



creating awareness ... effecting change

SUBMISSION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON FAMILY VIOLENCE ON BEHALF OF THE JEWISH TASKFORCE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE ("JTAFV INC")

1. HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF THE JEWISH POPULATION IN VICTORIA AND AUSTRALIA

Jewish people have been in Australia since the beginning of European settlement (1788) but the Jewish population only grew significantly after World War II, largely due to the influx of Holocaust survivors from Europe. It is estimated that some 35,000 refugees arrived after the War. The most recent Australian Census (2006) put the Jewish population of Melbourne at 40,547 out of a national Jewish population of 88,834. It is estimated, however, that there may well be significant under-counting by up to 30% for a range of reasons, one being the fear of admitting openly to being Jewish, due to historical anti-Semitism and the use that was made of such admissions on census documents by, for example, the Nazis in Europe. One reputable analysis of the Census figures estimates that 60,080 Jews live in Victoria, constituting 1.2% of the total Victorian population.

It is also important to note that Australia has the largest per capita post Holocaust survivor community outside Israel. The overwhelming majority of the survivors in Melbourne are from Poland, whereas in Sydney they are from Hungary. This Holocaust survivor demographic creates special needs. In brief, the post traumatic stress suffered by them impacts upon their wellbeing for the entirety of their lives, and has particular consequences when considering issues of elder care and elder abuse, themselves an under-resourced area of family violence. For example, there may be issues relating to hoarding of food, refusal to enter a shower, over protectiveness in relation to children. These can all lead to elder abuse: for example, the first two may result in forced feeding or forced washing in circumstances in which abuse can easily occur. The third can lead to abuse of power of attorney by a child of a survivor in circumstances where the survivor's will is overborn.

The large number of Jewish schools, synagogues, kosher restaurants and other cultural activities indicate the existence of a thriving and engaged community. Concentration of these institutions around the South Eastern Melbourne suburbs of Caulfield, East St Kilda and Elsternwick provides a Jewish environment widely considered as unparalleled elsewhere in Australia.

The Victorian Jewish community is made up of a range of sub-groups including Ultra-Orthodox, Chassidic, Chabad, Modern Orthodox, Conservative, Yiddishist and Progressive communities, but the majority of Jews describe themselves as traditional and strongly Zionist.

Victoria's Jewish population has continued to grow due to immigration from the former Soviet Union, South Africa, Israel and New Zealand.

There are a number of community organisations which cater to and support this diverse group of people. The roof body organisation for Victoria is the Jewish Community Council of Victoria. ("JCCV") and describes itself as "the Voice of Victorian Jewry". The current President is Jennifer Huppert. The JTAFV Inc is an affiliate of the JCCV.

2. WHY WE NEED A JEWISH SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

THIS submission is submitted by the JTAFV Inc and is supported and endorsed by the following organisations who function independently as well as interdependently:

- Jewish Care Vic
- Rabbinical Council of Vic
- Chevra Hatzolah – Emergency Response
- JCCV Inc

3. WHO IS THE JTAFV INC?

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence Inc. (JTAFV) has been providing confidential support, information and referrals to members of the Jewish Community of Victoria over the last 20 years.

The JTAFV Inc has, essentially, two arms. The first is dedicated to awareness raising and education in relation to family violence and abuse, and the second is a confidential telephone referral line which provides information and support to those persons in need of assistance.

4. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The basis of our work has been an understanding of the specific cultural needs of our community. An example of the importance of cultural awareness is that historically many people tended to disclose issues to their Rabbis as opposed to going in the first instance to the police or mainstream service providers. In the past, Rabbis had minimal training and/or skills in responding to disclosures and issues relating to abuse. Women were often inappropriately advised and thus became reluctant to pursue any further support or assistance from the Rabbinat. These findings led us to create a course specifically designed to support and educate the Rabbinat and ultimately to provide them with a resource tool/guide book to refer to for assistance when responding to disclosures of family violence.

In early 2014 JTAFV was awarded the Sustaining Women's Empowerment in Communities and Organisations (SWECO) Gold Award for the Publication of this resource book "*Will My Rabbi Believe Me? Will He Understand? Responding to Disclosures of Family Violence in a Rabbinic Context.*" This guide has generated much interest from other faith-based communities and it has been indicated that it can be adapted and used as a model for other CALD and Faith Based communities.

We continue to educate mainstream service providers such as DV Vic and Maternal Child and Health nurses as well as the local police about the cultural and religious traditions of the community. This creates a greater understanding between the provider and the individual seeking help which leads to a more sensitive and appropriate outcome. As we live in an increasingly multicultural society, it is even more vital for them to be sensitive to ethnic and cultural issues which inform, in many cases, the reasoning behind a victim's decision to leave or stay within an abusive relationship.

When a mainstream service provider understands cultural and religious practices, it is much easier for them to assist a person in need. Without such an understanding, they can, unintentionally, easily say or do things which may be culturally inappropriate.

Accordingly, we would like to make certain recommendations to the Commission which we feel may be of interest and able to adopted by mainstream service providers to assist individuals experiencing family violence/abuse. We would also be grateful for any later opportunity to be included in focus groups, meetings or requests for further information which may assist in filling gaps in relation to primary prevention or any future direction of policies and funding in the area of Family Violence.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:-

A. POLICE and IVO ISSUES

- a) A dedicated Police Liaison Officer – one person who has an overall understanding of the Jewish Community, works across the Jewish organisations and has Family Violence specific knowledge. This individual would be able to undertake the following:-

- Be the first point of contact for those seeking an IVO or seeking advice as to what to do ;
 - Deal with alleged perpetrators in a culturally appropriate way. This may be serving them with an order, dealing with accommodation issues and having enough knowledge to understand that when events occur on a Sabbath or Holyday there are ways of managing the situation and removing the perpetrator if necessary;
- b) Breach of Intervention Orders – increased funding is required for monitoring whereabouts of the perpetrator, installation of CCTV in the home, panic buttons etc. They must be able to keep women and children safe in their homes without fear of the perpetrator breaching the Intervention Orders. This of course is a huge problem faced by the police within the mainstream community. Coupled with this is the necessity for increased funding to counter cyber stalking and to educate workers to support victims on how to keep themselves safe from these invasive technologies
- c) One of the issues which creates difficulties for those seeking IVOs within the Jewish community is that relating to housing. This creates two discrete problems. The first is that the victim may have nowhere to go if she chooses to leave. Many women would not feel comfortable going to a refuge due to a number of factors. They include the following:-
- Lack of refuges within the Jewish demographic areas. Many women would want to remain within their suburb so that their children can continue at their schools. However, the catch 22 with this is that were there to be one within the Jewish suburbs, one could confidently predict that the location would soon be ascertained by the perpetrator;
 - The second discrete problem relates to the perpetrator. If the perpetrator has to leave the home, there may be no appropriate housing for him. This creates a problem in that some women will not apply for an IVO as they are afraid that if there is nowhere for the perpetrator to go, there will be repercussions on the victim because they made an application for an IVO.
 - In many cases of course they can and do go to family members or friends, but there is often increased harassment of the victim due to the perpetrator being forced from the home and they (usually she) is sometimes coerced into allowing the perpetrator back into the home. This is not a problem unique to the Jewish Community, but is exacerbated due to the particular cultural issues contained within it.
- d) Increased support for victims to fill out Intervention Order applications before reaching court. One of the issues facing victims is that due to many reasons, such as stress and anxiety they are unable to present their case in a chronological and logical manner so that the Magistrate is able to understand what the issues are. Due to lack of legal aid funding, many applicants fill out the applications themselves and many apply for the Orders themselves as well. Were there additional family violence officers either at the Family Violence courts and/or at the police, these individuals could obtain greater assistance in filling out the applications. Even with the existence of family violence officers at the courts and the police, the applicant still has to be able to present the material in a logical and coherent fashion. The number of applications and the resultant time constraints attached to the current system often prevent the applicants from deriving greater assistance from the relevant officers. The forms also do not allow for a great deal of information, with the consequence that an applicant may be accused of recent invention when they detail matters in court which were not referred to in their application.

- e) Addressing mental health and anger issues with the perpetrators in the initial stages, with an emphasis on focusing on responsibility for self. Additional resources are required in the police force to deal with the perpetrators at this stage and also there is a requirement for additional support for complex cases with ongoing mental health issues and generational abuse. There needs to be an increased focus on these mental health issues, as well as on male victims, elder victims and members of the GLBT community.

- g) Taskforce Alexis – run by Vic Police (Fiona Alexander) which involves multi agency meetings which share and discuss complex, ongoing and high risk families. This is an example where information is shared for the safety of the families involved.

B LEGAL AID AND COURT SYSTEM ISSUES

- a) Legal support. One of the major issues facing women today is the lack of legal aid funding. Many women affected by family violence will not be funded by legal aid due to eligibility issues. Although there has been some easing of the restrictions in cases where family violence is an issue, there are still huge numbers of litigants in the court system (Federal Circuit Court and Family Court) who do not have access to representation. They are then forced to represent themselves against their former violent partner, adding stress to an already stressful situation. Although in some cases they may be able to obtain private representation if there is a pool of assets from which to draw when proceedings are finalised, in many cases there is no pool, or not enough to provide for such representation.

- b) It is further submitted that in relation to the Court system, there is a requirement for additional resources to be dedicated to the training of not only judicial officers but also solicitors and barristers as there is a widespread lack of understanding as to the effects of family violence on both the victims and the children. In too many cases have we heard "he was never violent to the kids" and "he wouldn't hurt the kids". Unfortunately, as Luke Batty, the Farquharson children and other tragic cases have demonstrated, that is often not the case. Mandatory specialised ongoing training in the area would lead to a far greater understanding of the issues involved, particularly in the high risk cases.

- c) It is further submitted that in relation to the court system, there should be a specialised list dealing with serious allegations of family violence, similar to the Magellan list in relation to allegations of sexual abuse. This list could be triaged by a Registrar of the Court who would then be able to direct the matter into an appropriate list with a highly trained Judge to hear the matter.

C OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Ongoing Cultural Sensitivity Training with service providers including local police, Maternal Child Health, and other support services such as DHHS, Connections and ChildFIRST

- b) Increased funding for organisational links to individuals in supporting and referring agencies

- c) Spiritual/Rabbinic leadership – what is required are workshops specifically designed to be seen through a cultural/religious lens providing insight into the causes, issues and complexity of Family Violence so that they are better able to identify issues and respond appropriately to them.
- d) Telephone Support line for people to call in seeking confidential support, information and referrals to be staffed by responders from a cross section of the community who have the ability to provide a Jewish specific response
- e) Issues re pornography – the widespread access to and use of pornography has depersonalised the intimate relationship. This has created issues in two main ways. Firstly, many young men think that what they see on those sites reflects normal sexual relationships and young women feel coerced into complying with their boyfriends' requests lest they are cast aside. These young women do not have enough self confidence and awareness to resist these demands. Recent newspaper reports show a widespread increase in anal sex in relation to young people in adolescence. The second problem arises in the marital relationship, in that some men spend huge amounts of time on the internet, watching porn, and what they see they then seek to impose on their wives. In both cases women are objectified and the intimacy involved in these relationships is removed and replaced by degrading and demeaning demands. What is required is funding to provide programs which are, in essence, respectful relationship programs but with an emphasis on how porn demeans women.
- f) Ongoing monitoring/support is required to integrate the women and her children after having a period of 13 weeks of case management support
- g) Giving of The Gett – the Jewish divorce document which is the last instrument of power a man has over his wife. It is submitted that there needs to be a system where this is tied to the civil divorce as either pursuant to an enforceable binding prenuptial agreement or an amendment to the Family Law Act to provide that a man attend the Beth Din (Rabbinical court) and comply with all their requirements.
- h) Visa applications for overseas partners/fiancées should have information on Family Violence and what support someone who finds themselves in that situation is able to access. Tied in with the latter is to broaden refugee/social service support of women who are not permanent residents of Australia
- i) Counselling for marriage – this would be directed to not only when a couple is dating and in their pre-marriage stage but also to be ongoing as needed to negotiate roles and responsibilities during the marriage
- j) Restructure the crisis services for women to include children over 12.
- k) Increased funding for financial literacy and education courses to enable people to restart their lives and assist them to re-enter the housing and labour markets.
- l) Complete review of the L17 system including follow up and referrals to other organisations.

m) Increased funding for the children who are the victims of family violence, whether primary or secondary victims.

n) Respectful Relationship Programs in various permutations:

i) in schools and beyond: Increased funding for respectful relationship programs for both males and females addressing the root causes of gender inequality, and which would provide a guide as what respectful relationships are. These would be directed to children from a young age and continue through school years and onto mid to late twenties . Additionally , increased funding for lay leaders and key high profile people and organisations to receive education as to what constitutes a respectful relationship

- ii) Continuous ongoing awareness -raising undertaken by programs designed to educate the community about the range of abuse contained within Family Violence. These programs would be the trigger for attitudinal change.
- iii) Jewish Professional educators talking to groups like Principals, teachers, psychologists and parents providing cultural and religious specific education with respect to the various issues surrounding Family Violence

STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING

It is acknowledged that whilst this submission was being prepared, the State Government in its recent budget has committed funds towards many of the recommendations that we have made.

Deborah Wiener
Chair
JTAFV Inc
29 May 2015

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Royal Commission into Family Violence

Endorsement of submissions by Talya Faigenbaum and Dr Ann Wollner, and the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence (JTAFV)

28 May 2015

The Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV), the peak body of the Victorian Jewish community, thoroughly endorses the submissions and recommendations presented to the Royal Commission into Family Violence by Talya Faigenbaum and Dr Ann Wollner, and the Jewish Taskforce Against family Violence (JTAFV).

The JCCV is the peak body representing the Jewish community in Victoria. The JCCV has nearly sixty Jewish community organisations as affiliates, including schools, Synagogues, welfare organisations and other Jewish communal organisations and roof bodies. We represent the 52,000 members of the Victorian Jewish community, and have done so for over 75 years.

Our community includes secular, Progressive, Conservative and Orthodox Jews, but there are many shared cultural and traditional values across the streams of religion. Jewish specific responses and cultural sensitivity to family violence issues are very important for our community, for the continued welfare, mental health and safety of our community members.

The issues surrounding Gett Recalcitrance are a specific issue for the Jewish community, and the Faigenbaum-Wollner submission in particular raises important issues and make critical recommendations to help address this very serious community concern.

If you have questions regarding this endorsement, please do not hesitate to contact me via the JCCV office on [REDACTED] or the Executive Director of the JCCV, David Marlow, on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Jennifer Huppert
President

בס"ד



Rabbinical Council of Victoria

Religious Leadership for the Jewish Community

ועד הרבנים דויקטוריה

President: Rabbi Mordechai Gutnick

Vice President: Rabbi Daniel Rabin

Secretary: Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum

28 May 2015

Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence in support of the need for a Jewish Specific Response to Family Violence

WHO IS THE RCV

The Rabbinical Council of Victoria (RCV) is the pre-eminent religious leadership body of Victoria's Orthodox Jewish community. The RCV's primary role is in representing Victoria's congregational rabbis. It aims to foster positive relations with leaders of other communities and to enhance community participation among members of the Jewish community.

The role of the Rabbi is one of spiritual leadership and guidance. Many congregants approach the Rabbi for support and direction during life crises such as experiencing family violence and abuse.

WHY WE NEED A JEWISH SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Orthodox Jewish Community comprises multiple sectors, including those people who see the Rabbi as the ultimate authority on all life issues and decisions.

The religious, cultural and often language requires an intimate knowledge of the biblical as well as the cultural specifics of each community and how to support individuals from each one of the multifaceted groups.

A number of congregants would feel extremely uncomfortable approaching organisations other than those who have a deep understanding of their lifestyle. The Rabbi is given the responsibility to provide this guidance.

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence Inc. provides ongoing Rabbinical training focusing on Family Violence and provides Rabbis with an understanding of the surrounding issues of both the impact of the abuse as well as the reasons why the complications exist.

The Rabbi may be the only person with influence over the perpetrator, however there may be nowhere for the perpetrator to go once he agrees to leaving the home. It is therefore paramount that suitable accommodation is made available, and a implementation of following up on the perpetrator's whereabouts and behaviour is monitored to ensure safety of the woman and children in their home.

In circumstances where the woman and her children need to leave it becomes more complicated because of the family's need to continue schooling within the community, access to kosher food and a kosher home. The recommendation would be to have housing available for women and their children (often large families) so that they can remain together and not need to be in a refuge or rooming house. Referrals for housing and case management would be made to Jewish Care Vic who would then need the necessary accommodation available.

Primary prevention education from early on would be the way to break the cycle of abuse and re-establish a healthier cultural behaviour. Recommendations would be for ongoing educational programs examining what healthy relationships look like and providing tools for all life stages including the aging community.

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Rabbinical Council of Victoria Inc. Reg. No. A0042905Y

28 May 2015

Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence in support of the need for a Jewish Specific Response to Family Violence

What's working in the current system – with a focus on a culturally specific response (this is really important for the Jewish community)

The strengths of the current system are as follows:

- A co-ordinated Community Response that constitutes a number of different Communal Organisations with varying skills and expertise.
- These response Organisations provide a service that understands the cultural sensitivities of the victims, their families and the Community as a whole.
- Culturally sensitive education of members of the Community on the issue of family violence.
- Wonderful relationship between these Communal Organisations and the Victoria Police.
- A Call Referral Service.

What improvements do you put forward to improve the system for those experiencing FV.

- More work to be done on the destigmatizing of the concept of Family Violence.
- Implementing more proactive plans in identifying potentially dangerous liaisons/situations
- Preventative Programs including targeting of youth.
- Ensure appropriate most up to date training of First Responders.
- Getting tougher on Perpetrators.
- Assistance in engaging all member of the Community, including the ultra-orthodox.
- Assistance in supporting victims of family violence through the legal process.

Kol Tuv

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WHAT CAN YOU DO

The JTAfV is a place where families and safety come first. We promote understanding and awareness of the issues affecting healthy family and personal relationships.

If you or anyone you know needs help, contacting us is the first step towards putting a stop to the violence.

CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT LINE
03 9523 2100

www.jewishtaskforce.org.au



Creating awareness ... effecting change

WHAT'S YOUR ROLE IN FAMILY VIOLENCE?

TICK ONE OF THE BOXES

- VICTIM
 BYSTANDER
 ABUSER

DID YOU KNOW THE PERSON SITTING RIGHT NEXT TO YOU COULD BE A VICTIM OF FAMILY VIOLENCE?

No community or culture is immune from family violence. No social, cultural religious or economic group is immune. In fact today, it's as prevalent in Jewish homes as in the wider Australian community. Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Hassidic, old, young, men, women and even children.

FAMILY VIOLENCE DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE, BUT WITH THE HELP OF THE JEWISH TASKFORCE YOU CAN HELP PUT A STOP TO IT.

HOME IS WHERE THE HURT IS

Everyone has the right to feel safe in their own home. Home should not be a place where anyone is hurt, humiliated, blamed, manipulated, or sworn at. It should not be a place where threats, violence or fear is used to intimidate or control another family member on a recurring basis.

UNDERSTANDING FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family Violence often occurs in a cycle. At times there is calm, then tension builds to a peak after which blow-ups and outbursts occur. Often the victims themselves, who are more often than not women, take a while to recognise the abusive pattern and are understandably reluctant to seek help as it typically leaves them feeling responsible for the abuse or disempowered.

TYPES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

- **PHYSICAL**
- involves injuries or the use of physical force that may or may not require medical attention.
- **EMOTIONAL**
- involves language or actions that diminish the person's sense of self worth
- **PSYCHOLOGICAL**
- threats and intimidating behaviour that cause fear or isolate the individual.
- **FINANCIAL**
- involves behaviour that makes or tries to make a person financially dependent.
- **RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL**
- involves holding sway over the way a person worships or participates in their community.
- **SEXUAL**
- involves conduct of a physical, verbal or non-verbal nature that is demeaning to the victim.

THE JEWISH TASKFORCE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE INC.

We are comprised of professionals including psychologists, social workers, barristers, solicitors, doctors and others who are dedicated to raising awareness of the realities of family violence and sexual assault in the Jewish community. We offer support, appropriate information and referrals to those members of the Jewish community who need it. Our services are extended with the utmost discretion always maintaining the strictest level of confidentiality to anyone who reaches out to us for assistance.

For 20 years we've worked closely with the Rabbinat, Jewish Care, mainstream service providers and Police. We devote many programs towards school age children promoting the recognition of healthy relationships, to ensure that young people maintain respectful relationships leading to the creation of safe, happy homes. Working in the community has shown us that a culturally sensitive and Jewish specific response is essential to support all Jewish adults, adolescents and children from all sectors of the community.

STOP THE VIOLENCE BREAK THE SILENCE

Often victims of family violence are either afraid or ashamed to admit their "terrible secret". The confidentiality of our support line allows them to reach out for help when under other circumstances they would not do so—empowering them to find solutions to their problems.



jewishtaskforce.com.au



facebook.com/jewishtaskforce

YOU WON'T READ ABOUT OUR SUCCESS STORIES

But that doesn't mean there aren't any. It's because we understand that people affected by family violence and abuse don't want their stories repeated. They want to talk to someone when they don't know what to do. They want options when they don't know where to turn. They want validation and understanding. And most of all they want trusted support. For 20 years now, that's what we have provided them with. Quietly.



PROVIDING TRUSTED
SUPPORT AGAINST FAMILY
VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

03 9523 2100



**Will My Rabbi Believe Me?
Will He Understand?**

WILL MY RABBI BELIEVE ME? Will He Understand?

Responding to Disclosures of Family Violence in a Rabbinic Context



Rabbinical Council of Victoria

Religious Leadership for the Jewish Community

ועד הרבנים דויקטוריה

לא עליך המלאכה לגמור.....
ולא אתה בן חורין להבטל ממנה.

(אבות ב:ט"ז)

It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work...
Yet you are not free to desist from it.

(Ethics of our fathers 2:16)

The Jewish community has swept so much under the rug
that one can no longer walk on it. This treatise on abuse and
violence in the Jewish family is an eye-opener.

**This book should not be on the shelf. Rather, it should be
in the hands of rabbis, professionals, parents, husbands
and wives.**

The tragic effects of domestic abuse can be prevented, but
we must be alert to it.

Dr. Abraham J. Twerski



Family Violence (or Domestic Violence) exists in every society and all cultures. Unfortunately, the Jewish community is no exception. The harsh reality is that abuse occurs in all sections of our diverse community, including Orthodox, Conservative, Liberal or non-affiliated and from all socio-economic backgrounds.

Historically we have prided ourselves on being compassionate and caring towards the vulnerable in our midst. Therefore we must ask ourselves to examine why has it taken so long for this issue to be recognized and addressed by community members and leadership.

Acknowledging that abuse and violence can be perpetrated by one Jewish family member upon another challenges the very fabric and core of the proud and idealized Jewish Family upon which our community is founded. Looking away was simpler, denial far less confronting.

Victims too remained silent because they were embarrassed or terrified that disclosure would bring shame to the family and that their children would therefore be stigmatized and labeled as “unsuitable marriage material.”

Therefore, denial and silence were the pervading attitude for far too long.

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence (JTAFV) has been at the forefront of community education and awareness of the realities of family violence and sexual assault in the Jewish Community for over fifteen years. Integral to the multi-faceted approach of the JTAFV is the culturally sensitive response to victims of abuse, working to give them the courage and tools to rebuild shattered lives, as well as the facilitation of innovative and creative programs working towards the prevention of abuse and violence for all ages.



Our experience has shown us that congregants who are victims of abuse often disclose to their rabbi; therefore, rabbis play a vital role in enabling vulnerable community members to move forward to create positive change in their lives and the lives of their families.

In 2009, the JTAFV, in partnership with the Rabbinical Council of Victoria ran the first of an ongoing series of specialised seminars titled 'Appropriate Responses to Disclosures of Family Violence and Sexual Assault' for a small group of rabbis. Upon completing the seminar, the names of the participating rabbis were publicized to encourage victims of abuse to break their silence and begin a healing process, thus ending the cycle of violence.

The initial concept of compiling and publishing a protocol for appropriate responses to disclosures of family violence and sexual assault for the Rabbinate eventuated from the acknowledgement of the prevalence of these issues in our community and the unique responsibility of the Rabbinical leadership.

The result is this document:

“WILL MY RABBI BELIEVE ME? WILL HE UNDERSTAND?”

Unfortunately, no community is immune to violence and abuse. However open, honest discussion and community education are the most efficient and effective means to reduce the stigma of abuse for victims and to empower our children to protect themselves from predators, ultimately leading to happy, healthy relationships, true Shalom Bayis and safe children. To this end we would like to thank the Rabbinical Council of Victoria for partnering with our organization, demonstrating a steadfast commitment and dedication to positive change. These are the qualities of true leadership.

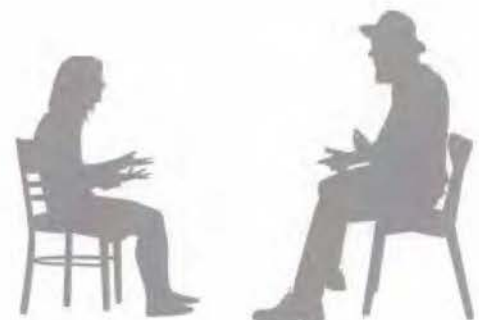
We are committed to supporting you, the Rabbinate, in your endeavors to best serve the members of your congregation and we are available to provide additional support, education and information. We look forward to a time when all members of our community live in harmony with dignity, respect and are free from fear.

Sheiny New

on behalf of

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence

Note: Violence and abuse can be and is inflicted by **both** men and women on their respective partners. However, statistics indicate that the overwhelming majority of perpetrators are male. Therefore for the purpose of clarity the perpetrator in this document is referred to as the husband and the wife as the victim.





Rabbi Meir Shlomo Kluwgant
RCV Representative and Rabbinic Liaison
to JTAFV



Rabbinical Council of Victoria
Religious Leadership for the Jewish Community
ועד הרבנים דויקטוריה

Melbourne's Jewish Community

is extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated group of individuals who have given so much of their time and efforts to address the issue of Family Violence in our community. I refer of course to the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence (JTAFV).

As much as we would like to believe otherwise, our community is not immune to the sad and sorry tale of domestic violence and sexual abuse. I must also say that it is to the credit of the religious leadership of our community, our rabbis, that they are prepared to acknowledge this fact, and to so actively participate in addressing it.

The Rabbinical Council of Victoria (RCV) is the pre-eminent Jewish religious leadership body in our community. Some years ago a partnership was formed, an alliance of sorts, between the JTAFV and the RCV. We have seen much progress since that time, culminating in the development of a professional training program for rabbis, which provides them with the knowledge, experience and skills to respond appropriately and effectively to disclosures of family violence and sexual abuse.

This very project, presented in the form of a publication, is one of the outcomes of the training program. We trust it will serve you and our community well.

There is a trait, common to both individuals and communities, to be oblivious to information that is unpleasant. In psychology, this is a defense mechanism known as “denial.”

The Jewish community has always taken great pride in the strength of the Jewish family. It was always believed that Jewish men are the most ideal husbands, in that they do not drink nor abuse their wives.

When I published “The Shame Borne in Silence” in 1996, discussing the problem of domestic violence among Jews, I was sharply criticized for revealing the problem. People preferred to remain in denial.

Some progress has been made since 1996, but unfortunately, the existence and dynamics of spouse abuse is still largely concealed, resulting in much suffering. It is crucial that every segment of the community be enlightened, so that instances of spouse abuse can be properly treated and hopefully, prevented.

Rabbis are often the first line of defense to which people turn when they have a problem, but many rabbis are not aware of spouse abuse, and well-intended advice may be misguided. Rabbis must make it known that they are receptive to the problem, and they must know what to look for in evaluating a marriage problem, and to whom to refer.

Endeavors and initiatives such as this very project, undertaken by the Rabbinical Council of Victoria in conjunction with the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence, to increase the understanding of spouse abuse, so that rabbis can better serve their communities, should be appreciated and supported.

Dr. Abraham J. Twerski



Dr. Abraham J. Twerski

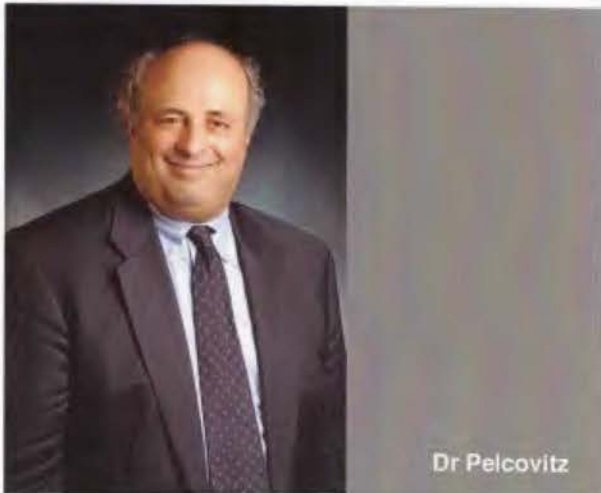
Abraham J. Twerski, MD is an ordained rabbi, a renowned psychiatrist, and author of more than 60 books. He is the founder of Gateway Rehabilitation Center in Pittsburgh PA, a foremost facility for treatment of alcohol and drug addiction. Dr. Twerski stems from a long line of Chassidic greats, of the Chernoble and Sanz dynasties, and traces his ancestry to the Baal Shem Tov, founder of the Chassidic movement. Dr. Twerski courageously pioneered awareness of spouse abuse in the Jewish community in his book “The Shame Borne in Silence”.

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Discussion...

Questions and Answers compiled by Rabbi Meir Shlomo Kluwgant;
based on a discussion with Dr David Pelcovitz.



Dr Pelcovitz

Dr. Pelcovitz holds the Gwendolyn and Joseph Straus Chair in Psychology and Jewish Education at Yeshiva University's Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration where he is also the Special Assistant to the President. Serving for over two decades as Director of Psychology at North Shore University Hospital-NYU School of Medicine, and Clinical Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry, at NYU School of Medicine, he has consulted extensively with the Jewish community in the United States, Europe and Israel on a wide range of issues facing children and adolescents.

Why would a person make a disclosure to their rabbi?

Often a person would approach their rabbi rather than a friend or relative, because abuse hits the victim in the soul. The rabbi is viewed as the source of spiritual response and therefore can become the first port of call for a victim.

What is the role of the rabbi when responding to a disclosure?

The rabbi carries a tremendous responsibility when responding to a victim who has the courage to come forward or to confide. Generally abuse occurs in secrecy; it is fuelled by this secrecy as it brings shame and silence with it. It takes a lot of courage to come forward and to make a disclosure; the victim will be anxious: "Will he believe me? Will he be there for me?"

The key issue in responding is to **let the victim know that you are there for them** and that you will support them throughout. It is not the role of the rabbi to figure out the facts or to solve the problem. The role, simply put, is to be there.

To put things into context, consider a person faced with the daunting task of climbing a very steep hill. When standing alone it appears difficult if not impossible. However with someone supportive close by, the hill begins to appear less daunting and the task at hand becomes achievable.

It is also important to know that this kind of interaction between rabbi and congregant is qualitatively different from the typical rabbi-congregant interaction. When it comes to a disclosure of domestic violence or sexual abuse, what is needed

Is it common for victims to make disclosures to their rabbis?

It would really depend on how the rabbi is viewed by his community. If he is the pastoral go-to-person then it is likely that a victim will approach him, however an equal number of victims are likely to approach a friend, family member or indeed a relevant professional.

is not a psak, or halachic ruling (such as with kashrut for example). It is about being there; taking a step back; believing the person and supporting them; again it is not about telling them what to do.

Is it appropriate for the rabbi to commit to confidentiality?

In the pastoral context, rabbis are traditionally 'keepers of secrets'. However it is certainly not appropriate for a rabbi to undertake, promise or commit to unconditional confidentiality when responding to a victim. It certainly is not appropriate for the rabbi to promise that he will not do anything with the information that is disclosed.

There may indeed be situations where the rabbi may be halachicly, legally or morally required to refer the victim to a relevant professional, or even to pass on information to the police. In all instances it is of course best to obtain the consent or permission from the victim.

What kind of response is appropriate?

It is important for the rabbi to know his limits. In fact rabbis are not typically experts in appropriate interventions for victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse. In these instances they are being called upon as a trusted friend.

An important response from the rabbi would be to guide the victim to professionals in the field. Without appropriate interventions from experts and professionals, the rabbi, with the best of intentions could in fact end up doing more damage than good (especially in cases involving paedophilia and abuse of children).

Would it ever be appropriate for a rabbi to recommend divorce?

In cases of domestic violence and sexual assault, as tempting as it may be, it is not the role of the

rabbi to be the one to recommend (or for that matter to discourage) divorce. Certainly if there is an imminent danger to the victim or children then immediate action should always be taken to protect them. Another key factor is how much fighting the children may be exposed to.

Would it ever be appropriate for the rabbi to recommend contraception?

This is a matter to be referred to competent halachic authorities. However it is important to note that when it comes to abuse of pregnant women, there is a high risk of physical and mental illness to the unborn child.

What kind of personal support is available to the rabbi?

This kind of work cannot and should not be done alone. The research tells us that the younger the rabbi, the greater the risk that this kind of work will have a strong impact upon him; especially when dealing with cases involving children. In addressing this, supervision (whether formal or informal) is a vital component; in fact there are a range of modalities and options available.

First and foremost it is important that you give yourself knowledge, as this can be soothing and stress reducing. Supervision from a seasoned rabbi will certainly help and make a difference. Other modalities include: rabbi-rebbetzin team approach, mentoring from a senior rabbi, training, chevrusa or surrounding yourself with a cohort of friends and colleagues; even discussions over the phone are helpful.

Processing is not a luxury, it is a necessity. If you are not comfortable with verbalization then consider writing about it, even if you do not show what you have written to anyone, processing and "getting it out" is not only helpful but indeed therapeutic.



Understanding Family Violence

Forms Of Domestic & Family Violence

Fear...

is a key element in domestic violence and is often the most powerful way a perpetrator controls his victim. Fear is created by giving looks, or making gestures, possessing weapons (even if they are not used), destroying property, cruelty to pets - or any behaviour which can be used to intimidate and render the victim powerless.

Intimidation: Includes smashing things, destroying her possessions, putting a fist through the wall, handling of guns or other weapons, using intimidating body language (angry looks, raised voice), hostile questioning of the victim, reckless driving of vehicle with victim in the car. It may also include harassing the victim at her workplace either by making persistent phone calls or sending text messages or emails, following her to and from work, or loitering near her workplace.

Verbal abuse: Includes screaming, shouting, put-downs, name-calling, using sarcasm, ridiculing her for her religious beliefs or ethnic background.

Physical abuse: Can range from a lack of consideration for her physical comfort to causing permanent injury or even death. It could include such behaviour as pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, choking, hair-pulling, punching etc. and may or may not involve the use of weapons. It could also be threats to, or actually destroying prized possessions. It is important to note that physical abuse often starts during pregnancy.

Emotional abuse: Is any behaviour that deliberately undermines the victim's confidence, leading her to believe she is stupid, or that she is 'a bad mother' or useless or even to believe she is going crazy or is insane. This type of abuse humiliates, degrades and demeans the victim. The perpetrator may make threats to harm the victim, friend or family member, threaten to take her children, or to commit suicide. Or the perpetrator may use silence and withdrawal as a means to abuse.

Social abuse: Includes isolating the victim from social networks and supports either by preventing the victim from having contact with her family or friends or by verbally or physically abusing her in public or in front of others. It may be continually putting friends and family down so she is slowly disconnected from her support network.

Economic abuse: Results in the victim being financially dependent on their partner. She may be denied access to money, including her own, demanding that she and her children live on inadequate resources. These can be contributing factors for women becoming 'trapped' in violent relationships.

Sexual abuse: Includes a range of unwanted sexual behaviours including forced sexual contact, rape, forcing her to perform sexual acts that cause pain, humiliation or injury, forcing her to have sex with others or forcing her to ignore taharat hamishpacha.

Controlling behaviours: Includes dictating what she does, who she sees and talks to, where she goes, keeping her from making any friends or from talking to her family, or having any money of her own. This can include preventing her from going to work, not allowing her to express her own feelings or thoughts, not allowing her any privacy, forcing her to go without food or water.

Spiritual abuse: Includes ridiculing or putting down her beliefs and traditions. Preventing her from belonging to the congregation that is important to her adherence to Judaism. Conversely, imposing religious adherence.

Separation violence: Often after the relationship has ended violence may continue, this can be a very dangerous time for the victim because the perpetrator may perceive a loss of control over the victim and may become more unpredictable. During and after separation is often a time when violence will escalate leaving the victim more unsafe than previously.

Stalking: Sometimes the victim is stalked by the perpetrator either before or after separation. Stalking includes loitering around places she is known to frequent, watching her, following her, making persistent telephone calls and sending mail including unwanted love letters, cards and gifts although the relationship has ended. Stalking is when a person engages in a course of conduct with the intention of causing physical or mental harm to that person, including self harm, or arouses apprehension or fear in that person for his or her own safety or that of any other person. A course of conduct might be a few episodes of the unwanted behaviour, or it might be one episode lasting for a long time , e.g. Loitering outside the person's home all day causing her fear or apprehension.

Spousal homicide: The death of the victim directly attributed to domestic violence. Research indicates that most homicides in 2007-08 were domestic homicides involving one or more victims who shared a family or domestic relationship with the offender. Intimate partner homicides comprised the largest proportion of domestic homicides (60%).

(Virueda, Payne: Homicide in Australia 2007-08 National Homicide Monitoring Programme Annual Report, 2010)



**Common
Questions
&
Answers**

Do some women provoke the violence by nagging?

Answer:

NO. Most abused women try to do everything they can to please their partner and avoid further violent episodes. Victims of domestic violence are vulnerable to further episodes of abuse regardless of their behaviour. Responsibility for violence rests solely with the abuser.

Is domestic violence a learned behaviour?

Answer:

Abusers have often witnessed domestic violence as children. However, not all children who grow up with domestic violence will go on to become abusers themselves, likewise not all perpetrators of domestic violence grew up in violent homes. Violence is a choice. In our society there is widespread tolerance of gender, racial, religious and cultural inequality and violence, this teaches us that abuse and controlling behaviour is acceptable. However, abuse that is learned can be unlearned and positive, healthy ways of relating can be learned.

Does alcohol or drugs cause domestic violence?

Answer:

NO. It is a misconception that domestic violence is caused by alcohol or substance abuse. The fact is that almost equal numbers of sober and drunken men are violent. Where studies show that more drinkers are violent to their partners, the studies are not able to explain why many drunken men (80% heavy and binge drinkers) do not abuse their partners. Alcohol or other addictive substances are used by men as a means to give themselves permission to be violent. If someone blames alcohol or drugs, they are avoiding taking responsibility for their actions - many people enjoy drinking and some may even drink excessively, and never use violence. Many people stop their drinking and still keep using violence and controlling behaviours. While the use of alcohol and drugs can often make the violence more serious, they do not cause it.

Religious beliefs and domestic violence

Abusers may use their religion as an excuse for their violence. Religion is no excuse for domestic violence. There is nothing to support the view that it is God's will for people to endure family violence. Use of Scripture to justify domestic violence is unacceptable. Some women may feel pressure from their faith or community to 'honour' their commitment to marriage and stay in the abusive relationship for the sake of Shalom Bayis. "Shalom Bayis is indeed a sacred concept, but it is the responsibility of both husband and wife to see that this is achieved. It is a mistake to think that the entire responsibility for Shalom Bayis rests on the shoulders of the wife. To say that the Torah advocates sacrificing herself to tolerate lifelong abuse is unconscionable".

Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D., (The Shame Borne in Silence: Spouse Abuse in the Jewish Community, pg68)

Is domestic violence more prevalent in some cultures?

Answer:

Domestic violence crosses all countries and cultures. Some abusive men claim that in their culture, women have a subordinate role, and the use of violence is permitted to keep women in line. Some accuse the legal system of attempting to destroy their culture or that laws against family violence are racist. It is important to maintain cultural traditions and beliefs, but this can be done without violence or abuse. Under the law the same standards of non-violent behaviour apply to all.

Source: Domestic Violence Prevention Centre - www.domesticviolence.com.au



**Impact of
Domestic
Violence
On
Women**

Impact of Domestic Violence On Women

When a woman is constantly abused and put down she may start to think of herself as worthless. Many women feel powerless. Many women stay in abusive relationships because they are too afraid to leave. If a woman does decide to separate, it is not unusual for her to return to her abusive partner, particularly when appropriate support and assistance is not available.

Domestic violence can have long-term effects on a woman. There may be emotional problems such as difficulty in trusting others. She may also suffer long-term effects on her health from physical injuries. A study done by VicHealth found that Domestic Violence is the single biggest risk factor associated with disease, disability and even death for Victorian women aged 15-44.

Not all the long-term effects are negative. Often a woman dealing with domestic violence has developed incredible strengths in order to survive. To come out and move into a new life after living through years of violence is usually an extremely positive experience.

All forms of abuse have damaging consequences. How may women be feeling?

Some of the ways that women may have been feeling include:

- Feeling worthless and lacking self confidence
- Ashamed and afraid of letting others know about the abuse
- That she is to blame for the abuse
- Hopeless and sad because she has tried everything
- Depressed and lonely
- Afraid of what he might do if she leaves or seek help
- Afraid that no-one will believe her
- Scared of coping on her own
- Confused

Why Doesn't She Just Leave?

It can be hard to understand why a woman would stay in a relationship when she is being treated so badly. There are many reasons why it is so hard to leave.

She is afraid of what the abuser will do if she leaves. The person who is abusive may have threatened to harm her, her relatives, or the children, pets or property. Leaving could, and often does, escalate the violence. Separation may create panic/embarrassment for the abuser as the community 'now knows what was going on.' They may threaten to commit suicide if she talks about leaving.

She still loves her husband, because he is not abusive all the time. Hope and love often keep women in a violent relationship as abusers rarely use violence all the time. It occurs in a cycle.

She is committed to the marriage and desperately wants 'Shalom Bayis'. Many women are socialized to believe they are responsible for making their marriage work. Failure to maintain the marriage equals failure as a woman.

She hopes he will change. Sometimes the abusive partner might promise to change. Many women rationalise his behaviour by blaming stress, alcohol, problems at work or unemployment.

She thinks the abuse is her fault. He might say, "Look what you made me do!"

She feels she should stay 'for the sake of the children', and that it is best that the children live with both parents. Her partner may have threatened to take or harm the children. She is afraid that it might negatively impact the children's Shidduch (marriage) prospects.

A lack of confidence. The abuser will have deliberately tried to break down her confidence and make her feel like she is stupid, hopeless, and responsible for the abuse. She may feel powerless and unable to make decisions. There are often psychological issues affecting abused women and self esteem is so low that the idea of changing her life may seem impossible.

Isolation and loneliness. He may have tried to cut her off from contact with family and friends. She might be afraid of coping on her own. If English is not her first language she might feel particularly isolated.

Pressure to stay from family, her community or Shul. She might fear rejection from her community, family or friends if she leaves. Leaving the community where one grew up can be devastating for women and their children.

She doesn't have the means to survive if the marriage ends. She might not have anywhere to live, access to money, or transport, particularly if she lives in an isolated area. She may be dependant on her partner's income and leaving may mean poverty for her and her children. Some women lack access to cash, bank accounts and often money management skills, as his 'control' is a major factor. She may have had an allowance even in cases where she was earning. If she has a disability, she may depend upon the abuser for assistance.

Leaving an abusive partner is often very dangerous. The abuse may continue or INCREASE when and just after she leaves. Please see the "Safety Plan" on page 49 to support her in preparing a plan for her particular situation.



**Impact of
Family
Violence
On
Children**

Impact of Family Violence on Children

People caring for a child who has experienced violence are often very worried about how the experience will affect the child. Children- regardless of their age- do respond to what's going on around them. However the effect on children and their recovery can depend on many things. See below an overview of the impact of family violence on children of different ages.

Babies

- Fearful of new people, loud noises or unknown voices
- May be slower to develop physically e.g. rolling over, crawling, learning to walk etc
- May be less responsive or interested in the world
- May not go to adults for help
- May not develop or learn to talk at same rate as other babies
- May find it difficult to follow requests
- May be very distressed



Toddler

- Afraid of the violent parent
- Clingy and afraid of new people and situations
- Hard to share and play with others
- Trouble with speech and memory
- Hard to listen, ask for help or show what they need
- Problems in their social relationships
- Restless sleepers or picky eaters



- Responsible for arguments
- Clingy and unwilling to try new things
- Difficult to understand and use baby talk
- Find it hard to share
- Withdraw, become quiet and not play much
- Display difficult behaviour
- Aggressive towards other people (biting, kicking, hitting)
- Wet the bed, have bad dreams or trouble sleeping
- Picky or not interested in food

Pre-Schoolers

5-12 year olds

Withdrawn or aggressive (hurting self or others)
 Uncooperative
 Complain about feeling unwell
 Wet the bed
 Find it hard to make friends
 Have difficulties with school work



Teenagers

Hard to express feelings or and to make and keep friends
 May bully others
 Rebel against authority figures
 Withdrawn and anti-social
 Increased risk taking including drug and alcohol intake
 Poor coping skills (e.g. hard to cope with stress)
 Poor social skills (talking to people they don't know)
 Experience stress, anxiety, depression and eating disorders
 At risk of homelessness or dropping out of school, suicide or self harm





**Important
Information
for
Mothers**

They are not to blame

The prevailing community attitude that mothers should be “perfect” and almost wholly responsible for their children’s well-being can lead to blaming the mother even when the father is the one who is violent. They may be feeling responsible for their partner’s violence, and for the impact his behaviour has on the kids.

Remember, they are not to blame for his violence and they are not responsible for the effect that his abuse of them has on their children.

‘He hits me, but he’s good to the kids’

This is commonly said by women subjected to domestic violence. But by abusing the children’s mother, he is not being “good to the kids”. Showing attention or affection to his children cannot make up for denying them (through his violence) their right to a safe and happy childhood. The mother’s role as a parent may be much more difficult because mothers are often not treated with respect, particularly by men who are violent.

You need help, so you can help your children:

No matter how caring a parent they are, at some level their ability to do their best for their children will be affected by their partner’s violence. This is also a time when the children are likely to need their care and attention more than ever. Until they can get the help they need to make themselves safe, their children cannot feel safe or happy knowing that their mother is being hurt.

Difficult choices:

Concern for children is probably a major factor (if not *the* major factor) in whether a mother decides to separate. It is likely to be confusing and difficult for them to weigh up which situation is best for their children.

Dilemmas may include:

- 'How can I take them away from their home, their pets, their school, the dad whom they love?'
- 'He says he will get custody of the kids.'
- 'Can I offer the kids anything better?'
- 'Are we in more danger if we leave?'
- 'How will a disclosure affect the children's shidduch (marriage) opportunities?'





**The
Cycle
of
Domestic
Violence**

The cycle of violence...

is a cyclic pattern that is common to many men who are abusive in their relationships, and has definite stages that are easily recognizable. When the man identifies these stages, it is often the beginning of the stages by which the man starts to understand his abusive and violent behaviour and begins to take responsibility for his actions. Recognition of this cycle by the woman can also be the time when she begins to understand that his behaviour follows a definite cycle that is not, and cannot be, influenced by anything she may do.

Each of the stages is unpredictable in length, with many variations in time and frequency.

Stage One - Build up

The man experiences a build up of tension, is preoccupied by his own view of the world and has an exaggerated sense of entitlement. He avoids social and emotional circumstances, relies on others to meet his every need and blames others and circumstances. He is full of righteous indignation with beliefs about how the world should, ought and must be and engages in self intoxicating thoughts and beliefs.

This stage escalates regardless of external circumstances, and is independent of his partner's behaviour.

Stage Two - Explosion

This is the most dangerous stage and can involve criminal assault, terrorizing, verbal abuse, serious threats and property damage. The man feels enraged and believes he is out of control; the episode can be brief or escalate over hours. Most men describe this stage as being out of their control; however, the violence is often in a context that has strong elements of choice and control. When the abusive and/or violent episode is closely examined the man is likely to recognize that it takes place usually within the home and has in fact been controlled, evidenced sometimes, by the parts of his partner's body that he targets.

Stage Three - Regret and remorse

At this stage in the cycle the man experiences and expresses feelings of remorse, helplessness or guilt, whilst often at the same time blaming his partner or circumstances as he looks for why this happened and who is at fault. He generally accepts no responsibility for his own behaviour.

The man believes and tries to persuade his partner that the abuse will never happen again. He may blame his partner for his abusive behaviour. He will often make promises about change that are conditional on his partner's change, and promises of change that are unlikely to be carried out. In fact, the violence often increases over time. The man may attempt to seek forgiveness from his partner and to offer explanations, e.g. 'I lost control and did not know what I was doing' that demonstrate he is not accepting responsibility for his behaviour. He may attempt to show his sincerity and caring by buying gifts, taking the family on outings, being helpful in the house, or being more attentive.

The man has resolved nothing by his remorse. His language and behaviour seem so unrelated to his violent behaviour that it is confusing for his partner. She wants to believe that he has changed. The woman may try to cover her distress and fear, accept his promises and forgive him in the hope that things will improve. Characteristically after a short time the man begins his own self-defeating thought processes and engages in tactics of abuse to maintain control moving back into build up stage and the escalation of his behaviour.

Stage 4 - Things he may try to get the woman back

Some women leave their partner during the cycle of violence. It is possible to anticipate the way the man is likely to respond. Although the behaviours described may appear genuine, they are manipulative and intended to blame, obligate or frighten the Woman into doing what the man wants. This is a time of danger for women and also can be a time of confusion, as many women want to believe his promises of change.

The man may respond to his partner leaving him in one of three distinct sets of behaviours which are outlined on the following page. It is possible for the man to engage in all three forms, it is also possible during one conversation for him to move through each pursuit. The main objective of his pursuit is to have others do something to reduce his own sense of desperation immediately. His behaviour at this time is part of the pattern of violence and not a move out of his cycle of violence.

Buy Back (The Honeymoon Period)

This is recognized by the man buying gifts, making promises, declarations of love, extensive apologies and attempts to show he is a 'changed man'. He may make promises to attend counselling or do anything to add credibility to his claims of having changed.

Buy back relies on creating a sense of goodwill, guilt and hope in his partner.

Violence

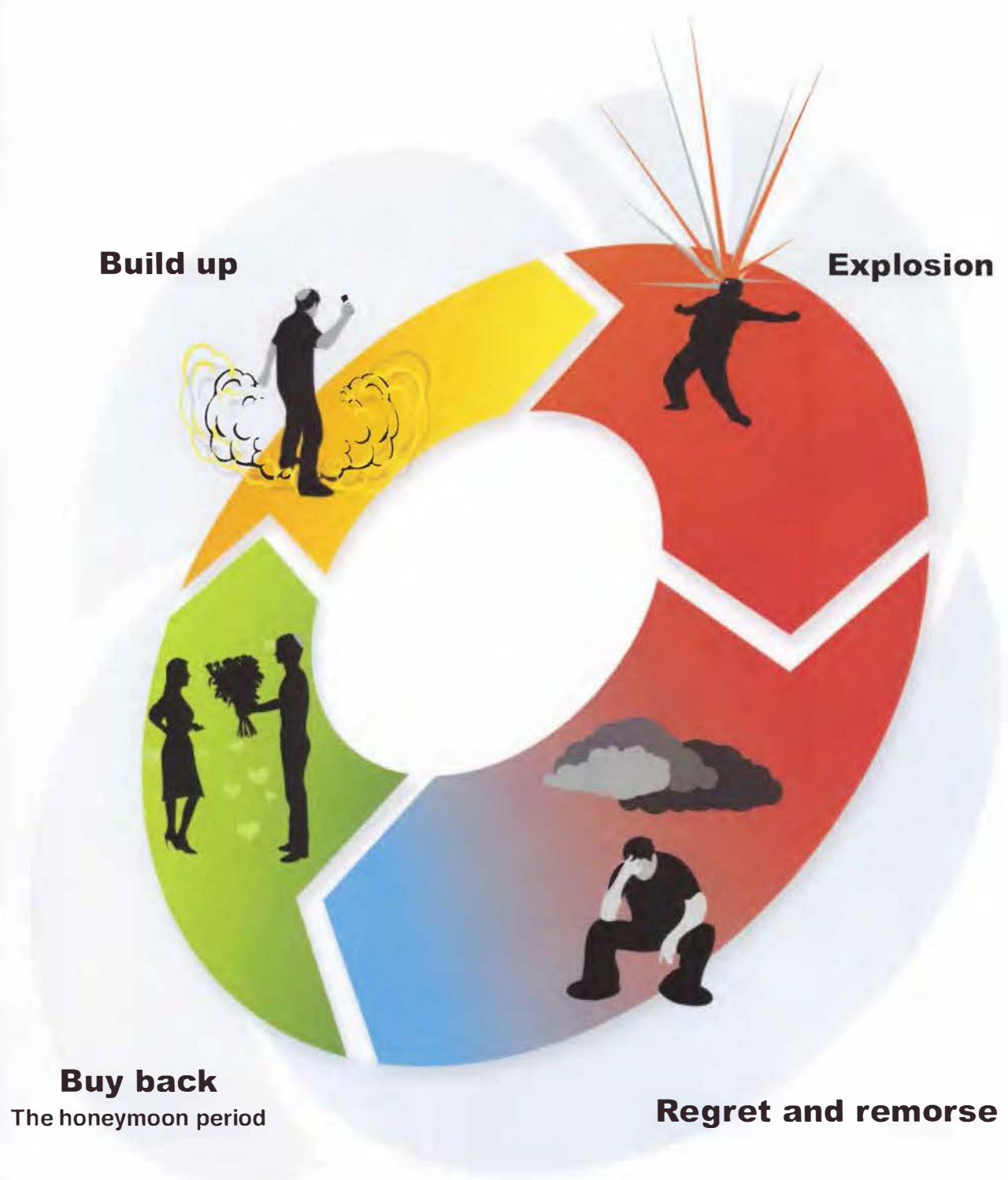
The man may threaten his partner with harm or threats to kill her and/or her children and pets. Constantly harassing, stalking, creating problems with family and friends, trash her belongings, create difficulties in regards to Family Court proceedings etc.

Helplessness

The man behaves in ways that indicate to his partner that he is unable to manage without her, will let her know he is unable to eat, sleep, work, and may make explicit or implicit threats of suicide.

Helplessness relies on the woman feeling obligated for his well-being, and guilt for his hurt.

The cycle of domestic violence



Build up

Explosion

Buy back

The honeymoon period

Regret and remorse



**Other Forms
of
Family
Violence**

Elder Abuse – A Hidden Crime

The focus of this document is to expose and discuss the realities of Family Violence as it pertains to spouses and partners. However, it must be noted that there are additional forms of violence which are perpetrated against family members causing untold shame and misery. These include (but are unfortunately not limited to) Elder Abuse and Adolescent Abuse

What is Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People?

Any behaviour within a relationship of trust that harms an older person. This included elderly parents or an aged person in any form of aged care.

Who is at risk?

Older people across any cultural, racial, religious, socio-economic and educational and backgrounds may experience elder abuse or mistreatment.

What is regarded as abuse or mistreatment of older people?

Financial Abuse

The illegal or improper use of an older person's money or possessions.

Psychological Abuse

Causing fear or shame, intimidation, humiliation, or making threats.

Physical Abuse

Inflicting pain or injury e.g. hitting or slapping, restraining, over medicating or refusing medicine.

Sexual Abuse

Sexually abusive or exploitative behaviour, including rape, indecent assault, sexual harassment and indecent behaviour.

Social Abuse

Preventing a person from having social contact with family or friends.

Neglect

The intentional or unintentional failure to provide necessities of life and care.

Why don't we hear more about it?

Those who experience abuse may:

- Feel ashamed to admit that a person close to them mistreats them
- Blame themselves or think that it is their fault
- Be frightened of what might happen to them if they tell about their situation
- Be worried of what other people may think
- Think that people may not believe them
- Feel isolated socially and/or physically

Many factors may contribute to Elder Abuse:

- Increased isolation from others
- Language and cultural barriers can restrict the knowledge about services or access to them
- Family members might feel that it's their duty to provide care to ageing parents and refuse to accept outside assistance
- The widening cultural gap between the generations of the family
- A family member might be financially dependent on the older person
- The abuser might have an addiction or mental illness
- A carer may experience significant stress
- A person suffering from dementia might contribute to the carer's stress

Older people have the right to:

Self Determination and Dignity - Older people have the right to make their own decisions on matters affecting their lives.

Feel Secure - To live safely, free of violence, abuse, neglect and financial exploitation.

Self Fulfilment - To be able to develop their own interests and to participate in educational, cultural, spiritual and social activities.

Access Information and assistance - To access information and assistance that is culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Participate in the community - Share their knowledge, contribute to the community and be an active member of society.

For further information please visit www.eapa.asn.au

Legal safeguards for Older People:

Organising Enduring Powers of Attorney (EPOA) - These are used to appoint a trusted person (agent) to make decisions for the older person when they no longer have the capacity to do so.

There are three types of EPOA;

1. Financial - for financial and legal decisions
2. Medical - for medical treatment decisions
3. Guardianship - for lifestyle decisions, e.g. where to live, who can visit and health care.

Conditions can be included to specify how the older person wants the agent to handle their affairs.

If there is concern about a Guardian's conduct (as in 3), anyone interested in the older persons's welfare can request VCAT to consider the actions of the Guardian.

Information contact: Office of the Public Advocate - 1300 309 337

Adolescent Violence to parents

Adolescent violence can be perpetrated against mothers, fathers, siblings and carers by daughters and sons. There are many reasons why it occurs. These include children witnessing or experiencing family violence and repeating their fathers' abusive and violent behaviours toward their mothers, parenting styles, adolescents' reactions to traumatic events or conflict, adolescent mental health or drug and alcohol issues and other contributing factors. Sometimes there is no apparent reason why it happens.

Adolescent violence to parents is a serious issue. Anecdotal evidence suggests it is increasing.

Adolescence is the time between childhood and adulthood. It is normal during this time for adolescents to challenge parents and authority as they head towards an independent life. Adolescents will exhibit healthy anger and conflict along the way, which is distinct from violent behaviour.

Violence is not the same as anger. Anger is an emotion; violence is about control and power.

Adolescent violence is any behaviour used by an adolescent in the family to control, dominate, threaten or coerce a parent or sibling. It can include any of the following:

Physical

Spitting, shoving, hitting, kicking, throwing things, breaking things and punching holes in walls or doors, bullying or physical violence to siblings, cruelty to pets, any action or behaviour that threatens a person's sense of well-being and safety.

Emotional, Psychological and Verbal

- verbal abuse, yelling, screaming, swearing, 'put downs' and humiliation
- verbal intimidation
- emotional and psychological intimidation
- playing mind games
- making threats to hurt or kill themselves or run away, in order to get their own way or to control parent/s and the family

Financial

- demanding money or things their parent/s cannot afford
- stealing money or possessions from parents, family members or friends
- incurring debts that parents are responsible for
- Adolescent violence is not just against parents. Many adolescents are also violent to their siblings.

Adolescent violence exists across all communities, social classes, cultural backgrounds and geographic areas.

For further information please visit www.ischs.org.au



**Response Model
for
Rabbis**

Response Model for Rabbis

1

Acknowledge the violence

- Enquire into her experience until you feel you understand what is happening
- Reflect the abusive behaviour in detail
- Name the abuse “Family Violence”
- State your position on family violence

2

Check for safety

- Are you safe right now?
- Do you have children in your care (if so get details)?
- Are the children safe? Have they ever witnessed or been hurt by his violence?
- Is there anyone with you at the moment?
- Are you in danger of immediate physical harm?
- Are there any weapons?
- Do you think that you will be injured or killed?
- Would you like me to call the police?

3

Highlight Her Strengths and abilities

- Assume, despite what she is experiencing, that she is competent and has strengths and abilities
- Ask her how she has coped so far and what she has put in place to keep herself and her children safe
- Validate the fact that it takes some courage to disclose and seek help
- Support and strengthen her capacity to mother and keep her children safe

4

Seek Support Elsewhere

- Equip yourself with relevant referrals and printed information
(Please refer to the Resource Directory)
- Familiarise yourself with what each service provides so that you can refer with confidence
- Work collaboratively with services to access the support and information you will need to respond to women disclosing family violence

5

Discuss the Wellbeing of the Children

- What impact do you think the violence is having on your children?
- Explore the possibility of appropriate support for the children e.g. School Counsellor.

Developing A Safety Plan

It is important that a woman who is concerned about her personal safety and the safety of her children develops a Safety Plan in case she finds herself in a dangerous situation.

A Safety Plan consists of thinking about and organizing the following details. It can be really helpful to go through it with her.

Where can you go?

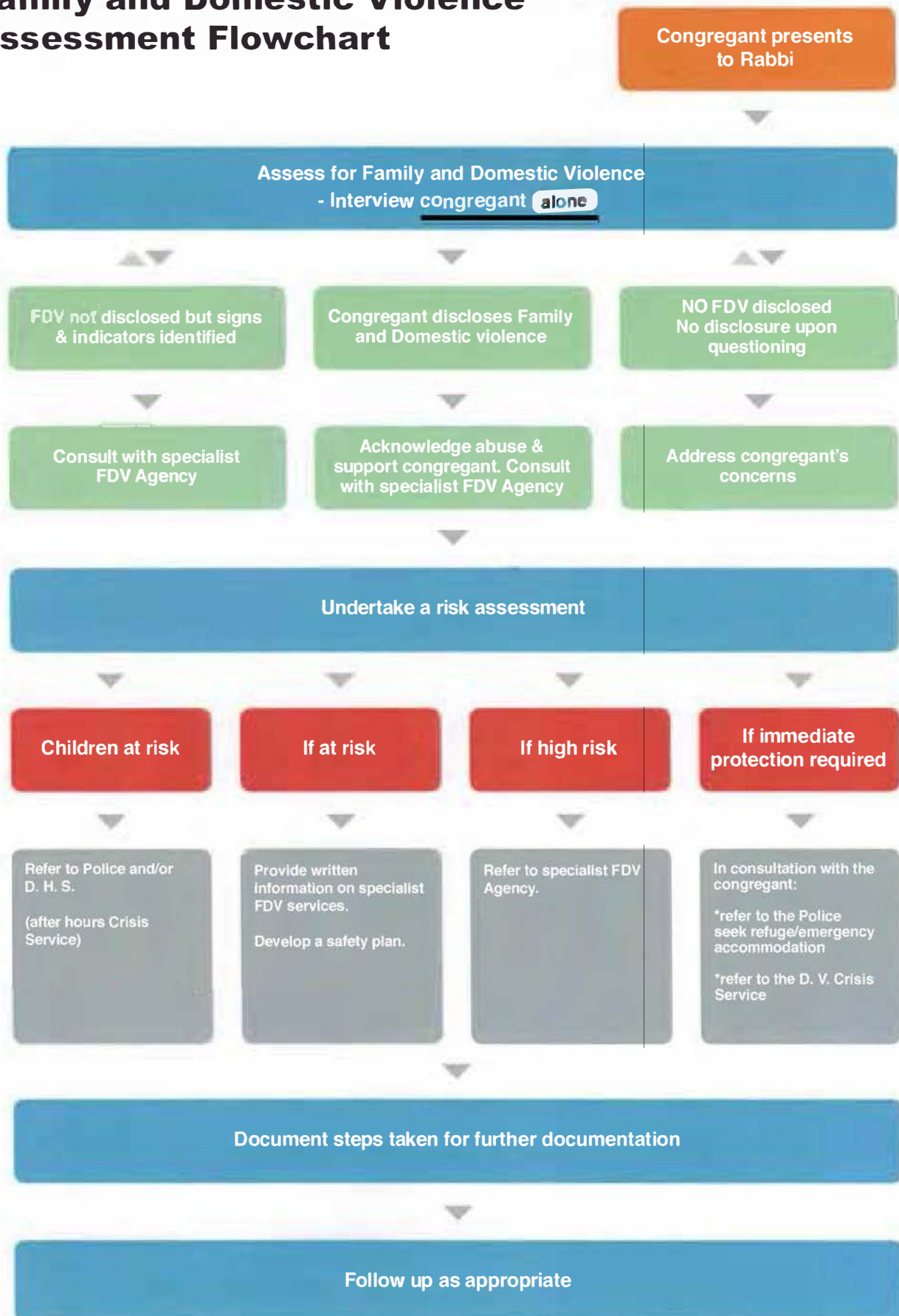
- Who can you talk to and feel safe with?
- Do you have friends or family you feel will believe and listen to you?
(Examples of others you can also contact: Doctor, Hospital, Health Centre, Police, Court House)
- Who and where are your local support services? Do you have their phone numbers?
- Do you have transport if you need to leave?
- Do you have a friend or family member that you can call if things get really bad? It is a good idea to establish a “code message” indicating that you are in danger and might need to leave quickly.
- Does your husband know where you would go if you left? Would you be safe?
- Do you have access to money/bank accounts? It is a good idea to put money aside in case you have to leave quickly.

What might you need?

- It is helpful to bring any papers (or photocopies) for identification. This may assist with legal and financial matters.
- House/car keys
- Driver’s Licence
- Medicare Card
- Pension/ Health Care Card
- Passport – personal and for children
- Birth Certificate
- Emergency bag with essentials (including the above documents/ photocopies) that can be left with someone you trust
- Medication - personal or for children



Family and Domestic Violence Assessment Flowchart



Checklist: 'How Do I Know If I Have Helped?'

Responding to disclosures of family violence can evoke feelings of being overwhelmed, disbelief, sometimes distress and often a deep sense of responsibility to provide appropriate support and information to the woman who is disclosing and any children involved. Rabbis can use the checklist below to reflect on their contact with women, support the development of the skills required to respond well and to ensure that they have covered the important issues associated with an initial disclosure.

- Provided a space to talk and enquired into her experience
- Reflected the abuse in detail
- Made clear my position on family violence
- Named the violence
- Checked if she was in immediate danger
- If high risk discussed Safety Plan
- Checked the safety of the woman and any children in her care
- Checked the impact of family violence on the children
- Referred the woman to relevant support services to help her plan for safety
- Assumed competence and asked how she has been keeping herself and children safe so far
- Validated the courage it takes to disclose family violence
- Provided relevant printed information

RCV Resolution Condemning and Combating Child Abuse



Rabbinical Council of Victoria

Religious Leadership for the Jewish Community

ועד הרבנים דויקטוריה

Whereas we have become increasingly aware of incidents of the sexual and physical abuse of children in our community; and

Whereas the lives and futures of many of these victims and their families are harmed in significant ways: suicide, post traumatic stress syndrome, inability to form healthy relationships, inability to develop healthy intimate relationships, etc.; and

Whereas many victims of abuse in our community still remain silent and do not come forward to accuse perpetrators or seek help for fear of stigma, personal and familial consequences, or perceived halachic concerns; and

Whereas the Rabbinical Council of Victoria condemns abuse and proclaims its censure of abusers, and affirms that the prohibitions of mesirah (reporting crimes to the civil authorities) and arka'ot (adjudication in civil courts) do not apply in cases of abuse and in fact, it is halachically obligatory to make such reports; and

Whereas reiterating this long held position can serve to provide pastoral and halachic leadership, support, direction and affirmation to abuse survivors and their families and advocates.

Therefore, the Rabbinical Council of Victoria resolves that:

- It affirms its unqualified condemnation of all forms of child abuse.
- It affirms its halachic position that the prohibitions of mesirah (reporting crimes to the civil authorities) and arka'ot (adjudication in civil courts) do not apply in cases of abuse.
- It will regularly issue on its website and to the media appropriate statements of condemnation when public attention is drawn to a case in which Jews are either victims or perpetrators of abuse.
- It will regularly evaluate the competence of its members in understanding and responding to issues of child abuse and initiate training and continuing educational opportunities for all of its members in this area.
- The members of the Rabbinical Council of Victoria address the issue of child abuse in their communities in at least one sermon per year, and that it be encouraged that contact information for local abuse services be displayed in a public place in all synagogues and Jewish community institutions serviced by its members.

The RCV works in partnership with the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence (JTAFV) and responds to disclosures of abuse confidentially and effectively. The RCV liaison to the JTAFV may be contacted on (03) 8517-5684.

17th November 2010



Legal Issues

Legal Issues

NOTE-THIS APPLIES ONLY TO VICTORIA AS THE LAW VARIES IN DIFFERENT STATES.
RABBIS SHOULD SEEK LEGAL ADVICE IN OTHER STATES

Does mandatory reporting apply to Rabbis?

Only if working as a Teacher, see below for more information

A Rabbi is not mandated to report unless he comes into possession of information (that a child is at risk) whilst working as a teacher.

It could also be argued that if his primary job is that of a teacher, rather than a pulpit rabbi, then he would be mandated to report.

Who has to report?

In Victoria registered medical practitioners, registered nurses, a person registered as a teacher under the Education, Training and Reform Act 2006 or teachers granted permission to teach under that Act, principals of government or non-government schools, and members of the police force are mandated to report to DHS, if they hold a :-

“Belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection on a ground referred to in Section 162(c) or 162(d), formed in the course of practising his or her office, position or employment.”

“Notifications of a child in need of protection are made under Section 64 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1989.”

Under Victorian law, a child is regarded as being under 17 years of age.

This includes both physical abuse and sexual abuse.

See : Sections 182(1) a-e, 184 and 162 c-d of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)

What happens if you have to report?

1 Responsibilities of a Mandated Notifier

The responsibilities of the mandated notifier include the following:

- Mandated professionals are only required to make a notification to the Child Protection Service when they form a belief that a child is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse in the course of practising their profession.

In other words, if you are a mandated notifier you will not be legally obliged to report if you encounter abuse in your private life, or when working in a capacity that is not directly related to the professional affiliation under which you are mandated. However, in such situations you have a moral or ethical obligation to report your concerns if you have reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of harm.

What do I have to do?

- You must make a report without delay.
- You are required to make a report each time you become aware of any further grounds for your belief.
- You do not have to prove that the abuse has occurred.
- It is your principal responsibility to report your belief. It is not the responsibility of your supervisor, principal, senior or boss. If you are one of a group of mandated notifiers who share the belief, based on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse, then only one mandated notifier needs to make the report. However, you must be satisfied that the report was made promptly and that all of the reasonable grounds were included in the notification.
- In instances where a mandated professional (supervisor, principal, boss) directs another mandated professional not to make a report, and that professional continues to hold the belief that child is in need of protection, then that person is legally required to make a report to the Child Protection Service.
- Mandatory reporting requirements take precedence over professional codes of practice where confidentiality or client privilege is claimed.

NOTE:-If you report to DHS the identity of notifiers is protected.

Child Protection and Family Services - Department of Human Services

www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-family-services

2 Do the laws of confidentiality apply to me?

NO

(a) The Evidence Act(Vic)2008 s 127 provides for only religious confessions to be protected and it is believed that this applies only to priest/confessor communications in relation to the confessional.

(b) Thus, what someone says to a Rabbi is not privileged (save for counseling situations), in other words what is said to you can be disclosed in court proceedings. It may be however that a judge would not compel a Rabbi to give evidence(regarding a confidential communication) if the Rabbi were unwilling to do so. However, this is untested in the courts.

There may be however an ethical and moral duty not to disclose what has been said to you in the course of counselling(the same as there may be a moral and ethical duty to report something to DHS even if it does not fall within the ambit of mandatory reporting).

3 When do I recommend police intervention?

If it appears to you that someone or their child/children is in immediate danger, then you should recommend intervention. For example, if it is clear to you or you hold a reasonable belief that someone's physical safety is at risk, you should tell them that if they do not go to or call the police, then you will.

4 When do I recommend an intervention order ?

You should recommend an intervention order if you believe that the person's safety is at risk due to the occurrence of family violence and the likelihood of it recurring. If you feel that someone has suffered from family violence, economic abuse or emotional and psychological abuse, then you should recommend that they apply for an order.

You should be aware that there is a possibility of the perpetrator being excluded from the home, but the court can also make orders that restrain the perpetrator from engaging in family violence but enabling them to remain at the home.

These are the matters that the court will look at pursuant to the Family Violence Protection Act 2008

5 Meaning of family violence

- (1) For the purposes of this Act, family violence is:
 - (a) behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour -
 - (i) is physically or sexually abusive; or
 - (ii) is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
 - (iii) is economically abusive; or
 - (iv) is threatening; or
 - (v) is coercive; or
 - (vi) in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person; or
 - (b) behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to in paragraph (a).
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), family violence includes the following behaviour -
 - (a) assaulting or causing personal injury to a family member or threatening to do so;
 - (b) sexually assaulting a family member or engaging in another form of sexually coercive behaviour or threatening to engage in such behaviour;
 - (c) intentionally damaging a family member's property, or threatening to do so;
 - (d) unlawfully depriving a family member of the family member's liberty, or threatening to do so;
 - (e) causing or threatening to cause the death of, or injury to, an animal, whether or not the animal belongs to the family member to whom the behaviour is directed so as to control, dominate or coerce the family member.
- (3) To remove doubt, it is declared that behaviour may constitute family violence even if the behaviour would not constitute a criminal offence.

6 Meaning of economic abuse

For the purposes of this Act, economic abuse is behaviour by a person (the first person) that is coercive, deceptive or unreasonably controls another person (the second person), without the second person's consent -

- (a) in a way that denies the second person the economic or financial autonomy the second person would have had but for that behaviour; or
- (b) by withholding or threatening to withhold the financial support necessary for meeting the reasonable living expenses of the second person or the second person's child, if the second person is entirely or predominantly dependent on the first person for financial support to meet those living expenses.

Examples -

- coercing a person to relinquish control over assets and income;
- removing or keeping a family member's property without permission, or threatening to do so;
- disposing of property owned by a person, or owned jointly with a person, against the person's wishes and without lawful excuse;
- without lawful excuse, preventing a person from having access to joint financial assets for the purposes of meeting normal household expenses;
- preventing a person from seeking or keeping employment;
- coercing a person to claim social security payments;
- coercing a person to sign a power of attorney that would enable the person's finances to be managed by another person;
- coercing a person to sign a contract for the purchase of goods or services;
- coercing a person to sign a contract for the provision of finance, a loan or credit;
- coercing a person to sign a contract of guarantee;
- coercing a person to sign any legal document for the establishment or operation of a business.

7 Meaning of emotional or psychological abuse

For the purposes of this Act, emotional or psychological abuse means behaviour by a person towards another person that torments, intimidates, harasses or is offensive to the other person.

Examples -

- repeated derogatory taunts, including racial taunts;
- threatening to disclose a person's sexual orientation to the person's friends or family against the person's wishes;
- threatening to withhold a person's medication;
- preventing a person from making or keeping connections with the person's family, friends or culture, including cultural or spiritual ceremonies or practices, or preventing the person from expressing the person's cultural identity;
- threatening to commit suicide or self-harm with the intention of tormenting or intimidating a family member, or threatening the death or injury of another person."

Thus, if you understand that these things are going on, then you should recommend an intervention order.

What is involved with getting an intervention order?

Summary of what is involved

In cases of emergency the police can issue a safety notice (similar to an intervention order) which lasts for a period of 72 hours and can include a condition to exclude the perpetrator from the home. The safety notice is also an application to the court for an intervention order and the notice expires when the matter comes before the court and an intervention order is made and served upon the respondent.

Alternatively, police or the victim can apply to the Court for an a intervention order. There are two types of orders, an interim order and a final order. The court may issue an interim order in the first instance so that victim is protected until a magistrate can hear all the evidence and make a final decision. The Court must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that there is a need to make the order to ensure the safety of the affected family member. All the details about applying for an intervention order are clearly outlined in a publication by the Victorian Legal Aid and is a useful and easy to understand reference for anyone seeking more information on this issues. http://www.vla.vic.gov.au/cl.safe_at_home.pdf

See below for more detailed information

A family member may apply for an intervention order- see family members - ss8-10. There is a broad definition, including:

- Any person the relevant person regards as 'being like a family member' if it is reasonable to regard them in this way given the circumstances of the relationship

Safety Notice

Family Violence Safety Notices

- Temporary on-the-spot after hours protection, issued by police, against adult respondents, where there are no other orders in place and they are necessary to ensure safety, preserve property or protect a child - s24
- Can include conditions similar to intervention orders - s29
- Operate as an intervention order application and summons to a first mention date that must be within 72 hours - s31
- In force from when they are served until the court refuses an intervention order at the first mention date or makes an intervention at the first mention date and that order is served on the respondent - s30

Grounds for family violence intervention orders

Interim orders s53

- Necessary, pending a final decision about the application, to ensure safety of affected family member (AFM), preserve property of AFM or protect a child
- Consent/not opposed
- Family violence safety notice has been made and there are no circumstances to justify discontinuing protection until final decision.

Final orders s74

- Respondent has committed family violence against AFM and is likely to do so again.

Criteria for determining duration -

- Court must take into account that the safety of the AFM is paramount as well as the applicant and AFM's assessment of the level and duration of risk from the respondent
- Court may take into account relevant matters raised by the respondent.

Conditions of Orders

- General ss80-81
 - Safety of AFM and children paramount
 - Can impose any condition that appears necessary or desirable
 - List of possible conditions includes:
 - Specific provision about exclusion from 'residence' – see below
 - Conditions about use of personal property
 - Revocation or suspension of firearms licence or weapons approval
 - Exclusion from residence ss79, 82-85
 - If the court decides to make an intervention order it must consider imposing a condition excluding the respondent from the residence shared (or proposed to be shared) with the AFM ('an exclusion condition'). The Act prescribes a non-exhaustive list of criteria - s82(2), that focus on avoiding disruption to the AFM and children
 - If the court decides an exclusion condition is appropriate against an adult respondent and the protected person does not oppose this, then the court must exclude
- (2) In making a decision about whether to include an exclusion condition in the family violence intervention order, the court must have regard to all the circumstances of the case, including the following -
- (a) the desirability of minimising disruption to the protected person and any child living with the protected person and the importance of maintaining social networks and support which may be lost if the protected person and the child were required to leave the residence or were unable to return to or move into the residence; s. 82
 - (b) the desirability of continuity and stability in the care of any child living with the protected person;
 - (c) the desirability of allowing any childcare arrangements, education, training or employment of the protected person or any child living with the protected person to continue without interruption or disturbance.
- (3) Subsection (1) applies regardless of any legal or equitable rights the parties have in the residence.
- (4) If the court decides that an exclusion condition is appropriate in a family violence intervention order against an adult respondent and the protected person does not oppose the inclusion of the condition, the order must include the condition.

10

Resource
Directory

Resource Directory

Emergency & Police Services

Police 000

Victoria Police has 180 Family Violence Liaison Officers (FVLO) across the state who could be the first contact point for rabbis and community members seeking more information or advice on police processes. In relation to making reports, the station (or in emergencies, 000) should be the first port of call.

Caulfield Police Station 9524 9500

Moorabin Police Station 9556 6565

Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT) 9556 6124

The SOCIT unit's role is to investigate criminal offences relating to child and adult physical and sexual assaults and to support these victims. Experienced police members, who are aware of the particular needs of their clients, staff these units.

Family Violence Support Services

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria (WDVCS) 9322 3555
1800 015 188
wdvcs@wdvcs.org.au (24/7)
For emergency accommodation

Salvation Army Family Violence Outreach Program 9536 7797
Inner South Region

(WAYSS) Outer South Regions 9791 6111

Inner South Community Health Services 9690 9144
Groups/Counselling

Connections 9521 5666
Counselling services for women, young people and children who have experienced family violence.

Child FIRST 1300 367 441
Inner Middle South
Intake and assessment team for children, youth & their families (Unborn - 18 yrs) that need to be linked into support services to protect & promote healthy development.

Family Life 8599 5433
Counselling services and group programs for women and children experiencing family violence.

Information and Resources

Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRCV) 9486 9866

WIRE 1300 134 130
Womens Information Referral Exchange
Helping women make the right connections

Sexual Assault Services

South East Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA) 9594 2289

After Hours Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL) 1800 806 292

Gatehouse Centre 9345 6391
for the Assessment and Treatment of Child Abuse including Sexual Abuse

Services for Children & Young People

After Hours Child Protection Crisis Line (Statewide) 131 278

Child Protection Intake
Business Hours
Eastern 1300 360 391
Southern 1300 655 795

Australian Childhood Foundation 1800 176 453 or 9874 3922

Gatehouse Centre for the Assessment and Treatment of Child Abuse 9345 6391

Parentline 132 289

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800

Austin Health Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) 9496 3620 After Hours 9496 5000

Childwise 1800 99 10 99
National Child Abuse Prevention Helpline wiseup@childwise.net

Emerge 1300 536 330
Supports women and children experiencing family violence

Jewish Services

Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence
www.jewishtaskforce.com.au
Admin Line 9523 6850
Support Line 9523 2100

Jewish Care 8517 5999

Services for men who use violence

Men's Referral Service 9428 2899
Telephone counselling and referral service to men behaviour change organisation in VIC 1800 065 973

Inner South Community Health Service 9534 0981
Specialist Mens behavioural change group program and counselling for men who perpetrate family violence

Men's Responsibility Program 9534 0981

Legal Services

St Kilda Legal Service 9534 0777

Women's Legal Service 9642 0877

Monash Oakleigh Legal Service 9905 4336

Victorian Legal Aid (VLA) Legal Information Service 9269 0120 1300 702 387

Court Network Family Violence Registrar 9603 7433
For information & support to make an intervention order

Financial Counsellors

Jewish Care 8517 5999

Inner South Community Health Service 9690 9144

Connections 9521 5666

Family Dispute Resolution

Mediation Tip Sheet
www.dvrcv.au/help-advice/preparing-for-mediation

Family Relationship Centres 1800 050 321

Useful Websites

Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence	www.jewishtaskforce.com.au
Hurt	www.hurt.net.au
Community Legal Centres	www.communitylaw.org.au
Domestic Violence Resource Centre	www.dvrcv.org.au
No To Violence (NTV) NTV, The Male Family Violence Prevention Association inc., is a peak organisation of individuals and agencies working for the prevention of male family violence. The specific focus is work with men to assist them to change and end their violent behaviour.	www.ntv.org.au
The Gatehouse Centre This website provides details of services to assess and respond to child abuse, including sexual abuse.	www.rch.org.au/gatehouse
Child Wise Child Wise is Australia's leading international child protection charity.	www.childwise.net
Emerge Women and children's support network	www.emergesupport.org.au
Womens Domestic Crisis Service of VIC	www.wdvcs.org.au
Women's Information Referral Exchange WIRE provides free information, support and referrals to women	www.wire.org.au
Women's Safety After Separation	www.wsas.here.ws
Women with Disabilities Australia Current information and resources on a range of issues facing women with disabilities, including violence and abuse.	www.wwda.org.au

Notes



Acknowledgements

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The Rabbinical Council of Victoria 8517 5712 or executive@rcv.org.au

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the woman of the home is the source of all blessing

(Talmud)

Every Friday night, it is customary for a husband to recite this prayer to his wife - to honour, respect and thank her for all that she is, and all that she does.

A woman of valour who can find? for her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and he hath no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil all the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships; she bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth food to her household, and a portion to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength, and maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself coverlets; her clothing is fine linen and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing; and she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her:
'Many daughters have done valiantly, but thou excellest them all.'
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her works praise her in the gates.

Eishet Chayil mi yimtza, vrachok mi'pninim michrah.
 Batach bah lev ba'alalah, vshalal lo yechsar.
 G'malathu tov v'lo ra kol y'mei chayeha.
 Darsha tsemer ufishim, v'ta'as b'chefetz kapeha.
 Hay'tah k'oniyot socher, mimerchak tavi lachma.
 V'titen teref l'beitah v'chok l'na'areha.
 Zam'mah sadeh v'tikachehu, mi'pri kapeha nat'ah karem.
 Chag'rah b'oz motneha, va'tametz z'ro'oteha.
 Ta'm'a ki tov sochrah, lo yichbe balayla nerah.
 Yadeha shilcha b'kishor, v'kapeha tam'chu phalech.
 Kapah par'sah l'ani, v'yadehah shil'cha l'evyon.
 Lo tira l'veitah m'shaleg, ki kol beitah l'vush shanim.
 Marvadim as'tah lah, shesh v'argaman l'vushah.
 Nodah b'sha'arim ba'alalah, b'shivto im ziknei aretz.
 Sadin as'tah v'timkor, v'chagor nat'nah la'kna'ani.
 Oz v'hadar l'vushah, vatischak l'yom acharon.
 Piha pat'cha b'chochmah, v'torat chesed al l'shonah.
 Tsofiya halichot beita, v'lechem atzlut lo tochel.
 Kamu vaneha v'ya'ashruhah, ba'aolah vay'hal'lah.
 Rabot banot asu chayil, v'at alit al kulanah.
 Sheker hachen v'hevel hayofi, ishah yir'at adonai hi tithalal.
 T'nu lah mi p'ri yadeha, vihal'luha b'shaarim ma'aseha.

אִשֶׁת חַיִל מִי יִמְצָא, וְרַחֵק מִפְּנִינִים מִכְרָה.
 בָּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בְּעֵלָהּ, וְשָׁלַל לֹא יִחְסַר.
 גְּמַלְתָּהּ טוֹב וְלֹא רָע, כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיהָ.
 דָּרְשָׁה צְמֵר וּפְשָׁטִים, וַתַּעַשׂ בְּחָפְזָא כַפֵּיהָ.
 הִיטָה כְּאֵנוּיּוֹת סוֹחֵר, מִמֶּרְחַק תְּבִיא לַחֲמָה.
 וַתִּקַּם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה, וַתַּחַם טָרֵף לְבֵיתָהּ וְחָק לְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ.
 זָמְמָה בְּעוֹד וַתִּקְחָהּ, מִפְּרִי כַפֵּיהָ נִטְעָה פְּרָם.
 חָגְרָה בְּעוֹז מִתְּנִיָּהּ, וַתִּאֲמַץ זְרוּעֹתֶיהָ.
 טָעַמָּה כִּי טוֹב סוֹחֵרָה, לֹא יִכְבֶּה בְּלִילָה נֶגֶה.
 יָדִיָּה שָׁלְחָה בְּכִישׁוֹר, וְכַפֵּיהָ תִמְכּוּ פֶלֶךְ.
 כַּפָּה פָּרְשָׁה לְעֵנִי, וְיָדֶיהָ שָׁלְחָה לְאַבְיוֹן.
 לֹא תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ מִשְׁלֵג, כִּי כִלְיֵיבֵיתָהּ לִבְשׁ שָׁנִים.
 מְרַבְּדִים עֲשֵׂתָהּ לָהּ, שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמֹן לְבוּשָׁהּ.
 נוֹדַע בְּשַׁעְרִים בְּעֵלָהּ, בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם זְקֵנֵי אֶרֶץ.
 סָדִין עֲשֵׂתָהּ וַתִּמְכֹּר, וַחֲגוֹר נָתַנָּה לְכַנְעָנִי.
 עוֹז וְהִדָּר לְבוּשָׁהּ, וַתִּשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן.
 פִּיהָ פָּתְחָה בְּחֲכָמָה, וַתּוֹרַת חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָהּ:
 צוֹפִיָּה הִלִּיכּוֹת בֵּיתָהּ, וְלָחֶם עֵצְלוֹת לֹא תֹאכַל:
 קָמוּ בְּנֵיהָ וַיִּאֲשְׁרוּהָ, בְּעֵלָהּ וַיְהַלְלָהּ:
 רַבּוֹת בְּנוֹת עָשׂוּ חַיִל, וְאַתְּ עֲלִית עַל פִּלְגָּהּ:
 שָׁקַר חֲחוּ וְהִבֵּל הִפִּי, אִשָּׁה יִרְאַת ה' הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל:
 תְּנוּ לָהּ מִפְּרִי יָדֶיהָ, וַיְהַלְלוּהָ בְּשַׁעְרִים מְעֻשִׂיָּהּ:

You are the woman of valour in your home and deserve to be treated that way.

CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT LINE

03 9523 2100

www.jewishtaskforce.org.au

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence, Inc is proud to participate in the Shabbos Project.





PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM
VICTORIA INC.

ארגון ליהדות מתקדמת בויקטוריה

28 May 2015

WHO IS PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM VICTORIA INC. (PJV)

Progressive Judaism Victoria is the roof body of a number of Progressive Jewish congregations in addition to The King David School, the Netzer Youth movement and the Bet Olam Funeral Service. PJV and its members are affiliated to the national body, The Union for Progressive Judaism which in turn is affiliated to the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The WUPJ represents the largest number of Jews throughout the world. Progressive Judaism embraces pluralism, modernity, equality and social justice as its core values and believes that such values are consistent with a committed Jewish life.

WHAT IS THE JEWISH TASKFORCE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE INC

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence Inc. (JTAFV) raises awareness and conducts educational and training programs about all aspects of domestic violence across the entire Jewish community in Victoria. Its programs also reach out to the Jewish Day schools and through various events to the wider Jewish Community.

JTAFV provides ongoing training to Rabbis (both Orthodox and Progressive) about domestic violence in all its forms, the impact of the abuse on the victims and their families as well as training in how to respond to disclosures. The Progressive rabbis and the Netzer youth movement have participated in that training. Several members of Temple Beth Israel, a Progressive congregation have or now hold executive positions in JTAFV. The bipartisan support that it receives from the broader community has resulted on JTAFV becoming one of the focal points, together with organizations such as Jewish Care and Tzedek, for members of the Jewish community to seek help if they are the victims of domestic violence.

Whilst the Progressive Rabbis undergo specific training as part of their intensive six year rabbinic studies, there is a need for ongoing continuous professional development at all levels to ensure that our Rabbis youth leaders and other constituents are aware of the changes to State and Federal laws as well as the development of new initiatives that can help reduce the rate of violence within the Jewish community.



PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM
VICTORIA INC.
 האיגוד ליהדות מתקדמת בויקטוריה

PJV considers more early intervention educational programs in primary schools is one way to break the cycle of abuse and re-establish a healthier cultural behaviour. This our recommendation would be for ongoing educational programs examining what healthy relationships look like and providing tools for all life stages including the aging community. The Jewish Community is fortunate to have multiple organisations which work independently as well as interdependently to support its members. The PJV endorses the submissions from the Jewish Community Organisations including:

- Jewish Care Vic
- Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence Inc.
- Chevra Hatzolah – Emergency Response
- JCCV Inc.

We thank you for the opportunity to present our recommendations to the Royal Commission into Family Violence and wish you well in your endeavours to collate all the information you receive and to put forward proposals for reducing the scourge of Family Violence in Victoria. We look forward to the implementation of improvements into policies and procedures for all organizations in Victoria , including the Jewish community , which will ultimately lead to healthier relationships for all people residing in this State.

Brian Samuel
 President

Progressive Judaism Victoria