

Back to school for family abusers

COURTS should force Fraser Coast domestic violence abusers to attend behaviour change classes.

That's the call from family abuse experts, who say many perpetrators are manipulating the DVO system because they don't fear the legal consequences of not complying with orders.

NewsRegional research shows our police are under the pump applying for thousands more domestic violence orders compared to five years ago, while facing a massive increase in breaches as abusers flout the law.

DVO applications jumped 36.9% between 2012-2013 and 2016-17.

Over the same period there was a 119.7% increase in breaches of DVOs.

Local cops also applied for 8084 domestic violence orders and recorded 5404 breaches.

Women's Legal Service Queensland and the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

representatives said they would like to see a greater spotlight on changing perpetrator attitudes.

Queensland courts can order offenders to complete behaviour change programs but it is not mandatory and it rarely happened, the experts said.

Queensland Centre for Domestic Violence and Family Violence Research Professor Annabel Taylor said some repeat offenders were "very familiar with court systems and how to work them".

"If you have such little respect that you're bashing up your partner, you're not going to respect the legal system," Dr Taylor said.

"These offenders do not consider the penalties as particularly onerous.

"We really have to up our game." The Queensland Government will spend \$7.67 million on perpetrator programs this financial year. Taylor Street Community Legal Service did not respond to a request for comment.

- NewsRegional