



# **Domestic & Family Violence Referral Options**

**May 2008**

**Domestic Violence  
Resource Centre (Victoria)**

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## **Women's Domestic Violence Services**

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These services provide advocacy and support to women and children experiencing domestic violence.

### **Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria (WDVCS)**

Phone: 9322 3555 or toll free 1800 015 188 (country callers) 24-hours, 7 days a week

- provides telephone crisis counselling, referral, information and support
- the service is the central contact point for women's refuges in Victoria
- women needing accommodation need to speak to the service themselves, to provide certain information required for referral to a refuge
- if there are no vacancies in refuges, the workers will assist a woman to explore other options until she can move into a refuge
- agencies can ring for information about the service
- the crisis line can be extremely busy, so callers need to keep trying until they get through (sometimes it is easier after office hours)
- the service can provide 24-hour access to interpreters and to support for Indigenous women

<http://www.wdvcs.org.au>

### **Women's Refuges**

Refuge accommodation can be arranged through the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria (WDVCS) (see above). While WDVCS is the main source of referrals to women's refuges, many refuges also accept referrals from other designated agencies within their region.

- women's refuges provide safe accommodation and support for women and children escaping domestic violence
- their location is not made public for safety and security reasons
- domestic violence workers in refuges provide assistance with Centrelink, schooling, court support, and housing related needs
- refuges assist women with referrals for legal issues including immigration and Family Law matters and Intervention Orders
- refuges provide support to women with a diverse range of cultural and other needs, including women with disabilities. They can cater for special dietary and other cultural and/or religious needs
- where language is a barrier, refuge workers utilise the Victorian Interpreting and Translation Services (VITS). Some refuges also employ bilingual workers. When requested or deemed necessary, referrals are made to ethno-specific agencies such as the Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service (IWDVS) for cultural and linguistic support
- different refuges provide different forms of accommodation. Some provide high-security communal living, others have individual units with communal space, and some provide accommodation in which women and children can live independently
- depending on her circumstances and safety issues a woman may not need to move a long distance from where she currently lives and in some cases may continue to work in her current workplace. Children may continue to attend the same school if it is considered safe to do so. Refuges work with women to develop safety plans to support them and their children to continue their normal lives as much as possible
- all refuges have Children's Support Workers whose role is to work with the mother and the child focusing on practical and therapeutic needs
- callers (nominated by the woman in refuge) who wish to speak to the woman once she is in refuge can ring the Women's Domestic Violence Service administration line on 9377 9600 Monday-Friday 9am to 5.30pm and the WDVCS crisis line at other times

## Domestic Violence Outreach Services

Domestic violence outreach workers provide support to women and children who are experiencing or escaping from domestic violence. The venue for support is at a location where both the worker and the woman feel safe. Outreach workers support victims/survivors of domestic violence by

- providing support to women with a diverse range of cultural and other needs, including women with disabilities
- working with women to develop safety plans to enhance the safety of themselves and their children
- providing information on options and resources, referral to other services, and case management support. Case management support is client driven and based upon the individual woman. Support may involve assistance with Centrelink, schooling, court support, and housing related needs; referral to other services such as housing (including to refuge), counselling and financial counselling; and the provision of advocacy
- assisting women with referrals for legal advice and the provision of court and legal support for immigration, Family Law, Intervention Orders and other legal matters
- where language is a barrier workers utilise the Victorian Interpreting and Translation Services (VITS)
- providing support to children (accompanying women supported by the service) through the refuge children's worker

Domestic violence outreach workers also provide information to other service providers and are involved in community education.

## Melbourne Metropolitan Outreach Services

|                          |              |   |
|--------------------------|--------------|---|
| Eastern Metropolitan     | Ringwood     | 9870 5939   |
| Northern Metropolitan    | Heidelberg   | 9458 5788   |
| Southern Metropolitan    | Frankston    | 9781 4658   |
|                          | Cranbourne   | 5990 6789   |
|                          | Dandenong    | 9791 6111   |
|                          | Narre Warren | 9703 0044   |
| Middle/Inner South Metro |              | 9536 7777 or<br>1800 627 727 (from landline only) |
| Mornington Peninsula     |              | 5971 9454   |
| Western Metropolitan     | Footscray    | 9689 9588   |

\* Offices are open from 9am to 5 pm Monday to Friday unless otherwise stated.

## Rural Outreach Services

|                   |                 |                              |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Barwon South West | Geelong/ Barwon | 5224 2903                    |
|                   | Warrnambool     | 5561 1934                    |
|                   | Hamilton        | 5571 1778                    |
|                   | Portland        | 5521 7937                    |
|                   | Casterton       | 5581 2109                    |
|                   | Camperdown      | 5593 1892                    |
| Gippsland         | Warragul        | 5622 7000                    |
|                   | Morwell         | 5120 2000                    |
|                   | Leongatha       | 5662 4502 or 1800 221 200    |
|                   | Bairnsdale      | 5152 0052                    |
|                   | Lakes Entrance  | 5152 0052                    |
| Grampians         | Horsham         | 5362 1200                    |
|                   | Ballarat        | 5333 3666                    |
|                   | Stawell         | 5358 7400                    |
|                   | Ararat          | 5352 6200                    |
| Hume              | Wodonga         | (02) 6022 8888               |
|                   | Shepparton      | 5823 3200 or 5821 9458       |
|                   | Broadford       | 5784 5555 (8.30am to 5pm)    |
|                   | Wangaratta      | 5722 1100 (8.30am – 5pm)     |
| Loddon Mallee     | Mildura         | 5021 2130 24hrs on call      |
|                   | Bendigo         | 5430 3000 or 1800 884 038    |
|                   | Swan Hill       | 5033 1899 (8.30am to 5.30pm) |

\* Offices are open from 9am to 5 pm Monday to Friday unless otherwise stated.

## Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service (IWDVS)

Phone: 8413-6800 (9.15am - 5.15pm, Monday to Friday)

The Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service works with women & children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) who are victims/survivors of domestic violence.

The service has a pool of bi-lingual and bi-cultural workers who provide support, information and referral to women and children escaping domestic violence.

It also provides support and advocacy to women, including assisting women with housing and Centrelink, providing information about the refuges and other accommodation and women's legal rights in Australia.

IWDVS workers also accompany women to legal appointments or court and other settings as required.

<http://www.iwdvs.org.au>

## **Indigenous Family Violence Support**

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### **Elizabeth Hoffman House (Aboriginal Women's Domestic Violence Service)**

Phone: 0407 937 202

Elizabeth Hoffman House is a refuge with the primary function of providing emergency shelter for Aboriginal women and their children in need of support due to domestic violence.

Provides:

- a supportive accommodation service sympathetic to the needs of service users
- Outreach Support to Aboriginal women in metropolitan Melbourne to assist them to access support services in the areas of family violence and related issues.
- conducts Community Education workshops with Aboriginal communities throughout the State

<http://www.kiams.net/hoffman/index.htm>

### **Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service**

Phone 9654 3111 or Freecall 1800 105 303.

FVPLS Victoria was established to provide services to victims of family violence and sexual assault and where appropriate to work with families and communities affected by violence.

### **Gippsland East Aboriginal Co-operative**

Phone 5152 1922

Provides short-term crisis accommodation for women & children escaping family violence.

### **Goulburn Valley Community Health Service – Indigenous Family Violence Support**

Phone 5823 3200 (and ask to speak with the Indigenous Family Violence Support Worker)

### **Indigenous Family Violence Support Officers**

Phone: 9096 8028 (Statewide Co-ordinator)

For phone referrals to specific regional Support Officers, contact the Statewide Co-ordinator, Indigenous Family Violence Strategy, Department of Human Services. This office can also assist with information on Victorian Indigenous Family Violence strategy.

## **Regional Integrated Family Violence Leadership Positions**

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Within each region, there is a group of services involved in providing an integrated family violence response. Each of these groups is supported by an Integrated Family Violence Leadership Position.

These positions provide a central contact point in the region for:

- Information about the work of the Regional Family Violence Committee;
- Information about Community Education programs, forums and training;
- Production and dissemination of family violence information products;
- Information about regional services and networks, best practice approaches, and protocols;
- Feedback from within and between services and the general community regarding responses to family violence; and
- Family Violence data for the region.

The title of the leadership role varies as each region has its own auspicing agency. Below is a list of the regions and the agency in each region that auspices this position. At times, you may want to contact the person in this role in your region to discuss interagency issues or obtain information to support interagency liaison. In most regions the leadership role is a part-time position.

### **Metropolitan**

|                |  |           |
|----------------|--|-----------|
| Eastern Metro  | Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Service | 9870 5939 |
| Northern Metro | Women's Health in the North                | 9484 1666 |
| Southern Metro | Southern Family Life                       | 9598 2133 |
| Western Metro  | Women's Health West                        | 9689 9588 |

### **Regional**

|                      |                                    |           |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Barwon South West    | Community Connections              | 5223 1660 |
| Gippsland            | Gippsland Women's Health Service   | 5143 1600 |
| Grampians (Ballarat) | Child & Family Services            | 5337 3333 |
| Grampians (Horsham)  | Grampians Community Health Centre  | 5358 7415 |
| Hume                 | Women's Health Goulburn North East | 5722 3009 |
| Loddon Campaspe      | EASE                               | 5443 4945 |
| Loddon Mallee        | Mallee Domestic Violence Services  | 5021 2130 |

## Sexual Assault Services

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### Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

Phone: **1800 806 292** (from anywhere in Victoria to be directed to your local CASA, or for after hours support)

CASA offer 24-hour crisis support to recent victims of sexual assault.

- CASA offer telephone or face-to-face counselling to survivors of recent and past sexual assault/abuse (including incest)
- they also provide legal information
- CASA can also assist survivors to negotiate with hospitals, doctors, the police and other legal system representatives, where appropriate

<http://www.casa.org.au/>

### Melbourne Metropolitan CASAs

|                 |                |                           |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| CASA House      | Carlton        | 9635 3610 or 1800 806 292 |
| Western CASA    | Footscray      | 9687 5811                 |
| Northern CASA   | Heidelberg     | 9496 2240                 |
| Eastern CASA    | East Ringwood  | 9870 7330                 |
| South East CASA | East Bentleigh | 9594 2289                 |

### Rural CASAs

|                      |             |           |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Ballarat CASA        | Ballarat    | 5320 3933 |
| Barwon CASA          | Geelong     | 5222 4802 |
| Gippsland CASA       | Morwell     | 5134 3922 |
| Goulburn Valley CASA | Shepparton  | 5831 2343 |
| Loddon Campaspe CASA | Bendigo     | 5441 0430 |
| Wimmera CASA         | Horsham     | 5381 9272 |
| Upper Murray CASA    | Wangaratta  | 5722 2203 |
| South Western CASA   | Warrnambool | 5564 4144 |
| Mallee CASA          | Mildura     | 5025 5400 |

## **Services for Children and Young People**

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### **DHS Child Protection Crisis Line (Statewide)**

Ph: 131 278 (24-hours, 7 days a week)

During business hours, this Crisis Line provides referrals to regional Child Protection Officers, who will accept and investigate notifications of suspected child abuse.

After hours and during weekends, this Crisis Line will accept notifications of suspected child abuse.

### **Austin Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

Intake: Phone 9496 3620 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday AH: 9496 5000 through Emergency Department

CAMHS Programs and Services include:

- a wide range of free services, delivering mental health care for children, adolescents (under 18 years) and their families or carers.
- includes outpatient services, inpatient services, including adolescent inpatient care (covering regional catchment areas).
- child inpatient care (12 years of age and under) is offered statewide.

AIM Team (Adolescent Intensive Management Team)

- An outreach team responding to the needs of teenagers who have been assessed by the community outpatient teams as requiring intensive, more flexible day to day treatment or management off campus.

### **Gatehouse Centre for the Assessment and Treatment of Child Abuse**

Ph: 9345 6391 9.00 am - 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

For emergency after hours assistance during evenings, public holidays and weekends, telephone the Royal Children's Hospital on (03) 9345 5522. The switchboard operator will then page the on-call worker.

The Gatehouse provides assessment, treatment, counselling and support for children & young people up to 16 years old harmed by violence, including sexual assault and where there are concerns of abuse.

- the Gatehouse Centre does not have the legal power to investigate concerns about child abuse
  - the Victoria Police work alongside the Department of Human Services, where appropriate, having responsibility for the criminal investigation
  - information and consultation to hospital staff, agencies and the community is available 24 hours each day
  - Referrals are received from family members, professionals and members of the community
- <http://www.rch.org.au/gatehouse>

### **Australian Childhood Foundation**

Ph: 1800 176 453 or 9874 3922

The Australian Childhood Foundation is a national charity that works to make children's safety and welfare a priority. It provides counselling, advocacy, education, child abuse prevention programs and research.

[www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

## **Parentline**

Ph: 132 289 (8am - midnight Monday - Friday, 10am - 10pm Weekends)

Parentline is a statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents and carers with children from birth to eighteen years. It is a confidential and anonymous service.

<http://www.parentline.vic.gov.au>

## **Kids Helpline**

Ph: 1800 551 800 (24-hours)

Kids Help Line is Australia's only free, confidential and anonymous, 24-hour telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between five and 18.

E-mail and web counselling also available

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au>

## **Useful Websites**

DVIRC has developed the following websites in consultation with young people and services.

[Bursting the Bubble](http://www.burstingthebubble.com) is an award winning site for teenagers and is about abuse by family members. The website provides quizzes, stories, and advice <http://www.burstingthebubble.com>

'[When love hurts](http://www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove)' - a website for teenagers on relationships, respect and abuse. Provides a respect checklist, the relationship quiz, true stories [www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove](http://www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove)

## **Services for men who use violence**

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### **Men's Referral Service**

Ph. 9428 2899 or STD Freecall 1800 065 973 (12 noon to 9:00pm Monday to Friday)

The Men's Referral Service is an anonymous and confidential telephone service provided for men by men. It provides a central point of contact for men who are wanting to stop their violent or abusive behaviour towards their family members, but are not sure how or where to go for advice. Many women also call the Men's Referral Service seeking information and help for their male partner, husband, relative or friend.

[www.ntv.net.au](http://www.ntv.net.au)

## **Support Groups**

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There are a variety of support groups around Victoria for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and incest.

Contact the Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC) Ph: 9486 9866 or consult the *DVIRC Quarterly* newsletter, which provides quarterly updates on support groups.

Alternatively, call your local domestic violence outreach service for information on local support groups.

## Legal Services

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### Women's Legal Service

Legal Advice Line: Ph: 9642 0877 or 1800 133 302 (country callers). Monday and Friday mornings 10am – 1pm; Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6.30pm – 8.30pm; Wednesday afternoon 2pm – 5pm.

Women's Legal Service is a state-wide community organisation providing free confidential legal advice, assistance and referral for women. Their services include legal advice telephone line, face to face advice & assistance, casework, court support, interpreter assisted appointments, outreach service and community legal education.

### Community Legal Centres

Ph: 9652 1500 (Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria 9am – 5pm M-F) for local legal centre.

Provide free legal advice and assistance to anyone who lives, works or studies within their catchment area. The Centres also provide community education about the law and legal system and advocate for law reform. Legal advice can be provided in the areas of Family Law, Crimes Compensation, debts and any other areas. Where appropriate, the Centres can assist with applications for Legal Aid whereby a private solicitor will act, and Legal Aid will pay for it.  
<http://www.communitylaw.org.au>

### Specialist Community Legal Services

There are a number of specialist services that provide legal advice, referral and advocacy:

- Youth law Ph: 9611 2412 <http://www.youthlaw.asn.au>
- Mental Health Legal Centre Ph: 9629 4422 <http://www.communitylaw.org.au/mentalhealth>
- Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Ph: 9654 3111 <http://www.fvpls.org>
- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) Ph: 9419 3888 or Toll Free: 1800 064 865 (24-hours) <http://www.vals.org.au>
- Disability Discrimination Legal Service Ph: 9654 8644 <http://www.communitylaw.org.au/ddls>
- Muslim Legal Services Victoria Ph: 9654 4683 <http://www.hrlrc.org.au>
- Human Rights Law Resource Centre Ph: 9225 6695 <http://www.hrlrc.org.au>
- Victorian Immigrant & Refugee Women's Coalition Ph: 9654 1243 <http://www.virwc.org.au/>

### Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) Legal Information Service

Ph: 9269 0120 or 1800 677 402 (country callers) (8.45am - 5.15pm M-F)

This service offers free legal information in English and 14 other languages, from Monday to Friday. Legal Aid Victoria has in-house lawyers who give legal advice and act for survivors of violence. For your nearest legal aid office, phone Legal Aid Victoria. Legal Aid can fund legal costs of private lawyers for those who are eligible, and they provide duty lawyer services at some Magistrates' Courts. Eligibility for Legal Aid is means- and merit-tested. Recipients are expected to repay costs where possible.  
[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

## Family Dispute Resolution

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### Mediation Tip Sheet

DVIRC has developed a useful tip sheet for women attending mediation.

<http://www.dvirc.org.au/HelpHub/MediationTips.htm>

### Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)

Ph: 1800 050 321 (Family Relationship Hotline) for nearest FDR practitioner

Family Dispute Resolution assists people affected by separation to resolve some or all of their disputes with each other. FDR practitioners are accredited under the Family Law Act.

From 1 July 2007 the law requires separating parents to use FDR before taking a parenting dispute to the court (exceptions include cases where violence or child abuse is present).

FDR practitioners work in many places including a Family Relationship Centre, Roundtable Dispute Management, counselling/mediation organizations or in private practice.

[www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au) [www.dvirc.org.au](http://www.dvirc.org.au)

### Roundtable Dispute Management (Victoria Legal Aid)

Ph: 9269 0500 or email: [rdm@vla.vic.gov.au](mailto:rdm@vla.vic.gov.au)

Roundtable Dispute Management (RDM) is Victoria Legal Aid's FDR service. RDM offers a case managed settlement conference conducted by a highly qualified FDR practitioner (chairperson). Each person attends with their lawyer, if they have one. Clients can choose not to have contact with the other person.

Usually one person applies for a legal aid grant allowing them to access RDM's services. RDM then contacts the other party and invites them to attend. Participation is voluntary.

[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

### Family Relationship Centres

The Family Relationship Centres (FRC's) is a FDR service that offers individual, group and joint sessions to help separating families make workable arrangements for their children without having to go to court.

Ph: 1800 050 321 (Family Relationship Hotline) for nearest FRC or **see overleaf**.

## Family Relationship Centres

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**Ballarat:** 1300 303 988  
32 Main Road, Ballarat  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/ballaratfrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/ballaratfrc)

**Berwick:** 8768 4111  
1-2, 38 Clyde Road, Berwick

**Frankston:** 9770 0341  
37 Playne Street, Frankston  
<http://familyrelationships.gov.au/frankstonfrc>

**Geelong:** 1300 656 043 or 5246 5600  
Suit 2, 27-31 Myers Street, Geelong  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/geelongfrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/geelongfrc)

**Greensborough:** 9404 7800  
79 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/greensboroughfrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/greensboroughfrc)

**Mildura:** 1300 667 382  
105 Lemon Avenue, Mildura  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/mildurafrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/mildurafrc)

**Ringwood:** 9871 6300  
68 Charter Street, Ringwood  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/ringwoodfrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/ringwoodfrc)

**Sunshine:** 9313 0444  
1 Clarke Street, Sunshine  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/sunshinefrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/sunshinefrc)

**Traralgon:** 5174 1055  
41 Grey Street, Traralgon  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/traralgonfrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/traralgonfrc)

**Wodonga:** (02) 6022 8644  
282 Beechworth Road, Wodonga  
[www.familyrelationships.gov.au/wodongafrc](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/wodongafrc)

## **Interpreting Services**

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When working with a female client, workers are encouraged to book a female interpreter.

### **On Call Interpreting & Translating Agency**

Ph: 9867 3788

Contact the On Call Interpreting & Translating Agency for telephone or on-site interpreting (Auslan included). Eligible DHS funded agencies receive free services - see

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/multicultural](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/multicultural) for eligibility guidelines.

[www.oncallinterpreters.com](http://www.oncallinterpreters.com)

### **Victorian Interpreting and Translation Services**

Telephone Interpreting: Ph: 9280 1955      On-site Interpreting: Ph: 9280 1990

Contact the Victorian Interpreting and Translation Service (VITS) for telephone or on-site interpreting or translation of materials. There are fees involved for this service.

[www.vits.com.au/index.htm](http://www.vits.com.au/index.htm)

### **Department of Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs - TIS National (National Translating & Interpreting Service)**

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) for telephone interpreting. There are fees involved for this service. Organisations can make on-line applications for fee exemptions.

Ph: 131 450

[www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) (Follow the links to 'Living in Australia' and 'Help with English')

A useful book, *Improving the use of translating & interpreting services: A guide to Victorian Government Policy & Procedures*, can be obtained from the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Ph: 9208 3152 or download from the language services, standards and guidelines section of their website: [www.voma.vic.gov.au](http://www.voma.vic.gov.au)

## **Victoria Police**

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### **Family Violence Incidents**

In the event of an emergency contact Police on 000.

### **Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence**

Victoria Police have a new Code of Practice for the investigation of Family Violence. Police are required to take action when called to a family violence incident - referral, civil or criminal action, or all of these. For assistance with complaints or concerns with follow up, contact your local Family Violence Liaison Officer (at local 24-hour station), or the Regional Family Violence Advisor (see Family Violence Unit website for details p10).

The Code of Practice outlines how police will respond to reports of family violence and emphasises that all such reports will be treated seriously by police. The Code can be downloaded through the weblink below:

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=674](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=674)

### **Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Units (SOCA)**

Ph: 9247 6936 or see website for local SOCA Unit contact numbers at

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=757](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=757)

The SOCA Units' role is to investigate criminal offences relating to child physical and sexual assaults and to support these victims. Experienced police members, who are aware of the particular needs of their clients, staff these units. There are 31 SOCA Units located throughout Victoria.

## Counselling services

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Counselling services can be accessed via the Victims' Support Agency, local Community Health Service, Family Service Department within Local Government, and through local non-government Family Support Agencies.

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### **Victims' Support Agency**

(03) 8684 6700

Victims' Support Agency is a central resource for victims of crime. To obtain information about the services available for victims of crime, see below and visit the website:

[www.justice.vic.gov.au/victimsofcrime](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/victimsofcrime)

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### **The Victims' of Crime Helpline**

Victims of crime can call a dedicated Helpline staffed by trained Victim Support Officers. Helpline staff offer information, advice and referrals to assist victims to manage and recover from the effects of crime. Helpline 1800 819 817

Available support includes:

- Information on how to access the Justice system, including the Victims' Register
  - Referral to local and regional services which can provide practical assistance and support
  - Information on how to access counselling
- 

### **Victims' Assistance and Counselling Program**

The Victims Assistance and Counselling Program (VACP) is a network of services that operate throughout Victoria. These services assist victims, their families or anyone affected by a violent crime to access information, counselling and practical support, either by telephone or in person.

Immediate assistance can be provided depending on individual circumstances. They also provide access to ongoing practical support, outreach services, court support, referral and coordination of specialist support groups.

See Victims' Support Agency website for details of local services:

[www.justice.vic.gov.au/victimsofcrime](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/victimsofcrime)

Or call Victims' of Crime Helpline for referral to nearest VACP  
1800 819 817

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### **Victims' of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT)**

The Victim's of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) considers applications for financial assistance by victims of violent crime committed in Victoria. Interim awards for counselling and financial assistance for immediate safety and medical expenses can be made quickly by Registrars without the need for a hearing before a Magistrate.

The Victim's of Crime Helpline or a Victims' Assistance and Counselling Program service can help you with VOCAT applications 1800 819 817

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**Women's Information Referral Exchange (WIRE)**

WIRE provides free information, support and referrals to women across Victoria. Includes a walk-in centre at Queen Vic Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale St, Melbourne.

[www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)

1300 134 130  
(9am-5pm M-F)

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**Gay & Lesbian Switchboard (Vic.)**

Offers a telephone based counselling, information and referral service. Free, confidential and anonymous counsellors are available Daily 6pm - 10pm, Wednesdays 2pm - 10pm

[www.switchboard.org.au](http://www.switchboard.org.au)

(03) 9827 8544  
Free Call 1800 184 527

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**Community Health Centres**

Community Health Centres offer groups and activities for women, men, children and young people. They can also provide counselling. Listed under 'Community Health Centres' in the Business White Pages; ring to find out availability of services.

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**Interstate Contacts**

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**NOTE: 1800 numbers can only be accessed from within the relevant state.**

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|                             |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Australia Capital Territory | Domestic Violence Crisis Line                                     | (02) 6280 0900  |
| New South Wales             | DoCS Domestic Violence Line                                       | 1800 656 463  |
| Northern Territory          | Dawn House – Women's Shelter<br>Alice Springs – Women's Shelter   | (08) 8945 1388<br>(08) 8952 6075                      |
| Queensland                  | DV Connect  | 1800 811 811<br>(07) 3008 8294                        |
| South Australia             | Domestic Violence Crisis Service                                  | 1300 782 200  |
| Tasmania                    | Family Violence<br>Counselling & Support:<br>Response & Referral: | 1800 608 122<br>1800 633 937<br>(can be used in Vic.) |
| Western Australia           | Crisis Care Unit<br>Women's DV Help Line                          | 1800 199 008<br>1800 007 339                          |

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## Useful Websites

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### **Domestic Violence Resource Centre (Vic)**

Ph: 9486 9866 9am to 5pm.

[www.dvirc.org.au](http://www.dvirc.org.au)

The DVRC website has a comprehensive range of information about domestic violence information for workers, survivors and students.

[Bursting the Bubble](http://www.burstingthebubble.com) is an award winning site for teenagers and is about abuse by family members. It provides quizzes, stories, and advice <http://www.burstingthebubble.com>  
'When love hurts' - a website for teenagers on relationships, respect and abuse. Provides a respect checklist, the relationship quiz, true stories [www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove](http://www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove)

### **No To Violence; The Male Family Violence Prevention Association**

No To Violence (NTV), the Male Family Violence Prevention Association Inc., is a peak organisation of individuals and agencies working for the prevention of male family violence. The specific focus is work with men to assist them to change and end their violent behaviour.

<http://www.ntv.net.au>

### **Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse**

This site houses a comprehensive catalogue of publications and research articles on domestic and family violence including statistics; health issues; practice innovations; community education; indigenous issues; group work; and research.

[www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au](http://www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au)

### **Women's Safety After Separation**

This website aims to provide information to women facing separation, particularly where there is violence and abuse.

<http://wsas.here.ws>

### **Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic)**

DV Vic is a peak advocacy organisation committed to the rights of women and children to live free of violence. It comprises a membership of women's family/domestic violence services operating across the state of Victoria.

<http://www.dvvic.org.au>

### **Women's Health Victoria**

This site provides information on a range of issues relevant to women's health care. They have a library available to the public.

[www.whv.org.au](http://www.whv.org.au)

### **Women's Health Information Centre**

Phone: 9344 2007 or rural freecall 1800 442 007

Located at The Royal Women's Hospital Melbourne, the Women's Health Information Centre (WHIC) is a free, confidential and statewide health information service for all women in the state of Victoria, Australia.

[www.rwh.org.au/wellwomens](http://www.rwh.org.au/wellwomens)

### **Women's Information Referral Exchange (WIRE)**

Women's Information provides free information, support and referrals to women across Victoria. WIRE services include a phone support service, a walk-in centre, and a comprehensive, searchable website.

[www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)

### **Women with Disabilities Australia**

Current information and resources on a range of issues facing women with disabilities, including violence and abuse.

<http://www.wwda.org.au>

### **The Australian Childhood Foundation**

<http://www.childhood.org.au>

The Australian Childhood Foundation has two other websites:

The 'kidscount' website [www.kidscount.com.au/](http://www.kidscount.com.au/) is for parents and gives information about parenting and child development.

The 'stopchildabuse' website is a resource for anyone who wants to know more about the problem of child abuse in the community and what you can do to prevent it.

<http://www.stopchildabuse.com.au/>

### **The Gatehouse Centre**

This website provides details of services to assess and respond to child abuse, including sexual abuse. It includes links to publications, research and training.

<http://www.rch.org.au/gatehouse>

### **Australian Institute of Family Studies**

[www.aifs.gov.au](http://www.aifs.gov.au)

The AIFS website provides family related research and information. It has a library available to the public and also houses the following websites:

- [www.aifs.gov.au/acssa](http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa) - Australian Study for the Centre of Sexual Assault-online library.
- [www.aifs.gov.au/nch/nch\\_menu](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/nch_menu) - Child Protection Clearinghouse, that produces publications & research.

### **Office for Children (Department of Human Services)**

Victorian State Government department site, with information about family violence and child abuse, child protection, resources, and other links.

<http://www.office-for-children.vic.gov.au>

### **Office of Women's Policy (Department of Victorian Communities)**

Victorian State Government department site, with information about current Government policy on violence against women, including the Women's Safety Strategy, and the report of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence, 'Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria'.

<http://www.women.vic.gov.au>

**Family Court of Australia**

The Family Violence section contains information about personal safety, the Court's strategy, external services and links to other websites.

<http://www.familycourt.gov.au>

**Magistrates' Court of Victoria**

This site includes links to the Specialist Family Violence Court (under 'Specialist Court Jurisdictions') established in 2005, and other legal information, forms, links and resources.

<http://www.magistratescourt.vic.gov.au>

**Victoria Police Family Violence Unit**

The role of the Family Violence Unit (FVU) is to work with central departments and geographical regions of Victoria Police to develop and implement strategies aimed at enhancing the police response to family violence.

[http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=288](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=288)

**Secretariat of National Aboriginal And Islander Child Care (S.N.A.I.C.C.)**

Advocates for the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children. Available on the SNAICC website is an indigenous children's services directory, newsletters, reports and publications, news, events and links to child abuse prevention websites.

[www.snaicc.asn.au](http://www.snaicc.asn.au)

**Relationships Australia**

Phone: 1300 364 277

Support groups, family and individual counselling, education on relationships, and for abusive and abused partners.

[www.relationships.com.au](http://www.relationships.com.au)