

Domestic violence victims should seek help early as Christmas approaches

November 24 2015, by Niki Widdowson

Seek help early if you are at risk of domestic violence, is the advice from QUT criminologist Professor Kerry Carrington as Christmas approaches.

Professor Carrington, who heads QUT's School of Justice, said domestic violence was linked to emotions and families.

"The Christmas festive season is one of those times as it is full of emotion and themed around family and family get-togethers. Domestic violence escalates during this time," she said.

"Stresses are often amplified. People who are victims of or fear domestic violence should not be ashamed to seek help now."

Professor Carrington said people exposed to or at risk of domestic violence should contact the newly set up dvconnect.org website.

"It has a 24/7 call centre, it's a free service. There are more resources and awareness of victims' plight from all sectors of the community than ever before."

Professor Carrington has called for specialised domestic violence police stations to be brought to Australia after researching women-only police stations in South America where they were first instituted.

"Almost half of the homicides in Australia are connected to domestic

and [family violence](#)," she said.

"A significant advantage of specialised domestic violence police stations is that they offer an integrated response to domestic violence and sexual assault because they can have social workers and other support workers there.

"They have improved women's access to justice by providing specially trained staff where women are listened to and believed and given the appropriate support."

QUT introduced Australia's first university course for [domestic violence](#) prevention designed for those who come into contact with victims and perpetrators of abuse.

"The Graduate Certificate in Domestic Violence course has been well-received and we have had many enrolments for commencement in February

"The course is offered on line and provides an in-depth look at the latest studies to inform research, policy, and practice in the field. It is an interdisciplinary course, drawing from criminology, law, social work, sociology, psychology, health, and economics."

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

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