DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING ABUSED?

- Let her know she is not alone
- Tell her the abuse is not her fault
- Read and collect information to pass on to her
- Talk with her about her choices and help her develop a safety plan
- Provide a place for your friend and her children to stay in bad times
- Help her find housing
- Show that you believe in her and her ability to deal with change
- Offer to babysit while she looks for housing, seeks support, or goes to work
- Call 911 if you see her being hurt

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- Don’t tell her what to do, when to leave or when not to leave
- Don’t push her before she is ready
- Don’t make her feel bad for staying
- Don’t tell her to go back to the situation
- Don’t tell her to stay for the sake of the children
- Don’t be angry with her if she does decide to go back. Many women go back to abusive situations before they finally leave.
- Don’t talk to her partner about it. This could put your friend in danger.

Support her choices, whatever they are. She needs a friend. These are not easy decisions. Listen, refer and support.

Are you someone who cares? ACT NOW. See available Metro Vancouver resources on the inside of this brochure.

Ending violence against women is core to YWCA Vancouver’s mission. A spectrum of YWCA programs and services support women who have experienced abuse; Munroe House (a second stage transition house), violence prevention programs, legal support, resources and more.

YWCA Vancouver is a registered charity, providing a range of integrated services for women and their families, and those seeking to improve the quality of their lives. From early learning and care to housing, health and fitness, employment services and leadership, YWCA Vancouver touches lives in communities throughout Metro Vancouver.

Violence is a harmful act that violates human rights and denies the dignity and equality that we all deserve.
Violence Against Women: The Facts

Every year thousands of women in Canada are seriously injured or killed by their partners — many die. All kinds of women are abused — young, old, women with disabilities, immigrant women, and women of all races, religions and social classes. Violence happens in small towns and big cities. It affects us all.

1 in every 2 women is the victim of at least one act of physical or sexual violence after the age of 16

3 out of 4 women who experience violence are assaulted by someone they know

653,000 women reported that they experienced spousal violence by a current or previous partner between 1999 and 2004

Only 36% of women who experience spousal violence report the incident to police

On average in Canada, 73 women are killed every year by their husbands

41% of men who kill their wives have a history of domestic violence known to the police

105,711 women and children sought safety in Canadian shelters between April 2005 and March 2006

In 2004, 47% of women who experienced violence turned to a formal help agency

Violence seriously affects children and youth

Violence creates a climate of fear and uncertainty, which undermines the well-being of children and youth. It affects children’s emotional development, social behaviour, and their ability to learn at school. Children who witness violence at home are at risk of becoming victims of violence themselves, and are also more likely to become involved in abusive relationships as adults. Parents are responsible for teaching their children the values of equality and respect. The cycle of violence must stop in the home.

1. Over one million children in Canada have witnessed domestic violence
2. 61% of children who witnessed violence saw their mother seriously injured
3. Children who witness violence are more likely to be overly aggressive by bullying, threatening, or physically attacking people
4. Children who witness violence often display increased levels of depression, delinquency and emotional anxiety

Remember, no one deserves to experience violence or abuse.

Is your relationship healthy?

Respect, honesty and trust are essential parts of a healthy relationship. Feeling hurt or upset at times is normal, but relationships should never make you feel scared, humiliated or controlled.

HEALTHY SIGNS

- Do you and your partner respect each other’s feelings, make decisions together and support one another?
- Do you and your partner communicate openly and honestly, accept responsibility for your actions and admit when you are wrong?
- Do you and your partner share financial decisions and responsibilities?
- Do you and your partner talk through disagreements, make compromises and resolve conflicts in ways that make you both feel comfortable, safe and satisfied with the outcome?

WARNING SIGNS

- Does your partner check up on you or act possessively?
- Does your partner yell, put you down, call younames or make you feel bad about yourself?
- Does your partner boss you around, give orders and make all the decisions?
- Does your partner blame you for his own harmful behaviour or avoid taking responsibility for his actions?

DANGER SIGNS

- Does your partner claim to be the head of the household and control all money in the home and bank account?
- Does your partner keep you from getting a job or an education?
- Does your partner have a temper or make you afraid?
- Do you try to please your partner instead of yourself to keep from being hurt?
- Does your partner inflict unwanted touching, kissing, tickling, or make sexual threats? Does your partner push, hit, slap, kick or use weapons to harm you?

Women who experience violence do not need to feel ashamed or helpless. Violence and abuse is never the victim’s fault. There are people and services to help you. Talk to a trusted friend about the abuse or contact a community organization for more information. Services in Metro Vancouver are listed on the back of this poster.

PLANNING FOR SAFETY

Leaving an abusive relationship takes a great deal of courage and strength. All women must plan for their well-being and their children’s safety. Planning for safety means knowing how to access the people, places and resources that can help if you are the victim of violence.

IDEAS FOR YOUR SAFETY PLAN

- Call or visit a women’s centre to learn about resources available for victims of violence
- Tell your friends and neighbours to call the police if they hear yelling, banging or frightening noises coming from your house
- Think about where you can go if you decide to leave your partner, such as a safe house for women
- Memorize emergency service phone numbers
- Keep some extra money and a set of keys in a safe place
- Leave an extra set of clothes and photocopies of your personal ID with a friend or family member
- Teach your children to use the telephone to call the police and the department
- Create a code word with family and friends to signal that you need help