



Got Your Back

INFORMATION SHEET

Relationships Australia
CANBERRA & REGION

Every relationship matters.





About Got Your Back

Relationships Australia Canberra & Region want to make sure that 12-25 year olds who have been impacted by family and domestic violence are supported to deal with any issues they are facing.

Family and domestic violence is when someone hurts, frightens, controls, bullies and intimidates someone else in their family.

This can be anyone including parents, step-parents, siblings, step-siblings, grandparents, foster parents, aunts or uncles, carers, a parent's partner or their ex-partner or a young person's own partner.

And even if that person is hurting someone else and not the young person themselves, it can still have a huge impact on how they feel.

Family violence is not just physical abuse.

If a person is physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive, threatening or controlling another person in their family, that's family violence.

Family violence is often a repeated pattern of behaviour, and it is not okay. It is also abuse if a young person is witnessing family violence happening to someone in their family.

We are creating a community of support where young people affected by family and domestic violence can connect with each other, share ideas and discuss the challenges they are facing.

We know that for lots of young people impacted by violence at home, it can feel like there are no safe spaces to share experiences or get help or support. We also know that many young people have lots of wisdom and strength and we would like to help build on this.

Got Your Back belongs to the young people who take part. It is their group; they choose what they do and what the group speaks about. It is their chance to have a say and to hear from other young people in a similar situation.





What would happen if they are part of the group?

They would meet with up to 7 other young people in their age group each week. They are principally supported by Niamh (Neve) from Relationships Australia Canberra & Region, however Niamh does have someone there to help her run the group. In the group the young people would have some fun, get to know each other and have a chance to talk about any challenges they are facing.

Before they attend for the first time, Niamh will have a chat with them face to face. She will explain to them what the group is about and find out a bit more about them. Once they decide that the group is for them we will invite them to their first session.

The group starts off by getting to know each other and having a discussion about how they would like the group to run. Everyone has a chance to have their say. This discussion is followed by some fun activities to give them a chance to get to know each other and to have a laugh. After that they have a chat about anything that is important to them or topics that people want support or more information about. The group concludes with a check in with each other.

The group will always be inclusive, welcoming and safe. And there will always be something to eat!

The group will go for about an hour each week.

Meetings take place in the North and South of Canberra directly after school. The group runs on Mondays at Woden Youth Centre and on Thursdays at Belconnen CRCS.



Do they have to say yes to being part of this group?

No! It's totally up to the young person. No one will be upset if they say no.

They can also change their mind at any point for any reason. There is no pressure for them to answer any questions they don't want to. Their comfort is the most important thing.

They don't have to tell us their reason for not taking part, if they prefer not to.

If they decide to try the group and later think it's not right for them then they don't have to keep coming.



Is the group confidential?

We are required by law to keep the young person's information private and secure. Anything they tell us remains confidential and secure except:

- where they or another person may be at risk of harm; or
- where they say the information can be shared with others.

From time to time we also need to give information to organisations that give us funding, to be sure the money is being spent in the right way. When we do this, we make sure the young person cannot be identified in any way. We do this by giving them anonymous information.

Occasionally we use this anonymous information to do some research into how the group is going and how we could improve it. Sometimes this research is done in collaboration with other services or people outside of Relationships Australia Canberra & Region. If they are involved, they will only receive anonymous information. Participants will not be identified.

We will speak with participants if we are doing any research with outside services or people. The young person can decide if they want to be involved or not.

When it is time to destroy their information, we will make sure this is done safely.



Will their parents be informed that they are taking part in the group?

If the young person is over 16, their parents' consent is not required. If they are between 12 and 16 we will need to seek their parents' consent for them to take part. We may be able to have consent from just one parent if one of their parents isn't around or if there is a worry about their safety. The young person can discuss this with Niamh if they have worries about this.



What if someone they know is there?

While it might be a bit uncomfortable at first, we will make sure all participants feel welcome and set some ground rules about sharing personal information outside of the group. We will have a Group Agreement that everyone will be asked to agree to. It makes sure that everyone understands that the group is confidential.



What happens if they see a group member in another social situation?

It might be a bit uncomfortable if they bump into someone from the group, somewhere else. They may not want to talk about the group, and the people around them may not know they are going to the group. It may be best to wait for the other person to say hello first.

We encourage young people to let each other know how they feel about interactions outside of the group.



Can they bring a friend or sibling along?

If they have been impacted by violence at home YES, if not NO. We want to make sure the group is a safe space for young people who have experienced violence.



How much will it cost?

The group is completely free.



What if they have a complaint about the group?

If they have a complaint, we want to hear it and it will be looked into properly. They can put their complaint in an email to racroffice@racr.org.au.

They are interested in coming along, what do they do now?

They can complete our contact form at racr.org.au to send us a message or call, email or text Niamh on 0427 431 288 or niamh.oconnor@racr.org.au.

They don't want to come right now, any advice?

That's fine too. We are open to young people contacting us if they want to check it out in the future.

They can always get further support from the following people:

ACT Police – Call 000 if they need emergency assistance

Domestic Violence Crisis Service – Call their 24/7 Crisis Line for support at any time of the day on 02 6280 0900. If they live outside the ACT please call 1800 RESPECT.

Kids Helpline – Call their free, confidential, private counselling number for young people ages 5 to 25 on 1800 55 1800 at anytime for any reason. Or, if they can't phone them, they can connect one-on-one over webchat 24/7 at their website- kidshelpline.com.au

Lifeline – Call their 24/7 Crisis Support number on 13 11 14 if they are feeling overwhelmed or they are having difficulty coping or staying safe. Lifeline provide confidential one-to-one support on the phone. They can also text Lifeline on 0477 13 11 14 from 12pm to midnight or chat online at lifeline.org.au from 7pm to midnight.

They can also talk to someone they are comfortable with and that they trust. Someone who is able to keep them or the person they are worried about safe and help them. This might be a neighbour, a teacher, a friend's parent or another family member.

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