

Domestic Violence & Your Workplace

Be Aware. Take Action.



WOMEN'S
SHELTERS
CANADA | HÉBERGEMENT
FEMMES
CANADA

[ENDVAW.CA](https://endvaw.ca)

Land Acknowledgement



WOMEN'S
SHELTERS
CANADA

HÉBERGEMENT
FEMMES
CANADA





About Women's Shelters Canada

Women's Shelters Canada (WSC) provides a strong, unified, pan-Canadian voice on the issue of violence against women (VAW) in Canada. WSC brings together 16 provincial and territorial shelter networks and more than 600 shelters across the country. We work to amplify the voice of the shelter sector, create opportunities for collective learning, and advocate for system change to end gender-based violence.

Shelters support survivors. We support the shelters.

Our Mission

- We develop expertise to ensure that policies, legislation and regulations reflect the needs of shelters.
- We create opportunities for shelters to exchange ideas, learn from one another and share resources.
- We create research and publish reports to fill the data gap on shelters.
- We fund shelters and programs to expand supportive housing options for survivors.
- We create campaigns and increase awareness of GBV – VAW.

Today's Goals

By the end of today's session, we hope you will:

- Know more about domestic violence
- Understand how domestic violence can show up for Veterans
- Know how to respond if this comes up in your work

Today's Agenda

1. Key Facts about Domestic Violence
2. Why is this your responsibility?
3. What You Can Do:
 - A) Recognize
 - B) Respond
 - C) Refer
4. Practice: Case studies



Safety in this Session

This session deals with difficult subject matter.

- Reflect on how you can care for yourself during & after our time together
- Support services are available:
 - Workplace supports (e.g. EAP)
 - Assaulted Women's Helpline: 1-866-863-0511 or text #7233
 - Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310
 - Sheltersafe.ca

**Thank
You!**



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

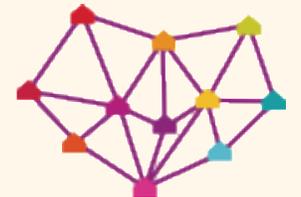
Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Canada 

ACWS

Alberta Council of
Women's Shelters

Key Facts: Domestic Violence



What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic Violence is a pattern of behavior used by one person to gain power and control over another. This pattern of behavior may include:

- Coercive control
- Physical and sexual violence
- Emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse
- Economic abuse
- Spiritual abuse
- Harassment, stalking, and threats
- The use of electronic devices to harass and control
- Isolating the survivor from their friends & family
- Threats or violence against children or pets

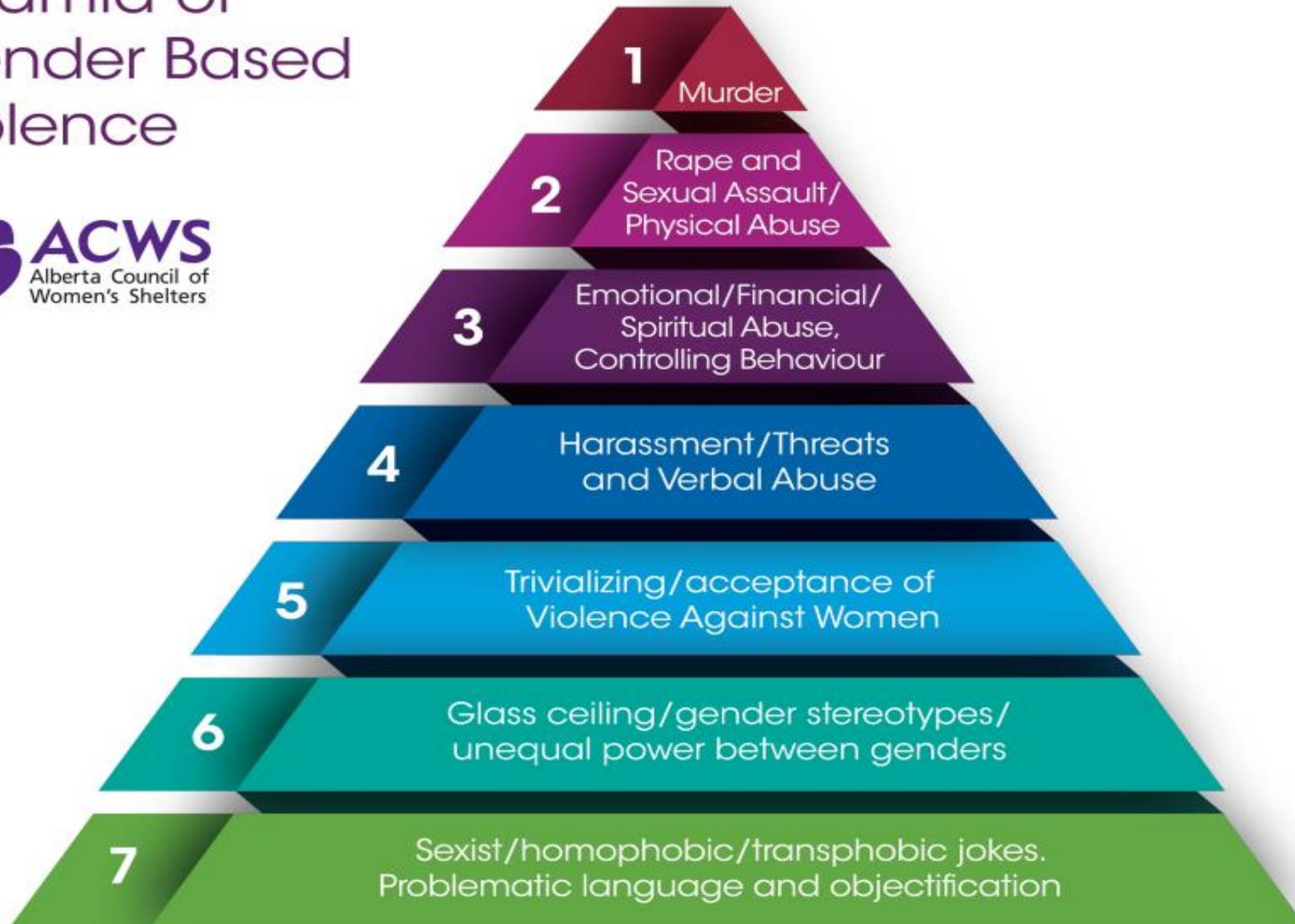
Violence Against Women in Canada

- **44% of women and girls** who had ever been in an intimate partner relationship reported experiencing some kind of psychological, physical, or sexual abuse in the context of an intimate relationship since age 15 (*Statistics Canada, 2021*)
- Approximately **every 4 days**, a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner (*CFOJA, 2022*)
- Women make up **73%** of all intimate partner homicide victims (*Statistics Canada, 2023*)
- Women are **4x** more likely than men to experience IPV (*Statistics Canada, 2023*)
- **61%** of Indigenous women have experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime (*Statistics Canada, 2021*)

Domestic Violence and Veterans

- The rate of domestic violence among veterans is likely close to the rate among the general population (1 in 3 women), although the numbers vary quite a bit depending on the study
- 1 in 4 disciplinary allegations at the RCMP were related to DV between 2014 and 2025
- However, there are some unique elements:
 - The presence of PTSD can increase the risk of domestic violence
 - There can be added barriers to reporting such as: stigma, fears of jeopardizing someone's career, geographic isolation/being separated from family and friends, challenges around confidentiality in a tight-knit community or on base, etc.
 - Access to firearms
 - Both partners may be veterans / serving

Pyramid of Gender Based Violence

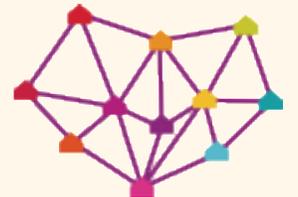


Social norms and values lay the foundation for what is or is not okay

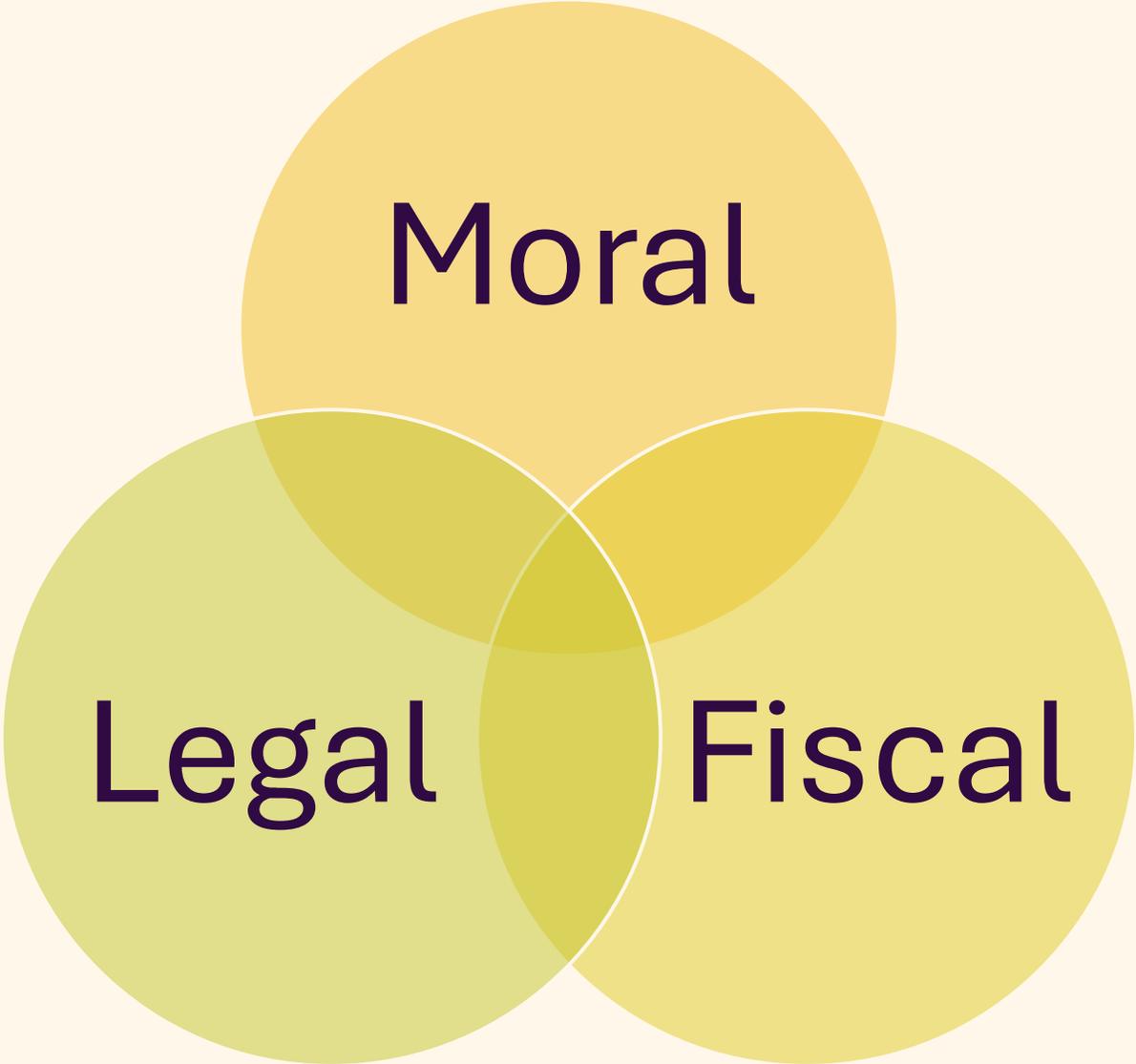
By changing norms and values, we can change the culture

By changing culture, we can end violence

Why is DV Your Responsibility?



Why Act?



Moral Reasons: The Opportunity

43.2% of workers experiencing violence from an intimate partner discussed it with someone at work.

(Wathen, C.N., MacGregor, J.C.D., MacQuarrie, B.J. with the Canadian Labour Congress, 2014)

Moral Reasons: The Positive Impact of Employment

There are many ways that employment can help survivors:

- Income
- Employment benefits
- Social well-being
- Self-esteem



Fiscal Reasons: The Costs of DV in the Workplace

Reduced employee productivity

Increased absenteeism

Replacement, recruitment, and training due to injury or dismissal

Decreased employee morale

Higher company health expenses

Strained relations among co-workers

Potential harm to employees, co-workers, and/or customers

Liability costs

Fiscal Reasons: The Costs of DV in the Workplace

Impact	2010 Estimated Annual Monetary Impact <i>(per 100 employees)</i>
29% of victims will take time off work, conservative estimate is 2 days per month.	\$5,391.00
56% of female victims will arrive late at least 5 days per month and 28% will leave early 5 days per month	\$2,760.30
74% of female victims are harassed while at work. They then use work time and resources to deal with related issues.	\$14,604.80
Victims and perpetrators require time off to attend court	\$656.90
94% of female victims experience problems at work. Close to 50% of victims lose a job due in part to domestic violence.	\$3,520.00
Recruitment costs replacing workers who leave because of domestic violence.	\$57,354.88
Total	\$85,000.00 per 100 employees

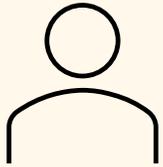
Legal Reasons: Occupational Health & Safety

According to Part II of the *Canadian Labour Code*, **harassment and violence** means “any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or comment.” This includes all types of harassment and violence, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and domestic violence.

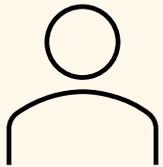
Examples of harassment and violence include:

- Aggressive or threatening behaviour, including verbal threats or abuse.
- Spreading malicious rumours or gossip about an individual or a group.
- Socially excluding or isolating someone.
- Persistently criticizing, undermining, belittling, demeaning, or ridiculing someone.
- Making abusive or derogatory remarks or jokes about someone’s gender, gender identity or gender expression, sex, or sexual orientation.

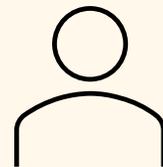
Legal Reasons: Occupational Health & Safety



Employers investigate, record and report in accordance with the regulations, accidents & occurrences of harassment and violence. Employers must take the prescribed measures to prevent and protect against harassment and violence in the workplace & respond to occurrences of harassment and violence in the workplace.



Supervisors must receive complaints of violence and harassment and receive training on how to do so, in addition to receiving training on preventing violence and harassment.



Workers may make complaints relating to an occurrence of harassment and violence to the employee's supervisor or to the person designated in the employer's workplace harassment and violence prevention policy.

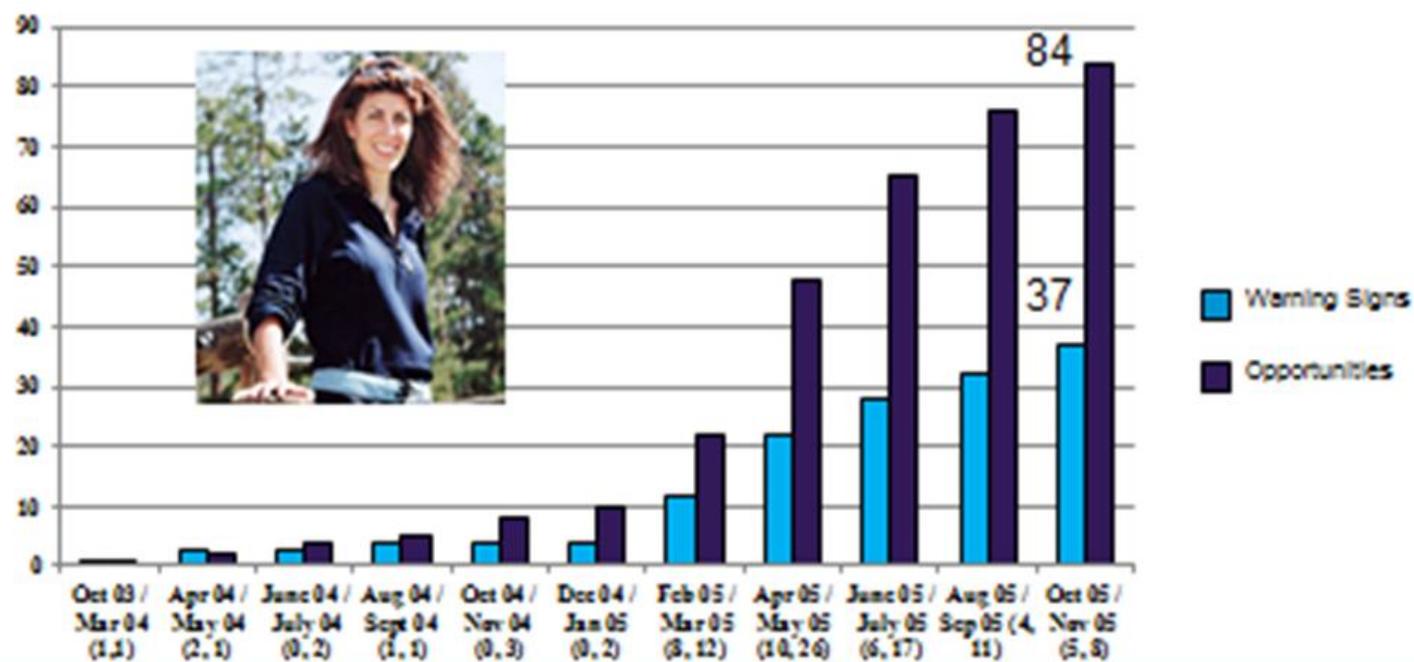
Violence and Harassment Training

Workplaces are responsible for developing or identifying training on workplace harassment and violence for employees. The training must:

- Be delivered by a qualified individual.
- Be taken by all employees, especially supervisors and managers, as well as by the employer themselves.
- Inform employees of their rights and obligations.
- Describe how to recognize, minimize, prevent, and respond to workplace harassment and violence.

Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations (SOR/2020-130)

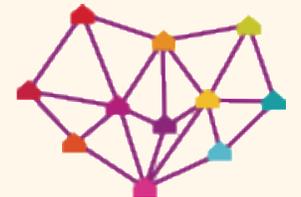
Critical Events & Missed Opportunities Dupont Inquest



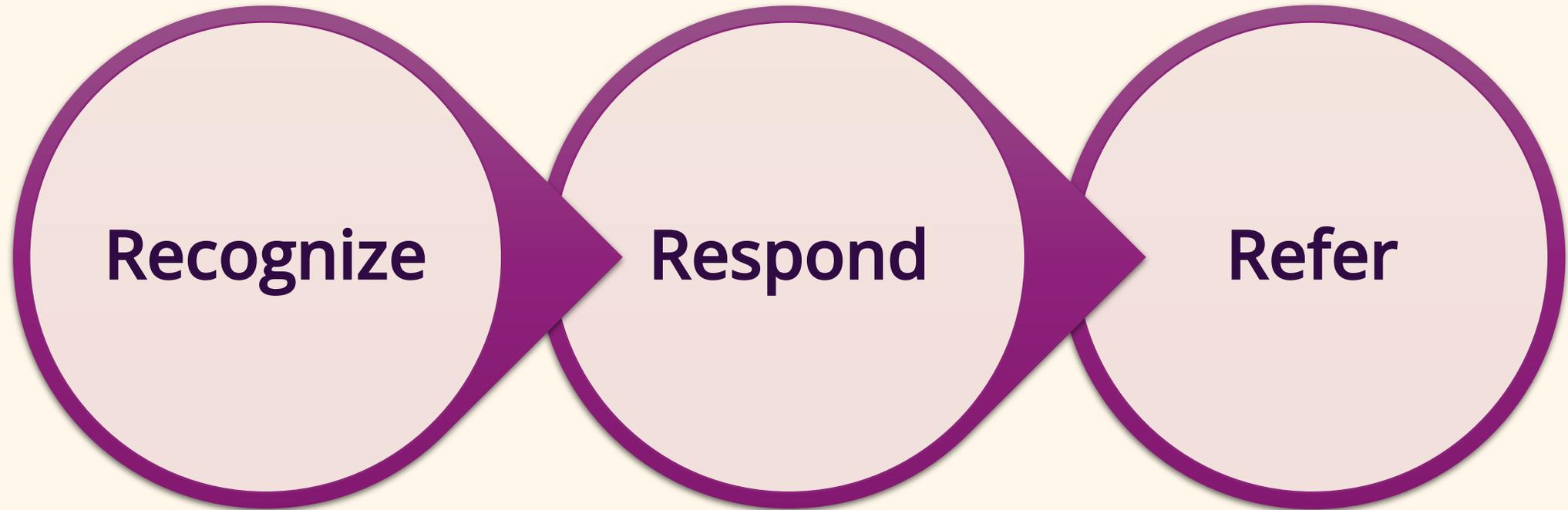
BREAK



What You Can Do



The Steps





Recognize

**A Person
Experiencing
Abuse**

Warning signs:

- Unusually sad, withdrawn, or tired
- Difficulty concentrating
- Fearful of leaving work or going home
- Changes in work performance
- Noticeable injuries
- Change in clothing style or makeup
- Unusual number of calls, texts, or emails
- Appearances of gifts and flowers
- Denial of being harassed or injured
- Disruptive personal visits by (ex)partner
- Regularly late for work/appointments
- Frequent absenteeism
- Difficulty getting to work/appointments

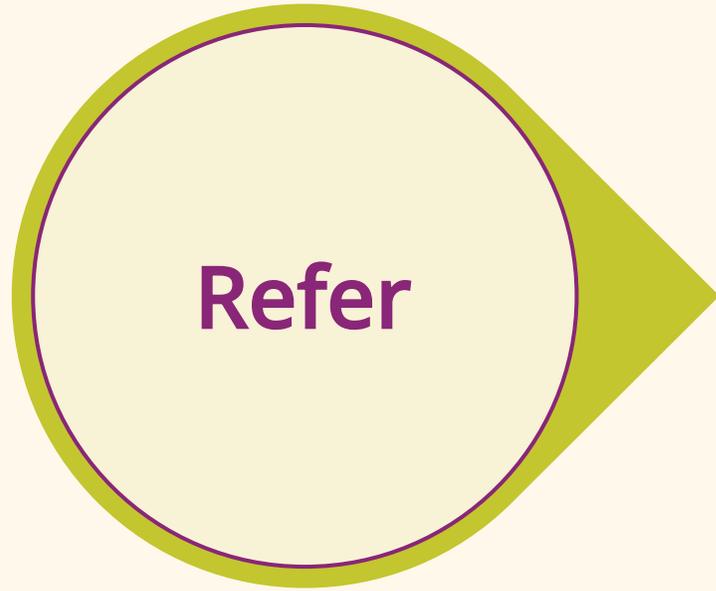


Respond

**A Person
Experiencing
Abuse**

Best practices for responding to survivors:

- Avoid victim-blaming
- Believe what they are saying
- Share that you are concerned
- Respect cultural nuances
- Respect her right to make decisions
- Offer support
- Respect limitations and stay within the scope of your role
- Explore options and resources
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Follow your policy on reporting
- Practice self-care and boundaries



A Person Experiencing Abuse

Best practices for referring survivors:

- Respect the limitations of your role
- Refer to organizational supports such as an Employee and Family Assistance Program
- Refer to community supports such as local domestic violence shelters:
www.sheltersafe.ca

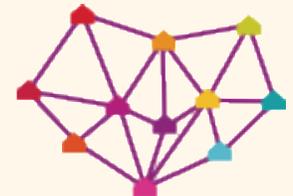
Local Resources

Ottawa:

- Interval House of Ottawa
- Nelson House of Ottawa-Carleton
- Chrysalis House
- Sakeenah Homes
- Nisa Homes
- Oshki Kizis Indigenous Women's Shelter
- Maison d'amitié
- Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre
- The Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa
- Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel (CALACS) Ottawa
- Sexual Assault & Partner Abuse Care Program – Ottawa Hospital
- CHEO Sexual Assault Care Program

Gatineau:

- Maison d'Ingrid
- L'Autre Chez-Soi
- Maison Unies-Vers-Femmes
- Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions sexuelles de l'Outaouais (CALAS)
- CALACS de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau





Recognize

A Person Using Abuse

Warning signs:

- Disproportionately upset over events or interactions
- Holds grudges
- Obsession with others, including suspicion and record-keeping
- Fascination with weapons
- Repeatedly phones or asks people to “check-up” on partner
- Derogatory comments about their partner and others
- Threats to harm self or property, or to commit other acts of violence
- Unwelcome romantic overtures

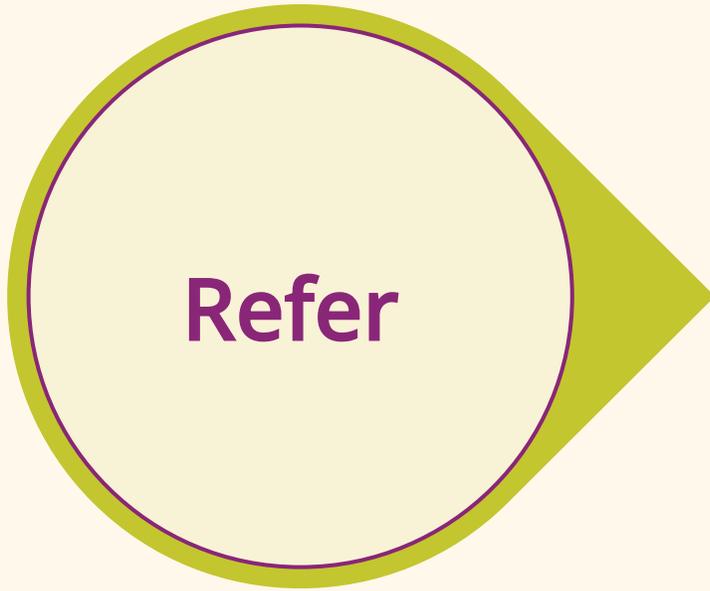


Respond

A Person Using Abuse

Best practices for responding to people using abuse:

- Avoid directly confronting the person about their abusive behaviour
- Focus on managing performance issues
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Follow your policy on reporting
- Be mindful of the survivor's safety and your own safety
- Practice self-care and boundaries



Refer

**A Person
Using Abuse**

Best practices for referring people using abuse:

- Respect the limitations of your role
- Organizational supports such as therapy and wellness supports available through your Employee Family Assistance Program
- Info on specialized men's programming:
<https://menand.ca/>

Resources

National:

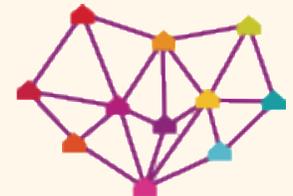
- Men& (menand.ca or 1-833-327-MENS)

Ottawa:

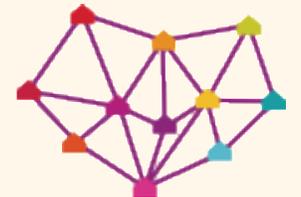
- John Howard Society Aggression Prevention Program
- Partner Assault Response Programs – normally referred via Court Order
- Men & Healing

Gatineau:

- Donne-toi une chance – Je me reconstruis, Pour moi et mes enfants



Case Studies



Case Study 1

You notice that one of the people you support is quieter than usual and becoming more and more withdrawn. She doesn't speak up in meetings as often as she used to, and you feel like her attention is wandering. She has been unusually late on a few meetings and events. You know she started seeing someone new a few months ago, and you are concerned that he might be abusing her.

What do you do?

Case Study 2

Someone you know works at the front reception desk of the office. Her partner often stops by during the day and talks with her, but the visits are always brief so you don't think much of it. One day, you notice that his car is in the parking lot for awhile after he comes in to speak with her. Once you notice that, you realize that he seems to be parked outside for long periods of time throughout the day, and that he's always in a parking spot near the front of the building where he can see her at her desk.

What do you do?

Case Study 3

Your colleague has been leaving the office every day on his lunch break. Sometimes he comes back late. You overhear him telling another colleague that he has been going to check in on his partner over lunch every day because he doesn't trust her. He uses vulgar language when describing his partner, and his tone is very aggressive.

What do you do?



A Success Story

For inquiries & further info:

knowledge@endvaw.ca

www.endvaw.ca

To find a local shelter:

sheltersafe.ca



@endvawnetwork



Women's Shelters Canada



@endvaw.bsky.social

Take Care

- This session dealt with difficult subject matter.
- As you leave the session, do something to decompress and process how you are feeling.
- Support services are available:
 - Workplace supports (e.g. EAP)
 - Assaulted Women's Helpline: 1-866-863-0511 or text #7233
 - Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310
 - Sheltersafe.ca

ENDVAW.CA

References

- Canada Labour Code (R.S.C., 1985, c. L-2).
- Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability. 2022. *Call it Femicide: Understanding Sex/Gender-Related Killings of Women and Girls in Canada, 2018-2022*.
- Employment and Social Development Canada. *Requirements for Employers to Prevent Harassment and Violence in Federally Regulated Workplaces*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/workplace-health-safety/harassment-violence-prevention.html#definition>.
- Scott, K.L., Lim, D.B, Holmes, M., MacQuarrie, B.J., Wathen, C.N., MacGregor, J.C.D. 2017. *Domestic Violence at the Workplace: Investigating the Impact of Domestic Violence Perpetration on Workers and Workplaces*.
- Statistics Canada. 2021. *Experiences of Visible Minority Women in Canada, 2018*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00008-eng.htm>
- Statistics Canada. 2023. *Homicide Trends in Canada, 2023*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/241211/dq241211a-eng.htm>.
- Wathen, C.N., MacGregor, J.C.D., MacQuarrie, B.J. with the Canadian Labour Congress. 2014. *Can Work Be Safe When Home Isn't? Initial Findings of a Pan-Canadian Survey on Domestic Violence and the Workplace*.
- WomanACT. 2022. *Intersection Between Employment and Safety Among Racialized Women*.
- Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention (HVP) - 943-1-IPG-104.

What does DV look like in the workplace?

Preventing someone from getting to work by:

- Physically assaulting or restraining them
- Preventing sleep
- Hiding car keys or withholding transportation money
- Not bringing the car home
- Not showing up to care for children

Interfering with work by:

- Showing up at work
- Harassing phone calls (to the survivor, their coworkers, their supervisor)
- Stalking
- Asking co-workers questions about the survivor
- Threatening coworkers
- Damaging work equipment

Impact on Survivors' Work

Of all domestic violence survivors surveyed:

- **81.9%** reported negative impact on their work.
- **53.5%** reported that the abusive acts continued at or near their workplace.
- **37.1%** reported that their coworkers were affected too.
- **8.5%** reported losing their job because of the violence they experienced.

(Wathen, C.N., MacGregor, J.C.D., MacQuarrie, B.J. with the Canadian Labour Congress, 2014)

Of Indigenous survivors, Black survivors, and people of colour survivors surveyed:

- **24%** reported losing their job because of intimate partner violence.
- **53%** reported that racism impacted their experience as a survivor in the workplace.
- **29%** said that race or immigration status was used by their abusive partner in employment sabotage.

(WomanACT, 2022)

Impact on Abusers' Work

Of men using abuse that were surveyed:

- **71%** reported being in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours to continue ongoing conflict, emotional abuse, and/or monitoring.
- **21%** of the men who continued perpetration of DV during work hours reported that someone at work knew about these behaviours. In **19%** of these cases, someone at work “covered” for them while they engaged in these behaviours.
- **45%** reported that domestic violence issues negatively affected their job performance.
- **9%** reported causing or almost causing a work accident because they were distracted or preoccupied with DV issues.
- **25%** of respondents reported taking paid and/or unpaid time off to deal with domestic violence issues.

Scott, K.L., Lim, D.B, Holmes, M., MacQuarrie, B.J., Wathen, C.N., MacGregor, J.C.D.

(2017)