



RESPONSIBILITY + ACTION = POWER

CRIME PREVENTION WEEK ~ NOVEMBER 1 - 7, 2014

Crime Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility

Preventing Violence Against Women

The Issue

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women.

Violence against women can include:

- **Physical abuse:** Slapping, choking, or punching. Using hands or objects as weapons. Threats of physical harm.
- **Sexual abuse:** Using threats, intimidation, or physical force to force her into unwanted sexual acts.
- **Emotional or verbal abuse:** Threatening to kill her (or to kill the children, other family members or pets), threatening to commit suicide, making humiliating or degrading comments about her body or behaviour, and other actions designed to demean her or to restrict her freedom and independence.
- **Financial abuse:** Stealing or controlling her money or valuables. Forcing her to work or denying her the right to work.
- **Spiritual abuse:** Using her religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate, and control her.
- **Criminal harassment/stalking:** Following her or watching her in a persistent, malicious, and unwanted manner.

Violence against women happens in all cultures and religions, in all ethnic and racial communities, at every age, and in every income group.

Community Impact^{***}

- Over two-thirds of Canadians (67%) have known a woman who has experienced physical or sexual abuse.
- Each year, over 40,000 arrests result from domestic violence—that's about 12% of all violent crime in Canada. Since only 22% of all incidents are reported to the police, the real number is much higher.
- According to police-reported data, about 173,600 women aged 15 years and older were victims of violent crime in 2011. This translates into a rate of 1,207 female victims for every 100,000 women in the population, 5% higher than the rate of violence against men.
- About 1 in 10 female spousal victims reported harm to others in family. Besides direct harm, children can also witness spousal violence against women. Almost 6 in 10 (59%) female spousal victims with children reported that their children heard or saw the violent episode.
- A DisAbled Women's Network survey found that 40% of women with disabilities have been raped, abused or assaulted.
- Domestic violence has been consistently identified as one of the most common forms of violence against women, both nationally and internationally.

****Adapted from the Canadian Women's Foundation*



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Where to get help

VictimLink BC: Free and confidential services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over 100 languages, providing crisis and referral information. 1-800-563-0808 or www.victimlinkbc.ca

Domestic Violence – It's Never OK: a website providing information and resources for those experiencing or wanting to assist a loved one who is experiencing domestic violence.

www.domesticviolencebc.ca

Helpline for Children: a toll-free number that connects with a child welfare worker (social worker) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 310-1234 (no area code required) if you have reason to believe that a child may be abused, neglected, or is for any other reason in need of protection.

Ministry of Justice – Victims and Witnesses of Crime and Violence webpage: provides information to victims and witnesses of crime, violence, or abuse.

www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victimservices

How you can help

When you recognize the warning signs of abuse:

- Talk to her about what you see and assure her that you are concerned. Tell her you believe her and that it is not her fault.
- Encourage her not to confront her partner if she is planning to leave. Her safety must be protected.
- Offer to provide childcare while she seeks help.
- Provided your own safety is not at risk, offer your home as a safe haven to her, her children and pets. If she accepts your offer, do not let her partner in.
- Encourage her to pack a small bag with important items and keep it stored at your home in case she needs it.
- Know that you or she can call VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808, or a local transition house or a victim service program. In an emergency call the police, or 9-1-1 if available in your area.

Warning Signs of Abuse

He:

- puts her down
- does all the talking and dominates the conversation
- checks up on her all the time, even at work
- tries to suggest he is the victim and acts depressed
- tries to keep her away from you
- acts as if he owns her
- lies to make himself look good or exaggerates his good qualities
- acts like he is superior and of more value than others in his home

She:

- is apologetic, makes excuses for his behaviour or becomes aggressive and angry
- is nervous talking when he's nearby
- seems to be sick more often and misses work
- tries to cover her bruises
- makes excuses at the last minute about why she can't meet you or she tries to avoid you on the street
- seems sad, lonely, withdrawn and is afraid
- uses more drugs or alcohol to cope



www.bccpa.org

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