

DVConnect Mensline is a free, confidential telephone counselling, referral, information and support, service for Queenslanders identifying as male, and who may be experiencing or using domestic and family violence (DFV). This service is available 9am until midnight, 7 days a week. In the last financial year, DVConnect's Mensline received almost 15,000 phone calls and referrals.

DVConnect's Mensline offers counselling, referral, information and support for:

- Men who are using violence in their relationships
- Men who are experiencing domestic violence
- Others seeking support for men using or experiencing domestic violence.

## **Men using violence in their relationship**

Many men who are using DFV in their relationships are able to change their behaviour. When men choose to seek help and change their behaviour, they go on to have healthier and happier relationships, role modelling positive behaviours for their children.

Mensline Queensland recognises violence is a choice and actively works with men to:

- Acknowledge the courage it takes to ask for help to put an end to destructive behaviour
- Acknowledge that individuals are accountable for their own behaviour and are responsible for how they choose to react to stress factors
- Acknowledge and encourage men to change behaviour through support, referral and advocacy.

## **Men experiencing violence within their relationship**

Domestic violence happens to all genders, males against females, males against males, as well as females against males. Although not as widely publicised, it does happen. Domestic violence and abuse within intimate relationships can happen to anyone, regardless of their gender. It is control and power based. For example a man could experience this from his girlfriend, his boyfriend, his wife or his husband.

No one person's experience is the same or typical. There is no 'typical' experience within this situation. Domestic violence within intimate relationships can change over time. Rarely do relationships start with abuse and violence. It is commonly something that happens with time, and very rarely improves, unless the abuser is willing to put in the work required to change their behaviours.

## **Mensline Court Support**

Mensline Court workers interview and engage with men who have been involved in DFV situation before they appear in court (Beenleigh, Ipswich, Brisbane, Holland Park and Richlands). Mensline assists men (identified as either respondents or aggrieved) who are appearing at court where an application has been made for a DFV Protection Order, either by the QLD Police or a private application by an aggrieved or a victim, regardless of gender.

Without collusion with men workers will challenge alleged abusive behaviour robustly but non-judgmentally, and assess whether men comprehend the affects of the abuse on their partners, their families, themselves.

Mensline supports Behaviour Change Programs with approved providers and approved intervention programs. For those men who are take responsibility for their use of DFV and demonstrate commitment to make unconditional agreements to change their behaviour, there is hope and the Mensline worker will work towards a court intervention for the man to be able to attend a behavioural change program.

Mensline acknowledges and actively promotes the notion that when provided with clear and practical strategies to expand behavioural choice, men have the capacity for positive change.