

2021

# About 1800RESPECT and domestic and family violence

[1800RESPECT.org.au](https://1800RESPECT.org.au)

**1800RESPECT**  
NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC  
FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE  
**1800 737 732**



# At 1800RESPECT



We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of this nation. We proudly recognise Elders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work and live.

We value an organisation wide culture based on respect, and understand that respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures supports our continued growth as an organisation and as a nation.

As a proud Kamilaroi woman I would like to pay my respects the Traditional Owners of the land that I work, life and walk. I pay my gratitude, honour and respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.



# About 1800RESPECT

**1800RESPECT is a free confidential telephone and online counselling service available 24 hours a day, offering:**

- Information on sexual assault and domestic and family violence
- Referral to relevant services, including specialist counselling
- Counselling for anyone impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence.

**1800RESPECT is staffed by professional counsellors and provides support for:**

- People experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, sexual assault, domestic or family violence
- Friends and family
- Workers and professionals.

**We are available to anyone living in Australia – including men, children, people with disability, and those on temporary visas.**

# About 1800RESPECT

**1800RESPECT is part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022:**

- Work alongside National Partners to combat violence against women:
  - Our Watch (primary prevention)
  - DV-alert (training)
  - ANROWS (research).



**1800RESPECT has been in operation since 2010:**

- Originally received 20,000 calls a year
- Now receive approximately 20,000 calls and chats per month, and rising
- This number peaks at different times of the year.

**If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence,  
call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit [1800RESPECT.org.au](https://www.1800RESPECT.org.au)**

**In an emergency, call 000.**

# 1800RESPECT during COVID19

**1800RESPECT continues to operate as normal during the COVID19 pandemic. The service continued to be available by phone and web chat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

- We saw an increase in contacts to the service from April 2020 when stay-at-home restrictions came into place
- From April – July 2020 there was an overall 21% increase in contacts
- There was a shift in how people accessed the service, with an increasing number of people using webchat to speak to our counsellors
- 1800RESPECT and Mensline were the main referral points for the national Help is Here campaign conducted by the Australian Government
- We increased our social media presence and messaging to reach more people who may have been experiencing violence and abuse.



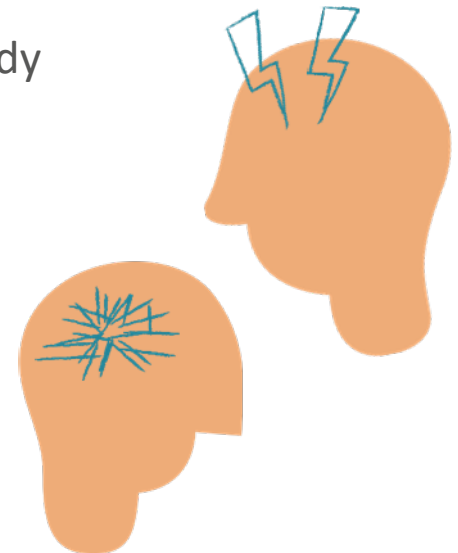
# About sexual assault

Sexual assault, violence, abuse, harassment and rape can happen to anyone, in any type of relationship.

However, we see that women experience this type of abuse more. 1 in 5 women has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 (AIHW, 2018).

It can involve:

- Touching any part of your body in a sexual way
- Sharing intimate images of you
- Stopping you from making your own choices about your body
- Drugging you
- Grooming
- Staring at you
- Making sexual remarks.



# Responding to sexual assault

Responding well when someone shares their experience of sexual violence can make a big difference.

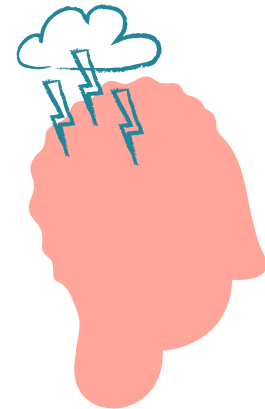
It is important to:

- Believe them – it's normal to want to ask questions, but this can make the other person feel uncomfortable
- Listen – it can take years for someone to tell you of their experience, so when they do it's important to listen without interrupting or talking too much
- Never blame them for what happened
- Ask before you touch them, including touching their hand or hugging them
- Help explore options, such as finding support services.

Supporting someone who has been through a traumatic experience can be upsetting. You can contact 1800RESPECT if you need support for yourself.

# About domestic and family violence

- Domestic and family violence happens when one person in a relationship hurts another or makes them feel unsafe. The behavior is ongoing and is about power and control over another person.
- Domestic and family violence can happen to anyone —a person from any country, religion, sexuality, gender, social background or culture. However, domestic violence is recognised to be a gender-based issue.
- *Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life. — UN Declaration*





# About domestic and family violence

## What does it involve?

Domestic and family violence can involve behaviour that is violent which can, but does not have to be, physical. Abuse comes in many forms:

- Emotional and psychological
- Financial
- Image-based and technology-facilitated
- Spiritual
- Legal
- Social
- Reproductive
- Neglect.



# About domestic and family violence

## Who is at risk?

People belonging to certain groups or communities may experience higher rates of domestic and family violence than others.

For example, people with a disability are 1.8 times more likely to experience abuse in some form.

Some people can also experience forms of violence specific to a part of their culture, identity or situation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are up to 80 times more likely to experience violence.

They may also experience unique challenges in finding support or leaving a violent situation.

1800RESPECT provides support for everyone living in Australia, regardless of their situation.

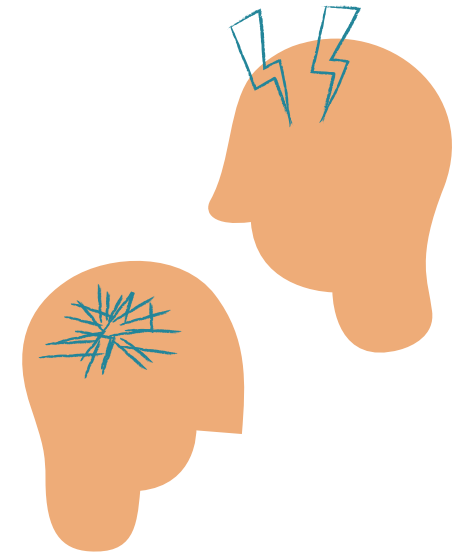


# About domestic and family violence

## Signs of abuse

People's responses to violence can vary. When someone has experienced violence and abuse, they may:

- Suddenly stop going out for no reason
- Experience depression and/or anxiety
- Worry a lot about making a particular person angry
- Make a lot of excuses for someone's negative behaviour
- Have marks or injuries on their body that can't be explained
- Stop spending time with friends and family
- Seem scared or wary around a particular person
- Have more days off work than normal
- Spend too much time at work to avoid going home
- Seem worried that they are being watched, followed or controlled in some way.



# Barriers to support

It is difficult to disclose an experience of violence, but even more so if there are barriers to services, community or professional support.

- Social and economic disadvantage
- Trauma from forced separation policy
- Drug and alcohol use
- Access to services
- Concerns about maintaining anonymity
- Concerns about being diverted to other services
- Concerns about being able to attend community and cultural events
- Concerns about being disconnected from community
- Confusion about legal processes.



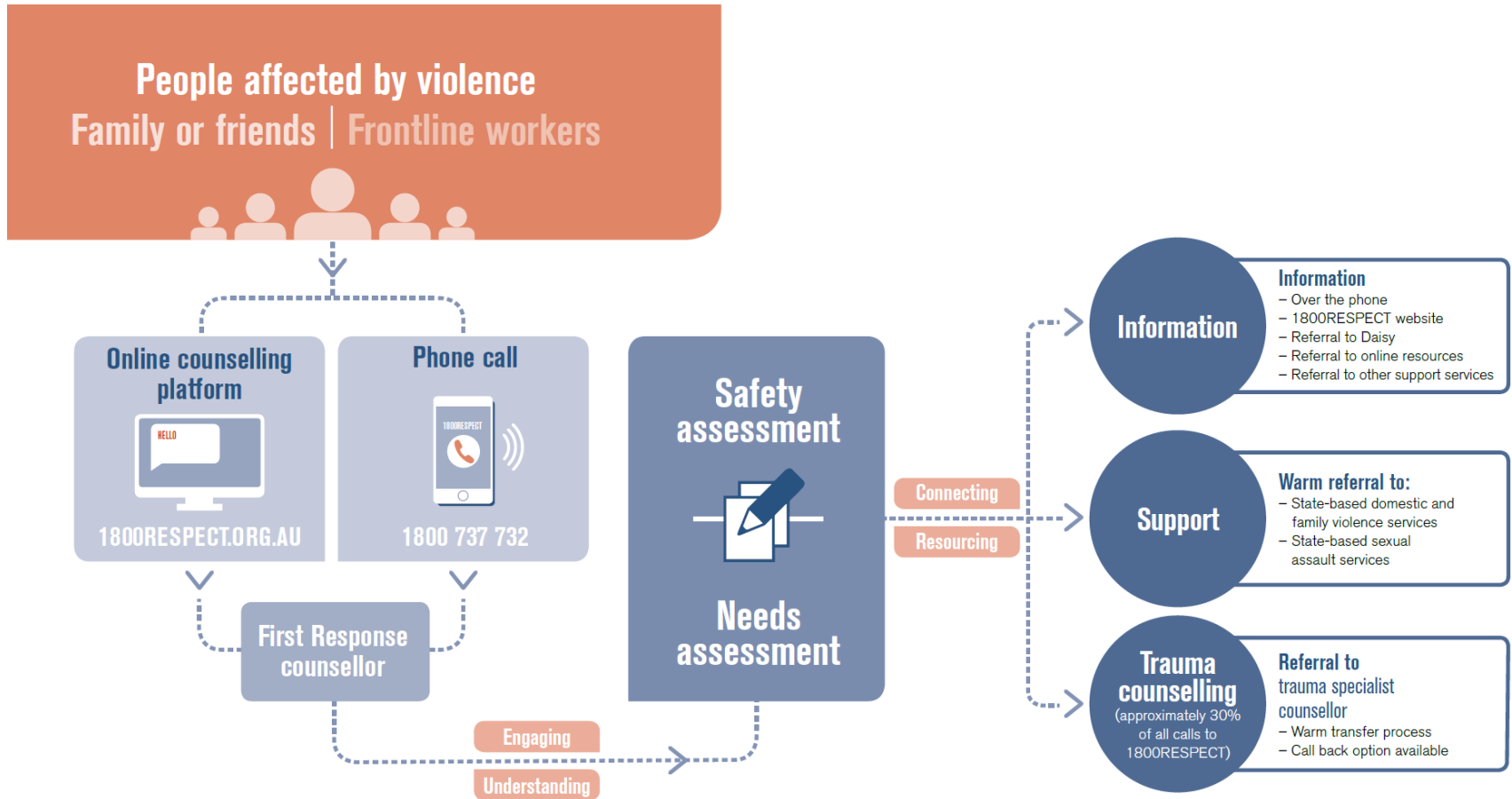
# About domestic and family violence

## How to respond

How you respond to someone who discloses experiences of violence and abuse can make all the difference. It is important to:

- In an emergency or if someone is in danger, call 000 immediately
- Believe them and take their fears seriously
- Listen without interrupting or judging
- Never blame the person experiencing the violence for what has happened to them
- Don't make excuses for the person who has hurt them
- Understand that they may not be ready or it may not be safe to leave. Don't try to force them to do what you think is best
- Help in practical ways, with transport, appointments, child minding, or a place to escape to
- Help explore options. You or the person you are supporting can call 1800RESPECT or visit our website for more information and support.

# What happens when you contact 1800RESPECT



# 1800RESPECT Disability Pathways Project

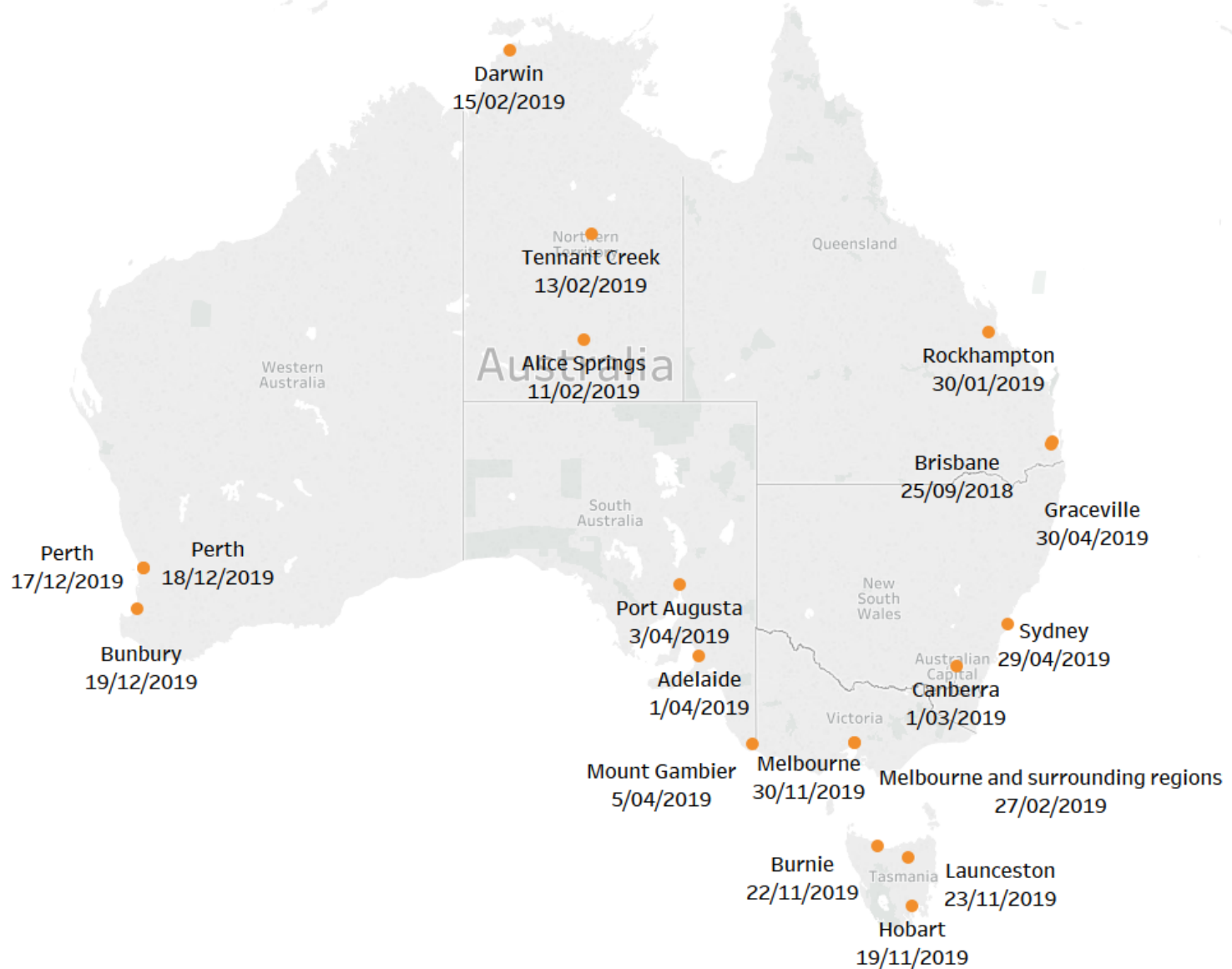
The Disability Pathways Project (DPP) commenced in 2017 and ran for 2 years, bringing together some of Australia's most influential disability advocates and professionals. Through national consultation, the project aimed to improve:

- Referral pathways, including formalising relationships and bridging gaps with disability, advocacy and support services
- Counsellor training, including better understanding needs and to make services more accessible
- Resources, resulting in the Sunny App and the Disability Support Toolkit
- Communications, resulting in a national campaign and ongoing communication messages
- Data frameworks and strategies.

Other outcomes included improvements to the 1800RESPECT Service Directory, the 1800RESPECT Accessibility Inclusion Plan, and Scope communication access symbol accreditation.



# DPP national consultation





Sunny is 1800RESPECT's free and accessible app for women with disability who have experienced violence and abuse.

As part of the DPP, Sunny was co-designed with women with disability to make sure it provides the very best support for the people who use it.

- Women with disability can use the app to:
- Tell their story
- Learn about different types of abuse
- Understand what abuse is and what has happened to them
- Know their rights
- Find people who can help.

Sunny is available for both Apple and Android mobile devices.



## Counsellor training

1800RESPECT Disability Awareness assists to improve counsellor knowledge of:

- Women with disability and their experience of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination
- Effective communication with and intervention for women with disability experiencing violence
- Appropriate referral pathways for women with disability.

## Disability Support Toolkit

The toolkit is now online on the 1800RESPECT website. It is available to anyone working with people with disability who may experience violence and abuse. It includes:

- Guidelines and fact sheets
- Easy English guides
- Videos and campaign resources.

# Improvements in disclosure





Follow us on social media

