

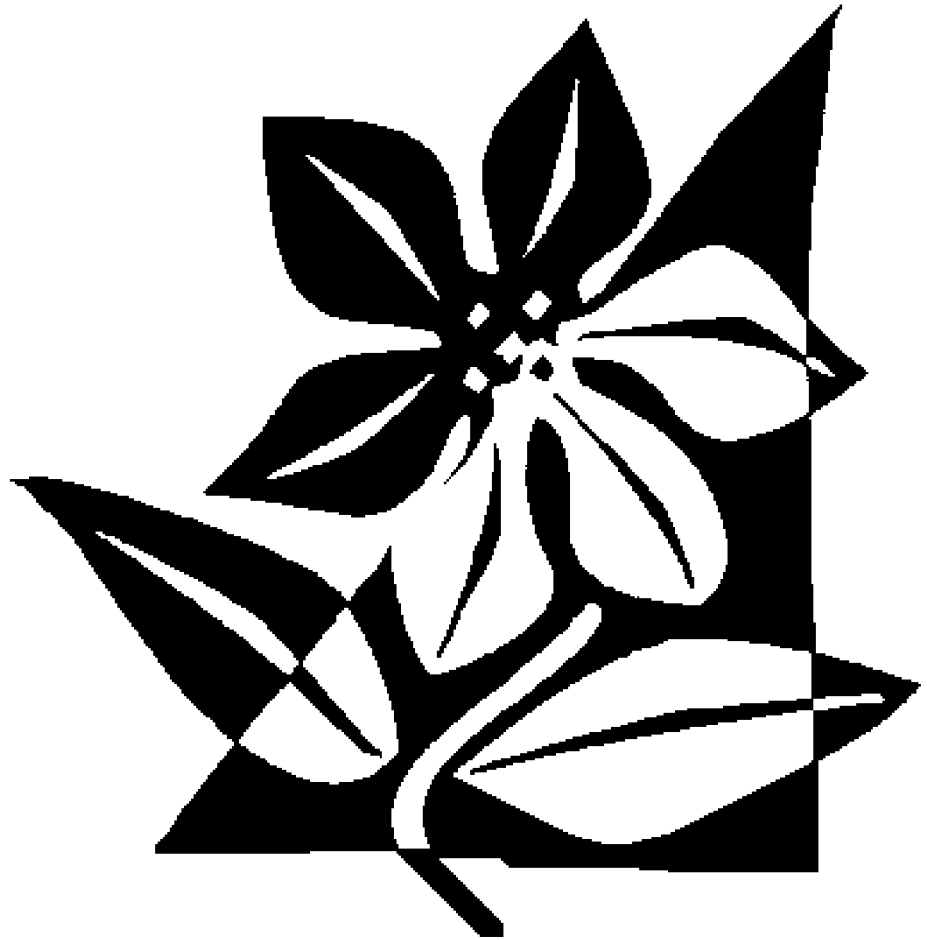


Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

**Awareness Information for People in the Workplace**

*Dating Violence:  
An issue at any age*



Canada

# **DATING VIOLENCE: AN ISSUE AT ANY AGE**

## **AWARENESS INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE**

A guide for use by people interested in meeting together to discuss dating violence issues.

funded by  
Mental Health Unit, Health Care and Issues Division and  
National Clearinghouse on Family Violence  
Health Canada

March 1996

Our mission is to help the people of Canada  
maintain and improve their health.

Health Canada

Additional copies are available from:

**National Clearinghouse on Family Violence  
Health Promotion and Programs Branch  
Health Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 1B4  
Tel.: (613) 957-2938**

or call the toll free number,  
**1-800-267-1291**  
**Fax: (613) 941-8930**

\*TDD toll-free number  
(\*Telecommunication device for the Deaf),  
**1-800-561-5643 or (613) 952-6396**

également disponible en français sous le titre:  
**La violence dans les fréquentations: un risque à tout âge.  
Sensibilisation en milieu de travail.**

The opinions expressed in this guide do not necessarily reflect the official views of Health Canada.  
Contents may not be reproduced for commercial purposes but any other reproduction, with  
acknowledgements, is encouraged.

© Minister of Supply and Services Canada 1996

Cat. H72-21/140-1996E  
ISBN 0-662-238S7-5

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The concept featured in this handbook and in the Family Violence Awareness Information Project was developed under contract with the Justice Institute of B.C. by Flora MacLeod, Program Director, Program Services. The Step by Step Guide and Tips for Presenters were developed by adult education consultant Brenda Dafoe.

The project was funded by Mental Health Unit, Health Care and Issues Division, Health Canada in collaboration with the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Health Canada. The project benefited from the guidance of Joan Simpson, Coordinator, Violence Prevention and Mental Health, Mental Health Unit, and Barbara Merriam, Manager, National Clearinghouse on Family

Violence, Health Promotion and Programs Branch, Health Canada.

The material for the series was developed following focus groups conducted on wife assault, child abuse, abuse and neglect of older adults, and dating violence and under the guidance of advisory committees expert in each topic. The material in the Dating Violence handbook was tested with a workplace group in Calgary, Alberta and college students in Surrey, British Columbia. Appreciation is expressed to the people who facilitated those pilots and presented the material to their colleagues or who participated in the sessions and gave invaluable feedback about them.

### **Advisory Committee:**

VALERIE BEGG  
Educator, Child Abuse Prevention Program for Adolescents  
The Canadian Red Cross, Fraser Region  
New Westminster, B.C.

JENNY FRIESEN  
Therapeutic Foster Care Coordinator and  
Member, Weyburn and Area Council on Child

Abuse Committee  
Weyburn, Saskatchewan

BARBARA KLAASSEN  
Coordinator, Child Abuse Prevention Program  
for Adolescents  
The Canadian Red Cross, Calgary and Area  
Calgary, Alberta

PEARL MCKENZIE

Consultant,  
North Vancouver, B.C.

SUZANNE MULLIGAN  
Executive Director, Community Child Abuse  
Council of Hamilton-Wentworth  
Hamilton, Ontario

DONNA STEWART  
Coordinator, B.C. Coalition to Eliminate  
Abuse of Seniors  
Burnaby, B.C.

**Development and Production:**

FLORA MACLEOD, WRITER AND PROJECT  
DIRECTOR

BRENDA DAFOE, WRITER AND ADULT  
EDUCATION CONSULTANT

ANITA BONSON AND SARAH ROSS, EDITORS

WESTERN TECHNIGRAPHICS LTD., PUBLISHERS

FUNDING PROVIDED BY:  
MENTAL HEALTH UNIT, HEALTH CARE AND  
ISSUES DIVISION,  
HEALTH CANADA AND NATIONAL  
CLEARINGHOUSE ON FAMILY VIOLENCE  
HEALTH PROMOTION AND PROGRAMS BRANCH  
HEALTH CANADA

**INTRODUCING THE DATING VIOLENCE INFORMATION  
HANDBOOK**

**THIS HANDBOOK WAS DEVELOPED IN THE BELIEF THAT:** \_\_\_\_\_

- people get together to discuss issues that concern them experiences and life situations
- people learn by discussion with each other
- learning can be facilitated within a peer leadership approach
- a peer leadership approach demonstrates respect for people's

- people bring with them valuable skills and valid points of view that guide their interactions with others
- a peer leadership approach is appropriate in the presentation and discussion of basic material about issues that affect us all in our everyday lives

## **FEATURES:**

---

### *DESIGNED FOR INFORMAL GROUPS*

this information was developed for use by people interested in meeting together to discuss dating violence issues in a guided format

### *BASED ON PEER LEADERSHIP*

the material is organized in a simple, nontechnical format to help the presenter who is neither a content expert nor necessarily an experienced teacher or public speaker

### *CONTAINS BASIC INFORMATION ON DATING VIOLENCE*

the material is introductory and designed to be appropriate and of interest to the general public

### *FOCUSES ON AWARENESS AND RESOURCES*

the goal of the information session is to help people develop a greater awareness about dating violence, about practical steps for help and about the range of resources available in their own community (including services, programs, and resource people who have specialized and expert information on this topic)

### *DESIGNED IN A ONE HOUR FORMAT*

the session takes about one hour, though groups may decide to take more or less time or to carry over discussion to subsequent sessions

### *FOR USE IN WORKPLACE AND OTHER SETTINGS*

while the handbook is designed for use in the workplace, over a lunch hour, or before or after work, it may also be used in other settings in the community to guide informal discussions on dating violence

### *PART OF A SERIES*

additional sets of information on family violence topics are available free from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

## HOW THE INFORMATION IS ORGANIZED

### PLANNING THE INFORMATION SESSION

---

The first section includes discussions of goals, who might be involved in sessions, where and when sessions might take place, and how to set up a session. Note the page called "TIPS FOR PRESENTERS" with suggestions and ideas on presenting the information in the package.

This section also contains background information from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, a blank COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST to be completed by the presenter and a sample POSTER for advertising the session.

### STEP BY STEP GUIDE

---

The second section includes basic information, ideas for introductions, suggestions for what to say on the topic, an agenda, quiz answers,

activity ideas, handouts and guidelines on how to use the handouts.

## PLANNING THE INFORMATION SESSION

### GOALS

---

It is important to know what you hope to accomplish by holding an information session on dating violence. The goals of the information session are to help people:

- become aware that there is violence and abuse in relationships;
- talk about and begin to understand dating violence as it affects people of all ages;

- learn some practical steps for helping; and
- learn about resources available in the community.

People in our society are concerned about dating violence. We can all take steps to make our community safer. A good way to start is by creating awareness in the workplace.

### WHO?

---

Who plans an information session on dating violence? You can. You can organize a workplace information session by getting a group together and using this guide to start a discussion.

It is a good idea to share the role of discussion leader with someone so that one of you is available to leave the group if a participant becomes upset and needs private individual support and information before the session

ends. Talking about violence in relationships is not easy and people who have been affected by it may need to talk to someone about places to go for help. Be sure you and the co-leader review the STEP BY STEP GUIDE in advance of the information session. Afterwards, at the end of the session, allow additional time so that you can respond to any requests for information or help.

You are not expected to have all the answers to people's questions about dating violence, but you can refer them to the resource list of knowledgeable people in the community who can help. You don't need to be an expert to plan a session. You do need:

- an interest in the subject;
- to read the enclosed materials; and
- to complete the community resources page.

Identify key people who may offer their support. Some work places have people on site

with a special interest in issues affecting employees. Contact, in advance, representatives of any employee assistance, union counselling or occupational health programs, or other resources such as well-being or health and safety committees. These people may be willing to help you organize an information session or might like to attend. In any case, they should know that the session is being planned, not only as a courtesy, but because they may experience an increase in the number of employees asking for help.

## **WHERE?**

---

This guide is designed for use in the workplace, but it could also be used in home or community settings.

In your workplace, check procedure about use of meeting rooms. A quiet room is best. There may be a classroom or boardroom in your workplace that could be booked for the session. A private office can be used, depending on the number of people attending. A separate section of a cafeteria or staff room may be suitable. If there is an employee

assistance program or a union counsellor in your workplace, ask them for ideas about where to hold the session.

If you do not receive approval for a workplace meeting or if no suitable space is available, you can make arrangements to meet some place else like a library, YWCA, community or family resource centre. Any of these may say "yes" to your request.

## **WHEN?**

---

The STEP BY STEP GUIDE has been designed in a 55 minute format so that it can be used in a noon hour. It is also possible that your employer may be willing to offer work time for the session. This is because family

violence, including dating violence, affects workers' lives, and may cause illness, absenteeism, and lack of concentration resulting in low productivity or possible injury.



## HOW?

---

Decide on a time and place. Ask somebody else to help and decide who will do what.

Then:

### 1. *Let people know.*

---

You may decide simply to invite a number of people who you think may have an interest in dating violence. Or you can advertise, using posters on bulletin boards. But remember that permission may be required before putting up posters on bulletin boards in the workplace.

A sample poster is included in the handbook. To use "as is", enter time and location

information, and then photocopy on coloured paper.

About ten people make a good number for an information session but more or fewer will work equally well. If you invite people, you will have a sense of how many are coming. A group can't be too small; you and someone else can use the guide effectively.

### 2. *Complete the DATING VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST handout in advance.*

---

This form is provided at the back of the handbook. It is very helpful to participants if local telephone numbers are written on the handout. So, before the information session date, look up and fill in at least one emergency number and any community service information number that may be available. Any single enquiry number will be able to refer you to others.

Some key resources are available in nearly every town or community in our country. The telephone book is the best source for these

numbers but the local library or information centre may also be able to tell you how to reach services that are in your area.

Telephone numbers are important because people who attend the information session may need to know where to go for help. They may not say anything specific at the time, but having a list of resources to take away with them may make all the difference for them in the future.

### 3. *Do some reading and preparation in advance.*

---

- read the TIPS FOR PRESENTERS;
- read the STEP BY STEP GUIDE;
- read the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence fact sheet on Dating Violence included in the handbook;
- photocopy the completed DATING VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST, agenda and other handouts. Make enough copies for all

the people you expect to attend the session. Post any spare resource lists on bulletin boards that are available for staff use in your workplace; and

- prepare pieces of paper or bring index cards and pencils for use in the EXAMPLES exercise.

Good luck with your dating violence awareness session.

## TIPS FOR PRESENTERS

1. You and the group are here to explore dating violence together. Be yourself. Your feeling comfortable and relaxed will contribute to an informal, friendly atmosphere.
2. Your role is that of a group facilitator, not an expert. It is not up to you to come up with all the answers or solutions: *"My role today is to help people keep on topic and to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak if they want to."*
3. Adults bring to any learning situation a wide range of knowledge. It is helpful to recognize and, if appropriate, acknowledge this: *"That example is a good one. You have a lot of knowledge about this issue, Jane..."*
4. Dating violence is not easy to talk about. Feelings of sadness or anger may surface during the presentation. Acknowledging those feelings can be helpful. Say something like the following: *"That must have been very upsetting for you, Fabriba..."*
5. It's a good idea to follow the timing suggestions on the agenda. If the group is particularly interested in one topic you may wish to ask them for a group decision: should they proceed with the agenda or stay with the topic under discussion? *"We only have 10 minutes left and three more sections to cover. How would you like to proceed?"* Meeting again another day may be an option. Or you may decide not to complete the session but to give out the handouts.
6. It's important to acknowledge all comments with a nod, a smile or a brief *"Thanks,"* whether or not the comments fit the agenda.
7. Sometimes a group member may go off on a tangent, expressing strongly held beliefs they want to talk about. You may wish to say something like the following: *"I understand your concern about..., but today we are discussing..."* If the group member persists, acknowledge the concern, continue with the agenda, and ask the group member to speak with you after the session.
8. From time to time, it may be helpful to refer back to key points made earlier in the presentation: *"Remember when we talked earlier about signs of emotional abuse?"*
9. Some participants may experience strong emotions and want to talk to somebody privately. Have a partner who can assist you. This allows you to continue with the presentation while your partner offers support and information about help available in your community.
10. Thank the group for coming: *"Dating violence is a tough subject to talk about. Concerned people like yourselves can make a difference. Thanks for coming!"*

Developed by Brenda Dafoe

## STEP BY STEP GUIDE

### 1. AS PEOPLE COME IN:

**Give them a copy of the AGENDA, the QUIZ, and the DATING VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST.**

- ask them to fill out the QUIZ
- let them know the QUIZ will be discussed later
- briefly go over the AGENDA with the group to let them know how the hour will be organized

### 2. INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND MEMBERS OF THE GROUP (about 5 minutes)

**Begin by introducing yourself and any co: presenter.**

Mention:

- why you decided to organize this session
- time limitations: "We have only 55 minutes today for this session and a lot to cover as you can see by your agenda."
- that if for any reason someone needs to leave during the session, they should feel free to do so
- that dating violence is an emotional topic that some of us find hard to talk about
- that there are programs which help prevent dating violence
- that people are invited to add comments or ask questions during the session.
- does everyone already know each other?
- is the group so large that introductions will take up too much time?
- will some people feel uncomfortable going through an introduction exercise?
- ask participants to turn to the person on left and introduce themselves
- then turn to the person on their right and do the same.

**Introduce group members.**

Look over the group and decide:

If any of these points apply, skip their this section and move on to the Overview section. If you decide to do introductions, a quick way to ensure that everyone has met at least two people is to:

### 3. WHAT IS DATING VIOLENCE? (about 20 minutes)

#### **Begin by defining dating violence.**

Dating violence refers to a situation in which one dating partner is physically, emotionally or sexually abused by the other dating partner. In most cases the abused partner is a woman. Dating violence is not new; it is a serious problem that until recently was not talked about.

Although dating violence happens most often to young women in their teens or early twenties, it can occur at any age. In today's society, people of all ages date. Like all issues involving violence in a trusting relationship, it is difficult to talk about and may raise personal issues for some of the participants.

#### **You could say:**

##### **Our purpose today is to raise awareness of dating violence:**

what is dating violence, what are the early warning signs, and what can be done about it?

Dating violence can occur at any age and between different sex or same sex couples. It is not a new social problem but has only recently been acknowledged. The term "dating violence" includes both physical violence and emotional abuse. While the extent of dating violence is unclear, all indications are that it is very common. As with family violence issues, awareness is the first step in addressing the problem. But it is not easy to talk about and may raise personal issues for some of you.

One of the reasons dating violence has not been addressed is that it is not often discussed or recognized as a problem. It may not be easy to recognize because of the socialization of men and women in our society. In the past, inequality between men and women was socially acceptable and incidents of dating violence were not questioned.

Some women are more vulnerable to abuse because they have been socialized to believe that women should put men's wants and needs before their own. They may believe that men should be independent and powerful and that women should be passive and dependent. Dating

## Exercise

In the following exercise, use the handout **STORIES** to help clarify what we mean by dating violence. The handout contains four case studies. You are going to ask the group to answer questions and to discuss each story.

Begin by giving out the **STORIES** handout. Explain the exercise.

### You could say:

Your handout presents four stories. I am going to read them one at a time. Then I will ask you to answer the questions following each story.

When we are finished, I will ask you to volunteer some of your responses to each story. Please feel free to make comments or ask questions as we proceed.

## STORIES (Handout)

Listen to each story as it is read. After each story answer the questions on your sheet.

- #1. Maria has been dating Rick since the beginning of grade 12. In the past few weeks, Rick has started questioning her about her behaviour. He continually asks her who she talks to in class, why she wasn't home when he phoned, and why she is spending time with her girl friends when she could be seeing him. Maria has not paid much attention to these comments, but lately Rick has sounded and appeared angry most of the time. He has been yelling at her in the hallways at school and calling her names, then apologizing. Last night he hit her. He says he is upset because he loves her and she is "driving him crazy".

Is the story an example of dating violence?      Yes      No

If yes, what are the warning signs? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to presenter:** The story is an example of dating violence. The warning signs include jealousy, control issues, and blaming the victim.

- #2. Two years ago, Sara had dated a man called Al. Although she was very interested in having a serious relationship, Al wasn't. Eventually they drifted apart. Sara concentrated on her career and dated other men from time to time. She was not sexually or emotionally involved with any of them. Recently, Al called, said he really missed her, and they began dating again. Al became very serious very quickly and Sara was thrilled.

Within the month Al began to question her about the men she had dated during the time he was not around. She explained that she had dated casually, but that

was all. Al accused her of lying and called her names. He began to question her about the men she worked with. He persisted in calling her secretary to track her whereabouts. Sara was extremely upset and explained to Al that nothing had happened. Al still doesn't believe her.

Is Al's behaviour appropriate?                      Yes      No

Is Al's behaviour signalling trouble ahead?                      Yes      No

If yes, what are the warning signs? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to presenter:** Al's behaviour is inappropriate. His questioning and accusations demonstrate a lack of trust. His possessiveness and jealousy have no rational basis.

**#3.**      At age 45 and recently divorced, Bill is back on the dating scene. He had been married for 20 years. He is dating Emily, a recent widow, who also happens to be his immediate supervisor at work. Occasionally, on dates, Emily appears sullen and withdrawn and when Bill asks her what's wrong she replies, "Nothing ... leave me alone". One night when Bill persists in trying to find out what is wrong, Emily yells: "Leave me alone or go look for another job!"

Is the story an example of dating violence?                      Yes      No

What are the warning signs? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to presenter:** A common response to this story is that Bill is pestering Emily and therefore is partly at fault. Bill may have shown poor judgement with his persistent questioning, but he is not being abusive. Emily is being abusive; she is using her position of power at work to control his behaviour.

**#4.**      Kim was invited to a party at the home of someone she didn't know very well. As the evening progressed she had quite a bit to drink. Finally she decided to "sleep it off" and curled up in the host's bedroom where she passed out. When she woke up she realized she was partly undressed. Steve, whom she had dated the previous year, was sitting on the side of the bed grinning at her.

Is the story an example of "date rape"?                      Yes      No

If yes, is Kim at fault?                      Yes      No

If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to presenter:** The story is an example of date rape. A person who is unconscious cannot consent to sexual activity. Possible prior sexual behaviour between the parties has no bearing on the present situation.

Now that the group has discussed some examples of dating violence, you can further clarify what we mean by this term. Distribute the handout **DATING VIOLENCE DEFINITIONS**.

**You could say:**

Dating violence includes the emotional, physical or sexual abuse of one partner by the other in a dating relationship where the, partners are not living together.

**Emotional or verbal abuse** is the most difficult form of abuse to identify and is very hurtful to the partner being abused. It may include threatening, humiliating, insulting, pressuring, isolating, blaming, yelling or smashing things, and other expressions of anger, jealousy and possessiveness.

**Physical abuse** involves the use of force and may include restraining, slapping, punching, kicking, hitting, shoving, biting, choking or use of a weapon.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when sexual behaviour is unwanted. It includes date rape, legally defined as sexual assault. Threats are often used to gain the compliance of the victim. It does not matter if there has been consenting sexual behaviour prior to the abuse.

Now clarify some of the things we know about dating violence.

**You could say:**

Dating violence can occur at any age, but teen-age women are most at risk. Many young women still believe that having a boyfriend is an important indication of their worth, both to themselves and to others. A "bad" date often appears a better alternative than no date at all. Young teens often experience dating violence which can set the stage for relationship patterns in the future.

As in other forms of violence, power and control are the central issues. In our society, people are not all treated as equals; those who lack power are more vulnerable to abuse. Males, therefore, are usually the aggressors.

Ask the group for questions or comments on the information so far. Then go on to discuss **EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF DATING VIOLENCE**.

**4. EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF DATING VIOLENCE: EMOTIONAL ABUSE**  
(about 10 minutes)

abuse. Emotional abuse often escalates into physical and/or sexual abuse. Therefore, alertness to signs of emotional abuse means **alertness to early warning signs of dating violence.**

The EARLY WARNING SIGNS on the handout are all signs of emotional

**You could say:**

Now that you have looked at some examples of dating violence, can you help yourself and others recognize a potentially violent dating partner or situation?

**Controlling someone through emotional abuse is often the beginning of dating violence .** Emotional abuse often escalates into physical and/or sexual abuse. Therefore, one way to recognize a potentially violent dating situation is to learn to recognize the signs of **emotional abuse.**

If someone feels they are "walking on egg shells" to keep their partner from becoming angry, there is trouble ahead!

The following **early warning signs** can alert you to the possibility of a violent dating situation, your own or someone else's.

Distribute EARLY WARNING SIGNS handout. Go over the handout with the group.

**5. TIPS FOR SAFER DATING**  
(about 5 minutes)

The following TIPS FOR SAFER DATING can also assist in making dating a safer activity.

**You could say:**

Being aware of the early warning signs of emotional abuse is one to avoid dating violence. But there are additional safety steps to take when dating.

Hand out TIPS FOR SAFER DATING



Go over the handout with the group.

## **EARLY WARNING SIGNS: EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

*Early warning signs of dating violence include:*

- Acting jealous or possessive
- Not taking "no" for an answer
- Controlling contact with friends/family/outside activities
- "Putting down" ideas, friends, family, appearance
- Making all the decisions
- Imposing traditional views of male/female relationships
- Driving fast or doing other scary things
- Expressing fear or anxiety as anger
- Making accusations of lying
- Refusing to discuss feelings and then blowing up
- Becoming angry or violent after drinking or using drugs

Other early warning signs include behaviour that is:

- Threatening
- Manipulating and controlling
- Embarrassing
- Blaming

Remember: If someone feels they are "walking on eggshells" to keep a partner from getting angry, there is trouble ahead.

## TIPS FOR SAFER DATING

Here are some tips that you, or someone you know, may find helpful.

When dating:

- Trust your instincts
- Have a safety plan
- Meet in public places for the first few dates
- Tell someone where you are going and with whom
- Be assertive: leave if you feel uncomfortable
- Be able to leave: have transportation or money for a bus, taxi and phone call
- Be able to call a taxi: know the address of where you are
- Pay your own way: avoid obligation
- Get to know your date: are your date's values similar to yours?
- Avoid situations that might lead to date rape: give clear messages
- In a long term dating situation, keep in touch with your friends and family

### 6. RESPONDING TO DATING VIOLENCE (about 5 minutes)

It's important to let the group know that there are attitudes and actions that are useful in stopping dating violence.

Emphasize that the most important step in doing something about dating violence is recognizing that the situation is abusive.

## You could say:

What can you do if you or someone you know is involved in an abusive dating situation? The most important step is to recognize that the situation is abusive and then take action.

This can be very difficult for a number of reasons, including the belief that a "bad" date is better than no date at all, or that the abusive behaviour will change for the better. It's important to realize that the pattern of control and jealousy will become worse over time, not better.

Distribute **WHAT YOU CAN DO** and go over the handout with the group.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Recognize that no one has a right to control another person
- Put the blame where it belongs, on the abuser
- Tell someone trustworthy about the violence
- End the relationship as soon as possible
- Consider reporting a date rape or a physical assault to the police

## 7. DISCUSS THE QUIZ (about 10 minutes)

**Ask participants to find the QUIZ they completed earlier.**

Read each question and answer aloud. All are FALSE. Depending upon the time available, you may want to encourage discussion after each point. Not everyone will agree with the answers or they may raise what seem like unrelated issues. If this happens, some responses you might use are:

"What do others think?"

"That sounds like a topic for another discussion".

"I'll write down that question and contact someone who can give us more information on that topic".

## QUIZ ON DATING VIOLENCE

1. Dating violence only happens to teenagers.
2. Jealousy is an expression of love.
3. The abuse will stop if there is enough love. Things will get better.
4. Alcohol and drug abuse are the causes of violence in a dating relationship.
5. There is a significant connection between violence and ethnic origin, education or income.
6. Women do not resort to physical violence in a dating relationship.
7. Violent behaviour always has its roots in the abuser's family situation.
8. Some women stay in a violent dating relationship because they like it.
9. Once women decide to leave the relationship, the risk of violence is over.

**Fact:** Dating violence can happen at any age. Older people as well as younger people can experience dating violence.

**Fact:** Jealousy relates to feelings of insecurity. Acting on those feelings is a controlling behaviour, not a loving behaviour.

**Fact:** The opposite is true. Violence increases as emotional dependency and commitment increase. Dating violence usually gets worse, not better.

**Fact:** Alcohol and drug abuse do not cause violence. But they are often present and are common excuses for dating violence.

**Fact:** Dating violence crosses ethnic, education and income boundaries.

**Fact:** Although men are the primary initiators or aggressors in abuse, women do use violent physical behaviours at times. Studies show that women are likely to be acting in self-defence or reacting to emotional abuse.

**Fact:** Violence is not always learned in the family of the abuser. However, males who witness their father's violence are more likely to use violence as a solution to problems in their own personal relationships.

**Fact:** Emotional abuse over a period of time leads to loss of self-esteem. Women who are abused may come to believe that they deserve the abuse and may find it increasingly difficult to assert themselves and leave the situation.

**Fact:** Women are more at risk once they have decided to leave, because violence is about power and control.

**8. WIND UP: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? (about 5 minutes)**

During the last 5 minutes of the group you may want to ask if they would like to meet again to:

- continue the discussion on dating violence (particularly if you ran out of time and did not finish the session);
- invite a community resource person to talk about dating violence issues and what services are available in this community;
- view a video on dating violence recommended by a local community resource person;
- discuss plans to encourage the local school board to develop programs which promote healthier gender roles and to implement dating violence prevention programs;
- discuss plans to encourage local colleges and universities to establish dating violence counselling and educational services;
- take an active stand against pornography and offensive advertising that normalize violence against women.

If someone has a specific concern, make sure they know about any employee assistance program or union counselling that may be available in your workplace. Refer to the **DATING VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST** for other suggestions of where to go for help.

Thank the group for coming to the session.



## **WORKSHOP HANDOUTS**





# Dating Violence

Information from...

## The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

### What is dating violence?

*Dating violence* is any intentional sexual, physical or psychological attack on one partner by the other in a dating relationship. This definition reflects the belief that all forms of abuse are harmful and worth taking seriously. A wide range of harmful acts can occur in dating relationships that go beyond what people traditionally think of as "serious" abuse, that is, physical or sexual violence. Although both men and women may act abusively, the abuse of women by men is more pervasive and usually more severe.

Dating violence is more likely to happen when the aggressor has been drinking. This often leads people to blame alcohol for the problem. In fact, abusers themselves use alcohol as an excuse for being violent.

*Sexual abuse* includes unwanted sexual touching, using force or pressure to get a partner to consent to sexual activity, rape and attempted rape, and attempting or having intercourse with a person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. These kinds of abuse are more often directed at women. While all these acts are damaging emotionally, they vary in the extent to which they result in physical injury.

Sexual assault is particularly dangerous when the aggressor refuses to use condoms despite the risk of FHV (AIDS) infection. Such assaults cause extra distress to women because they must also deal with the fear of being infected.

*Physical abuse* includes shoving, slapping, choking, punching, kicking, biting, burning, hair pulling, using a weapon, threatening someone with a weapon, or forcibly confining someone.

These attacks cause both emotional and physical harm. Typically, men use physical force to assert control while women use it to protect themselves, to retaliate or because they fear that their partner is about to assault them.<sup>1</sup> Some women live in terror of such attacks. Men do not seem to fear assaults by their female partners. In general, men think of women's use of force as ineffectual.

*Emotional abuse*, like sexual and physical abuse, varies in its intensity and its consequences. It includes behaviour such as insulting or swearing at a partner, belittling them, threatening or terrorizing them, destroying their property or possessions, isolating them from friends and relatives, and treating them with irrational possessiveness or extreme jealousy. Emotional abuse originates in the aggressor's desire to control the other person's behaviour. By undermining the other person's self-confidence, the abuser tries to limit a dating partner's ability to act independently.<sup>2</sup>

Both men and women use emotional abuse as a way to control their partners. Men are more likely to escalate the abuse when they think they are losing control. When words are no longer effective, men will sometimes resort to physical violence.

Both partners suffer emotional harm as a result. Society, however, too often downplays the effects of emotional abuse because there is no visible harm. As a result, communities offer little support to deal with emotional abuse by both men and women.

### **How widespread is the problem?**

Increased concern about interpersonal abuse in Canadian society is reflected in the increased number of studies on the topic (see Endnotes).<sup>3</sup> All of the studies show that dating abuse is a serious problem in Canada, but it is still difficult to assess its extent. This is because different surveys use different questions to determine if a person has been abused or abusive: some researchers use legal (i.e., *Criminal Code*) definitions of assault<sup>4</sup> while others rely on a broader definition based on *potential harm*, both emotional and physical.<sup>5</sup>

In any case, between 16%<sup>6</sup> and 35%<sup>7</sup> of women surveyed say they have experienced at least one physical assault by a male dating partner.

Studies on sexual abuse in dating are even less clear-cut because the definition of sexual abuse varies, and responses from men and women differ so much. Kelly and DeKeseredy<sup>8</sup> found

that 27.8% of the women they surveyed reported at least one incident of sexual abuse in the 12 months preceding the study. Fully 45.1% of the women said they had been victimized since leaving high school.<sup>9</sup> Based

on *Criminal Code* definitions of sexual assault, Roberts<sup>10</sup> found that 37% of Canadian women had experienced at least one sexual assault since the age of 16.

### Myths about Dating Violence

Myth	Reality
Women are at greatest risk of being assaulted by strangers.	Canadian, British and U.S. studies indicate that women are at far greater risk of being assaulted by men they know. Dating partners are more dangerous than strangers.
Jealousy is a sign of love.	Jealousy is the most common reason for assaults in dating relationships. When a man continually accuses a woman of flirting or having an affair, and is suspicious of everyone he sees with her, he is possessive and controlling.
When a woman gets hit by her partner, she must have provoked him in some way.	No one deserves to be hit. Whether or not there was provocation, violence is always wrong. It never solves problems, although it often silences the victim.
Women in abusive dating relationships stay because enjoy being abused.	Women who are abused by their dating partners do they not stay in the relationship because they like being bullied. Most victims want to improve their relationship rather than end it. Adolescent girls, in particular, feel social pressure to stick it out because having a "bad" boyfriend is considered better than having no boyfriend at all.
Men cannot control their sexual urges, and if a woman gets her date sexually aroused, she deserves what she gets.	Men <b>are</b> capable of controlling themselves. That's why forcing sex on a partner is illegal. Even if a woman has consented to petting or necking, she still has the right to control her own body. When a woman says NO or NO MORE, then the man is required by law to stop.

## Myths about Dating Violence (cont'd)

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Reality</b>
Men have the right to expect sexual favours if they pay for dates or if they have a longstanding relationship with a woman.	This myth is particularly persistent among teenagers. In fact, it is unreasonable to expect sex in return for initiating and paying for dates. And not every long-term relationship has to lead to "going all the way". Sex must be voluntary, and both partners have to agree on when they are ready.
Maybe things will get better.	Once violence begins in a dating relationship, it usually gets worse without some kind of intervention. Waiting and hoping he'll change is not a good strategy. Partners in an abusive relationship need help to break out of the pattern.
"Name calling" doesn't hurt anyone.	Emotional abuse is often considered harmless "name calling". But name calling hurts; that's why people use it. Emotional abuse lowers the victim's self-esteem, sometimes permanently. For many women it is the most damaging aspect of abusive relationships.
I can tell if a guy is going to be a "hitter" just by looking at him.	Abusers come in all sizes and shapes. They are not the stereotypical muscle-bound thugs portrayed in the media. They are in the classroom, at the dance, or living next door.
It'll never happen to me!	Dating violence <i>can</i> happen to you. It is not limited to a particular social class, or any single ethnic or racial group. Some women are victimized on their first date while others are assaulted after dating a long time. Everyone is at risk.

## **Warning signs**

The following are general warning signs of the potential for sexual or physical violence in dating relationships. Each warning sign is accompanied by facts or approaches that may help you reduce your risk of being victimized. This information may also help you to offer better support to women who are assaulted.

**Warning sign:** Your partner makes threats of violence.

**Reducing the risk:** Any threat should be taken seriously. Get help immediately when a partner threatens to use violence. It is not a joke or a game. Men who threaten will generally carry out their threats. You can get help from counsellors, women's shelters, teachers and a variety of community groups. Your friends may also offer support, but be cautious. If the person you go to for advice trivializes your experience or tells you "boys will be boys," go elsewhere.

**Warning sign:** Your partner is obsessed with dominating and controlling you.

**Reducing the risk:** Exploring your partner's attitude to women is probably a useful technique for reducing risk. Knowing how he feels about issues like equality between partners or compromise in decision making is important. Look for early signs that he has to "have it all his own way".

**Warning sign:** Your partner is sexually possessive and often degrades or humiliates you.

**Reducing the risk:** Possessiveness should be addressed directly. You have to tell your partner that it will not be tolerated. Whether you are dating someone or not, you have the right to do what you want with your body. If he objects, he can always leave the relationship.

**Warning sign:** You know your dating partner abused a former girlfriend. His father is physically abusive. Your partner accepts or defends the use of violence.

Reducing the risk: Dating abuse is often part of a continuing pattern of behaviour. If your partner was abusive in a previous relationship, then the risk is very high that he will be abusive in this relationship. Men often become accustomed to violence because they see it as a way of life in their family or peer group. To break this pattern, urge your partner to get counselling.

Many men discuss their use of violence with their peers. Friends should tell friends that abuse is wrong. Women should be encouraged to report their experiences. When the victim is silent, the abuser may think he can "get away with it". Silence may also give him the message that his violence isn't really a problem.

### **What can you do?**

If you are **being abused**, get out and get help. Informed counsellors can help you deal with the emotional and physical consequences of the abuse.

If you want to stay and "work it out" with him, insist that he do more than just apologize. He needs to get counselling. Violent men do not just stop; the first blow is never the last.

If you suspect that **someone you know** is **being abused**, listen and be supportive. It is important *not to blame her* for the abuse. Tell her that what is happening is wrong and that he is responsible for his actions — she didn't provoke the violence or deserve it.

Let her know that he won't just stop. Both of them need help. She needs to heal, and he needs to be taught how to behave.

If you suspect that **someone you know** is

**being abusive**, confront him about his use of violence. Tell him that it is wrong and illegal. Make him see that he is responsible for his actions; don't accept any excuses.

Tell him that sexual assault is any unwanted sexual contact and that includes taking advantage of a woman who has been drinking or taking drugs. Point out that a sexual assault conviction could mean 102 years in prison.

### **Where to go for help**

Most communities have services for victims of abuse and for abusers. These organizations will provide you with information and support. The YWCA may be one place to start. Local rape and sexual assault crisis centres can also be very helpful.

If you're still in school, ask a guidance counsellor or a teacher to help you find an agency that works with young people. Teenagers can also call the Kids Help Phone toll free at 1-800-668-6868.

**If you want to end violence in dating relationships**, don't be afraid to stand up for your beliefs. Tell those around you that violence is always wrong. Talk about other ways to deal with problems in relationships.

Support education programs in schools, universities, colleges and the wider community that address issues of male violence against women and that seek to end violence by promoting greater equality in dating relationships. For example, the issues of jealousy and power and how they relate to sexual abuse in dating should be part of the school curriculum.

Join the campaign to persuade people that **NO MEANS NO** and that the men who deal the blows, not the women they hit, are responsible for the violence.

## **Suggested Reading**

"Dating Violence: Not an Isolated Phenomenon" by Marina Princz. *Vis-à-Vis*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1992): pp. 1-4. Available from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Health Canada, Ottawa, ON K1A 1B4. Telephone: 1-800-267-1291

*Sexual Assault* by Shirley Pettifer and Janet Torge, published by the Montreal Health Press Inc. (1992). Available from the Montreal Health Press at P.O. Box 1000, Station Place du Parc, Montreal, QC H2W 2N1

*Dating Violence Prevention and It's Not Your Fault* by the Canadian Red Cross Society (1992). Available from the Canadian Red Cross Society, Fraser Region, Suite 207 — 88 Tenth Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 6H6

*Sexual Assault: A Help Book for Teens in the Northwest Territories* by Diana Barr (1992). Available from the Victims Assistance Committee, Department of Justice, Government of the Northwest Territories, P.O. Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

*Just A Kiss*, a photo novella about dating violence (1993). Available from Battered Women's Support Services, P.O. Box 1098, Postal Station A, Vancouver, BC V6C 2T1

*Teenage Girls and Acquaintance Assault* available in English and Spanish from Planned Parenthood of Toronto, 36B Prince Arthur Avenue, Toronto, ON M5R 1A9

*Degrassi Talks: Abuse* (1992). Significant focus of the book is on date rape and dating violence. Available from Boardwalk Books Inc., P.O. Box 6248, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1P6

*Educational Packages* (There is a cost for these.)

*Preventing Violence in Dating Relationships* A Teaching Guide (1993). Available from Education Wife Assault, 427 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 1X7

*Outreach to Teens* A Manual for Counsellors Who Work with Teen Victims of Violence Against Women (1992). Available from Cumberland County Transition House Association, P.O. Box 1141, Amherst, NS B4H 4L2

*Healthy Relationships* A Violence-Prevention Curriculum (1994). Available from Men for Change, P.O. Box 33005, Quinpool Postal Outlet, Halifax, NS B3L 4T6

*Dating Violence Prevention Overview and Response* (1992). Available from the Canadian Red Cross Society, Fraser Region, Suite 207 — 88 Tenth Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 6H8

*A.S.A.P.*, A School-based Anti-Violence Program (1993). Available from the London Family Court Clinic, 254 Pall Mall Street, Suite 200, London, ON N6A 5P6

### **Audio-Visual**

*The Family Violence Audio-Visual Catalogue* available through the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence includes more than 70 films and videos that can be borrowed through the regional offices of the National Film Board of Canada. "Right From the Start" and "The Crown Prince" are highly recommended.

"Not Just Anybody", part of the Madison Series, is available from Forefront Productions, 609-402 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1T6

### **Endnotes**

1. Thorne-Finch, R. *Ending the Silence: The Origins and Treatment of Male Violence Against Women*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992, p.10.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
3. Cairns, K. V. and J. Wright. *A Survey of Unwanted Sexual Attention in the University of Calgary Residence Complex*. Report to University Housing. Calgary: University of Calgary, 1993.
4. Rodgers, K. "Wife Assault: The Findings of a National Survey," *Juristat: Service Bulletin* Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (1994): vol. 14, no. 9: p.3.
5. Kelly, K. and W. DeKeseredy. "The Incidence and Prevalence of Woman Abuse in Canadian University and College Dating Relationships," *Journal of Human Justice*. (1993): vol. 4, no. 2: pp.25-52.
6. Rodgers, *ibid.*, p.12
7. Kelly, *ibid.*, p.28.
8. *Ibid.*, p.29.
9. *Ibid.*, p.24.
10. Roberts, J. "Criminal Justice Processing of Sexual Assault Cases," *Juristat: Service Bulletin* Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (1994): vol. 14, no. 7: p.1.



## Bibliography

Check, J. V.P. and V. LaCrosse. *Attitudes and Behaviour Regarding Pornography, Sexual Coercion and Violence in Metropolitan Toronto High School Students* Toronto: The LaMarsh Research Programme Reports on Violence and Conflict Resolution, 1988.

Elliot, S., D. Odynak and H. Krahn. *A Survey of Unwanted Sexual Experiences among University of Alberta Students* Research report to the Council on Student Life. Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1992.

Finkleman, L. *Report of the Survey of Unwanted Sexual Experiences among Students of the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton and Saint Thomas University* Fredericton: University of New Brunswick Counselling Services, 1992.

Fitzpatrick, D. and C. Halliday. *Not the Way to Love: Violence against Young Women in Dating Relationships* Nova Scotia: Cumberland County Transition House Association, 1992.

Litch-Mercer, S. *Not a Pretty Picture: An Exploratory Study of Violence Against Women in High School Dating Relationships* Toronto: Education Wife Assault, 1987 (revised 1988).

This document was prepared under contract by Katharine Kelly of Carleton University.

For further information on family violence, contact:

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence  
Postal Locator 0201A2  
Family Violence Prevention Division  
Health Programs and Services Branch  
Health Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 1B4

Telephone: (613) 957-2938  
or call the toll-free number,  
**1-800-267-1291**

For TDD users  
(Telecommunication Device for  
the Deaf) **(613) 952-6396**



or call the toll-free number,  
**1-800-561-5643**

Fax: (613) 941-8930

Our mission is to help the people of  
Canada maintain and improve their health.  
*Health Canada*



# DATING VIOLENCE COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	<b>Write in local telephone number here</b>
Community Information Services . . . . .	_____
SEXUAL ASSAULT/RAPE CRISIS CENTRES	_____
POLICE/RCMP . . . . .	911 (if available) or local detachment number
HOSPITAL EMERGENCY . . . . .	_____
CRISIS/DISTRESS LINES . . . . .	_____
<p>Some of the following resources will be available in your area. Telephone numbers can be found in the telephone book, via Information Services in your community, or by asking representatives of any union</p>	
High School Counselling Services . . . . .	_____
University/College Counselling Services . . . . .	_____
Women's Centres . . . . .	_____
Dating Violence Prevention Programs . . . . .	_____
Community Health Services:	
Child & Youth . . . . .	_____
Transition House/Shelter . . . . .	_____
Police/RCMP: Victim Services . . . . .	_____
Schools: Peer Counselling/	
School Counsellors . . . . .	_____
Kids Help Phone . . . . .	1-800-668-6868 (national toll-free line)
Provincial/City Health Units . . . . .	_____
Native Organizations & Programs . . . . .	_____
Department of Social Services . . . . .	_____
. . . . .	_____
. . . . .	_____
. . . . .	_____

Remember: if a particular resource is unable (or unwilling) to help, try other resources until you find the help you need.

# **DATING VIOLENCE:**

**An issue at any age**

## **LET'S TALK ABOUT IT**

**A 55 MINUTE DISCUSSION**

**What is dating violence?**

**How does it affect us and people we know?**

**Is there help in our community?**

WHEN? \_\_\_\_\_  
Time and date

WHERE? \_\_\_\_\_  
Location/address

For more information contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

Session material is based on information  
from the National Clearinghouse on Family  
Violence, Health Promotion and Programs

Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 1B4.

# **DATING VIOLENCE: AN ISSUE AT ANY AGE**

## **AWARENESS INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE**

### **AGENDA**

#### **Introductions**

<b>What is dating violence?</b>	<b>20 minutes</b>
<b>Early warning signs of dating violence</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Tips for safer dating</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
<b>Responding to dating violence</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
<b>Discussing the quiz</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Where do we go from here?</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>

## QUIZ ON DATING VIOLENCE

Circle your response: TRUE or FALSE

- |    |  |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1. | Dating violence only happens to teenagers.   | T | F |
| 2. | Jealousy is an expression of love.   | T | F |
| 3. | The abuse will stop if there is enough love.<br>Things will get better.                      | T | F |
| 4. | Alcohol and drug abuse are the cause of violence in<br>a dating relationship.                | T | F |
| 5. | There is a significant connection between violence<br>and ethnic origin, education or income | T | F |
| 6. | Women do not resort to physical violence in<br>a dating relation                             | T | F |
| 7. | Violent behaviour always has its roots in the<br>abuser's family situation.                  | T | F |
| 8. | Some women stay in a violent dating relationship<br>because they like it.                    | T | F |
| 9. | Once women decide to leave the relationship,<br>the risk of violence is over.                | T | F |

## STORIES

Listen to each story as it is read. After each story answer the questions on your sheet.

- #1.** Maria has been dating Rick since the beginning of grade 12. In the past few weeks, Rick has started questioning her about her behaviour. He continually asks her who she talks to in class, why she wasn't home when he phoned, and why she is spending time with her girl friends when she could be seeing him. Maria has not paid much attention to these comments, but lately Rick has sounded and appeared angry most of the time. He has been yelling at her in the hallways at school and calling her names; then apologising. Last night he hit her. He says he is upset because he loves her and she is "driving him crazy".

Is the story an example of dating violence?      Yes      No

If yes, what were the warning signs? \_\_\_\_\_

- #2.** Two years ago, Sara had dated a man called Al. Although she was very interested in having a serious relationship, Al wasn't. Eventually they drifted apart. Sara concentrated on her career and dated other men from time to time. She was not sexually or emotionally involved with any of them. Recently, Al called, said he really missed her, and they began dating again. Al became very serious very quickly and Sara was thrilled.

Within the month Al began to question her about the men she had dated during the time he was not around. She explained that she had dated casually, but that was all. Al accused her of lying and called her names. He began to question her about the men she worked with. He persisted in calling her secretary to track her whereabouts. Sara was extremely upset and explained to Al that nothing had happened. Al still doesn't believe her.

Is Al's behaviour appropriate?      Yes      No

Is Al's behaviour signalling trouble ahead?      Yes      No

If yes, what are the warning signs? \_\_\_\_\_

- #3.** At age 45 and recently divorced, Bill is back on the dating scene. He had been married for 20 years. He is dating Emily, a recent widow, who also happens to be his immediate supervisor at work. Occasionally, on dates, Emily appears sullen and withdrawn and when Bill asks her what's wrong she replies "Nothing ... leave me alone". One night when Bill persists in trying to find out what is wrong, Emily yells: "Leave me alone or go look for another job!"

Is the story an example of dating violence?      Yes      No

Which party is being abusive? \_\_\_\_\_

**#4.** Kim was invited to a party at the home of someone she didn't know very well. As the evening progressed she had quite a bit to drink. Finally she decided to "sleep it off" and curled up in the hosts' bedroom where she passed out. When she woke up she realized she was partly undressed. Steve, whom she had dated last year, was sitting on the side of the bed grinning at her.

Is this story an example of "date rape"?                      Yes      No

If yes, is Kim at fault?    Yes      No

If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_

**DEFINITION OF DATING VIOLENCE**

Dating violence includes the emotional, physical or sexual abuse of one partner by the other in a dating relationship where the partners are not living together.

**EMOTIONAL OR VERBAL ABUSE** is the most difficult form of abuse to identify and is very hurtful to the partner being abused. It may include threatening, humiliating, insulting, pressuring, isolating, blaming, yelling or smashing things, and other expressions of anger, jealousy and possessiveness.

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** involves the use of force and may include restraining, slapping, punching, kicking, hitting, shoving, biting, choking or use of a weapon.

**SEXUAL ABUSE** occurs when sexual behaviour is unwanted. It includes date rape, legally defined as sexual assault. Threats are often used to gain the compliance of the victim. It does not matter if there has been consenting sexual behaviour prior to the abuse

## **EARLY WARNING SIGNS: EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Early warning signs of dating violence include:

- Acting jealous or possessive
- Not taking "no" for an answer
- Controlling contact with friends/family/outside activities
- "Putting down" ideas, friends, family, appearance
- Making all the decisions
- Imposing traditional views of male/female relations
- Driving fast or doing other scary things
- Expressing fear or anxiety as anger
- Making accusations of lying
- Refusing to discuss feelings and then blowing up
- Becoming angry or violent after drinking or using drugs

Other early warning signs include behaviour that is:

- Threatening
- Manipulating and controlling
- Embarrassing
- Blaming

Remember: If someone feels they are "walking on eggshells" to keep to keep a partner from getting angry, there is trouble ahead.



## **TIPS FOR SAFER DATING**

Here are some tips that you, or someone you know, may find helpful.

### **When dating:**

- Trust your instincts
- Have a safety plan
- Meet in public places for the first few dates
- Tell someone where you are going and with whom
- Be assertive: leave if you feel uncomfortable
- Be able to leave: have transportation or money for a bus, taxi and phone call
- Be able to call a taxi: know the address of where you are
- Pay your own way: avoid obligation
- Get to know your date: are your date's values similar to yours?
- Avoid situations that might lead to date rape: give clear messages
- In a long term dating situation, keep in touch with your friends and family

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

- Recognize that no one has a right to control another person
- Put the blame where it belongs, on the abuser
- Tell someone trustworthy about the violence
- End the relationship as soon as possible
- Consider reporting a date rape or a physical assault to the police