

# Forum: More can be done to deal with issue of family violence here

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In my years of working as a social worker, I have witnessed the worsening impact of family violence incidents on victims. They could suffer from permanent disability, loss of confidence, inability to trust others and mental health issues. In worst-case scenarios, the incidents could result tragically in death.

While I have noticed an increase in public awareness of family violence, as well as more victims stepping forward to seek help, more could be done to deal with the issue in Singapore.

In this regard, I propose addressing the issue in the following ways:



First, the nation needs to drive greater public awareness towards recognising signs of abuse, including psychological and emotional abuse, which are less obvious.

Only then would cases of abuse be detected earlier, thereby minimising the



detrimental impact of such abuse on the victim.

Second, it is important that victims of abuse receive adequate support from the community.

People can start by taking each victim's disclosure seriously, and encourage him to seek help instead of asking him to forgive the abuser and disregard the incident.

Lastly, I recognise that victims do not always seek to have their loved ones punished. Thus, penalties for abusers could instead include mandatory counselling and therapy sessions with social workers, or moving away from the victim's home for some time.

Societal engagement, coupled with the right laws and policies, and support from social service agencies, can go a long way towards helping victims and families recover from the harm that family violence brings to everyone in the family - victim, abuser and witnesses alike.

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