



TODAY
Family Violence
Help Centre

It starts today

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Today Family Violence Help Centre

We are a **first stop** for anyone experiencing family violence.

We offer **non-judgmental** support for everyone targeted by family violence regardless of situation, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or culture.

Short-term support

Free, confidential, safe, inclusive

Family Violence

Family violence describes a **systematic pattern** of abusive behaviours within a relationship that is characterized by **intimacy, dependency and/or trust**.

The abusive behaviours exist within a context where their **purpose is to gain power, control and induce fear**.

(Adapted from the definition developed by *Community Initiatives against Family Violence, 2008*)

Prevalence of Family Violence

SNAPSHOT OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IN CANADA

FAMILY VIOLENCE includes intimate partner violence, child maltreatment, and elder abuse. It can be physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse, as well as neglect



FAMILY VIOLENCE accounted for approximately **25%** of all **police-reported violent crime** in Canada in 2011

CHILD MALTREATMENT

32% OF ADULTS IN CANADA REPORT HAVING EXPERIENCED SOME FORM OF MALTREATMENT AS A CHILD

TYPES OF CHILD MALTREATMENT:



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



IN CANADA, **30%** OF WOMEN experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime

ABORIGINAL WOMEN ARE MORE THAN **TWO TIMES** AS LIKELY AS NON-ABORIGINAL WOMEN TO EXPERIENCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



80% OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IS AGAINST **WOMEN**

Types of Violence

Emotional/Psychological

Financial/Economic

Spiritual

Cultural / Immigration

Physical

Sexual

Emotional Violence

Emotional / psychological violence is the use of words to control, dominate, intimidate, degrade, and/or intentionally harm another psychologically.

It encompasses a wide range of behaviors that attack a person's sense of self-worth.

It is about misuse of power to control over another person

Emotional abuse - Jealousy

#1 risk factor for domestic homicides

Jealousy is often romanticized as a reflection of caring but actually reflects a feeling of ownership.

At the start of the relationship, an abuser will equate jealousy with love. The abuser will question the victim about who the victim talks to, accuse the victim of flirting, or become jealous of time spent with others. The abuser may call the victim frequently during the day, drop by unexpectedly, refuse to let the victim work, check the car mileage, or ask friends to watch the victim.

www.newhopeforwomen.org

Stalking – Criminal Harassment

80% of domestic violence homicides have a stalking component – Mark Wynn

Stalking is when a person repeatedly watches, follows, or harasses another person making them feel afraid or unsafe. Someone who stalks can be a known person such as a current or past romantic partner.

Stalking is normalized and romanticized in the media, but in reality, it is a draining, often terrifying and traumatizing experience for victims and is a crime.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse occurs when someone uses money or property to control or exploit another person.

- Withholding or taking money
- Giving allowance and monitoring what the person buys
- Creating debt in that person's name
- Stealing money or property, selling or damaging possessions
- Interfering with abused person's work, or efforts to better themselves (school)
- Limiting the hours a person can work
- Using their money to hold power over the other person

Spiritual / Cultural / Immigration Abuse

Ranges from criticism, to barring participation, to forcing the abused person to behave in a way that is contrary to their community's norms

Misusing scripture to support abusive behaviour

Using a person's immigration / treaty status against them

Threatening to harm people in their home country, threats of deportation, outing, destroying important papers

Threatening to take children over seas and not come back

Taking permanent residency documents, treaty status card, or passport

Physical Violence

Physical abuse is the intentional use of force or threats of force on another person in an attempt to control behaviour, intimidate, or punish.

May consist of a single incident, or multiple, repeated and potentially escalating incidents.

It can cause physical pain or injury this can create ongoing health issues.

Strangulation

Strangulation is an indicator of escalation in the risk and lethality in a relationship and a predictor to future violence.

High risk and potentially lethal event. One of the most deadly forms of domestic violence.

Victims may or may not present with bruises or marks.

Victims may minimize or downplay strangulation.

Important Symptoms of Strangulation

- Voice changes including loss of voice (50%)
- Breathing changes (gasping/panting/hyperventilating)
- Coughing
- Difficulty/pain swallowing
- Throat/neck pain
- Bowel and bladder incontinence
- Victim may not connect this to the strangulation or be too embarrassed to report
- Nausea and vomiting
- Amnesia and loss of memory from before, during and after the assault
- Uncontrollable shaking/twitching (myoclonus)
- Ringing in ears (tinnitus)

Sexual Violence

Refers to any non-consensual action that pressures or coerces someone to do something sexually they don't want to do.

It can also refer to behaviour that impacts a person's ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs.

Possible Warning Signs

Low self-esteem – difficulty making decisions, defers to partner.

Seems fearful of the partner – concerned about upsetting him/her.

Doesn't want partner to know about visit.

Can't accept calls at home.

Seems tense, “wired,” stressed out.

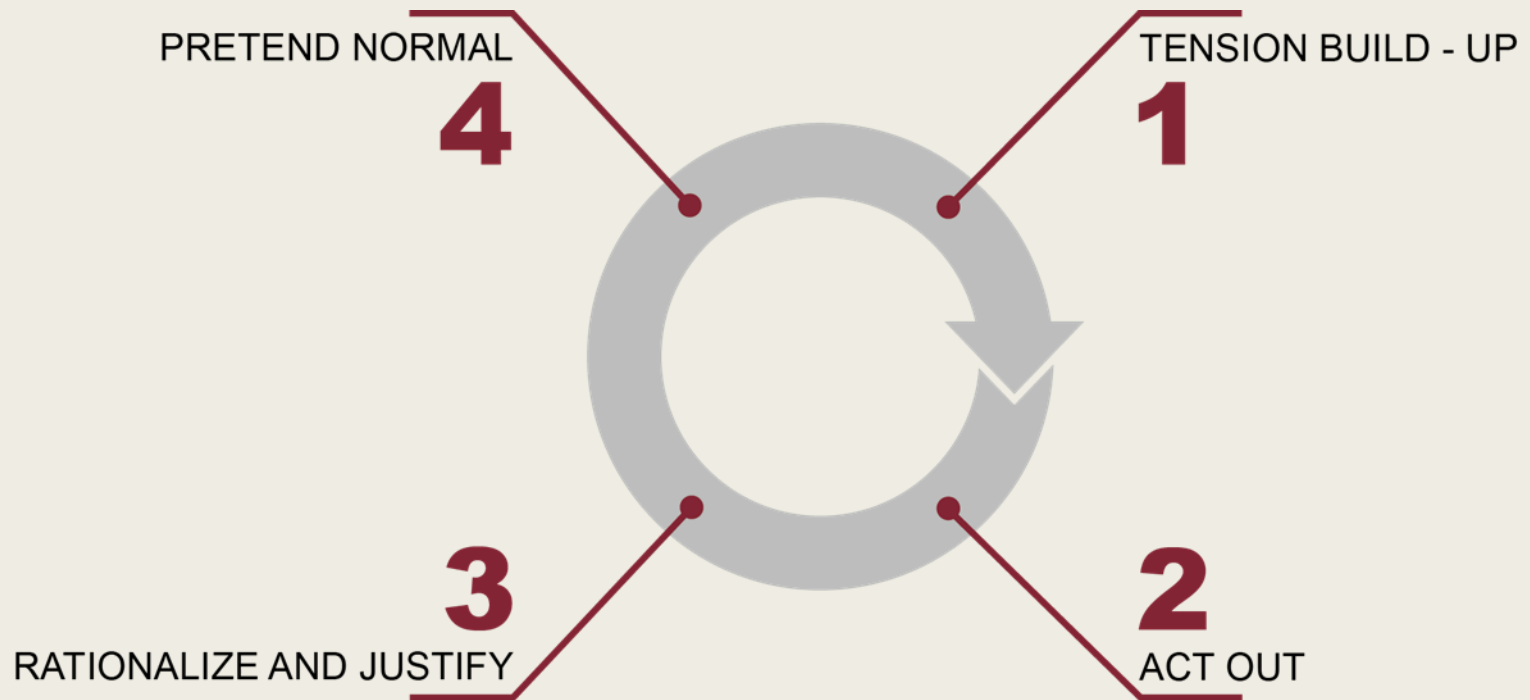
Seems depressed or emotionally drained.

Denies or minimizes partners behaviours.

Can be “overly helpful”

May not allow medical professionals to do a complete assessment.

Cycle of violence



Impact of Family Violence on Children

What children learn:

- Violence is an acceptable way to solve problems
- Violence has a place in the family
- There are few, if any, consequences for violence
- Violence is an acceptable way to manage stress
- Violence can be tolerated
- It is okay to hit someone who is smaller or less powerful or who challenges your power.

Duty to Report

Everyone in Alberta has a role and shared responsibility in supporting families to keep children safe and well.

In Alberta, if you know or suspect a child is in danger from their parent or caregiver, we are legally obligated to report.

- Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-KIDS (5437)
- 780-422-2001 Child and Family Services (Edmonton)
- Contact local police or RCMP

Barriers to seeking help

What are some reasons people affected by violence may not access support?

What are some reasons someone might choose to not disclose?

Leaving is a process

There are **many risks** associated with leaving which could put people in greater danger than staying.

Leaving is not the only option and is not even a consideration of many people.

Establishing what the **client wants** is critical, we must start where that person is. What is their readiness for change?

Individuals may be motivated to leave to protect the children, or stay to keep family intact

Leaving can trigger an increase of violence.

Ideally, leaving should be planned with **support**

What if they say everything is okay?

Change the question “Is there anything you need right now?”

Continue to watch for warning signs and risk factors

Have another conversation if you see more warning signs

Provide information about resources in the community

Responding to a disclosure

Believe the person when they say they are being abused

Acknowledge the courage required to share their experience

Validate let them know they don't deserve this

Don't impose on them what you would like to see happen

Explore the person's readiness to accept information or resources at this time. (e.g. Can I offer you some help today?)

Reflective Listening



Positive Responses to Family Violence



Safety Planning

Safety planning is about identifying risk and planning options to increase safety regardless of clients situation.

- Safety planning can be ongoing and needs to be revisited when circumstances change (living arrangements, legal, high risk times).
- For more extensive safety planning, contact a Family Violence Specialist.

Sample Immediacy Questions

Has there been a recent escalation of any type of abuse?

Is there a recent history of:

- *any physical abuse - especially strangulation*
- *sexual abuse*
- *jealousy*
- *threats of suicide or homicide*
- *police involvement, charges, and/or protective orders*
- *separation*
- *stalking*
- *pregnancy*
- *abused person in a new relationship*

RSA

SHORT



Community Resources

Today Family Violence Help Centre
780-455-6880

24-hour Family Violence Provincial Helpline **310-1818**

24 Hour Information and Referral Line - **211**

Edmonton Women's Shelter (WIN House) **780-479-0058**

City of Edmonton Individual and Family Well Being Counselling
780-496-4777

Questions?



@TodayFV



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www.todaycentre.ca

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