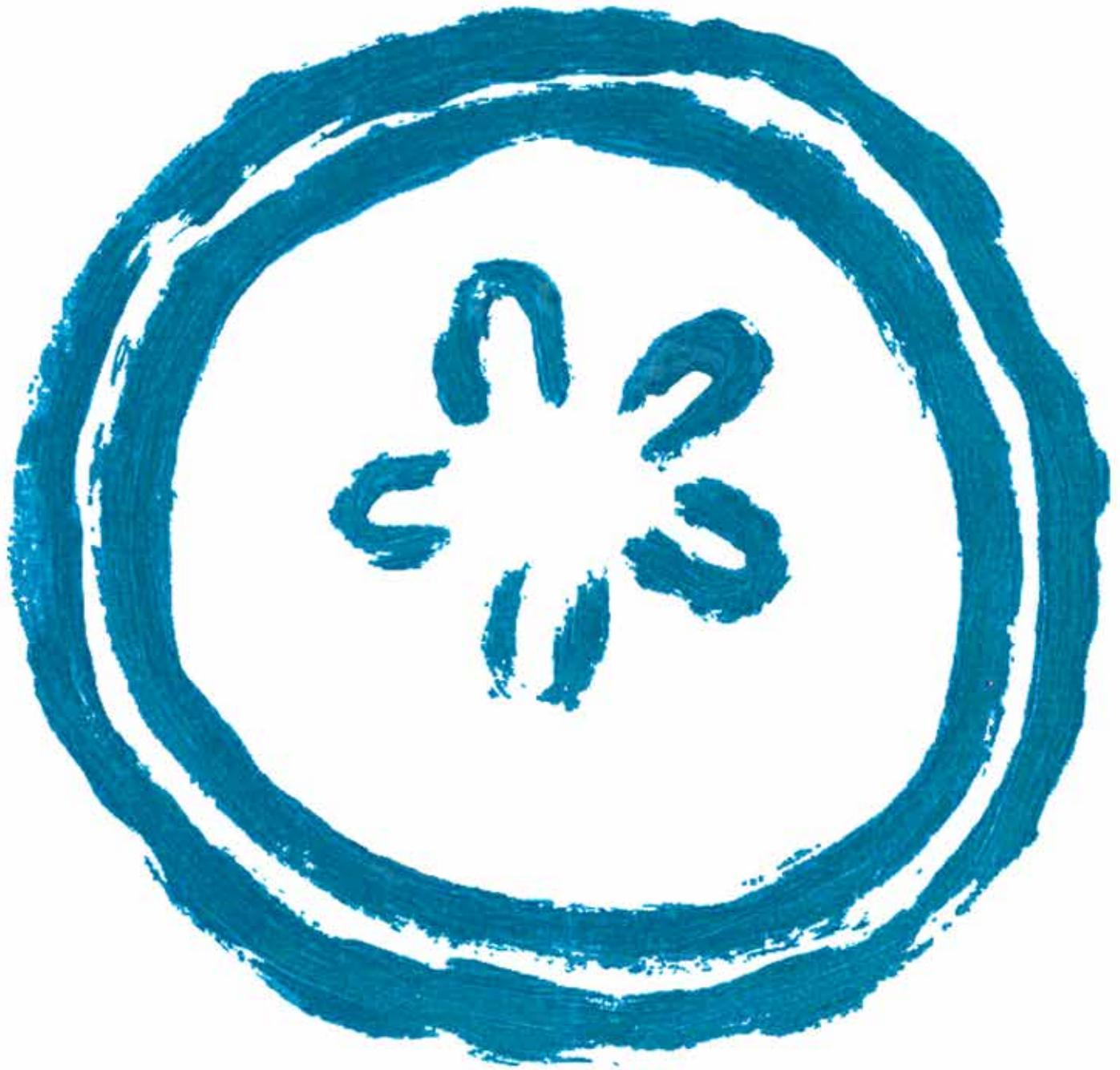


# DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE

*Responding to domestic & family violence in community*



Atunypa Wiru Minyma Uwankaraku (Good protection for all women)  
NPY Women's Council  
Domestic & Family  
Violence Service



## A GUIDE TO RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE IN COMMUNITY

Below is a general guide and ABCDE checklist that can help you respond:



# A

**Provide opportunity to talk Alone. Be Approachable, and consider your own Attitude:**

If possible, find a private place away from the user of violence. Offer the woman support and calmly ask her about her experience. Consider your body language, your tone of voice, and other ways you can communicate safety and respect.

# B

**Believe her:**

Listen and allow the woman to simply tell her story.

It can be tempting to jump in with opinions and possible solutions straight away. Once you have heard her, tell her you believe her story then ask any follow up questions needed. Avoid blame and remain empathetic. Many women feel they can't reach out for help, for fear that their experience will not be believed or validated. Avoid judgement and assumptions, and be aware that trauma may impact the way a woman is sharing her story.

# C

**Call in resources, but also consider Confidentiality and Consent:**

It may be necessary to call the police, clinic or hospital if a woman is harmed, injured or unsafe. NPYWC Domestic and Family Violence Service is available during business hours to offer support to women who feel they are at risk of, or have experienced incidents of DFV. Consider your legal responsibilities around reporting domestic and family violence in your state. Do not share information with any other community members without explicit consent from the woman.

# Responding to Domestic & Family Violence



## **Document what happened, including Details about incidents or injuries:**

As soon as possible, record any details about specific incidents, injuries or symptoms that you become aware of, including sighted injuries. If the woman consents, let DFVS know of these records as they may assist in the safety planning process, or need to be used in court.



## **Ensure Safety:**

Support the woman to identify and communicate her plan to increase safety. Consider asking the woman where it might be safest for her and the children to stay in the community (i.e. with protective, supportive family), or within the home (ie. rooms with exits, street visibility, and less access to weapons).

Ask her how she will get there, who she can go to for support, what she will need, and when she will enact this plan. Include any children and/or pets in safety planning. NPYWC DFV service can assist to explore safety planning options, according to risk assessment and other restrictions. Respond according to your capacity and work obligations.

Questions such as *'Has this happened before?'* and *'What did you do/where did you go last time?'* can also be helpful in supporting women to identify their own safety plans and strategies.

It's important to make space for women and to respect their choices.



# Responding to Domestic & Family Violence

## Looking after yourself

Responding to DFV, can feel overwhelming and it can be difficult to feel confident that you are doing the right thing. Keep yourself safe at all times. Sharing responsibility amongst relevant community members and services, can help to reduce the individual pressure of responding to DFV and can also support better outcomes for women and children. Always remember, you are never responsible for someone else's choice to use violence.

Many organisations also offer access to support services that can support in addressing any symptoms of vicarious trauma or stress associated with responding to DFV. CRANA offers a toll free 24hr counselling line especially for remote bush staff. 1800RESPECT is a national sexual assault and domestic family violence counselling worker that service that can provide confidential support to people experiencing or responding to domestic and family violence or sexual assault.

**Please call the NPYWC DFV service (1800 180 840) for support and advice in relation to responding to DFV.**

