

## WHAT IS CONJUGAL VIOLENCE?

Conjugal violence is a violent or aggressive behavior that is used to gain or maintain power over a partner in a family set up. Conjugal abuse can be Physical, Sexual, Emotional / Psychological and Financial.

## IF YOU ARE A SURVIVOR OF CONJUGAL VIOLENCE, BE AWARE THAT:

- Conjugal violence is a crime and it is unacceptable.
- Conjugal violence is a HUGE problem and it exists in all cultures.
- Violence tends to increase over a period of time without intervention.
- You are not alone. We are here to support you.
- You are not to be blamed. The abuser is responsible for his actions.
- Your safety and your children's safety are most important.
- Your spouse or partner does not have the authority to have you deported.
- If you are sponsored by your husband, you cannot lose your status or be forced to leave Canada for leaving an abusive relationship.
- If you have a temporary or no status, consider taking legal advice about your options.

## YOU HAVE RIGHTS TO:

- Child custody
- Press charges
- Legal aid (no lawyer fee)
- Social aid (welfare and child benefits)
- Low income housing

## WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

If you are in a crisis, in an emergency or anytime that you experience abuse,

- Call 9-1-1 for emergency protection
- S.O.S. for shelter, call 1-800-363-9010
- Go to the nearest CLSC or talk to your doctor
- Contact a community centre like South Asian Women's Community Centre
- Speak to a social worker or counsellor

**Housing: ROMEL:** (514) 341-1057

**Legal Information and Assistance:**  
(514) 864-2111

**SAWCC:** (514) 528-8812

**PRAIDA (Refugee Claimants):**  
(514) 284-0054

## HOW TO HELP A SURVIVOR OF CONJUGAL VIOLENCE



## SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE (SAWCC)

WE SPEAK FRENCH, ENGLISH AND THE MAIN SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGES

(514) 528-8812

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Secrétariat  
à la condition  
féminine

Québec 

## WOMEN HELPING WOMEN: WHAT TO DO

- **Do** know the facts about conjugal violence.
- **Do** make time for the conjugal violence survivor.
- **Do** assure her that you believe her story.
- **Do** let her talk about her feelings and listen without judgement.
- **Do** reassure her that the abuse is not her fault.
- **Do** let her know that you are concerned about her safety.
- **Do** explain her how abuse increases over the period of time without intervention.
- **Do** discuss with her how conjugal violence affects the children.
- **Do** respect her choices and be supportive.
- **Do** help her to form a safety plan if she decides to leave.

## SAFETY PLAN

CREATING A SAFETY PLAN INVOLVES IDENTIFYING ACTION STEPS TO INCREASE YOUR OWN SAFETY AND TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER VIOLENCE.

- Keep important documents, or copies of important documents in a safe place out of reach of your abusive partner (for example: passports, immigration documents, social insurance number, children's birth certificates, health cards, and banking information).
- Keep important phone numbers with you.
- Save and set aside some money away in a safe place, a little at a time.
- Record the abusive incidents, if you can do this safely and keep it somewhere out of reach of your abuser and children.
- Get legal advice about your situation.
- Contact a local police service or a local shelter.
- Do not tell your partner that you are leaving; leave quickly.
- Hide extra clothing, house keys, car keys, money, etc. at a friend's house.
- Consider getting a safety deposit box at a bank where your partner does not go.

## WOMEN HELPING WOMEN: WHAT NOT TO DO

- **Don't** judge the survivor.
- **Don't** criticize her partner, but criticize the abusive behavior of the partner.
- **Don't** blame the survivor. That's what the abuser does.
- **Don't** underestimate the potential danger for the survivor and yourself.
- **Don't** promise any help that you can't follow through.
- **Don't** do anything that might provoke the abuser.
- **Don't** pressure the survivor.
- **Don't** try to make decisions on her behalf.
- **Don't** give up. If she is not willing to open up at first, be patient.
- **Don't** do anything to make it more difficult for the survivor.
- **Don't** tell her to leave or criticize her for staying.