

WHEN A WOMAN IS BEING ABUSED

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AND HOW TO HELP

PRODUCED BY THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN RELATIONSHIPS (VAWIR) COMMITTEE
VERNON BC | JUNE 2011

The purpose of this document is to assist community members in being better able to help women who are experiencing relationship abuse.

The information in this document is about abuse against women by men in relationships. While we acknowledge that abuse also happens to men by women in relationships, we keep our focus on women's experience because violence against women by men continues to be a significant social problem. Men commit 86% - 97% of all criminal assaults against women and women are killed 3.5 times more often than men in domestic homicides.



CONTENTS

Section 1	3
If a Woman Tells you she is Being Abused What to Say and What Not to Say	
Section 2	6
What is Relationship Abuse? Power & Control Wheel Examples of Abusive Behaviour Why does Relationship Abuse Happen The Cycle of Abuse	
Section 3	12
Recognizing Risk Factors	
Section 4	14
When Children are Involved	
Section 5	16
Safety Planning Making Plans to Leave Things a woman can do to Increase her Safety	
Section 6	19
Barriers to Safety Reasons Women might Stay in Abusive Relationships	
Section 7	20
Resources (Vernon BC)	
Credits and References	22



IF A WOMAN TELLS YOU SHE IS ABUSED

When talking to a woman who is being abused, some things may help, and other things may stop her from wanting to confide in you fully. Please read the next page for some suggestions on what you can say, and what you should not say.

IF A WOMAN IS BEING ABUSED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:

- Violence against women in relationships is **NOT** a private family matter
- Violence tends to increase when a woman leaves an abusive relationship, and can escalate when the abusive partner believes she is planning on leaving
- Assault, harassment, and sexual assault are crimes
- Help is available, whether she wants to stay in the relationship or leave (refer to the Resources section of this document)

- WHAT TO SAY -

DO SAY THESE THINGS

- DO** let her know you believe her
- DO** tell her she doesn't deserve to be hurt
- DO** tell her the abuse is not her fault
- DO** take the abuse seriously. Don't underestimate the danger she may be in
- DO** privately express your concern and ask "How can I help?" Encourage her to talk to someone who can help her identify risks and develop a safety plan
- DO** honour her feelings and experiences. She may need to talk about the good stuff and the bad stuff in her relationship
- DO** find out what she wants to do and support her in that decision
- DO** accept that she may want to stay in the relationship or try to make it work. Don't criticize - remind her that you are there for her
- DO** be prepared for many different feelings or reactions

- WHAT NOT TO SAY -

DON'T SAY THESE THINGS

- DON'T make judgments
- DON'T give advice
(This will only reduce her confidence in her ability to make her own decisions. Listen to her and give her information. Not advice.)
- DON'T blame her for the abuse
(DON'T ask questions like *"what did you do for him to treat you like that?"*, or *"Why do you put up with it?"*, or *"How can you still be in love with him?"* These questions suggest that somehow the abuse is her fault)
- DON'T criticize her partner
(This will likely make her want to defend him. **DO** criticize the abusive behaviour; **DO** let her know that no one has the right to hurt her. For example, you could say *"Your partner shouldn't treat you like that"*)
- DON'T ask a lot of probing questions
(A woman who feels uncomfortable talking about the abuse may shut down)
- DON'T try to work out 'reasons' for the abuse
- DON'T over-react. If you express shock or horror, she may stop talking
- DON'T confront her partner
- DON'T pressure her to leave
(She knows her situation best - **DO** focus on listening and providing information; support her to make her own decision)



WHAT IS RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

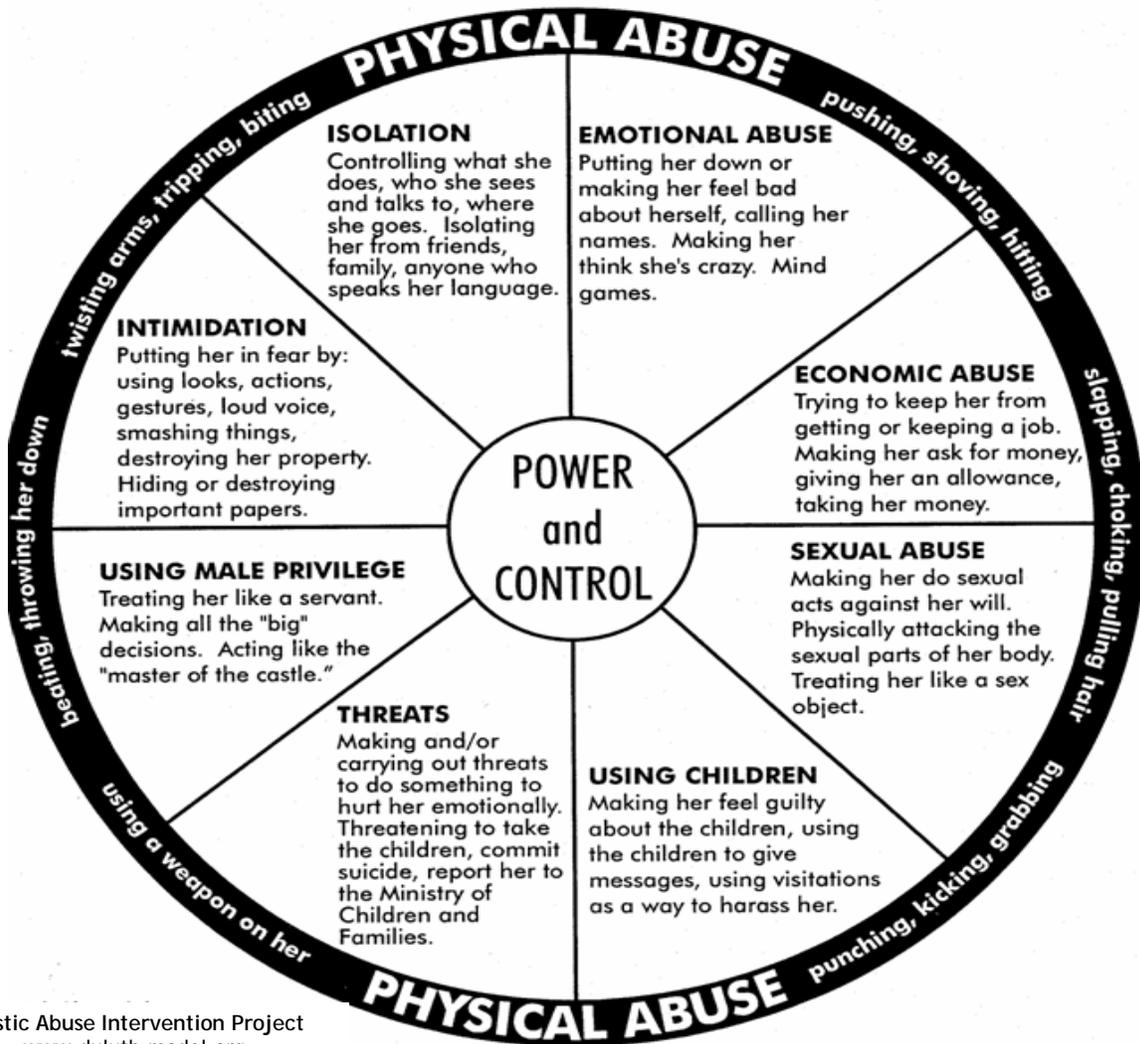
Violence against women in relationships can include a wide range of abusive behaviours. Some examples of abusive behaviours include intimidation and threats, verbal attacks, physical harm, and sexual assault.

Abuse can happen at any stage of a relationship: at the beginning of a relationship, after several months or years, when the relationship is ending, and even months or years after the relationship has ended.

An abusive partner uses threats and violence to gain power and control over his partner. His abusive behaviour undermines and lowers her self-worth and can create fear and anxiety. When a woman tries to leave the relationship, his abusive behaviour can often become worse.

The Power and Control Wheel (shown on the next page) depicts the many forms that relationship abuse can take. Male domination (the need for power and control over another person) is at the centre of the wheel. The eight sections, (intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming, using children, male privilege, economic abuse, and using coercion and threats) represent control tactics used by abusive partners. These tactics are often used by abusive partners in combination with violence to keep power and control over women.

THE POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL



Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
www.duluth-model.org

EXAMPLES OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Physical abuse (such as hitting) and sexual assault are the most vivid forms of abuse and often become what people define as abusive behaviour. While these behaviours are certainly considered to be abusive, it is also important to realize the many other forms which abuse against women can take.

The following examples depict abusive behaviour against women in relationships.

EMOTIONAL/VERBAL ABUSE:

- Doing and saying things that are humiliating or degrading
- Yelling at her, insulting her, or calling her names
- Constantly criticizing her and blaming her for everything
- Threatening her
- Ridiculing her beliefs, background, gender, age, sexual preference, or abilities
- Withholding affection, approval, and appreciation
- Preventing her from contacting family and friends (isolating her)

***Isolation** can involve denying a woman access to support services, sabotaging her relationships with family and friends, preventing her from attending school or work, and/or taking the vehicle when she resides in a remote area. It can also involve limiting her mobility, locking her in a room, not allowing her to use the phone, and/or refusing to let her leave the residence.*

PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT:

- Controlling or limiting what she can do, where she goes, who she sees
- Opening her mail, e-mail, or reading other private documents
- Keeping control of identity documents (passport, Driver's License, Status card, etc.)
- Interfering with her work or school
- Threatening to hurt her, her children, her family members, her pets, etc.
- Threatening to commit suicide if she leaves the relationship
- Threatening to take her children away from her
- Checking her computer and/phone activity
- Repeatedly phoning her, texting her (throughout the day, night, at work, etc.)
- Repeatedly e-mailing her
- Following her or watching her where ever she goes

***Stalking** refers to repeated harassing or threatening behaviour that causes fear in the woman. Attempts at repeated forms of contact when a woman has made it clear that she wants no contact is considered stalking. Examples of stalking behaviours include: following her; repeatedly appearing at her home or workplace uninvited; waiting outside her home or workplace; repeated phone calls; texts; and/or e-mails; vandalizing her property; phone her friends or family members to find out what she is doing; waiting at places the woman tends to go; trying to talk to her in public when she has made it clear she wants no contact.*

EXAMPLES OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR (*continued*)

FINANCIAL ABUSE:

- Controlling all the money in the household
- Making all financial decisions
- Refusing her access to bank accounts, credit cards, etc.
- Giving her an allowance
- Refusing to let her have a job or causing her to lose her job
- Not paying bills or refusing to find work
- Taking her money or property
- Running up debts in her name
- Not following court orders regarding child support unless she does what he wants

PHYSICAL ABUSE:

- Preventing her from leaving the home (including removing the phone, taking the only vehicle when she lives in a remote area, etc.)
- Breaking her things, damaging property, threatening to damage the things she values
- Harming a pet
- Frightening her by driving recklessly
- Not allowing her to sleep (keeping arguments going well into the night hours)
- Not allowing her to get medical attention when she needs it
- Threatening her with a weapon
- Shoving, spitting, slapping, choking, punching, or kicking her
- Causing harm with an object of any kind
- Forcing her to share needles with others
- Forcing her to abort or carry a pregnancy against her will

SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Forcing her into sexual activities that she does not want to engage in
- Forcing her to perform sexual acts which make her uncomfortable or that hurt her
- Making remarks about her sexual abilities in front of others
- Putting her at risk for unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases
- Injuring sexual parts of her body
- Accusing her of having or wanting sex with others
- Engaging in pornography when she is not comfortable with it
- Forcing her into the sex trade or threatening to do so

USING THE CHILDREN:

- Threatening to or actually keeping the children from her
- Threatening to kidnap the children
- Using custody and access issues to harass her
- Using the children to relay negative messages
- Using the children to spy on her activities
- Abusing the children emotionally, physically, or sexually

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN RELATIONSHIPS HAPPENS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS AND IS ALWAYS WRONG

WHY DOES RELATIONSHIP ABUSE HAPPEN?

There are many theories of why relationship abuse happens. It is important to acknowledge that the woman is not to blame. Relationship abuse is not her fault. Understanding the reasons for why the abuse is happening may not be as important as assisting her in seeking safety.

Research offers the following explanations to increase our understanding of why abuse happens in relationships (this is not an exhaustive list).

- Abusive partners are often individuals who feel it is their right to be dominant (to have power and control) over the women and children in their lives
- Abusive partners are likely to have multiple personal problems, such as unemployment, poverty, mental illness (such as depression), and issues with addiction
- Abusive partners may have been exposed to family violence as children and learned to get their own way by using violence
- A widely accepted theory is that men use violence to control women because of the historical inequalities in our society between men and women. Our society has historically rewarded and privileged men and devalued women.

THERE IS A CYCLE IN RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

Relationship abuse is rarely a single act of violence. Research shows that abuse in relationships tends to happen in cycles. The abuse happens repeatedly and tends to follow a typical pattern with 3 distinct phases.

TENSION BUILDING PHASE:

In this phase an abusive partner becomes increasingly critical, jealous, angry, and insensitive. He becomes increasingly verbally abusive and minor physical assaults may occur.

During the tension building phase, a woman tends to:

- start feeling that her partner is going to get angry about something
- feel as though she is "walking on eggshells"
- become fearful that she has done something wrong
- start doing things to keep the peace, or trying to control the environment
- start making excuses for her partner's angry/inappropriate behaviour
- start feeling as though she is losing control
- experience feelings of helplessness

EXPLOSION PHASE:

In this phase, tension explodes into violent acts or extreme verbal or psychological abuse. There is often anger, arguing, and blaming. These abusive incidents are triggered by the abusive partner's perception of the situation, not by the woman's behaviour. This phase may be short, but has incredibly lasting effects. It is during the explosion stage that women are most likely to be physically hurt. Homicide and suicide are most likely to occur during the explosion stage.

HONEYMOON PHASE:

In this phase an abusive partner promises the abuse will not happen again and acts lovingly for a while. Women forgive their partners during this phase because their partners' loving behaviour and promises remind them of why they fell in love. Their hopefulness that the relationship will improve is rekindled. The honeymoon phase after a violent assault intensifies a woman's emotional attachment to her abusive partner.

DENIAL:

Denial is a powerful defense mechanism. It is what sits at the centre of the cycle and it is what enables the cycle to continue. The abusive partner uses denial to avoid responsibility for his behaviour, to essentially deny its occurrence. Women use denial to psychologically protect themselves and the relationship by "forgetting" how bad it really is. Unfortunately, research shows that this cycle is only repeated again and again. The violence only becomes worse, more serious, and more frequent over time.

**IF YOU RECOGNIZE THESE DESCRIPTIONS IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP,
CONTACT THE VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY
(250) 542-1122**



SERVICES ARE FREE AND IMMEDIATE

RECOGNIZING RISK FACTORS

There are times when a woman in an abusive relationship may be at greater risk. Always take a woman seriously if she is expressing fear regarding her safety or the safety of her children/family members.

The following list outlines risk factors that may put women at greater risk of being assaulted or even killed.

RELATIONSHIP FACTORS:	
Relationship Status	<input type="checkbox"/> A recent or pending separation <input type="checkbox"/> A new relationship starting
Obsession, Jealousy, Control	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive jealousy, stalking, or obsessive behaviours <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive controlling behaviours (such as not allowing her to go places)
Social Powerlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional challenges are present (such as disability, language barriers, lack of transportation, addiction, pregnancy, poverty, elderly, mental illness, literacy)
Children Exposed	<input type="checkbox"/> Children under age 19 living in the home <input type="checkbox"/> Arguments or threats regarding custody, contact, primary care or control of the children, etc.)
PERCEPTION OF RISK:	
Perception of Personal Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Fear that the abusive partner will disobey terms of protective/ no contact orders
Perception of Future Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of further violence if abusive partner is arrested, or released from custody after arrest - especially if he knows her location
Violence History	<input type="checkbox"/> Abusive partner has a history of actual or attempted violence, threats, or intimidation on any person outside the family who has not been in an intimate relationship with him (such as friends, co-workers, strangers)
Previous Domestic Violence History	<input type="checkbox"/> Abusive partner has a history of staking, harassment, assaults, threats, sexual assaults, property damage, or other abusive behaviours against his partner or a previous intimate partner <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency/severity of violence or abuse towards the partner, family members, pets, or another person has been increasing (physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> History of threats or actual violence or abusive behaviour toward children, pets, other family members, friends, co-workers, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Has in the past forcibly confined his partner or taken her hostage <input type="checkbox"/> Has in the past strangled or bitten his partner <input type="checkbox"/> Has assaulted his partner while she was pregnant <input type="checkbox"/> Minimizes or denies previous spousal assault history

RECOGNIZING RISK FACTORS *(continued)*

ABUSER HISTORY <i>(continued)</i>	
Restraining or Protective Orders	<input type="checkbox"/> Has violated a court order in the past <input type="checkbox"/> Is presently bound by a court order
Alcohol/Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> History or (or current) drug/alcohol abuse
Employment Instability	<input type="checkbox"/> Is unemployed or experiencing financial problems
Mental Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Is depressed or has a history of depression <input type="checkbox"/> Has a history of other mental illness (such as bipolar, paranoia, schizophrenia) <input type="checkbox"/> Has threatened or attempted suicide
ACCESS TO WEAPONS / FIREARMS:	
Used or Threatened	<input type="checkbox"/> Has used or threatened to use a weapon or firearm against his partner, a family member, child, or pet
Access to Weapons	<input type="checkbox"/> Owns or has access to weapons or firearms

Resource: Spot the Signs - Before Someone Dies, Jocelyn Coupal (www.spotthesigns.ca)

Domestic homicides are the most predictable and preventable of all murders. The problem is that most of us do not know what to look for or what questions to ask to figure out whether someone who is in an abusive relationship might be at risk of being killed. If you answer "yes" to 7 or more of the above risk factors, there is the potential of serious risk for escalating or lethal violence.

In an emergency always call the police. For assistance getting safe, contact the Vernon Women's Transition House Society at 250-542-1122, or VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808.

Refer to the Resources section for more information on helpful services within Vernon.



WHEN CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED

Children are at risk when there is abuse present in the home. It is a common misjudgment to believe that children are unaware of abuse when abuse is present in the home. It is also a common misjudgment that just because the abuse is not directed at the children, that it is not harming them.

Being exposed to abuse is not healthy for children. Observing abuse between parents or caregivers is not healthy for children.

ABUSE IN THE HOME AFFECTS CHILDREN ON MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS

CHILDREN ARE AFFECTED BY WHAT GOES ON IN THE HOME:

Infants, children, and teens are affected by what goes on in their home. Being exposed to anger and violence has a negative effect on them regardless of their age. It affects their health, their behaviour, their emotional development, their brain development, their ability to form healthy relationships, and their ability to learn in school. Children depend on their parents to meet their emotional and physical needs. The “home” is meant to be a safe place for children. It is a place where they are meant to be unconditionally accepted, loved, and nurtured. When abuse is present in the home, internal concepts of safety are disrupted. In these situations, children’s needs may be neglected. Witnessing abuse makes children fearful. It causes them undue anxiety as they worry that their behaviour somehow triggered the abuse, that they should have been able to stop the abuse, or that they should have prevented their mother from getting hurt.

RELATIONSHIP ROLE MODELS:

Living in a home where a parent is being abused gives children a negative example of adult relationships. Children may grow up to copy these abusive behaviours. Girls may grow up believing that it is acceptable to be treated poorly, disrespected, and abused by male partners. They may grow up to believe they are not worthy of healthy love. They may grow up unaware of what a healthy relationship looks like. Boys may grow up to believe that men have the right to have power and control over the women in their lives. They may grow up to believe that yelling, name calling, and abusive behaviours are acceptable means to handle conflict and disagreements.

Witnessing the abuse of a parent or caregiver does not mean that the child will definitively grow up to become an abusive person or a victim of abuse. However, the chances of becoming involved in relationship violence when they grow up are much higher.

CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE IN THEIR HOME SHOULD RECEIVE SOME FORM OF COUNSELLING



Refer to the Resources Section for information on supportive services for children

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN CHILDREN WILL BE IN NEED OF PROTECTION

When relationship abuse is present in the home, there may be circumstances when the children are in need of protection. The following list identifies circumstances indicating that a child is in need of protection:

- If the child has been or is at risk of being physically harmed
- If the child has been or is at risk of being sexually abused or exploited
- If the child is being physically harmed because of neglect by the parent/caregiver
- If the child is being emotionally harmed by the parent's behaviour
- If the child is being deprived of necessary medical care
- If the child's development is likely to be seriously impaired by a treatable condition which the parent refuses to provide or consent to treatment
- If the child has been abandoned and adequate plans have not been made to ensure the child is cared for

Reference: Section 13, Best practice approaches: Child protection and violence against women, by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (2010).

IF A CHILD IS IN NEED OF PROTECTION:

- If a woman's children are at risk of being harmed by the abusive partner, she needs to take responsibility for their safety and well-being. Encourage her to seek safety for them
- If a woman is not capable of getting her children to safety, and her children are in immediate danger of being hurt, inform her that steps can be taken on her behalf to assist her in seeking safety
- If you need to report your concerns for the children on behalf of a woman, contact the Helpline for Children, at 250-310-1234



SAFETY PLANNING WITH WOMEN

A woman tells you she is in danger; now what? The following ideas can help a woman increase her safety and prepare in advance for the possibility of further violence. Safety planning involves thinking about action steps that will increase her safety in advance for the possibility of further violence.

It is important to know that a woman does not have control over her partner's violence. However, she does have a choice about how to respond to situations and how to best keep herself and her children safe. Considering these ideas ahead of time can also make a woman's decision to leave easier when an opportunity presents itself or when her physical safety demands it.

Violence does not necessarily end when a woman leaves the relationship. The abuser may harass, stalk, and threaten her even after she leaves. Sometimes, the violence can get worse if the abuser believes she is planning to leave. Violence can also get worse when she does leave.

IN AN EMERGENCY:

If violence is escalating, she may need to act quickly. It is important to be prepared. Here are some things to consider with her:

- Where will she go in an emergency?
- How will she get there?
- Is there someone she can call to tell what is happening and where she is going?
- Is there someone she can leave her pets with?
- If she needs to go to the Women's Transition House, does she know how to get there?
- If she is in danger, she should get to a phone and call 911 immediately

**WOMEN EXPERIENCING RELATIONSHIP ABUSE CAN GET HELP AT THE
VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY
(250) 542-1122
SERVICES ARE FREE AND IMMEDIATE**

MAKING IT EASIER TO LEAVE:

When a woman shares her home with the abusive person, she needs to plan carefully ways to increase her safety and the safety of her children. Some items are important for her to have with her should she leave the abusive relationship:

- Important documents, such as:
 - Personal identification (Driver's License, other photo ID)
 - Birth Certificate (for herself and for her children)
 - BC Health Care Card (for herself and for her children)
 - Social Insurance Number
 - Permanent Residence Card / Immigration documents / work permit
 - Legal paperwork (Marriage Certificate, Divorce papers, Custody papers, Legal protection and Restraining orders)
 - Banking information (credit card, bank card, bank statements (account information), investment documents)
 - Rental agreement for home / house deed
 - Vehicle title / registration information / insurance documents
 - Children's school documents
- Cash
- Keys: house / vehicle / safety deposit box / post office box / etc.
- Address book / important phone numbers
- At least 1 months supply of medication for everyone in family who has medication needs
- Cell phone or calling card
- A few days worth of clothing (for herself and for her children)
- Cherished items: jewelry / pictures / keepsakes / children's favorite toys / etc.

- Documents can be copied and kept in a safe place outside of the shared home
- Items can be placed in an "emergency bag" and kept with a trusted friend / family member

THINGS A WOMAN CAN DO TO INCREASE HER SAFETY:

- Trust herself
- Document everything (including the date and place incidents occurred). Even if she is not planning to take legal action, it helps to have this information in case she changes her mind later. Keep answering machine messages, text messages, e-mails, etc.
- Let her family, friends, trusted co-workers, employers, and neighbors know what is happening. Be clear in communicating her needs and fears. Request that family, friends, and others inform her if they see or hear from the person abusing her
- Contact the police when a restraining order is violated
- Tell others in her life not to give out information about her to anyone
- Change any regular routes and daily routines (be unpredictable)
- If possible, car pool with trusted others in her life
- Keep a cell phone with her at all times (or carry a personal attack alarm)
- Take a self-defense class
- If she believes she is being followed while in her car: make 4 left- or right-hand turns in a row; if the other vehicle continues to follow, drive to the police station or a trusted friend's home - NOT her own home)
- Sound the car horn to attract attention
- Become familiar with stores that are open 24 hours and other populated areas
- Keep from using less-traveled areas
- Look around - she needs to be aware of what is going on around her
- Check the backseat of the vehicle prior to getting in
- She should always let someone know where she is going and what time she will check in
- Practice how to get out of the house safely: what doors, windows, etc. will she use?
- If she does not live with the abusive person: ensure doors and windows are locked; consider getting an alarm system; purchase rope ladders to be used from second-storey windows; ensure smoke detectors are functional; purchase fire extinguishers
- She can teach her children how to use the phone to dial 911 (making sure they know their full names, address), or to run to a neighbors house if violence occurs
- She can devise a code for her family, friends, children, co-workers, etc. that indicates she is in danger (such as "it is my cousin Shirley's birthday today)
- Plan where to go in case she needs to leave quickly
- Get legal advice



BARRIERS TO SAFETY

REASONS WOMEN MIGHT STAY IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

It is hard for any woman to take action and to stop abuse in a relationship.

There are many reasons why women stay in abusive relationships or do not reach out for help. Each woman's situation is unique. It is important to understand the many barriers that women face when attempting to get safe, rather than placing blame on women or making them feel they are in some way responsible for the abuse.

Some barriers to women's safety include:

- She believes no one cares
- She is afraid no one will believe her
- She believes the children need the security of a 2-parent home
- She believes the abuse is normal and acceptable
- The abusive partner keeps promising he will change
- She doesn't know her rights or about services available
- She still loves him and wants to believe they can make the relationship work
- She is afraid of being alone
- She is too tired or depressed to care
- She is concerned that other people in her life will gossip
- She lacks social supports because of isolation from family and friends
- She feels ashamed and humiliated
- She doesn't want to admit that someone who is supposed to love her is hurting her
- She is afraid asking for help will only make matters worse
- The abusive partner has threatened to kill her if she leaves
- She is afraid he will harm her children or other family members if she leaves
- She is afraid her children will be removed from her care if she asks for help
- She fears for the safety of her pets or farm animals
- She is afraid he will commit suicide if she leaves and everyone will blame her
- She has no money and no way to support herself or her children
- She has nowhere to go
- She would have to leave the country or town
- She believes her children would blame her for breaking up the family
- She doesn't want her children to leave their school and friends
- She believes strongly that the bond of marriage is forever
- She has family members pressuring her to stay
- She would have to leave many treasured possessions behind
- The abusive partner has told her he will take the children if she leaves
- Some women face additional challenges to leaving abusive relationships: women with disabilities, women in same-sex relationships, women who have immigrated from another country*



**MANY WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCE RELATIONSHIP ABUSE
FEEL ALONE AND ARE AFRAID TO REACH OUT FOR HELP
RESOURCES IN VERNON BC**

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Ambulance/Fire/Police - emergency	911
Vernon RCMP (non-emergency)	250-545-7171
Helpline for Children	250-310-1234

24 HOUR HELP

24 Hour Crisis Line	250-545-2339
VictimLink BC <input type="checkbox"/> <i>VictimLink BC is a toll-free, confidential telephone service available across BC and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It provides information and referral services to victims of crime and immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence.</i>	1-800-563-0808

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Vernon Women's Transition House Society <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Shelter for women and their children who are seeking refuge from relationship violence. Support, advocacy, appointment accompaniment as necessary.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Telephone support always available (24/7, including holidays)</i>	Vernon: Armstrong:	250-542-1122 250-546-6744
Women's Counselling Services <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Individual and group counselling services for women who have experienced abuse in a relationship (physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse)</i>	Vernon: Armstrong:	250-558-0334 250-546-6744
Children who Witness Abuse Counsellors <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counselling services for children who have witnessed serious family conflicts (such as the abuse of their mothers)</i>	Vernon: Armstrong:	250-558-3850 ext.201 250-546-6744
Outreach Services <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A program for women and their children who are at risk of relationship abuse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Services can include: individual, family, group support; parenting support; transportation for medical, legal, social services appointments, life skills, housing (support securing permanent housing; support accessing legal services)</i>		250-542-1185
Family Resource Centre Society for the North Okanagan <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counselling services for Individuals, family, and children; group counselling; sexual abuse counselling</i>		250-545-3390
Family Resource Centre Society for the North Okanagan <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counselling services for Individuals, family, and children; group counselling; sexual abuse counselling</i>		250-545-3390
North Okanagan Child & Family Services Society (NOYFSS) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counselling services for children, teens, and families; group counselling</i>		250-545-3572

Mental Health & Addictions (Interior Health)	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Individual counselling for youth and adults with mental health issues or substance-related issues; access to a Psychiatrist</i>	250-549-5737
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (continued)	
Seniors Information & Resource Bureau	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>A central resource centre assisting seniors, their families, caregivers, and the community to access services which will enable seniors to maintain an independent life style</i>	250-558-0040
Whitevalley Community Resource Centre (Lumby)	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counselling services for individuals, families, children, and teens; group counselling</i>	250-547-8866
LEGAL INFORMATION	
Legal Advocacy Program	250-542-3322 ext. 214
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing information and referrals to individuals with concerns regarding welfare, disability, pension, employment insurance, landlord/tenant, and consumer debt</i>	
Victim Assistance (RCMP)	250-260-7171
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>An extension of RCMP services, providing information and emotional support services to victims of crime or tragedy.</i>	
Specialized Victims Assistance	250-542-3322
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing services to people who have experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, child sexual abuse, and criminal harassment (stalking). Services include court preparation and accompaniment, assistance completing forms, support.</i>	
Law Line	1-866-577-2525
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Legal information for persons not able to afford legal help; provided through the Legal Services Society.</i>	
Legal Assistance Clinic	250-542-3322
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Free basic legal information from volunteer lawyers on legal issues. Lawyers may be able to provide advice on the following topics: criminal law, landlord/tenant issues, human rights, WCB, debts, small claims, immigration, contracts, legal documents, wills and estates.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>By appointment only. Available to people of all income levels. Thursday evenings, 7:00pm - 9:00pm</i>	
HEALTH SERVICES	
Vernon Jubilee Hospital	250-545-2211
Cammy LeFleur Street Nurse Outreach Program	250-545-3572
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>An outreach program that provides street-level medical services for street-oriented youth and adults; situational education to people who are homeless, drug-addicted, and/or experiencing a mental illness</i>	

BC Nurses Line

24 hour, toll-free access to registered nurses, trained to provide confidential health information and advice on the phone

1-866-215-4700
or 811

PRODUCED BY:

Violence Against Women In Relationships (VAWIR) Committee

Contact Information: Committee Chair
(250) 558-3850, extension 204

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