

## Being a SAFE Dad

- Talk about your feelings so that your children can learn that it is alright for men to talk about their feelings.
- Spend time with your daughters. You are the first man that your daughters really know. You can help them to learn how men should treat them when they grow up.
- Show your sons the way you would like them to behave when they are men.
- Enjoy your children and listen to them.
- Comfort them. All children get a special feeling of security when being comforted by their dads.
- Play with your children. Fathers often enjoy rough and tumble play with their children. This helps the children learn that you can be strong but not too rough to hurt others. They also learn that you can get excited but then stop before things get out of hand.
- When they talk to you listen to them.. Make special times to listen to what is happening in their lives.
- Treat your children's mother and all women with respect so that your daughters will grow up knowing that it is good to be a woman and your sons will know how to treat future partners.

## Other Contacts

**Mensline** 1300 789 978

*Offers confidential counselling, referral & support*

**Men's Info Line** 1800 600 636

**Life Line** 131 114

**Relationships Australia** 1300 364 277

**Centacare** 07 4772 9000

### NQDVRS

- ◆ Information and referral
- ◆ AARDVARC program for children
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Court Support
- ◆ Choosing Safety Upgrades program
- ◆ Men's Behaviour Change Program
- ◆ SAFE Dads Program
- ◆ Community education & Training

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## Against Violence #33



# SAFE DADS



**An education and information program promoting non-violent parenting for men**

NQDVRS  
Funded by



## Aims of the SAFE Dad's Program

- ⇒ To provide education and information to fathers that domestic and family violence has a detrimental effect on their children. To provide an enabling and safe environment for fathers to talk about their feelings and their fathering role
- ⇒ To enable men to address the impact of their violence within a group setting
- ⇒ Assist men to model respect for the children's mother and significant others

## Who Can Attend?

The SAFE Dad's program is designed for any father over the age of 18 who uses or has used domestic violence.



Any father wishing to learn about and address his use of domestic violence and the effect this violence has on his children may attend the program. All fathers and step-fathers are welcome regardless of their family circumstances.

## How will the Program Work?

The program consists of four two-hour weekly sessions and is free of charge. NQDVRs will accept referrals and will plan dates to suit

## What will be Covered by the Program?

- ⇒ The program will explore what it means to be a father. Participants will address how domestic and family violence negatively impacts on their children, the children's mother and themselves.
- ⇒ The group will increase their understanding of how to provide non-violent discipline and to negotiate the discipline of their children with the children's mother.
- ⇒ Participants will be equipped with some tools to prevent violence.
- ⇒ The group will discuss the benefits of being in a healthy relationship.

## Children and Domestic Violence

Many people believe that if domestic violence occurs between two partners, their children will not be affected, that they are too young to understand and that they will just forget about it. It is also often assumed that if a man is a 'good dad', his children will not be impacted by the violence he uses against their mother.

***Using violence against your children's mother is not being a good dad. You may be seriously harming your children in many ways***



Children living with domestic and family violence can grow up believing that violence is an appropriate way to solve problems and that men have the right to

control women. They may blame themselves or their mother for the violence.

## Are You Using Domestic and Family Violence?

**Forms of domestic and family violence include:**

### Physical abuse

using or threatening to use greater physical strength to control someone e.g. hitting, pushing, kicking, choking, using weapons.

### Sexual abuse

e.g. unwanted sex, sex acts and/or touching, ignoring or ridiculing sexual feelings, sexual harassment.

### Verbal abuse

e.g. put downs, insults, name calling, swearing.

### Social abuse

e.g. isolating someone, insulting their friends or family, humiliating them in front of others, refusing to let them socialize.

### Economic abuse

e.g. controlling the finances whoever earns them, depriving someone of enough money to live decently, refusing to work.

### Emotional abuse

controlling someone through fear and intimidation e.g. withholding affection, criticising, punishing, degrading, playing 'mind games' and stalking.

### Spiritual abuse

e.g. breaking someone's spirit, ridiculing their beliefs, boasting of exploits with others, comparing them to others.

