

## WHO ELSE CAN HELP

- ★ Friends and Family Members, teachers, school guidance counsellors
- ★ Kids Helpline  
1800 551 80 (24 Hours)
- ★ Parentline  
1300 301 300
- ★ TAIHS (Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service)  
4759 4000
- ★ The Women's Centre  
4775 7555
- ★ Lifeline Service (24 Hr Counselling)  
13 11 14
- ★ Uniting Care  
4775 9100
- ★ Centacare  
4772 9000
- ★ Act for Kids  
4755 8777
- ★ Relationships Australia  
1300 364 277

## WEBSITES

**Kid's Helpline**  
[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

**Reachout**  
[www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)

**DVConnect**  
[www.dvconnect.org](http://www.dvconnect.org)

**1800 Respect**  
[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The program involves a shared commitment between the child, the safe caregiver and AARDVARC workers. During our time together, we strive to maintain a non-violent environment. As we all have the right to feel safe, we work together to maintain our safe and supportive space.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

We aim to establish a trusting confidential relationship. Whilst confidentiality and trust are essential in any relationship, the safety of the child/ren is seen as paramount. Where a worker becomes aware of abuse, or potential risk of abuse, they are required by law to report this to the relevant authorities. However, if this is the case, workers and safe caregiver will work together to consider ways and / or strategies in which to maintain the safety of the child.

For inquiries please contact the AARDVARC team.



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DVNQ acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work, and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



DVNQ is committed to inclusivity and advocacy, ensuring equitable access and respect for all people, regardless of cultural background, age, gender, sexuality, or disability.



## AARDVARC CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECOGNITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND REAL CHANGE

Children and young people living free from domestic violence

DVNQ

# ABOUT

The AARDVARC Program is specifically for children and young people aged 4 to 18 years, and their safe caregiver who have experienced domestic or family violence.

## AARDVARC offers the child and their safe caregiver:

- Acknowledgement of their experience of violence
- An opportunity to talk and make sense of this experience, within a safe and supportive environment
- Information, ideas and referrals

**Short term individual programs provide further opportunity to explore the experience of violence for the child/young person and their safe caregiver.**

## Individual programs:

- Seek to explore the effects of violence on the child/young person and their safe caregiver
- Respect the role of the safe caregiver
- Seek to strengthen the relationship between child/ren and their safe caregiver
- Assist families to develop strategies in dealing with their experience of violence
- Provide specific support and information to families
- Programs are flexible.

**A variety of activities to connect with and communicate with children are utilised in the AARDVARC program.**

## These activities aim to promote:

- Healthy relationships education and development
- Self esteem
- Handling conflict, anger and stress safely
- Communication skills
- Identification and exploration of feelings
- Protective behaviours and safety plans

## INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS

for children/young people and their safe caregiver for 1 hour per week for approximately 6 weeks

## INFORMATION SESSIONS

Information sessions for safe caregivers

## GROUP SESSIONS

Strengths-based group sessions for families

## DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE DOES AFFECT CHILDREN

Children are affected by living with violence. Every child's experience is unique. Listed below are some of the ways that children may act, feel or be thinking as a result of their experience.

## What children and young people may feel:

- Scared
- Powerless
- Confused
- Helpless
- Angry
- Guilty about loving the abusive parent
- Guilty about not protecting the abused parent
- Worried about the future
- Worried about the possible loss of the parent
- Insecure
- Hopeless
- Split down the middle
- Numb

Remember - it is OK and very normal to have these feelings

## What children and young people may think:

- Violence is an appropriate way to solve problems
- The violence is the non-violent caregiver's fault
- The violence is my fault
- Domestic violence is a secret
- Men have the right to control women

## How children and young people may act:

- Aggressive to other children, brothers, sisters, pets
- Treat the caregiver like the partner treats them
- Regression (return to behaviours from their younger years). E.g. bedwetting, whining, tantrums, specific fears
- Problems concentrating / forgetful
- Easily distracted or startled
- Fighting at school or problems with school work
- Lying, stealing
- Withdrawn, unusual shyness
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares
- Physical illness (stomach aches, headaches)
- Unable to play

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Spend quality time with children
- Encourage healthy relationships and boundaries
- Set respectful limits
- Support children to overcome their fears
- Let other people know
- Condemn the behaviour, not the person
- Link your actions to his behaviour

## What your child/ren may need to hear from you:

- Violence is not OK and it is OK to talk about it
- It is not your fault
- It must be scary for you and I will listen to you
- You can tell me how you feel.
- I am sorry you had to see / hear it
- There is nothing you could have done to prevent / change it