

It is OK to Help this Summer

The festive season and summer holiday time is when we enjoy being with family and friends, we relax and take stock of the year that's ending.

Sadly for many in New Zealand this won't be true. Violence in the home escalates over Christmas and January. Calls to Police increase as family situations get out of control.

Only 20% of people experiencing violence at home ever contact Police or social services – most reach out to friends and family first.

It is OK to help when you are worried about someone you know whether they are being hurt or are hurting someone else. Here are some ideas:

Give the gift of help this summer

Tip: Small acts of kindness can make a big difference – offering food, taking children on an outing, spending time listening.

Family violence never takes a holiday

Tip: If you know or suspect violence is happening, don't ignore it.

Christmas is not OK if there's violence at home

Tip: If the stress is getting to you, take a walk and calm down.

Spend time not money

Tip: Don't spend more than you can afford – talk about how to keep expenses down this summer.

Value older people in your whanau

Tip: It's important for older members of the family to have a say in how they will contribute to celebrations – financially and in other ways too.

If you are worried about someone it's important to reach out – safely.

- never put the victim's or your own safety at risk
- people need support to make decisions in their own time - go at their pace
- if children are being hurt they need adults to step in and take charge of their safety
- if someone is in danger or you think someone could be harmed call Police on 111
- even if you're not sure you can call the It's not OK information line on 0800 456 450. It operates every day of the year from 9am to 11pm.

For more information go to www.areyouok.org.nz