Shield PNG

WHEN THERE ARE GUNS AT HOME



Where there is a firearm in a house, everything changes shape. An argument carries a different weight. Leaving carries a different risk. A woman deciding whether to tell anyone is making a different calculation to the one her sister makes in a house with no gun. The weapon does not need to be pointed at anyone. Everybody in the house knows it is there.

If this is your house, here is what to do

1. **Tell one person outside the house**

   Not to get anyone arrested – so that someone else knows. A sister, a cousin, a woman from your church group, a health worker. Nearly four in ten women in PNG who experience violence never tell anyone at all. If something happens, the difference between one person knowing and nobody knowing is enormous.

2. **Call 1-Tok Kaunselin Helpim Lain on 7150 8000**

   Free, confidential, 24 hours, in English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu. They will not tell you what to do. They will help you think through your own situation and your options. You do not have to have decided anything before you call.

3. **Work out where you would go**

   Not when something is happening – now, while things are calm. Which relative, which direction, which road. Tell that person in advance that you might come.

4. **Do not move, hide or unload the weapon**

   We are not going to pretend that is safe advice. A man who finds his gun has been touched will know exactly who touched it. Leave it.

5 **Keep the children's route separate from yours**

If you cannot get out, they may still be able to.

6 **If something is happening right now, call the police**

If you can reach a police station, ask for the Family and Sexual Violence Unit – those officers are trained for this and will see you in private.

7 **Be prepared for a wait**

The units are badly under-resourced and the queues are real. Take someone with you if you can, so that you are not sitting there alone with hungry children deciding whether to give up.

The law is on your side. An unlicensed firearm is a serious criminal offence in its own right, separate from anything else that happens in the house, and it does not need anyone to witness a shooting to prove.

1-Tok Kaunselin Helpim Lain

7150 8000

Free, confidential, 24 hours, in English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu.

One thing to do today

Save 7150 8000 in your phone, under a name that means nothing to anyone else.

