

# Practice guide 1: Screening for adults

## Some practice tips

- listen closely, validate their experience and do not rush the process
- if violence is disclosed through the process, proactively name the violence and reinforce that responsibility for the violence rests solely with the perpetrator
- if violence is disclosed follow the procedures for your service/agency

## Introduction

Begin with a practised but genuine introduction of why your service asks these questions, such as:

- *Services across the ACT have begun to routinely ask all women the same questions about violence at home.*
- *This is because violence in the home is very common and can be serious and we want to connect women with help wherever we can.*
- *You don't have to answer the questions if you don't want to.*
- *All answers to the questions will remain confidential to our service except where you give us information that indicates you or your children are at immediate risk of serious harm. We would discuss this with you (adjust this to your organisation).*

## Screening questions

Ask the three agreed ACT screening questions, which are:

- *Has your partner or ex-partner ever put you down, humiliated you, called you bad names or tried to control what you can or cannot do?*
- *Have you been hit, slapped or hurt in other ways by your partner or ex-partner?*
- *Are you ever frightened by your partner or ex-partner?*

## Possible outcomes

If the answers to these questions are **no**:

- *Say something like: Thanks for answering those questions and if you ever need assistance please just ask.*

If the answer to any of the questions is **yes**:

- *Do you feel safe to go home when you leave here?*
- *Would you like some assistance with this?*

If the answer is **no to assistance**:

- *Say something like: Thanks for answering the questions. There is help available and we are here to help whenever you might want or need it.*

If the answer is **yes to both experiencing violence and wanting assistance**:

- *Thanks for answering those questions and for telling me about that. I'm sure this is difficult but it's important to know you aren't alone, it isn't your fault and help is available for you.*
- *I'd really like to refer you to a service/worker in a service that helps women in situations like this and they could help us develop some strategies that work best for you. Are you happy for us to contact them together now?*