

FAMILY Violence



Myth busting facts about violence against women

Myth: Men are violent in their relationships because they are stressed, unemployed or drink too much alcohol.

Fact: Unemployment, alcohol and stress are often used as excuses for domestic and family violence. This means something else is always to blame for the violence – work, lack of work, the neighbours, the children, financial difficulties etc., and stops the perpetrator being responsible for his/her violence. There are no excuses that can be used to justify violence against women and children. The majority of individuals who drink or are stressed are not violent.

Myth: Men get angry so they lose control.

Fact: Using violence is a choice. Is the abuser violent towards his boss at work?

Myth: it can't be that bad as she hasn't left

Fact: Women stay with a violent partner for many reasons. They are often so fearful of leaving it is safer to stay. A woman is at highest risk of danger when she does leave the abuser. Staying can give a woman some control.

Other reasons why a woman may decide to stay in a violence environment include:

- Fear, low self-esteem, shame, guilt
- Lack of financial independence, relying on her partner's income
- Desire to maintain the family unit; sometime there may be family pressure to keep the family together
- Children
- Belief that the partner can and will change
- Isolation – lack of family and social support networks

Myth: Family violence affects only a small percentage of the population and is rare.

Fact: Family violence is serious and prevalent, and affects women from all different sectors of society. A woman is more likely to be injured or killed by an intimate partner in her own home than by a stranger on the street.

Myth: Family violence only occurs in poor, uneducated and minority families.

Fact: Family violence consistently occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, region, ethnicity, educational level or race.

Myth: Men are just as much victims of domestic violence as women.

Fact: Men are also victims of violence. But they are more likely to be physically injured or killed by a non-intimate partner.

Myth: She asked for it; she deserved it; she provoked it

Fact: No one asks or deserves to be physically or psychologically abused. It is common for abusers to blame women for provoking them. Women often blame themselves when they are consistently told that the violence is always their fault. There is absolutely no excuse for violence.

Myth: Family violence is usually a one off, isolated occurrence.

Fact: Family violence is a pattern of coercion and control that one person exerts over another. Family violence is not just one physical attack. It includes the repeated use of a number of tactics, including intimidation, threats, economic deprivation, isolation and psychological and sexual abuse. Physical violence is just one of these tactics. The various forms of abuse utilised by abusers maintains power and control over their spouses and partners.