

Community Violence

Community violence is defined as violence that occurs between individuals or groups, who may or may not know each other. It generally occurs in public places or in institutions such as schools, workplaces, prisons or nursing homes. Violence can be physical, sexual, psychological or of a neglectful nature¹.

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Indigenous females are 31 times more likely to be admitted to hospital from an assault than non-Indigenous females².



Quick facts

- Indigenous males are 7 times more likely to be assaulted and admitted to hospital than their non-indigenous counterparts².
- More than one third of all assault hospitalisations in Australia are young people³.
- Young men aged 18-24 are most at risk of experiencing community violence⁴.

Personal safety

When out in the community, there are precautions you can take to reduce your risk of being exposed to violence.

- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Walk in well lit and busy areas.
- Walk with a friend or group wherever possible.
- Walk confidently.
- Plan ahead, how are you going to get home?
- Contact police if you feel you are in immediate danger⁵.

Produced by ICCWA with support from ExxonMobil Australia

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Preventing violence

The factors that contribute to violent responses – whether they are factors of attitude and behaviour, or related to larger social, economic, political or cultural conditions – can be changed. Violence can be prevented.

The World Health Organisation recommends the following violence prevention strategies:

- Developing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and caregivers.
- Developing life skills in children and adolescents.
- Reducing the availability and harmful use of alcohol.
- Reducing access to guns, knives, pesticides and other weapons.
- Promoting gender equality to prevent violence against women.
- Changing cultural and social norms that support violence.
- Victim identification, care and support programmes⁶.

Young men aged 18-24 years most frequently reported that the physical assault occurred at licensed premises (44%) or in the open (34%)⁴.

Information and support

For free information and counselling services:

Crisis Care: 08 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008 (24 hours)

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline: 08 9223 1188 or 1800 007 339 (24 hours)

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline: 08 9223 1199 or 1800 000 599 (24 hours)

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

Legal Aid, Domestic Violence Legal Unit: 08 9261 6254 or 1300 650 570 or TTY 1800 241 216. Contact for help with restraining orders, safety issues, and advice on legal issues including family law and children's matters.

Women's Law Centre: 08 9272 8800 or 1800 625 122 or TTY 08 9272 9500. Specialist women's legal service seeking to provide information, advice, minor assistance, representation, community legal education, law reform activities.

Family Court Counselling Service: 08 9224 8248

Department for Child Protection: 08 9222 2555 or 1800 622 258

Victim Support and Child Witness Service: 1800 818 988 or 08 9425 2850

Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC): 08 9340 1820 or email KEMH_SARCEducationandTraining@health.wa.gov.au

References

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6. World Health Organisation 2009, *Violence prevention the evidence: overview*, WHO, Geneva, <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241598507_eng.pdf>.

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ICCWA is the peak not for profit organisation involved in injury prevention and community safety promotion in Western Australia. Our mission is to reduce the incidence of injuries and their effects on the community.