

**"I want
the violence
to stop!"**

This brochure has been developed to help women who are abused by their husbands or boyfriends. It is important to note that physical or sexual violence in the family is against the law. Assault by a brother or sister, parent, uncle, aunt or other family member also may lead to criminal charges. Call one of the immigrant aid agencies or a women's shelter for help and advice on any of these problems.

***If your husband or boyfriend
abuses you, you should know . . .***

YOU ARE NOT ALONE: In Canada, about one in eight women is abused by her partner. Women of all age groups, income and education levels, social classes, religions and races are among those being abused.

YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME: If you are abused, that does not mean you are not a good wife or girlfriend. The abuse is not your fault. For some reason, your partner cannot control his own feelings of anger and frustration. He is the one at fault.

Although you may love your partner, the abuse *is not going to stop* until he gets help, or until you leave. It is often difficult for abusive men to change their behaviour without outside help. The longer you stay in the relationship without anyone to help you or your husband, the more you expose yourself and your children to serious harm. Disagreements between people involved in an intimate relationship are normal; using abuse to resolve those conflicts is not. No one deserves to be abused.

The violence affects your children. Children who grow up in homes where violence occurs often learn that violence is normal and acceptable. Many of these

children grow up to become victims of abuse or abusers. Often, their school work suffers. They may become withdrawn or aggressive. The longer they are exposed to the violence, the more likely they are to be seriously affected.

What is wife abuse?

You are being abused if your husband or boyfriend pushes, slaps or punches you, or if he:

- criticizes or humiliates you constantly
- threatens to hurt or kill you, your children or your pet
- prevents you from seeing your family and friends
- forces you against your will to have sex with him or with his friends
- does not let you have any money of your own or forces you to account for every cent
- threatens to send you back to your home country

Wife assault is against the law

Violence is not a private family matter in Canada. A man who beats or threatens to beat his wife or girlfriend can be charged with assault and tried in court. A man who forces his partner into unwanted sexual activities or uses sexual violence or humiliation can be charged with sexual assault and tried in court.

What can you do?

1. TALK TO SOMEONE:

Tell someone about your problem. Talking to a family member or a friend can help you decide what to do. At first, some friends and family members may not be understanding or helpful. It is important that you keep trying until you find someone who is willing to help. If you want to talk to someone in your own language, call one of the immigrant aid agencies listed at the back of this brochure.

2. CALL THE POLICE:

If you are afraid your husband or boyfriend is going to hit you or if he has already done so, call the police. Let them know that you are in danger. Give them your name and address.

3. GET MEDICAL HELP:

If you have been badly bruised or hurt, go to a doctor or to a hospital emergency department. Tell the doctor how you got hurt. Ask the doctor to write a report. The doctor's report may help you if your husband or boyfriend is charged with assault.

4. CALL A WOMEN'S SHELTER:

A women's shelter is a safe place where abused women and their children can stay for up to 21 days, at no cost. At the shelter, you and your children will be given a room, food, clothing, crisis counselling and information. No one will be told you are at the shelter. The women at the shelter will arrange for someone who speaks your language to come to the shelter to help you.

Remember that you can call the shelter any time of day or night if you need help or advice.

The names and telephone numbers of shelters are listed at the back of this brochure.

5. PLAN WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY:

Think ahead. If your husband or boyfriend hurts you or threatens you, be prepared to leave immediately if necessary. It is recommended that you take your children with you. Have the telephone number of a women's shelter or the police emergency number written down. If possible, take these items with you:

- passports
- keys
- immigration papers
- clothing
- health care cards
- medications
- social insurance cards

If you worry about being deported . . .

You will not be deported just for leaving an abusive spouse. Your husband or boyfriend also will not be deported as a result of family violence, unless his actions result in a criminal conviction with a sentence of more than six months.

Ask someone from an immigrant aid agency about your situation if you are on a Visitor's Visa, a Minister's Permit or a Temporary Employment Visa.

Getting Financial Assistance

If you decide to leave your home and do not have enough money to support yourself and your children, you should apply for financial help. Your immigrant aid agency and the women at the shelter will help you with this.

If you apply for social assistance, you should have all your important papers with you.

The financial help you receive usually provides for food, clothing, shelter and medical/dental expenses. You may also be eligible to receive financial help for needs such as furniture, a telephone, transportation costs, and other items.

Think About Legal Action

It is a good idea to get legal advice. Taking legal action may ensure a safer environment for yourself and your children. It may help to stop or at least reduce the violence. You may want to ask your lawyer about:

- assault charges and criminal prosecution
- place bonds and restraining orders
- separation and divorce
- child custody
- financial assistance
- your immigration status

If money is a problem, the Legal Aid Society may appoint a lawyer to act on your behalf. Legal Aid is not free, but you may qualify for financial help. You will be asked to sign a paper stating that you will pay when you can. Women's shelter and immigrant aid agency workers can help arrange Legal Aid.

If you worry about losing your children

If you leave your home, take your children with you. This is especially important if you think they may be hurt or if you apply for permanent custody. A court of law will decide where your children will live. See a lawyer as soon as possible.

Talk to your lawyer about getting permanent custody of your children and about receiving financial support for yourself and your children. Leaving your home because of violence will not mean that you give up your rights to your home and property, or to the custody of your children.

Planning your own life

There are organizations and agencies that can help you. If you need English classes, job training, help with finding a job or supportive counselling, contact an immigrant aid agency.

Remember, you are not alone, help is available.

Where to turn for help

Emergency 911

If you do not understand English, ask a friend or relative to translate for you, or call one of the shelters or agencies listed. These shelters and agencies will find interpreters or counsellors who speak your language.

Listed below are the Women's Emergency Shelters and Immigrant Aid Offices in Alberta.

SHELTERS OPERATING IN ALBERTA

CALGARY
Calgary Women's
Emergency Shelter
Phone: 232-8718

GRAND CENTRE
Dr. Margaret Savage
Women's Crisis Centre
Phone: 594-5095

CALGARY
Sheriff King Home
Phone: 266-0707

SHERWOOD PARK
A Safe Place
Phone: 464-7233

CAMROSE
Women's Shelter
Phone: 672-1035

GRANDE PRAIRIE
Odyssey House
Phone: 532-2672

HINTON
Yellowhead Emergency
Shelter
Phone: 865-5133
Zenith 22293

LLOYDMINSTER
Interval Home
Phone: 875-0966

EDMONTON
WIN House I and II
Phone: 479-0058
Lurana Family Centre
Phone: 424-6872

LETHBRIDGE
Harbour House
Phone: 320-1881

FORT McMURRAY
Unity House
Phone: 743-1190

MEDICINE HAT
Women's Shelter
Phone: 529-1091

PEACE RIVER
Peace Country
Crisis Association
Phone: 624-3466

RED DEER
Central Alberta
Women's Emergency
Shelter
Phone: 346-5643

SHORT TERM REFUGES

HIGH LEVEL

Safe Home Network
Phone: 926-3899

GRANDE CACHE

Grande Cache Transition
House Society Satellite
Phone: 827-5055

WHITECOURT

Wellspring Battered
Women's Support Services
Phone: 778-6209

FAIRVIEW

Fairview & District
Women's Centre Satellite
Phone: 835-2120

ST. PAUL

St. Paul and District Crisis
Association Satellite
Phone: 645-5132
Crisis Line: 645-5195

WAINWRIGHT

Family & Community
Services (Assistance and
Transportation for Battered
Women)
Phone: 842-2555
Crisis Line: 842-4203
Contact: Darlene Wolfe

LAC LA BICHE

Hope Haven Crisis Centre
Phone: 623-3100

SECOND STAGE HOUSING

CALGARY

Discovery House
Phone: 277-0718

EDMONTON WINGS

Phone: 426-4985

The Immigrant Aid agencies offer help in many languages, and will provide support and information about how to deal with your situation.

Calgary Catholic
Immigration Society
#400, 1400 - 1st Street S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0V8
Telephone: 262-2006

Calgary Immigrant Aid
Society
900A, 825 - 8 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2T3
Telephone: 265-1120

Calgary Immigrant
Women's Centre
802 - 14 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0N6
Telephone: 245-6785

Catholic Social Services
#3, 4908 - 50 Street
Camrose, Alberta T4V 1R1
Telephone: 672-1304

Changing Together —
A Centre for Immigrant
Women
Room 209, 10010 - 107A Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 4H8
Telephone: 421-0175

Edmonton Immigrant
Services Association
Cromdale School
11240 - 79 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5B 2K1
Telephone: 474-8445

Edmonton Mennonite
Centre for the Assistance
of Newcomers
10125 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 0V4
Telephone: 424-7709

Catholic Social Services
Immigration & Settlement
Services
10709 - 105 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 2X3
Telephone: 424-3545

St. Barnabas Refugee
Society
Suite 400, 10136 - 100 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0P1
Telephone: 428-7094

Lethbridge Immigrant
Settlement Association
506 - 4 Avenue, South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 0N3
Telephone: 327-5333

Saamis Immigration
Services Association
422 - 6th Street, S.E.
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 1H5
Telephone: 529-0700

Central Alberta Refugee
Effort (C.A.R.E.) Committee
#202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 6C2
Telephone: 346-8818

Peace Area Services
Society for Immigrants
#201, 10404 - 102 Street
Grande Prairie, AB T8V 3W3
Telephone: 538-3232

Canada Immigration Centres

The addresses of the Centres are listed in the telephone book under Government of Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada.