


# BE SAFE!

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Living without  
violence in Graz

Everything you need to  
know about "Violence against  
women" at **#grazstehtauf**

GRAZ



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Dear Residents of Graz,

This brochure is intended as a guide that provides information and assistance so that you can act quickly if the need arises. Because violence against women concerns us all!



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**Elke Kahr**  
Mayor

# Violence is not just physical

Violence includes more than just physical attacks.

The different forms range from physical and psychological violence to sexual violence.

A great number of people are affected by violence.

Only 7.4 per cent of women and 14.7 per cent of men have never experienced violence<sup>1</sup>.

The first means of combating violence is sensitisation.

<sup>1</sup>: Cf. Austrian Institute for Family Research (ÖIF), 2011: Violence in the family and in the close social environment. Austrian study on the prevalence of violence against women and men. University of Vienna, p. 7

Where does violence start?

What are my rights?

Whom can I turn to?

This brochure is intended to assist people in difficult situations. More addresses and telephone numbers for helpful information can also be found at **graz.at/gewaltschutz** or via our QR code.

**COUNSELLING CENTRES  
AND SHELTERS**



## **Violence is not just physical violence.**

Sexist jokes and language, treating women and girls as if they are objects—all that forms the basis for further violence against women, and it is the structures in our society and widespread ideas, such as certain role models, that pave the way for this.

As a result of the structural inequalities in our society (such as the discrimination of women in the workplace), women are frequently financially dependent on men.

This makes it even more difficult to get out of a violent relationship.

Violence is often used to demonstrate power or to exercise control over another person.

Violence does not start with a slap; it starts with a contemptuous and discriminatory attitude towards others.

**Murders/femicides are the tip of the pyramid of violence against women.**

# The pyramid of violence



## Femicides

Femicide is the murder of a woman because she is a woman. It is frequently the culmination of a long history of violence.

**In the majority of femicides, the perpetrator was the intimate partner or former intimate partner.**

An attentive social environment and the possibility of free-of-charge consultations are fundamental in preventing an escalation of violence.

Pyramid of violence according to the template <https://politikon.at/featured/2021/12/femizide-die-schattenpandemie-oesterreichs/>

Sources: [https://jbi.or.at/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Perspektiven\\_2020\\_13\\_Gewalt-gegen-Frauen.pdf](https://jbi.or.at/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Perspektiven_2020_13_Gewalt-gegen-Frauen.pdf); <https://orf.at/stories/3237491>; <https://politikon.at/featured/2021/12/femizide-die-schattenpandemie-oesterreichs/>

Verein Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser, aoef.at

# Domestic violence



COUNSELLING CENTRES  
AND SHELTERS

Men tend to experience violence in public places. Women are predominantly affected in their partnership and in the family. The perpetrators are **predominantly male, usually intimate partners, family members or acquaintances.**

Domestic violence is not a sudden, one-off form of violence. There are regular violent acts that become increasingly more intense until they escalate. In many cases, the perpetrators regret their behaviour, the victim forgives them, and the vicious circle starts all over again.

There are many organisations that can help you break out of this spiral. Addresses and links can be found via the QR code.

## **Immediate protective measure in the event of domestic violence**

**Call the police (133)** if you experience violence. They can take away the apartment or house keys from the perpetrators and issue a restraining order. Children of course remain in the household.

In the process, it is irrelevant who owns the apartment or who signed the tenancy agreement.

In 2020, the option of issuing a restraining order was created under the law.

If such an order is issued, the person causing harm is prohibited from coming within 100 metres of the person being harmed, irrespective of where the person goes. Restraining orders are currently limited to two weeks.

During this period, you can request injunctive relief from the courts (with the help of a counselling centre). The injunctive relief can apply for up to six months or at the longest up to the end of any court proceedings.





**Take your  
feelings seriously!**

**Know your  
rights!**

## **Tips for those affected**

- **Save emergency numbers** in your mobile telephone so that you can make a call quickly in an emergency.

**Police** 133

**Ambulance** 144

**European emergency number** 112

- Find out about emergency accommodation and save the telephone number of the **women's shelter** in Graz +43 316 429 900.
- **Contact people you know and** friends or seek professional counselling services. **Take your feelings seriously!**

- Ask **friends** and relatives whether you can stay overnight **at their house** when you do not feel safe.
- You can get support and help at a **counselling centre**; contact addresses can be found with our QR code or at **graz.at/gewaltschutz**.

### **Learn about your rights!**

- **Look for rooms** that you can lock and in which you can make phone calls (mobile phone reception).
- Make sure that the battery of your **mobile phone is always charged**.
- **Ask neighbours** to help you in an emergency or **call the police (133)**.

- **Prepare an emergency package** (money, keys, clothing, documents and medication) and hide it where you can access it easily, e.g., at your workplace, if you have access to it at any time, or with your family.
- **Be sure to go to the doctor** if you have been physically injured (e.g., raped) so that evidence can be collected.
- You can always get **professional assistance** in Graz at the counselling centre TARA (more on p. 53).

**COUNSELLING CENTRES  
AND SHELTERS**





# Live safely

Only in rare cases do attacks take place in building entrances, on staircases or if perpetrators gain access to third-party apartments.

**In most of these cases, the victims don't know the perpetrators.**

## Tips for those affected

- **If somebody threatens you** or wants access to your home, call the **police (133)**!
- **Don't give out any information about yourself** to strangers.
- **Safety locks** on doors and windows can give you greater safety. **Burglars are deterred**, and it is more difficult for them to enter. The counselling centre of the criminal investigation unit will help you make your home safe.
- **Don't let any strangers into the home.** Use an intercom, the spyhole or a safety chain. You can still talk to the person.
- If your gut feeling warns you against **unknown service providers**, such as tradesmen or salespeople, **demand proof of identity** from them! You can also phone the company they're from. Ask whether an appointment was made.



# Sexual violence

Having to take off your clothes or talk about intimate things, having to be photographed in a sexualised way, be touched in intimate areas of your body, carry out sexual acts or look at the genitals of others—all that can be sexual violence.

Around one in three women and around one in eleven men report having experienced sexualised violence.<sup>2</sup>

## **A “no” must be enough!**

There is no obligation to sexual acts, and these may never take place against a person's will. It is also sufficient to show that you do not want to perform the acts, or to cry or say no.

<sup>2</sup>: Cf. ÖIF, 2011.

Sexual acts that a person cannot agree to due to physical, psychological, cognitive or linguistic inferiority or because resistance is simply impossible (e.g., when asleep or drugged) can also be reported.<sup>3</sup>

**Sexual acts against your will (and thus also rape within marriage) are punishable offences.**

Any person can report them, irrespective of whether they are affected themselves or not.

More information on the topic of sexual violence can be found

- in the brochures of the counselling centre TARA—**taraweb.at**
- and on the website **sexuellegewalt.at**.
- Young people will find information in the brochure “RECHT sexy!” from the organisation Hazissa—**hazissa.at**.

<sup>3</sup>: Cf. paragraph 205a of the Austrian Penal Code (StGB).



# Sexual harassment

The sexual crime most frequently committed is sexual harassment.

Around three quarters of women state that they have been sexually harassed at some point in their lives.<sup>4</sup>

Sexual harassment occurs primarily in public (e.g., in pubs) but can also take place at home, at a friend's place or at work or school. It is frequently expressed through suggestive glances, sexual comments, sexist sayings and jokes, touch or demands for sexual acts.

<sup>4</sup>: Cf. <https://www.sexuellegewalt.at/informieren/zahlen-fakten/#Strafverf>

## Tips for those affected

- In pubs and bars, you can get help from the staff with the code **“Ist Luisa da?”** (“Is Luisa there?”) (cf. p. 50).
- To help you feel safe when walking home, you can call the **Graz “Heimweg” telephone** on Fridays, Saturdays and before public holidays between 11 pm and 3 am at **+43 316 872-2277**. Here, a person from the Ordnungswache Graz (municipal security service) will talk to you on the phone until you reach home.
- You determine who is allowed to get **close to you**—listen to your gut feeling.

- **Set clear and unmistakable boundaries**, for instance, with words such as “Hands off!”, and gestures.
- Don’t enter into discussions with harassers. **You don’t have to justify yourself.**
- In pubs, on public transport and at events and festivals, ask the **staff for assistance.**
- **Ask another person directly and specifically for help.** “I’m being harassed; please help me!”
- Phone somebody or act as if you are doing so. **If necessary, notify the police (133).**



# Sexual harassment in the workplace



WEBSITE

OMBUDSMAN FOR EQUAL TREATMENT

Suggestive e-mails, sexual innuendos or comments, irrespective of whether from employers, colleagues or customers—sexual harassment is always a punishable offence.

The Ombudsman for Equal Treatment will help you further. You can reach them at **[gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at](https://gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.gv.at)**.

On the following pages, you will find out what you can do to stop sexual harassment.

## Tips for employees

- If **there are courses on the topic of sexual harassment**, take part in them! If not, say that you're interested in attending courses on this topic!
- Report any form of **discrimination and violence** (to supervisors, violence prevention officers or to members of the works council).
- **Make your boundaries clear.** Tell somebody immediately if they cross those boundaries.

## Tips for those affected

- **You can inform your employer.** Your employer has a duty of care towards you and must help you.
- Write down what happened. **Start a paper trail** with messages or photos. **Tell colleagues you trust or the works council about your situation.** The works council will treat your information confidentially and will only take further steps if you so wish.
- **Seek assistance from counselling centres.** The counselling provided by the Ombudsman for Equal Treatment is free of charge and confidential and will help you in these cases.



# Sexual harassment over the telephone

Sexual harassment over the telephone is also a form of violence. **The phone calls are often anonymous.**

On the following pages, you will find out what you can do to stop it.

## Tips for those affected

- **Don't respond to the callers**, and don't say anything. Hang up.
- With many smartphones, it's possible to **block calls free of charge**. Find out more from your mobile phone provider. There are also apps for this.

- You can request an **unlisted number** from your telephone provider.
- Change your telephone number.
- Request a **trap and trace device** from your provider to identify the harassers.
- **Notify the police (133)**.

# Violence on the internet



INFORMATION ON THE LAW  
"HASS IM NETZ" ("ONLINE HATE")

Misogynistic hate posts, insults, humiliation, misinformation, threats. A disproportionate number of women and girls are affected by violence on the internet.

This form of violence can also occur in former intimate partner relationships. In most cases, the perpetrators want to intimidate their victims, keep them silent and exercise power.

You can protect yourself against violence on the internet because there are rules and laws here too. Information on the "Hass im Netz" law can be obtained via our QR code or at **<https://www.bmj.gv.at/themen/Fokusthemen/gewalt-im-netz.html>**.

## Tips for those affected

- Ideally you should start a paper trail. **Take screenshots** and write down the dates and times.
- **You don't have to be silent!** You can also make threats publicly visible. Tell or write to relatives and friends about what is happening.
- You only have to respond briefly to threats of violence, e.g., **“What you're writing is not okay. I will take steps against you.”**
- Report breaches of the law or breaches of guidelines to the operators of the respective website.
- **The Styria Centre for Protection against Violence provides assistance in the event of cyberbullying.** The centre can be reached at the telephone number **+43 316 77 41 99** and at **gewaltschutzzentrum-steiermark.at**.
- You can report messages of hate, e.g., directly via the app **banhate.com** of the Styria Anti-Discrimination Centre.
- The **Women's Service** in Graz also offers advice in cases of cyberbullying and cyberviolence and can be reached at the telephone number **+43 316 71 60 22** and at **frauenservice.at**.

# Stalking



WEBSITE  
CENTRE FOR PROTECTION  
AGAINST VIOLENCE

Following and pursuing, repeated unwanted calls, letters, e-mails and other messages. Stalking takes many forms and can also happen on the internet.

You can seek to have a court issue a restraining order and injunctive relief. The perpetrators will be banned from any contact with you, including by telephone or e-mail. They also may not be in the vicinity of your home or other places that you regularly visit.

Advice and support are available, for instance, from the Gewaltschutzzentrum Steiermark (Styria Centre for Protection against Violence) at **[gewaltschutzzentrum-steiermark.at](http://gewaltschutzzentrum-steiermark.at)**

## Tips for those affected

- **Notify the police (133)** if you are pursued or harassed.
- Make it clear to the stalker that you **don't want any contact** with him or her any more. Then ignore this person.
- **Keep a paper trail** (messages, e-mails, letters, etc.) and write down the dates and times.
- **Tell people** you trust (friends, relatives and colleagues) **that you are being stalked** so that the stalker can't get any more information about you from others.
- **Don't accept any gifts** or packages from the perpetrator.
- In the event of **telephone harassment**, you can request an unlisted number from your provider. You can also block calls from certain telephone numbers (cf. pp. 38 and 39—Tips for persons affected by sexual harassment on the telephone)



# Helpful organisations



**COUNSELLING CENTRES  
AND SHELTERS**

In addition to numerous counselling organisations, there are also other campaigns and initiatives in Graz that assist people in precarious situations. Three of them are presented in more detail on the following pages.

Additional addresses can be found with our QR code or at **[graz.at/gewaltschutz](https://graz.at/gewaltschutz)**.



The campaign is being implemented by the Women & Equality department of the city of Graz in collaboration with the counselling centre TARA and the police.



## Is Luisa there?

This is a prevention campaign, a service for girls and women who want to escape an unpleasant situation when they are in a pub, a bar or a disco.

Currently, around 60 Graz restaurants and 12 youth centres are “Luisa venues”. Employees are trained and given all the information that they need to offer help quickly.

Girls and women can ask the staff the question “Is Luisa there?” and get immediate assistance from the employees of the venue.

\* Last updated: November 2022.

## Catcalls of Graz against catcalling

The term “catcalling” denotes verbal sexual harassment. Sexualising calls, suggestive gestures and comments, kiss and whistle sounds as well as sexual requests are not punishable.

If you have experienced sexual harassment, you can write to **@catcallsofgraz** on Instagram.

The negative experience will then be written in chalk on the road where the verbal abuse took place. A photo of the chalk writing and a report on the experience will be posted anonymously of course. In this way, sexual harassment is made visible.

## TARA counselling centre

### **Styria women's counselling centre in the event of sexual violence**

In the event of sexual violence, the TARA counselling centre will assist with the goal of supporting those affected in processing the violence experienced and overcoming the trauma.

Haydngasse 7/ground floor/1, 8010 Graz

**Tel.: +43 316 31 80 77**

**taraweb.at**



# Asserting and defending yourself

For safety's sake, many people avoid subways, dark alleyways, parks or poorly frequented places at night.

Urban planning departments and politicians have a major responsibility for ensuring women feel safe. They can contribute to greater safety with various measures, such as educational work; improved lighting of alleyways, roads and subways; and also through improved public transport links.

**On the following pages, you will find out what you can do to feel more confident and safer in such situations.**

## Tips for those affected

- It's not your fault if you feel unsafe or even intimidated. The following tips can help you, **but the responsibility is always with the perpetrator.**
- With an **upright posture**, you not only radiate self-confidence, you also feel more confident.
- **Self-defence courses** can help you strengthen body awareness, appear more self-confident and feel less afraid.
- It can also be helpful **to set boundaries loudly and clearly**, e.g., to say: "Let go of my arm!" and to defend yourself physically. Ask passers-by directly for help.

# Free pocket alarm

With a **small alarm device** , e.g., a pocket alarm or a whistle, you can make a loud noise in an emergency. This will attract the attention of others and deter perpetrators.

As part of **#grazstehtauf**, the campaign organised by the Women & Equality department to protect against violence, you can receive your own pocket alarm free of charge.

Please request your pocket alarm by e-mail at **[frauen.gleichstellung@stadt.graz.at](mailto:frauen.gleichstellung@stadt.graz.at)** or by telephone at **+43 316 872-4671**.



\* There is no legal entitlement to this. While stocks last.



# Being silent and listening

Sometimes it's not possible to defend yourself against violence. In these cases, it's important that you don't feel guilty or ashamed.

It's not your fault that you have experienced violence.

**The responsibility always lies with the perpetrators!**

## Tips for those affected

- **Talk to people** you trust about the situation. These kinds of conversations give you courage and strength.
- **You're not alone!** Contact a counselling centre. There you can talk to experts about the experience or commence legal steps.

- Counselling centres will also help you to **process** experiences of violence.
- Seek a doctor if you have been physically injured. You can be examined in the **clinical forensic outpatient clinic**.





# Signal for help

**This hand signal** was initiated by the Canadian Women's Foundation (CWF) in April 2020 as part of a campaign against domestic violence and has become known worldwide via the platform TikTok.

This lets victims of violence ask strangers for help without the perpetrator's knowledge. For example, you can use the silent signal in online meetings to indicate that you are exposed to violence at home.

**Please remember this sign and act when you encounter it!**

## Tips for those affected: Hand signal

To signal that you need help, please make the following three hand signs one after the other:



1: Hold palm  
to camera



2: Tuck  
thumb



3: Fold fingers down  
trapping the thumb



# Family. Expertise. Centre.

The Family.Expertise.Centre. (Familien.Kompetenz.Zentrum.) at Grabenstraße 90 b in Graz is the point of contact for families with minors in all life situations and life phases. Having and raising children entails great joy but also great challenges.

The Office for Youth and Family offers you and your family diverse individual, family and group services as well as the possibility of talking to other parents.

Source: City of Graz / Office for Youth and Family

## Support in everyday life

Everyday life with children can be stressful. Parents are constantly faced with an increasing number of tasks that require new skills.

Many parents feel they aren't sufficiently prepared for their role and that they are not up to this responsibility.

Often, information, input from specialists, assistance at short notice or discussions with other parents can help.

The earlier parents seek support, the sooner they learn to handle the challenges.

## Here for parents in difficult times

The staff of the Family Expertise Centre are here for you

- if you are worried about your child's behaviour or there are arguments and conflicts in the family;
- if you want to talk about these difficulties and look for new solutions;
- if you need psychosocial and psychotherapeutic assistance.

## Counselling, encounters and connecting with other parents

In the Family.Expertise.Centre., children, parents, grandparents and other caregivers of minors can make use of individual, family and group services and talk to other families:

For further information and services see  
**[graz.at/familienkompetenzzentrum](https://www.graz.at/familienkompetenzzentrum)**

- Family counselling and mediation
- Couple counselling
- Advice on raising children
- Legal advice on questions relating to separation and divorce
- Parent coaching
- Advice on the topic of protecting young people

## Brochure “BE SAFE!”

You can request the brochure  
“BE SAFE!” here:

**Tel.: +43 316 872-4671**

**[frauen.gleichstellung@stadt.graz.at](mailto:frauen.gleichstellung@stadt.graz.at)**

Information about the services and initiatives of  
the Women & Equality department can be found at  
**[graz.at/frauen](https://www.graz.at/frauen)**.

Also visit us on our social media channels

**[facebook.com/frauengraz](https://www.facebook.com/frauengraz)**

**[instagram/grazerin.jungundstark](https://www.instagram.com/grazerin.jungundstark)**

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**[graz.at/frauen](https://www.graz.at/frauen)**