



Stacey's* story

When I first met stay-at-home-mum, Stacey, she was quiet, teary and apologetic. When I took a history of her relationship with her husband, she recounted a tale of feeling isolated from her friends and family, being forced to have sex with her husband out of fear of retribution if she didn't, blaming herself for the breakdown in her marriage and fears about how their children were being manipulated to accept her husband's narrative around their separation. She had saved \$10 a week from her "allowance" so she could pay for her appointment with me in cash.

When I told Stacey that she was in an abusive relationship she was stunned. "But he has never hit me" she explained.

Sadly, while many people recognise physical and verbal abuse as family violence, there is little understanding around coercive control which, in my opinion, is the most insidious form of family violence. Signs of coercive control include isolation, monitoring of your activity, restricting your autonomy, gaslighting, name-calling, financial control, sexual coercion and making threats to control behaviour, for example, "if you leave me, you'll be living on the streets".

Fortunately, in NSW, we are getting closer to having this form of abuse criminalised and therefore punishable by jail time. Sadly, it has taken far too long to get to this point.

**Name has been changed to protect identity.*



FREE 10 MINUTE CONSULTATION

For a **FREE** confidential 10 minute phone consultation, call Managing Director, Fiona Reid.

Fiona Reid is the Managing Director of Reid Family Lawyers, a boutique specialist family law firm with offices in Brookvale and Surry Hills. She is supported by a team of expert family lawyers. The firm has a wealth of experience in all facets of family law including complex property matters, parenting matters, child support and spousal maintenance issues, relocation, de facto and same sex issues, surrogacy and adoption.



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