

## THE EFFECTS OF SPOUSAL ABUSE ON CHILDREN



The sad truth is that anytime a parent is abused by his/her spouse, the children are also affected, even if they are not abused themselves. When there is violence in the home, the children may live in constant fear that a loved one is going to be harmed.

### When Children See Their Parents Being Shouted At, Pushed Or Hit, They...

- May show their stress in various ways, and display other behavioural problems
- May think they are the cause of the problem
- May think that it is acceptable to hurt other people or allow others to hurt them
- May use violence to solve problems
- May stay away from home, be suicidal or self harm
- Are more likely to be abusive in their adult intimate relationships

It takes courage to walk away, but the only way to break the cycle of violence is to reach out for help and put a stop to it once and for all. Spousal abuse is a crime, and cannot be tolerated.

## ABUSE SHOULD NEVER BE TOLERATED

Victims may sometimes feel that they deserve the abusive treatment, or feel they have to stay with their abusive spouse for various reasons. The effects of abuse may be damaging and long lasting.

**DO SEEK HELP EARLY**

## HELP LINES

**ComCare Call**  
1800 222 0000

### FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST CENTRES

**PAVE**  
6555 0390

<http://www.pave.org.sg>

**TRANS SAFE Centre**  
6449 9088

<http://www.transfamilyservices.org.sg/safe.html>

**Care Corner Project StART**  
6476 1482

<http://www.carecorner.org.sg/start.html>

You can also find more information at:  
<http://www.stopfamilyviolence.sg>



National Family Violence Networking System



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT



SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE



Promoting Alternatives to Violence



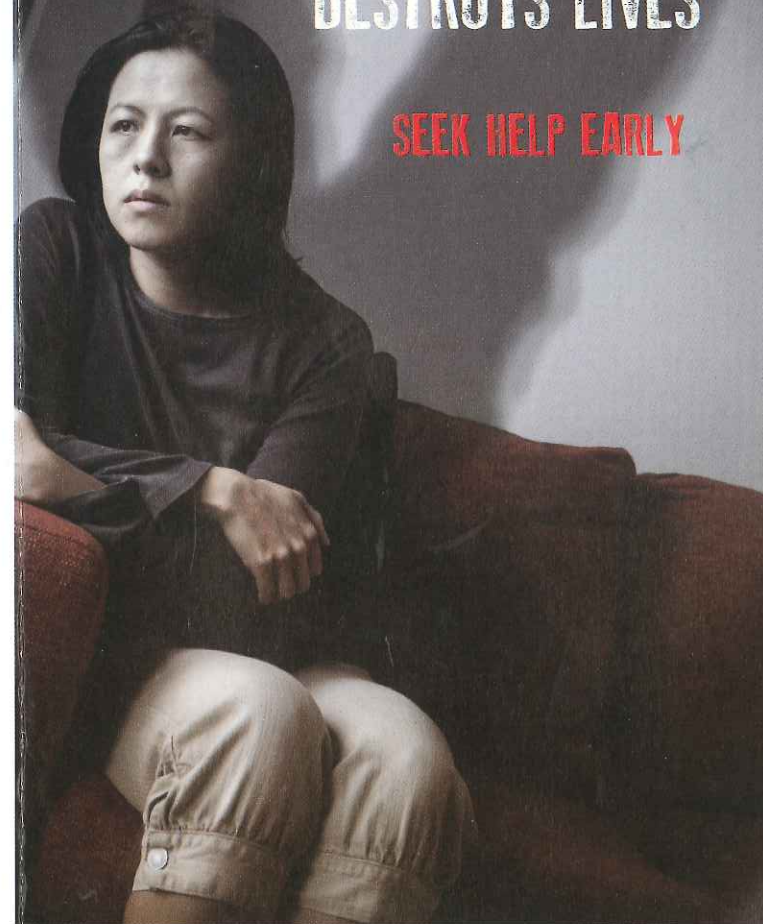
Family Services



Stop Abusive Relationships Together

# FAMILY VIOLENCE DESTROYS LIVES

**SEEK HELP EARLY**



## Stop Spousal Abuse

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, call ComCare Call at 1800 222 0000

Visit [www.stopfamilyviolence.sg](http://www.stopfamilyviolence.sg)

# STOP SPOUSAL ABUSE



Family violence is any violent, threatening or controlling behaviour that occurs within the family causing a person to live in fear.

## WHAT IS SPOUSAL ABUSE?

Spousal abuse occurs when your spouse uses aggression physically, emotionally or verbally to control you and put you in fear.

### THERE ARE VARIOUS FORMS OF SPOUSAL ABUSE

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE

This may start with threats that lead to physical actions such as being pushed before leading to more serious attacks such as hitting, pinching, or throwing of objects. It may become life threatening with serious behaviours such as strangling or the use of weapons.

#### EMOTIONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Emotional & psychological abuse can include threats and having rude and humiliating comments made against you. It may include being subjected to excessive control such as being isolated from friends and family, being followed or the need to provide constant reports on your whereabouts. You may not be allowed to handle money and possibly have your personal property, including prized possessions or pets, destroyed.

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse happens when the woman is forced to have sexual intercourse or take part in unwanted sexual activity.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

#### PHYSICAL

Signs could include, but are not limited to:

- Bruises
- Broken bones
- Cuts
- Internal injuries

#### EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

Signs could include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of self-esteem
- Feelings of shame, anxiety, hopelessness and terror
- Depression
- Isolation from friends and family

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

Signs could include, but are not limited to:

- Physical injuries such as bruises, lesions and cuts – although many assaults can also take place without injury
- Feelings of self-blame, guilt and shame

### THE VICTIM AND THE ABUSER



Victims of spousal abuse may...

- appear anxious
- believe that they don't deserve better
- have poor self image
- believe that things will improve if they just try harder

Abusers may...

- not realise that their behaviour is harmful
- feel that they are justified
- have a strong need for power and control
- blame others for their actions
- have unrealistic expectations and demands

### WHY DOES A VICTIM STAY IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

Victims may...

- Feel responsible for the abuser's behaviour
- Hold certain beliefs regarding marriage and family
- Believe abuser's threats or pleas for another chance
- Be afraid and not know where to go to seek help
- Have no financial support
- Hope for change