

## Domestic Violence Information Sheet

- Domestic Violence is the abuse between couples
- Women in Alberta experience the highest stalking rate in Canada
- Alberta has a higher proportion of cases involving domestic violence against women than any other province
- In Canada the health related cost of domestic violence against women is 1.15 billion dollars per year including medical and psychiatric costs
- Family Violence isolates children, damages self-esteem and can spawn psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, feelings of guilt and suicidal tendencies. Growing up in a violent home can lead some people to turn against their own children when they become parents, or to abuse their adult partners
- Violence experienced by women tends to be more severe and more repeated than the violence directed at men
- Women experience higher levels of certain types of emotional abuse such as: being threatened with harm or someone close to them being harmed, denied access to family finances, possessions destroyed, isolated from family & friends and/or called names or subject to put downs
- Domestic violence can have a devastating effect upon the victim, families and children who witness or live with the consequences of that violence
- Domestic Violence is learned behavior
- The victim's behavior is often a way of ensuring survival
- Victim's of violence may even initiate violence in an effort to get imminent violence over with, as a reaction to past abuse, or to deflect the abuse away from children
- Leaving a domestic violence relationship is a process, not an event
- A person who is being abused may endure the abuse for a long time before seeking support but the majority of abuse is never reported; 80% of women in shelters have no plans to report the abuse to police
- There are 7 types of abuse in Domestic Violence Relationships: Physical, Sexual, Financial, Emotional, Psychological, Spiritual and Threat of Abandonment and they are used to intimidate, humiliate or frighten a partner or make them feel powerless
- Emotional Abuse is commonly defined as the systematic tearing down of another human being and is based on power and control over another person. It is harder to define & diagnose and is a behavior which diminishes the other person's identity, dignity, self-worth and perception
- Emotional abuse often accompanies other forms of abuse but may also occur alone
- Children who see their Mother being abused are also victims of emotional abuse
- Physical Abuse is the most visible form of abuse but is often dismissed as frequent accidents or clumsiness
- The longer the physical abuse continues the more serious the injuries become and the more difficult it is to eliminate the abusive behavior

- It is believed that 3 or every 5 children in every classroom have witnessed their mother being assaulted.

## **Children Are Affected by Family Violence & Might:**

### **Internalize by:**

- Hyperactive or lethargic behavior, being overly sensitive, have poor concentration, withdraw into self, be depressed, feel sad, feel unworthy, blame self for family problems, be very compliant, get good grades, suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, have stomach aches/headaches/sleep problems, have anxiety or panic attacks, have trouble keeping or getting along with friends, have self-destructive thoughts or actions.

### **Externalize by:**

- Physical or verbally aggressive, complain of pains when moving or being touched, have difficulty getting along with others, insensitive to others, easily distractible, hyper, feel angry most of the time, feel rage, brag excessively, blame others, ADD/ADHD, Conduct Disorder, Post traumatic Stress Disorder

## **What You Can Do?**

### **As a Victim:**

- Remember you are not alone, that it is not your fault, you should talk to someone you trust, find help and advise in your community

### **As an outsider:**

- Listen to the victim, believe the victim, support them, inform them of available services in their community and hotlines, report suspected child abuse or neglect to a child welfare agency.

## **Support Services:**

Family Violence hotline 403-310-1818

Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-5437

Women's Shelters 403-346-5643

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-877-303-2642

Seniors Abuse Help Line 1-877-454-2580

The Outreach Centre 403-347-2480

Sylvan Lake & District Victim Services has an extensive amount of information in regard to all types of abuse, safety plans and personal security. Our services and resources are confidential and free of charge. For inquiries call our office 403-858-7255 Mon – Fri between 8AM and 5PM