

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS: WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?



They can look very different in different families and cultures – but a respectful relationship is always a **SAFE** one. That is most important. Everyone in the family should feel safe – they should not be afraid that someone is going to hurt them physically or force them to do things or threaten them.

- » People **DON'T CALL EACH OTHER NAMES**
- » When people show respect, they **USE GOOD MANNERS**
- » In respectful relationships people **KNOW WHEN TO WALK AWAY AND COOL DOWN.**
- » In respectful relationships people **LISTEN TO EACH OTHER.**
- » When people respect each other they **DO NOT TRY TO CONTROL EACH OTHER.**

HOW DOES RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOUR HELP FAMILIES?

Couples who respect one another are more likely to support each other by helping when things get tough. They share the workload when they can. This makes life easier for everyone.

Couples in respectful relationships still argue, but they try to resolve it quickly rather than let disagreements go on for days. There are more happy times in respectful relationships.

Children who grow up in families where people treat each other with respect are less likely to have:

- » Mental health problems (like anxiety and depression)
- » Learning issues at school
- » Trouble in their own relationships

Couples behaving in respectful ways tend to raise children who also behave respectfully.

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RISK FACTORS TO BE AWARE OF

IF YOU OR ANYONE ELSE EXPERIENCE THESE, THERE'S HELP AVAILABLE

The early risk factors that predict serious problems for new families are:

- 1. Ongoing Relationship Conflict.** Everyone argues of course, especially when we are tired, but serious, threatening or chronic conflict can break a relationship down and your impact mental health.
- 2. Financial pressures.** Raising children does involve some sacrifice. But if money worries are affecting your sleep, mental health, relationships or ability to parent – you need help.
Call Money Help on ph: **1800 007 007** for free advice.
- 3. Anger and violence.** When we are under pressure, situations can spin out of control. Anger is OK if it's expressed in acceptable ways. There's lots of support available to help people who feel angry during the transition period into parenthood. It's not uncommon. Anyone who chooses to be violent needs to seek help to change and reduce the harm to the people around them.
If you fear for your or your baby's safety call **1800 737 732** (which is **1800RESPECT**) for safe, confidential help.
- 4. Problematic alcohol or other drug use.** Substance use is not as acceptable for parents as it is for single people, as there is far greater risk to your baby and those around you. Call Directline on **1800 888 236** for help or advice. You can make changes.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP WITH THIS

If you can't seem to make changes, go and see someone you trust for advice. This may be someone in your community, or a Community Health Centre or you can ring a Helpline (see our list of resources below).

Maternal Child Helpline – Available to Victorian families with children from birth to school age. Provides information, support and guidance regarding child health, nutrition, breast feeding, maternal and family health and parenting. Ph: **13 22 29**

Parentline – Provides a telephone, counselling, advisory and information service for parents and carers with children aged up to 18 years.
Ph: **13 22 89** 8am–midnight, 7 days a week

DirectLine – Provides free and confidential counselling, information and referral for alcohol and drug-related matters. **1800 888 236**

The Men's Referral Service – Offers a confidential telephone service provided for men by men. For men who want to stop their violent or abusive behaviour towards their family members. Women can also seek information and help for their male partner, husband, relative or friend.
Ph: **1300 766 491** or **(03) 9487 4500**
Mon–Fri: 9am–9pm

1800 RESPECT – Confidential information, counselling and support service- Open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse. Call **1800 737 732** or call **000** if you are in immediate danger.

Women's Legal Service – **8622 0600**

Lifeline Australia – **13 11 14** – Crisis Support and Suicide Prevention.

Safe Steps – Provides crisis telephone support, information and referral to safe accommodation (refuge) for women experiencing violence and abuse in their relationships. **1800 015 188** or Ph: **(03) 9322 3555** (24 hr)

INTOUCH – a leading accredited service, which provides services, programs and responses to issues of family violence in migrant and refugee communities. Our organisation strives to create a world where all women and children will be safe and free from violence.

Email us at admin@intouch.org.au or call us now on **1800 755 988**

Wire Women's Support Line – Provides support, information and referrals on any issues, such as family relationships and legal issues; domestic/family violence; housing and homelessness; emotional wellbeing; mental health - anxiety, fear, stress and depression; and job search, study options and community volunteering. Ph: **1300 134 130** Mon-Fri: 9am–5pm

Drummond Street Services – Offer individual and family support, counselling around parenting, relationships, mental health and wellbeing for children, young people and adults or can connect you to the best support for you and your family.