

## Is this normal?

### Does your partner or someone else close to you:

- Hurt or threaten to hurt you, your children, pets, or others close to you?
- Intimidate or scare you, like driving dangerously with you in the car?
- Control you or take away your ability to be independent?
- Control your money or access to basic needs like healthcare, food, sanitary products, etc?
- Make big decisions without you?
- Check up or follow you all the time?
- Always put you down or call you names?
- Stop you doing things you like to do or that are important to you?
- Isolate you from friends, whānau, family, your support network?

## Is this normal?

- Force you to do things that embarrass or humiliate you?
- Get jealous or angry easily and often?
- Force you to have sex or do sexual things you don't like?
- Play mind games so you think you're going crazy, or blame you for their violence?

**These are not normal or healthy behaviours in a close relationship.**

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, it sounds like the person close to you is using abusive behaviour, and that you are experiencing family violence.

## Is this normal?

Family violence can look very different for different people, and doesn't always involve physical violence. It is often subtle to start with, and gets worse or more frequent over time.

**It is normal to respond to abuse in all sorts of ways.**  
**You may:**

- Feel confused, worried, afraid
- Fight back, get angry, frustrated
- Be alone, isolated, exhausted
- Do what's expected to keep the peace
- Think you're going crazy
- Worry about your children

**You are not alone.**  
**We are here to help.**

## Are you feeling trapped?

Abusive partners usually do lots of things to make it hard for their partner to leave.

Other people who don't see those things may say that you should leave or blame you for not leaving. They may think you're imagining things or exaggerating, or they may blame you.

**The most dangerous time for women and children is when they say they're leaving, or try to leave.**

You know best whether staying, leaving, or returning will be best and safest for you and your children at any point in time.

**We will help you, if you stay, leave, or go back.**

## Need better options?

It can be really hard to become safe without help from others. Most options will be a trade-off in some way. Only you can decide what is best for you.

### How can Women's Refuge help you?

We can help with:

- Emotional support
- Providing information about more safety and support options
- Connecting you with local Women's Refuge or other support services, including kaupapa Māori services
- Helping others understand what you need and why, speaking for you when it can make a difference
- Getting you into a safe house and supporting you while you stay

**Kia kaha! Kōrero mai. Stay strong! Ring us for help.**

## If you are in immediate danger ring 111 for Police

If it's not safe to speak, stay silent. A recording will say push 55 for emergency help, which connects to Police.

**Here are some ideas and options that may or may not be useful or doable. You know best what will work.**

- **Talk to a trusted neighbour**, agree on a signal or code (like texting a certain emoji) to let them know when you need them to do something like call 111 or come over to defuse the situation.
- **Practice with older children** what to do if they're scared or there's more violence, such as ring 111 and go to the bedroom, or run to neighbours.
- **Get a prepay phone your partner doesn't know about**, and load important contact numbers.

## Ideas and Options

**Be prepared for violence.** What are the easiest escape routes? Avoid stairs and the kitchen or other rooms with potential weapons.

**Arrange a safe place to escape to** with a neighbour, friend, whānau or family member, OR memorise 0800-REFUGE to go to a safe house. Call ahead to talk through your plans if possible.

**Open your own bank account.** If you're still with your partner, use a different bank and a friend's or work address. Talk to Women's Refuge about the option to open an account without ID.

**Apply for paid FV leave** from work (up to 10 days/year) or flexible working to deal with effects of family violence. Women's Refuge can write you a support letter if needed.

## Ideas and Options

**Put essentials in a safe place** with someone you trust - cash, cards, spare keys, medicine, passport, ID, birth certificates, cash, etc.

**Document the abuse or stalking you're experiencing** as it might be useful in the future. Doctors can document medical issues. Take photos of injuries, save abusive messages. You can safely save screenshots, messages, photos, etc. with the **Bright Sky NZ app**.

**If you're being followed or stalked:**

- Drive to your local police station if you're being followed
- Disable GPS on devices so you won't be tracked, check online privacy settings
- Get help from Netsafe for tech problems at 0508-638-723 or chat at [www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz)

## Ideas and Options

**You can leave your tenancy/rental with 48 hours notice because of family violence.** Search 'family violence' at [www.tenancy.govt.nz](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz) or call 0800 TENANCY for info.

**Consider applying for a Protection Order (PO)**, and occupancy/ tenancy and furniture orders, and a parenting order at the same time. **Ring 0800 REFUGE to talk about whether this is a good safety option for you**, and what happens if your ex breaches a PO (breaks its rules).

**If you have a PO, give a copy of it to all places you/your children go often** - school, work, etc. Tell people what you want them to do if your ex shows up.

**For help with debt** that is a result of family violence, ring **Good Shepherd** for help: 0800 466 370 option 4.

## Ideas and Options

**For help with benefits**, Women's Refuge can talk to a Work & Income Family Violence Case Manager for you.

**Remember you are strong** - you are surviving each day and doing so much to make your life and your children's lives better and safer.

You might need help with some of these ideas, or need lots of other different kinds of help, such as to get a Family Violence Visa or with Family Court proceedings.

**Ring or chat to Women's Refuge. We will do what we can to help, in ways that uphold your dignity and enhance your mana.**



**WOMEN'S REFUGE**

**0800 REFUGE (733 843)**

[www.womensrefuge.org.nz](http://www.womensrefuge.org.nz)

Our free services include a 24-hour phone line and live chat (Shielded Site), safe houses, support and advocacy for women and children in the community, and education and support programmes.



For information and live chat help that won't show in your browser history, click on this icon at the bottom of many Aotearoa NZ websites: The Warehouse, Trademe, Stuff, many government sites, banks, etc.



**WOMEN'S REFUGE**

**Safety Planning Ideas**

*To help you think through some safety and wellbeing options for you and your children*

