

Threats, Intimidation and Harassment are defined as forms of domestic violence under the Queensland Domestic Violence & Family Protection Act 2012. They can be grounds for seeking a protection order under the Act.

General Characteristics of Verbal and Emotional Abuse

Verbal/Emotional Abuse :

- * is a means of gaining and maintaining power
- * is manipulating and controlling
- * is hurtful
- * attacks the nature and abilities of the partner
- * is harmful and destructive
- * most often takes place behind closed doors
- * undermines and discounts its victims perception

Which can cause people to:

- * Feel confused about the perpetrators interactions and behaviour towards them, and may fear to question it
- * Feel lost
- * Be caught off guard
- * Feel confused about their own feelings
- * Feel pushed around
- * Feel out of control
- * Feel uneasy and empty within one self
- * Lack self-esteem and confidence
- * Feel fear

Many of the details in this brochure have been taken from Patricia Evans "The Verbally Abusive Relationship" and Laurie Mackinnon "Hurting Without Hitting: non-physical contact forms of abuse".

Feelings

Feelings are an emotional response to the environment around us. Feelings are natural and should be respected. By recognising and validating our feelings we can tell when something is right or wrong. The feelings previously listed can be a response to being treated abusively. It is important to acknowledge these feelings for your own safety and well-being.

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

TOWNSVILLE OFFICE

PO Box 6061, Townsville QLD 4810
Phone: 07 4721 2888 Fax: 07 4721 1794
nqdvrs @nqdvrs.org.au

1st Floor, Metway Arcade, 390 Flinders Street, Townsville

MOUNT ISA OFFICE

Po Box 502, Mt Isa QLD 4825
Phone: 07 4743 0946 Fax: 07 4743 7999
minqdvrs@nqdvrs.org.au
The Old Court House Building, Isa Street

<http://www.nqdvrs.org.au>

Against Violence #6



Emotional, Verbal and Psychological Abuse in Relationships



"Yelling at living things does tend to kill the spirit in them. Sticks and Stones may break our bones, but words will break our hearts"

Robert Fulgham

NQDVRs
Funded by



Non physical contact abuse, such as verbal, emotional and psychological abuse is a violence that does not leave bruises or marks on people from the outside, but it can cause long lasting hurt on the inside.

It has been shown that there are long-term effects from emotional, verbal and psychological abuse that include physical and mental distress and relationship problems. It is often said that hurtful words have a longer lasting affect on people.

Perpetrators aim to gain power and control over the other person through using emotional abuse.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE can include

- * Discounting reality and experience
- * Trivialising
- * Undermining
- * Threatening
- * Withholding information or feelings
- * Forgetting (denial, covert manipulation)
- * Ordering
- * Does your partner persistently demand and retain control?
- * Are the words and attitudes from your partner showing you disrespect and

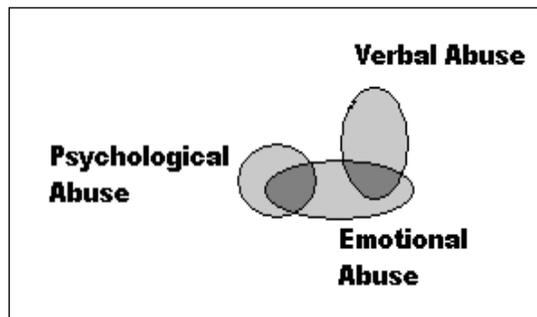
The content of the message in verbal abuse often degrades, insults, humiliates, ridicules or in some other ways lessens the dignity of the other person. It can also be the hostility in the tone rather than the content of the message which makes the communication abusive.

VERBAL ABUSE can include

- * Name calling
- * Accusing or blaming
- * Shouting and yelling
- * Put downs
- * Disguising jokes (ie. put downs)
- * Judging and criticising

Emotional abuse almost always involves *verbal abuse*. *Psychological abuse* almost always involves emotional abuse (Figure 1)

Figure 1.



Psychological abuse is an ongoing pattern of control, put downs, unrealistic expectations, verbal attacking and silent withdrawal. Through repeated episodes over time, the perpetrator undermines the target person's sense of self through emotional abuse.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE can include

- * Attacking the person by ignoring, humiliating, and or belittling them.
- * Behaviour and/or comments to undermine your sense of self
- * sulking;
- * threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away,
- * lying to your friends and family about you; telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.
- * Threatening to commit suicide
- * report you to welfare agencies unless you comply with his demands regarding bringing up the children;
- * isolates them by controlling their contact with the outside world and their support systems.