

Case study: Kym*

Kym was at university when she first experienced family violence from her boyfriend.

“I was an outgoing person and loved life. I’d been travelling overseas on my own and was excited to be back in Australia and studying something I was really interested in,” says Kym.

The violence began when Kym’s boyfriend moved into the house she shared with two of her friends.

“My friends couldn’t handle his aggression and eventually moved out. His brothers then moved in and encouraged his behaviour,” says Kym.

“He became extremely jealous and controlling, not wanting me to leave the house or spend time with friends and family.”

“It was emotionally and physically exhausting fighting with him all the time. Eventually, it became easier for me to stay home rather than argue.”

“It affected my studies and when I went to work, I found myself making ridiculous excuses about the injuries he’d given me.”

“I stopped going out to see my friends and my friendship group dwindled. I became a different person, very quiet and lacking confidence.”

“He wasn’t always a bad person, there were good times as well, but when the bad out numbered the good, I knew it was time to leave.”

“It took several attempts to gather the courage to leave, but in the end I’m glad I did it. Now I’m reconnecting with my friends and family, and getting my life back on track. I’m even looking at going back to study.”

“As a community, we need to take action against this behaviour and say, ‘that’s enough’.”

** Name has been changed.*