

Providing direct services to support men who use violence

to change their behaviour and keep women and children safer



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No to Violence: providing direct services to support men who use violence to change their behaviour and keep women and children safer

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No to Violence is leading the change to break the cycle of male family violence in Australia.

In addition to providing expert training, sector development and advocacy across the family violence sector, No to Violence (NTV) also provides a range of specialist clinical services to support men concerned about their use of abuse and violence to change their behaviour and keep women, children and communities safer.

While NTV specialises in targeted interventions to support men to change their behaviour, our primary concern is ALWAYS the safety and wellbeing of women and children.

While some of the NTV services described below are currently only funded and available in specific jurisdictions, all are suitable – if funded appropriately – for rolling out nationally and throughout all Australian states and territories.

Men’s Referral Service (MRS)

The Men’s Referral Service is the national counselling, information and referral service for men who use violence and abuse towards family members. It is operated by No to Violence and is the central point for men taking responsibility for – and seeking help for – their behaviour.

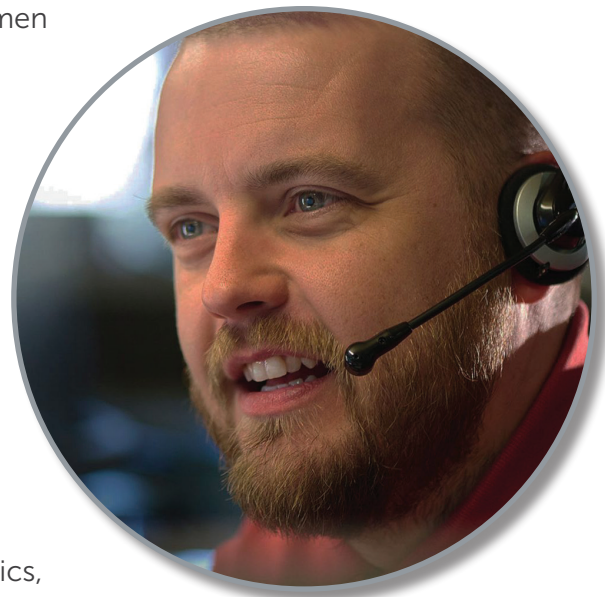


For too long, the focus has been on helping women and children who are hurt by abuse – not on stopping the men from hurting them in the first place.

Just as 1800RESPECT is the central point for victim survivors, MRS is the central point for men who want – or need – access to prevention, early interventions or behaviour change programs.

MRS helps to remove the burden of family violence from the victim-survivors and place it firmly on the men who use violence.

MRS can have a conversation with men who use violence to help them with some short term tactics, and put them in touch with some supports that can help them along their journey – and ultimately, keep women, children and communities safer.



Who does the Men's Referral Service support?

- Men who have or are still behaving abusively to change their behaviour
- Family members who are impacted by a man's use abusive behaviours
- Friends, family or colleagues of people who may be using or experiencing family violence and wish to understand how to support their friends, family, or colleagues
- Professionals wishing to support a client who is using or experiencing family violence

When callers call the Men's Referral Service

- They can remain anonymous
- They are listened to and treated with respect
- They receive referrals to local services that can help them take the next steps towards changing their behaviour and being the best man, partner, spouse or family member they can be.

Men's Referral Service 1300 766 491

Brief Intervention Service (BIS)

Delivered by the Men's Referral Service (MRS), the Brief Intervention Service (BIS) is a flexible, multi session service which is designed to intervene at a point in time to address risk, provide referral options to assist men who use violence to get further support, and to be resourced as they begin the behaviour change journey.

The Brief Intervention Service focuses on short term multi-session telephone support for men who use violence and:

- are on a waiting list for family violence support (such as a Men's Behaviour Change Program).
- are unable to access family violence support because:
 - Services are not readily available, and unable to take active referrals due to waitlists.
 - They live in remote or regional areas.
 - They have barriers to attend group programs.
 - They are from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Men can access multiple phone counselling sessions.

During the session:

- Counsellors support men to change violent behaviours.
- A key focus is on the safety of women and children.
- The Brief Intervention Service will also work to connect men with other ongoing services.

Men's Accommodation and Counselling Service (MACS)

The Men's Accommodation and Counselling Service (MACS) provides housing and counselling services for men who have been excluded from their residence due to family violence (via a Family Violence Intervention Order or Family Violence Safety Notice) and who are interested in engaging in counselling to address their behaviour.

Removing men from their family home provides an opportunity for women and children to remain in the family home when and where it is safe to do so, and if they choose to stay. This means women and children remain safe and stable and the disruption to their lives is minimised.

The Men's Accommodation and Counselling Service is operated in partnership by No to Violence and The Salvation Army. Both organisations have qualified counsellors who will listen to you, find out more about your situation and give you the advice and support you need.

Who is this service for?

Men who have used family violence and:

- Have been excluded (via a Family Violence Intervention Order or Family Violence Safety Notice) from the home due to family violence.
- Are in need of crisis accommodation.
- Are interested in engaging in counselling support to address their behaviour.



What callers can expect from MACS

- They will speak to a qualified counsellor who will support them into accommodation.
- They will be treated with respect and without judgement.
- Qualified counsellors will speak with them about ways of addressing violent and abusive behaviour.
- Qualified counsellors will help them get access to counselling services such as mental health, drug and alcohol, the Caring Dads program and Men's Behaviour Change Programs.

Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS)

Since 2017, No to Violence has operated the Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) in the Melbourne and Dandenong Family Courts in Victoria.

FASS is an important national service, funded by the Commonwealth Government to support anyone who has experienced, used, or is alleged to have used, family violence.

No to Violence's FASS workers are trained men's family violence practitioners, whose primary role is to engage men affected by family violence – including men who are victims of family violence, as well as men who have allegations of family violence made against them in their family law matter – to access to legal information and advocacy in relation to family law proceedings.

Through FASS, men are supported with:

- Access to legal advice regarding family law matters from duty lawyers
- Receive information and advocacy regarding family law proceedings
- Referrals to appropriate support services
- Safety planning and risk assessment (if applicable)
- Links to other court services.

MEND – Men Exploring New Directions online program

The MEND program was an Australian first. It is a 20-week online men's behaviour change program (MBCP), catering for up to 10 participants. MEND's online format ensures that MBCPs are accessible to people in rural, regional and remote areas who may not have access to in-person programs. While the program provider, Men and Family Centre (MFC) is based in Northern Rivers (regional NSW), as an online program, participants could attend from across Australia.

By expanding broader online MBCP/MEND programs we could:

- reduce waiting lists
- address difficulties to recruit and retain skilled staff (online format allows for staff to be located anywhere)
- preserve anonymity when using online MBCP in small communities
- improve access to individuals who face barriers to attend in-person MBCPs (eg work commitments, primary care responsibilities)
- improve access for rural/regional communities.

In March 2023, the researchers at Monash University provided a review report of the MEND program. Their review showed that online programs like MEND can play an important role for men who use family violence but are unable to access in-person programs.

Clear Space – Online behaviour change program for gay, bi, trans and queer men and non-binary people

Clear Space was an Australia-first online behaviour change pilot program for gay, bi, trans and queer men and non-binary people, facilitated by Thorne Harbour Health, Victoria's longest-running LGBTIQ+ organisation, which provided a 20-week behaviour change program, one-on-one counselling support, service referral, and family safety contact work to LGBTQ men and non-binary people who use family violence. Clear Space is a program evaluated by Monash University in April 2023.

While family violence in LGBTQ communities is an under-researched issue, we know that LGBTQ men and non-binary people experience high rates of family violence and other forms of gender-based violence. Unfortunately, we also know that access to services is severely limited. Too often, LGBTQ men are unable to safely access perpetrator interventions because traditional MBCPs are not designed with LGBTQ men or non-binary people—in mind.

As an online program, Clear Space also shows great potential to roll out nationally or within different jurisdictions across Australia.





Leading the change to end male family violence in Australia

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Men's Referral Service

1300 766 491

24 hours: Tasmania and New South Wales

8am–9pm Monday–Friday: all other states

9am–6pm Saturday–Sunday: all other states

Interpreters available upon request.

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