

What is FASS and how can it help you?

- Legal Aid WA's Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) offers a free duty lawyer and social support worker service for anyone with a family law problem who is affected by family violence.
- You can find FASS at the Family Court of WA at Level 2, 150 Terrace Road, Perth.
- You can also access FASS when the Family Court travels on circuit to Broome, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany.
- FASS duty lawyers can give you legal advice about parenting matters, applying for or defending a Family Violence Restraining Order, protection and care matters, urgent property matters, and divorce.
- FASS social support workers can help you to manage risk. They can also give you counselling, referrals to other services, in-court support, and help dealing with organisations outside the court system such as police, refuges, and housing services.

You can ask for help from FASS by calling Legal Aid WA Infoline on 1300 650 579 Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm (Australian Western Standard Time). If you are at Family Court just ask to see the FASS staff.

Where else can I find information?

You can also find more information on the national FASS website at nationallegalaid.org and the Family Violence law Help website at familyviolencelaw.gov.au

Contact us

Legal Aid WA Infoline
Monday-Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm

1300 650 579

Email: FASS@legalaid.wa.gov.au

FASS service providers

Perth

Legal Aid & Anglicare WA FASS

South West

Bunbury Legal Aid Office
South West Community Legal Centre
Waratah Support Centre

Great Southern

Albany Community Legal Centre
Albany Legal Aid Office
Anglicare WA Albany

Goldfields

Centrecare Kalgoorlie
Kalgoorlie Legal Aid Office

Mid West & Gascoyne

Geraldton Centacare Family Services
Geraldton Legal Aid Office

West Kimberley

Anglicare WA Broome
Broome Legal Aid Office



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What is family violence?

Family violence is:

- violence, or a threat of violence, by one family member towards another
- any other behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes them to be fearful

Family violence can happen between intimate partners and ex-partners (including same sex relationships), siblings, grandparents, children towards their parents or from family carers to a relative. It can also include people who are related to each other through their culture, kinship or religion.

Examples of family violence

Family violence is not just hurting someone, it also includes all of the behaviours in the pictures below.

If you have concerns about these types of behaviours you can seek legal advice and social support from FASS. It can be helpful to talk it through with someone else and understand what your legal options are and how you can increase safety for yourself and your family.

How can I stay safe if I am concerned about family violence?

If you are experiencing or at risk of family violence, there are steps you can take to increase your safety and that of your children.

- You may need to take immediate action to make yourself safe and plan for the future.

- Depending on your circumstances, you may decide to apply for a restraining order or other orders to help protect you from family violence.
- You may also wish to access counselling or other social support services.

Children and family violence

A child may directly experience, or be exposed to, family violence. A child is exposed to family violence when they see or hear family violence or experience its effects in any other way. Some examples of a child being exposed to family violence include:

- hearing threats made to hurt or kill another family member
- comforting a family member who has been hurt by another family member
- cleaning up mess at home when a family member has deliberately damaged property
- seeing police or an ambulance help a family member who has been hurt
- being asked to keep quiet about violence in the family

How does family violence affect children?

Family violence can impact children in a number of ways, such as causing the child to experience:

- physical injury or neglect
- low self-esteem, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems
- self-harm
- difficulty in communicating their feelings

- difficulty making friends
- behavioural problems, including aggression and dangerous risk taking
- problems at school
- poor concentration and low academic achievement

Children can be helped to heal from their experience of family violence. The FASS social support worker can help you get support for your child or children.

What you can do to protect your kids

Parents, carers and adults in children's lives can act in ways that are 'protective' such as:

- providing children with a place where they feel physically and psychologically safe
- parenting that provides structure, warmth, emotional support and positive reinforcement
- ensure there is positive support from other adults outside their immediate family, such as relatives, family friends and teachers

Programs to help people who use family violence

The aim of the programs is to support people to change their behaviours so that their family members feel safe. Legal Aid WA's Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) can provide information about programs available.

You can also access more information about available programs on the FASS website.

