melbourne – (03) 204 4000  
Fitzroy – (03) 418 0111  
Preston – (03) 487 3111  
Mildura – (050) 23 9511  
Sale – (051) 49 6111  
Shepparton – (058) 20 1111  
Swan Hill – (050) 32 0111

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Women's Refuge Referrals  
(03) 329 8433, 329 8525

*These numbers also for Aboriginal Women's Refuges.*

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre  
(03) 387 9155

Domestic and Social Violence Service  
(03) 534 4977

### WIRE

(03) 654 6844, (008) 136 570 (toll free)

### Life Line

(03) 662 1000

## SERVICES FOR OFFENDERS

Domestic and Social Violence Service  
(03) 534 4977

Melton–St Albans Community Health Centre  
Men Working With Men  
(03) 743 2022

## COMMUNITY SERVICES VICTORIA (CSV)

### Victoria

(03) 412 7777

Victorian Aboriginal Community Services  
Association Inc.  
(03) 482 2833

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Aboriginal Housing Board  
79 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy 3065  
(03) 419 8305

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### AICCAs

West Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
(09) 328 4615

Yorganop Aboriginal Child Care Corporation  
(09) 227 9022

Minoo Malgoo Childcare  
Carnarvon 6701  
(099) 41 1661

Ngunga Women's Group  
Derby 6728  
(091) 91 2042

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service  
Cnr Dora and Ana Streets, Broome 6725  
(091) 92 1338

Carnarvon Medical Service  
14-18 Rushden Street, Carnarvon 6701  
(099) 41 2499

East Kimberley Medical Service  
Ironwood Drive, Kununurra 6743  
(091) 68 1049

Geraldton Regional Medical Service  
162 Riflerange Road, Rangeway 6530  
(099) 21 5588

Kalgoorlie Medical Service  
14 McDonald Street, Kalgoorlie 6430  
(090) 21 2151

Kimberley Medical Service  
*(Administers BRAMS, EKAMS,  
Yuri Yanga, and operates clinics at LaGrange  
and Beagle Bay)*  
(091) 68 1049

P O Box 867, Broome 6725  
(091) 68 1288 (East Region)  
(091) 92 1338 (West Region)

Ngaanyajarra Council  
*(Operate clinics at Wingellina, Blackstone,  
Warakurra, Jameson, Tjukarla.)*  
3 Wilkinson Street, Alice Springs  
Northern Territory 5750  
(089) 50 5423

Ngangganawili Medical Service  
PMB, Wiluna 6646  
(099) 81 7077

Nomads Medical Service (Strelley)  
C/-18 Kalamunda Road, South Guildford 6718  
(091) 76 4912 (Strelley), (09) 279 4308 (Perth)

Mawarnkarra Health Service  
Harding Street, Roebourne 6718  
(091) 82 1954

Perth Medical Service  
154 Edwards Street, East Perth 6000  
(09) 328 3888

Yuri Yunga Medical Service  
Duncan Highway, Halls Creek 6770  
(091) 68 6266

### ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

Aboriginal Legal Services of Western Australia  
Suite 44, Picadilly Suite  
Cnr Short and Nash Streets, East Perth 6000  
(09) 265 6666

#### Branch offices

109 Federal Street, Narrogin 6312  
(098) 81 2011

69 Lockyer Avenue, Albany 6330  
(098) 41 7833

60 Egan Street, Kalgoorlie 6430  
(090) 21 3816

14 Napier Street, Broome 6725  
(091) 92 1189

Commercial Bank Building  
Cnr Marina Terrace and Cathedral Avenue,  
Geraldton 6530  
(099) 21 4938

Derby School Hostels  
Ashley Street, Derby 6728  
(091) 91 1407

58 Robinson Street, Carnarvon 6701  
(099) 41 1534

Lot 1371, Cottontree Ave, Kununurra 6743  
(091) 68 1635

Dempster House  
Wedge Street, Port Hedland 6721  
(091) 73 1668

Ngoonjuwah Centre  
Halls Creek 6770  
(091) 68 6156

400 Fraser Street, Roebourne 6718  
(091) 82 1239

Lot 398, Euro Street, Laverton 6440  
(090) 31 1156

#### Legal Advice Bureaus

Perth – (09) 261 6222  
Fremantle – (09) 335 7108  
Midland – (09) 274 3327

Broome – (091) 92 1888  
Bunbury – (097) 21 2277  
South Hedland – (091) 72 3733

## ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

*Please contact your local Health/Medical service for this information.*

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal Liaison Officers at the following offices.*

**Head Office**  
(09) 261 3524

### Suburban and country

Broome – (091) 92 1104  
Bunbury – (097) 21 4022  
Geraldton – (099) 21 4044  
Kalgoorlie – (090) 21 2733  
Kununurra – (091) 68 1733  
Midland – (09) 274 9222  
Mirrabooka – (09) 344 0222  
Perth East – (09) 323 3233  
South Hedland – (091) 72 2133

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Women's Refuge Group  
(09) 325 7220

Women's Information and Referral Exchange  
(008) 199 174 (toll free)

*You can also contact the Aboriginal Services Advisor at the Department of Community Services*  
(09) 222 2555

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Crisis Care Unit  
(09) 321 4144, (008) 199 008 (toll free)

Sexual Assault and Referral Centre  
(09) 382 3323, (008) 199 888 (toll free)

## REMOTE AREAS SERVICES

Bunbury Unit  
(097) 21 1591

Crisis Care Unit  
(09) 321 4144, (008) 199 008 (toll free)

Domestic Violence Co-ordinating Committee  
(09) 222 2555

Geraldton Unit  
(099) 21 7305

Women's Information and Referral Exchange  
(008) 199 174 (toll free)

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Adviser on Aboriginal Services  
(09) 222 2555

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Nyoongah Community Inc.  
139 Sydney Road, Wanneroo 6065  
(09) 342 6355

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### AICCA

South Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
(08) 362 7876

### HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Ceduna/Kooniba Health  
3 Eyre Highway, Ceduna 5690  
(086) 25 2843

Community Recreation and Health Services Centre  
128 Wakefield Street, Adelaide 5000  
(08) 223 5217

Pika Wiya Health Service  
8 Church Street, Port Augusta 5700  
(086) 42 3144

South Australian Aboriginal Health Organization  
62 Beulah Road, Norwood 5067  
(08) 333 7300

South Australian Aboriginal Trachoma and Eye Health Committee  
Room 3, 1st Floor, 5 Leith Street, Adelaide 5000  
(08) 231 5131

Yalata/Maralinga HS  
*(Clinics at Yalata and Oak Valley)*  
PMB 31, Ceduna 5690  
(086) 25 6988

### ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

Allen Bell House  
221 Henley Beach Road, Torrensville 5031

Cyril Lindsay House  
17 Maude Street, Glandore 5037  
(08) 223 6099

Nungas Rehabilitation Farm  
26 Manurra Road, Murray Bridge 5253  
(085) 32 4940

### POLICE SERVICES

**Police contact for domestic violence**  
(080) 274 8534

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement  
329 King William Street, Adelaide 5000  
(08) 211 8824

### Branch offices

6 Gibson Street, Port Augusta 5700  
(086) 42 4366

### Ceduna

17 Murat Terrace, Ceduna 5690  
(086) 25 2200

### Lower Murray Nungas Club

26 Mannum Road, Murray Bridge 5253  
(085) 32 3296

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal Liaison Officers at the following offices.*

### Head Office

Elizabeth  
(08) 256 06111

### Branches

Murray Bridge – (085) 32 0611

Port Adelaide – (08) 47 9111

Port Augusta – (086) 42 0300

Port Pirie – (086) 32 0211

Port Lincoln – (086) 82 0400

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Bramwell House  
(08) 79 7614

Christies Beach Women's Shelter  
(08) 382 0066

Hope Haven  
(08) 223 5428

Irene Women's Shelter  
(08) 293 4488

Judith House  
(08) 266 0550

Lower Eyre Penninsula (Port Lincoln)  
(086) 82 2085

Nunga Minimi's Aboriginal Women's Shelter  
(08) 267 5189

North Adelaide  
(08) 267 4982

Para District Women's Shelter  
(08) 255 3622

Port Augusta  
(086) 42 4357

South-East Women's (Mt Gambier)  
(087) 25 7611

Western Area Women's Shelter  
(08) 268 7897

Whyalla Women's Shelter  
(086) 49 1355

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Crisis Care Unit  
(08) 272 1222

### Domestic Violence Service

*(For both victims and offenders)*

C/- Eastern Comm. Health Service, Adelaide  
(08) 232 0040

### Women's Information Switchboard

(08) 223 1244, (008) 188 158 (toll free)

### Group for Men Violent Towards Women

(Clovelly Park)  
(08) 277 2488

### Rape Crisis Centre

(08) 363 0262

### Rape Crisis Line

(08) 363 0233

## REMOTE AREAS SERVICES

### Domestic Violence Service

(08) 207 8900

### Women's Information Switchboard

(008) 188 158 (toll free)

### Life Line

(08) 212 344 (toll free)

### Crisis Care Unit

(08) 27 2122

## DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

(08) 226 7000

## QUEENSLAND

### AICCAs

Brisbane -- (07) 391 5466

Mt Isa – (070) 43 9626

Mackay – (079) 51 2963

North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Corporation Child Care

(077) 72 6224, 72 6173, 72 6466

Rockhampton – (079) 22 2188

Yuddika – (070) 51 1388

Barambah AICCA, Cherbourg (071) 68 2757

## HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Brisbane  
10 Hubert Street, Woolloongabba 4102  
(07) 393 0055

Ipswich  
27 Roderick Street, Ipswich 4305  
(07) 202 2222

Mackay  
60 Victoria Street, Mackay 4740  
(079) 51 2833

Mookai Rosie Bi-Bayan Corporation  
Cook Hwy, Trinity Beach, Ipswich (via Cairns) 4879  
(070) 57 6266

Queensland Trachoma and Eye Health Corporation  
14 Fulham Road, Pimlico 4812  
(077) 75 3714

Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service  
551 Flinders Street, Townsville 4810  
(077) 72 2922

Wu Chopperan Medical Service  
197 Lane Street, Cairns 4870  
(070) 51 5806

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation  
(QEA) for Legal Services  
63–65 Turbot Street, Brisbane City 4000  
(07) 221 1448

QEB Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation  
for Legal Services  
39 Neil Street, Toowoomba 4350  
(076) 38 3604

QEC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Corporation for Legal Services  
119 Bolsover Street, Rockhampton 4700  
(079) 27 5711

### Branch offices

Palace Arcade  
Cnr Quay and Broderolin Streets, Bundaberg 4670  
(071) 52 8044

QED Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Corporation for Legal Services  
271–279 Sturt Street, Townsville 4810  
(077) 72 4211

60 Victoria Street, Mackay 4740 (QED Branch office)  
(079) 51 1196

West Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Corporation  
Cnr Miles and Mary Street, Mt Isa 4825  
(077) 43 7448

Njiku Jowan Legal Service  
55 Lake Street, Cairns 4870  
(070) 51 3899

Bynoe Hall  
Matilda, Normanton 4890  
(077) 45 1353

Far North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Corporation for Legal Services  
Douglas Street, Thursday Island 4875  
(070) 69 1569

## ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

Yarrabah Rehabilitation Farm  
226 Stanley Street, Cairns 4870  
(no phone number available)

PIADRAC  
9 Stagpole Street, Cairns 4870  
(070) 51 2910

### Cairns

Wunjuada  
Brambah Avenyue, Cherbourg 4605  
(071) 68 1225  
Douglas House  
198 Grafton Street, North Cairns 4870  
(070) 51 2910

Hopevale Alcohol Rehabilitation  
Hopevale Mission, Hopevale 4871  
(070) 60 9177

Mareeba, Rose Colless's Haven  
Shanty Creek Road, Mareeba 4880  
(070) 93 3190

### Mt Isa

KASH  
Barkley Highway, Mt Isa 4825  
(077) 43 2370

Ferdy's Haven  
Coconut Grove, Palm Island 4816  
(077) 70 1152

## ABORIGINAL ISLANDER POLICE LIAISON OFFICERS

*There are Aboriginal and Islander liaison Officers at the following police stations.*

Brisbane – (07) 364 4555  
Bundaberg – (071) 72 1211  
Cairns – (070) 51 2000  
Cherbourg – (071) 68 1166  
Dalby – (074) 62 2444  
Gladstone – (079) 72 1122

Gympie – (071) 82 4989, 82 2111  
Innisfail – (070) 61 1244, 68 1200  
Ipswich – (07) 281 4000  
Murgon – (071) 68 1211  
Mt Isa – (077) 43 2222  
Oxley – (07) 375 5971  
Rockhampton – (079) 27 6000  
Roma – (074) 22 1122  
Toowoomba – (076) 32 1122  
Warwick – (076) 61 1222  
Wynnum – (07) 396 2126

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal and Islander Liaison Officers at the following offices.*

**Head Office**  
(07) 864 8000

### Branch offices

Annerley – (07) 892 0777  
Beenleigh – (07) 826 1200  
Caboolture – (074) 90 1200  
Cairns – (070) 50 4455  
Charleville – (076) 54 3000  
Chermside – (07) 857 9555  
Fortitude Valley – (07) 818 4711  
Inala – (07) 372 0777  
Mt Isa – (077) 44 5202  
Mackay – (079) 51 2033  
Nundah – (07) 266 0888  
Rockhampton – (079) 31 6818  
Toowoomba – (076) 32 4699  
Townsville – (077) 72 9022  
Stones Corner – (07) 847 0444  
Westcourt – (070) 31 2988  
Woodridge – (07) 32 4699

### District office

Thursday Island (070) 69 1492

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

*You must be referred from the following.*

Crisis Care  
(07) 227 5999, (008) 177 135 (toll free)

Women's House Shelter and Information  
(07) 844 4008

Cairns Women's Shelter  
(070) 51 1833

### Life Line – Crisis Line

Brisbane – (07) 252 1111  
Bundaberg – (071) 726788  
Cairns – (070) 51 4300  
Gold Coast – (075) 39 9999  
Ipswich – (07) 281 9555

Mackay – (079) 51 2333  
Maryborough – (071) 21 2626  
Rockhampton – (079) 27 3399  
Sunshine Coast – (071) 43 5366  
Toowoomba – (076) 32 9900  
Townsville – (077) 79 9911

## LEGAL AID SERVICES

Brisbane – (07) 223 3444  
Cairns – (070) 51 3278  
Inala – (07) 372 4944  
Ipswich – (07) 281 0033  
Mackay – (079) 57 2562  
Maroochydore – (071) 43 4411  
Rockhampton – (079) 27 5277  
Southport – (075) 32 4222  
Toowoomba – (076) 39 1800  
Townsville – (077) 72 2877  
Woodridge – (07) 208 9566

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Centacare  
(07) 252 4371

Crisis Care  
(07) 227 5999, (008) 177 135 (toll free)

Life Line – *refer to same listings under Women's Refuge referrals*

Queensland Domestic Violence Task Force  
(07) 227 6593

## REMOTE AREAS SERVICES

Life Line – *refer to same listings under Women's Refuge referrals*

Crisis Care, (008) 177 135 (toll free)

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Head Office**  
(07) 360 2555

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Black Community Housing Service Limited  
P O Box 198, Brisbane 4001  
(07) 891 6955

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

### AICCAs

Central Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 53 4895

KARU Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
Darwin 0800  
(089) 22 7171

## HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Anyinginyi Health Service  
P O Box 403, Tennant Creek 0861  
(089) 62 2385

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Medical Service  
25 Gap Road, Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 52 3377

Ntanampa Hospital  
Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 52 6322

Kalano Community Health Association  
P O Box 646, Katherine 0851  
(089) 72 2588

Mutitjulu Health Service  
CMA Uninti Store, Mutitjulu Community  
Via Ayers Rock 0872  
(089) 56 2989

Nganampa Health Service  
*Clinics: Kalka, Pipalyatjara, Amata, Ernabella (Pukatja),  
Milmili, Fregon (Aparawatatja) and Indulkan (Iwantja)*  
3 Wilkinson Street, Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 52 5300

Pintubi Homelands Health Service, Walangurra  
PMB 13, Kintore 0872  
Alice Springs radio number 527 (call operator on 011)

Urapunta Health Service  
C/- Utopia Station via Alice Springs 0870  
Radio number 1258 (call operator on 011)

## ABORIGINAL LEGAL AID

Pitjantjatjara (part of Pitjantjatjara Council)  
Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 52 3626

Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service Inc.  
55 Bath Street, Alice Springs 0870  
(089) 52 2933

**Branch offices**  
250 Smith Street, Tennant Creek 0860  
(089) 62 1332

North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service Inc.  
1 Gardiner Street, Darwin 0800  
(089) 81 5266

Katherine Regional Aboriginal Legal Aid Service  
6 Pierce Street, Katherine 0850  
(089) 72 1133

NAASLAS Nhulunbuy  
12 Sinclair Street, Nhulunbuy 0880  
(089) 87 2937

## ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

Gordon Symons  
Stuart Highway, Winnellie 0820

FORWARD  
33 Charles Street, Darwin 0800

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

*There are Aboriginal Liaison Officers at the following offices.*

Alice Springs – (089) 51 3365  
Darwin – (089) 80 9531  
Katherine – (089) 72 1411  
Nhulunbuy – (089) 87 1232  
Tennant Creek – (089) 62 2164  
Aboriginal Services Co-ordinator – (089) 80 9366  
Aboriginal Information Officer – (089) 80 9370  
Outreach Services – (089) 80 9370

## WOMEN'S REFUGES

Catherine House (Darwin)  
(089) 27 4581

Dawn House (Darwin) (*Aboriginal woman worker*)  
(089) 27 8341

Ruby Gaea House (Darwin) (*Aboriginal women workers*)  
(089) 45 0155

Women's Crisis House (Katherine) (*Aboriginal woman workers*) (089) 72 1332

Women's Community House (Alice Springs)  
(089) 52 6075

## ABORIGINAL SERVICES

Aboriginal Interpreter Service (Alice Springs)  
(089) 52 2688

Anyinginyi Congress (Tennant Creek)  
(089) 62 2385

Central Aust Aboriginal Congress (Alice Springs)  
(089) 52 3377

Kalana Community Centre (Katherine)  
(089) 72 2588

## COUNSELLING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Crisis Line (Darwin)  
(089) 81 9227

Crisis Line Community Care Line (Alice Springs)  
(089) 50 2266, (008) 019 116 (toll free)

Darwin Family Violence and Sexual Assault  
Counsellor (Alice Springs)  
(089) 52 6006

Sexual Assault Committee  
(089) 81 8644

Sexual Assault Referral (Alice Springs)  
(089) 52 6075

Women's Community House Centre (Darwin)  
(089) 20 8407

Women's Crisis Centre (Katherine)  
(089) 72 1332

Women's Information Centre (Darwin)  
(089) 27 7166

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Head Office**  
(089) 46 3444

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Amoongnna Housing Association Inc.  
PO Box 780, Alice Springs, NT 0871  
(089) 52 4033

Aboriginal Development Foundation  
GPO Box 2894, Darwin, NT 0801  
(089) 84 3539