



Domestic Violence Action Plan

**Empowering Safe Communities –
Standing United Against Violence**



Our Commitment to Bridging the Gap on Domestic & Family Violence

Introduction & Why This Matters

Message from Our Chairman & CEO

At Sporties, we stand as the cornerstone of our community.

Our vision has always been to create a place where every person feels welcomed, respected, and supported. That vision also calls us to acknowledge the difficult realities faced by many, including the impacts of domestic, family, and sexual violence.

We cannot turn away from the fact that too many lives are affected by these experiences. We believe each of us has a role in fostering safety, awareness, and connection. As both a local employer and a gathering place, we are committed to ensuring that no one in our community feels alone, unseen, or without support.

This document reflects that commitment. It represents our promise to be part of the solution, standing alongside those who may be affected, offering compassion and understanding, and helping to create clear pathways to specialist support when needed.

We also recognise that external services are stretched and that waiting lists can be long. That is why we are building capacity within our walls: to listen with empathy, to respond with care, and to strengthen the bridges that connect people to the help they deserve.

Together, we can create a safer, stronger, and more supportive community for all.

Jeff Gibbs

on behalf of the Sporties Board and Management.

Together, we stand with our community to:



Raise awareness and deepen understanding



Train and empower our people to recognise, respond, and refer



Strengthen connections to essential services



Stand beside those who need us most

We are proudly supporting and working in collaboration with others in the Club industry



Contents

Understanding Domestic & Family Violence (DFV)	4
Recognising the Signs	7
How to Support & What Not to Say	8
Resources & Support	10
Supporting Our Staff	11



Understanding Domestic & Family Violence (DFV)

What is Domestic and Family Violence?

Domestic and family violence happens when someone uses ongoing patterns of behaviour to gain power, control, or dominance over another person. It is not limited to physical harm. Violence and abuse can take many different forms that impact safety, wellbeing, and freedom.

It can include:

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, restraining
- **Sexual:** unwanted sexual activity, coercion, assault
- **Emotional/Psychological:** threats, intimidation, gaslighting
- **Coercive Control:** calculated patterns of domination, such as tracking movements, isolating from friends and family, or micromanaging daily life
- **Financial:** restricting access to money or employment
- **Technological:** phone monitoring, abusive messages
- **Spiritual:** misusing religion or beliefs to control
- **Stalking/Harassment:** repeated unwanted contact

Prevalence of domestic violence in Australia



**1 in 4
women**

23% or 2.3 million



**1 in 14
men**

7.3% or 692,600

Have experienced violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15

Impacts of DFV

Victims / Survivors

- Physical health such as injuries and chronic health conditions
- Mental health such as such as anxiety, depression or PTSD
- loss of self esteem and compromised sense of safety
- Risk of homelessness, financial hardship

Children

- Witnessing violence is child abuse
- Developmental delays, concentration issues
- Anxiety, sleep disturbances

Stat: Nearly 2 in 5 children exposed to DFV show long-term trauma

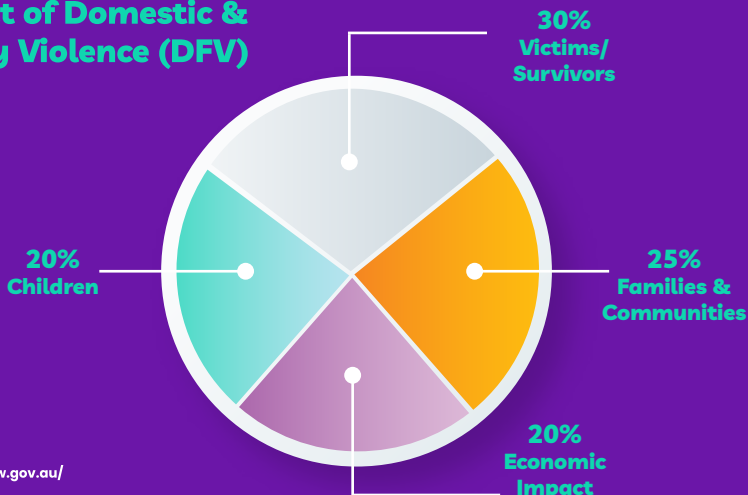
Families & Communities

- Emotional exhaustion, financial strain
- Fear, guilt, helplessness
- Erodes trust, increases cycles of poverty & crime

Economic Impact (NSW)

- DFV costs >\$4.5B/year (health, policing, justice, lost productivity)
- Employers face absenteeism, turnover, reduced performance

Impact of Domestic & Family Violence (DFV)



Source:
<https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/>



1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence.

82% of women who experience sexual assault do not report it to police.

32% of assault-related hospitalisations are due to domestic and family violence. 9 in 10 of those are female.



Police respond to over 140,000 DFSV-related calls annually. That's 1 every 4 minutes.

**These are more than numbers.
They are our co-workers, friends,
patrons and family**

Recognising the Signs & At Work

Recognising the signs of domestic and family violence can be challenging, but being aware of physical, emotional, and workplace indicators can help support those affected. It can include:

Physical Signs



- Unexplained bruises, cuts, sprains
- Frequent illness or vague health complaints
- Fatigue, insomnia

Emotional / Behavioural



- Low self-esteem, nervousness, hypervigilance
- Withdrawal, fear of partner's reactions
- Mood swings, irritability, sadness

At Work – Obvious Signs



- Frequent absences or lateness
- Avoiding events, nervousness, jumpiness
- Partner calls/visits excessively

At Work – Less Obvious Signs



- Financial issues, borrowing from colleagues
- Altered appearance, decline in personal care
- Technology monitoring, inconsistent stories
- Uncharacteristic behaviour, drop in performance

How to Support & What Not to Say

Supporting Someone

Supporting someone experiencing domestic or family violence starts with listening with care, offering belief and validation, and connecting them to appropriate help.

If you suspect abuse:

- "How are things going at home?"
- "You don't seem yourself lately, how are you feeling?"
- "Is there any support you'd like right now?"

If someone tells you:

- Listen actively
- Believe them
- Validate: **"This is not your fault"**
- Avoid judgement
- Ask how you can help
- Offer connection to resources (1800 RESPECT, Sonder, local services)

Key Principle:
Listen, believe,
validate.

**Offer support rather
than judging,
questioning or
solving.**

What Not to Say

Choosing your words carefully is crucial, as saying the wrong thing can unintentionally shame, frighten, or push someone away when they are seeking support.

Blaming:
"Why don't you just
leave?"

Minimising:
"Everybody argues
sometimes"

**Judging
emotions:**
"You're
overreacting"

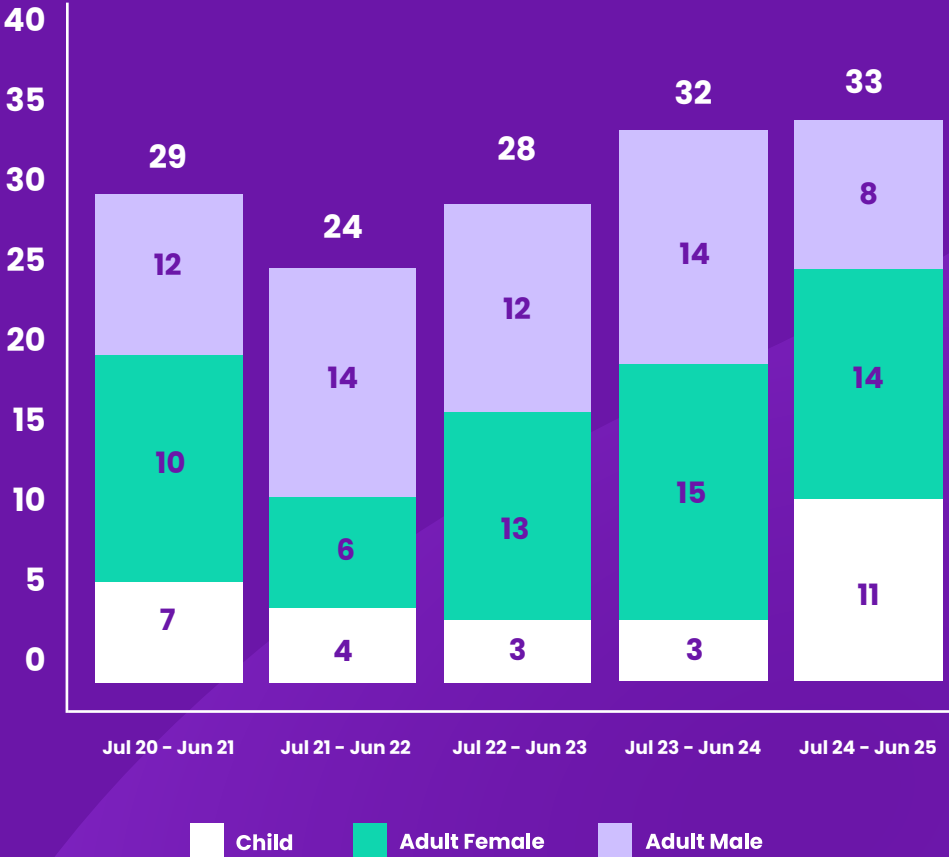
**Unsolicited
advice:**
"Call the police
immediately"

Disbelieving:
"Are you sure that happened?"

Comparing:
"Others have
it worse"

Domestic Violence Related Murder

The chart below shows the number of domestic violence related murders recorded by the NSW Police.



Source: https://bocsar.nsw.gov.au/documents/topic-areas/murder/DV_Murder_Infographic.pdf

Resources & Contact

Immediate Support

Resources & Support

-   **1800RESPECT (24/7 National) – 1800 737 732 | www.1800respect.org.au**
-  **NSW Domestic Violence Line – 1800 656 463**
-  **No to Violence (Men's Helpline) – 1300 766 491**
-  **Sexual Assault Counselling Australia – 1800 211 028**
-  **Empower App – www.empoweraustralia.com**
-  **Sonder (Employee Assistance) – Access via Employee Portal**
-  **Liverpool City Council Services – liverpool.nsw.gov.au**
-  **Emergency – 000 (if in immediate danger)**

At Sporties you can -

- Approach any staff member
- Be provided a private, safe space to talk
- Be provided with information that will assist in connecting you to professional support

Together, we can create a safer, stronger community



Supporting Our Staff

At Sporties, the same principles of listening, believing, validating, and connecting to support apply when it comes to our team. We recognise that staff may face personal challenges, domestic and family violence, or mental health struggles, and we are committed to creating a safe, caring workplace where help is always available.

What We Offer:

- **Access to Sonder:** Confidential support for personal, family, or work-related issues.
- **Access to Qualified Counsellor Onsite (First Responder):** Professional, trauma-informed support for staff when needed.
- **Trained Leadership:** All leaders are trained in Mental Health First Aid and equipped to respond with empathy, support, and guidance.
- **Ongoing Staff Training:** Regular training in recognising and responding to domestic and family violence, mental health challenges, and workplace wellbeing.
- **Leadership Support:** Guidance and encouragement for staff to seek help, debrief, and access resources safely.

We are committed to continuous improvement, always looking for ways to strengthen support, education, and wellbeing initiatives for our staff. Our goal is to provide a workplace culture where everyone feels heard, valued, and supported.



**Together, We Can
Make a Difference**