

A guide to

Relationships, domestic abuse and coercive control

Domestic abuse is widespread. It impacts people of all ages, genders, cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Some people do not recognise they are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship because there may not be physical violence.

Coercive control is abusive behaviour used to cause fear and/or control a person or situation. This type of domestic violence is known as domestic abuse and can go undetected in intimate partner or family relationships for years.

If not recognised this controlling behaviour can escalate to physical life threatening violence.



Coercive control checklist

Is there someone in your life who:

- Makes you feel afraid?
- Controls what you do and say?
- Puts you down or embarrasses you?
- Accuses you of flirting or cheating?
- Pressures or forces you to do sexual things?
- Threatens to hurt you, themselves, friends or family?
- Constantly checking your phone and location?
- Limits your access to money?

Any of the actions above may be signs of coercive control and domestic abuse.

If you answered yes to any of these or recognise that you use these behaviours you are likely to be in an unhealthy relationship.

There is support available to make changes and help build a healthier relationship.

It is important to seek advice and support even if you're not sure. We all need help sometimes.

Support Services

Emergency and Life Threatening Situations
Police 000

Law Enforcement
Crime Stoppers
(report anonymously)
1800 333 000

NSW Police Assistance Line
131 444

Helplines
1800RESPECT 1800 737 732
Kids Help Line 1800 551 800
Lifeline 131 114

NSW Rape Crisis Line
1800 424 017

Mensline 1300 789 978

Emergency Accommodation
Domestic Violence
Hotline NSW 1800 656 463
Link2Home 1800 152 152

Men's Services
Local Support Service
St George 8522 4450 or
0475 975 742

Legal Services Domestic Violence Unit

Legal Aid NSW 9219 6300

Women's Domestic Violence
Court Advocacy Service
1800 938 227

Women's Legal
Service NSW 1800 801 501

Indigenous Services
Aboriginal Family Worker
Program 9528 2933

Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/
ACT 1800 765 767

Victims Services (Aboriginal
Contact Line) 1800 019 123

Settlement and Community Services
Advance Diversity Services
9597 5455

Immigrant Women's Speakout
Association 9635 8022

Referral and Support
Integricare Parenting and
Family Service 9599 7821
Interrelate 1300 473 528
St George and Sutherland
Domestic Violence Service
9113 2495

St George Family Support
services 9553 9100

Sutherland Shire Family
Services 9528 2933



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Am I in a healthy relationship?

Psychological/Emotional

- My feelings are not judged by my partner. They support me and respect my boundaries.
- My partner makes me feel crazy and tells me I am, my feelings are judged and my boundaries aren't respected.

Sexual

- I have a choice whether I want to engage in sexual activities, my partner asks for consent and respects my decisions.
- My partner makes me engage in sexual activities even if I don't want to, they do everything they can to convince me and harass me until I do it.

Social

- I am encouraged to spend time with my friends and family, we understand the importance of these relationships.
- My partner doesn't let me see my family or friends and I am not allowed to socialise without them there.

Spiritual

- My partner respects my beliefs and values my choice to participate in religious or spiritual practices.
- My partner doesn't agree with my religious or spiritual practices, stopping me from participating and uses my religion or beliefs against me.

Physical

- I feel safe with my partner, they never hurt me or people I care about.
- My partner reacts violently towards me, throws things at me when they are angry or hits me during arguments.

Financial

- My partner doesn't control how I spend my money. I have complete access to my finances.
- My partner controls what I can spend money on, I always have to pay when we do things together. They spend my money without permission.

Technological control

- My partner doesn't check my phone, or limit who I can speak to and what I can do online, I feel trusted and in control of my own technology.
- My partner checks my messages and social media accounts, asks for my passwords and tells me they can see where I am at all times.

Verbal

- We calmly discuss our issues and respect each other's opinions, we communicate effectively and fairly to find a positive outcome for each other.
- My partner blames me, makes negative comments, humiliates and puts me down.

