

Do you need assistance?

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, contact Safe Steps on **1800 015 188** or email safesteps@safesteps.org.au to speak to a family violence crisis specialist.

If you have trouble talking or hearing, use the National Relay Service (NRS):

Phone **1800 555 690** and ask for **1800 015 188**

If you need a language interpreter call: **131 450**

For more information about Safe Steps and the Disability Family Violence Crisis Response Initiative (DFVCR) visit our website at safesteps.org.au

At Safe Steps we talk about family and domestic violence which also includes violence in intimate partner relationships and queerplatonic relationships. This is to acknowledge that people who need support may have experienced violence in a domestic relationship, or from family of origin, or while dating. Anyone who has experienced these and other sorts of relationship violence can contact us.

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre is working towards Rainbow Tick accreditation. Safe Steps recognise and respect people of all genders, sexes, and sexualities. We are committed to improving access and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual people seeking our support and are dedicated to ongoing improvement in being a safe and inclusive service and workplace for those in the LGBTIQ+ community.




Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Victoria, the land on which our services are delivered. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their culture, and Elders, past and present. We acknowledge the First Peoples' right to self determination and to continuing their connection to lands, waters and communities.

**Our services are available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week:**

 **1800 015 188**

 Email us at: safesteps@safesteps.org.au

 Webchat: safesteps.org.au/chat
(Monday-Friday, 9am to midnight
except public holidays)

 Visit our website: safesteps.org.au

How Safe Steps can support you

When you call the Safe Steps 24/7 crisis response line on **1800 015 188** or **contact us via webchat at safesteps.org.au/chat** you will speak to one of our Family Violence Crisis Specialists.

Our Crisis Specialists can:

- Assess your risks, and explore options to increase your safety, whether you want to stay in the relationship or with your family/carer or leave
- Refer you to LGBTIQ+ services that can provide specialist supports
- Create a personal safety plan designed to keep you and your children safe
- Assess eligibility for, and organise access to safe crisis accommodation for you, your children and any pets, following risk assessment findings and accommodation availability
- Support you with how you may be able to stay in your home with your children – if it is safe to do so – when the abuser is required by law to leave
- Explain your legal rights and entitlements including connecting you with the legal system or helping you to apply for an intervention order



Safe Steps

FAMILY VIOLENCE RESPONSE CENTRE

LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Family Violence Support Services



You Have the Right to Live Free From:

- Intimate partner violence
- Domestic violence
- Family violence

Who is Safe Steps?

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre is Victoria's statewide 24/7 crisis response service for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

We offer support to anyone who needs to escape domestic and family violence and live free from abuse. Last year we received over 50,000 calls that were responded to by around 100 Family Violence Crisis Specialists.

If you or someone you know needs help

Call Safe Steps for confidential support and information on **1800 015 188**.



What is domestic and family violence?

Any threatening or abusive behaviour that makes you feel scared or unsafe and occurs between people in a family or intimate relationship.

This behaviour doesn't have to be violent, but, if the behaviour causes you to fear for your safety or the safety of another person, it is time to call Safe Steps.

Domestic and family violence can affect anyone in any type of relationship including:

- Past or current intimate relationships, including relationships where you are dating or living together
- Queerplatonic relationships
- Relationships involving carers of people with a disability, a medical condition, or elders
- Relationships that include relatives and guardians
- Culturally recognised family groups

Domestic and family violence in the LGBTIQ+ community

Safe Steps recognises that individuals within the LGBTIQ+ community may experience increased risk and additional obstacles when seeking support.

It's important to recognise that intersecting systems of inequality and discrimination can influence the experiences of domestic and family violence within the LGBTIQ+ community.

For LGBTIQ+ people, domestic and family violence is likely to be both similar and different to that experienced by heterosexual and cisgendered people.

- Domestic and family violence experienced by the LGBTIQ+ community can include:
- Physical and sexual abuse
- Emotional and psychological abuse
- Homo/bi/intersex/trans/aphobia
- Rejection by family of origin
- Being denied access to gender affirming care or hormone treatment (including withholding medication)
- Financial abuse, such as withholding money or not allowing you to work
- Controlling what you can and can't do
- Threatening to "out" someone
- Threatening to share someone's HIV status without consent
- Threatening you or your loved ones including children, pets or other family members
- Isolating you from family, friends and community
- Spiritual or religious-motivated abuse or isolation
- Refusing to use someone's pronouns or accept their gender identity/expression
- Forcing concealment of sexuality and/or gender identity
- Destroying your personal belongings



This brochure is available in alternate formats.

For an accessible version, email disability@safesteps.org.au or call us on **1800 015 188**. For other language options go to safesteps.org.au