

PRIVATE
BROADCASTERS
ON-AIR
FOR CANADA

Violence

you

CAN

make

a

difference

'Violence: You Can Make a Difference' is the thrust of private broadcasters' dynamic, nationwide campaign to deal with the problem of violence in our society.

In another solid partnership with federal government departments, the campaign builds on the resounding success of the 1994/1995 'Speak Out Against Violence' initiative, during which hundreds of radio and television stations banded together to contribute over \$10.6 million in air time. The messages made Canadians more aware that violence makes victims of us all and that we must all be part of the solution.

The 1996 campaign kicks off with a new series of dramatic radio and television spots that revolve around three themes: *Violence Against Women*, *Violence Against Children* and *Media Literacy*.

A key element of the campaign is a series of practical, user friendly 'Tips for Action Against Violence'. Each radio and television spot offers a tip for action. The fact sheets expand on the spots' key messages with suggestions on how 'You *Can* Make a Difference'. Some tips deal with managing anger, helping abused persons, devising safety plans, coping with family violence, and getting help. Others promote media literacy. Broadcasters will expand on the tips through their own special programming and community initiatives.

'Violence: You *Can* Make a Difference' is the latest industry initiative under the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' (CAB) umbrella 'On-Air for Canada' program. Previous successful, award-winning campaigns focused on 'Racial Harmony' (1991) and, as a prelude to the 1992 constitutional referendum, 'We Need to Talk'. Unveiled in 1990, 'On-Air for Canada' centers on the \$150 million a year broadcasters donate in air time and the \$110 million they raise for worthy causes.

Partners Against Violence

'Violence: You *Can* Make a Difference' involves hundreds of broadcasters working with the government, other partners and the public in a united front against violence.

The TV and radio spots were funded by the federal government departments of Canadian Heritage, Health, Justice, Status of Women, Human Resources Development, National Defence, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Government specialists on violence helped shape the campaign concept and objectives.

CFMT-TV, Toronto and CJVB, Vancouver produced the messages in languages other than English and French; the CTV Network distributed the TV spots, including closed-captioned versions; Broadcast News Limited, Pelmorex Radio Network and Nouvelles Télé Radio distributed the radio spots; and the Canadian Association of Broadcast Representatives assisted with the media strategy. Award-winning Cossette Communication-Marketing contributed hundreds of hours to the project.

Suggestions for Members of Parliament and Senators

The enclosed fact sheets expand on the tips from the 'Violence: You *Can* Make A Difference' campaign and were developed around the themes of: Violence Against Women, Violence Against Children and Media Literacy.

You can become involved in this campaign by:

- Photocopying and circulating the 'Tips for Action Against Violence' fact sheets to staff and your constituents.
- Having your constituency staff develop a list of the phone numbers of local women's shelters, children's aid societies and municipal social services departments for quick referral to callers seeking help.
- Incorporating some of the tips in your constituency mailings or community newspaper column.
- Working with community groups to hold 'town hall' meetings. Invite participants to discuss how the media works, what messages it conveys to us, and what effects it has on all of us as consumers of video, audio and printed materials.
- Promoting the federal government's involvement in this initiative and support anti-violence activities.

Suggestions for Community Organizations

The enclosed fact sheets expand on the tips from the 'Violence: You *Can* Make A Difference' campaign and were developed around the themes of: Violence Against Women, Violence Against Children and Media Literacy.

Violence Against Women and Children

- Photocopy and distribute the 'Tips for Action Against Violence' fact sheets to staff and members of the public.
- If you don't already have a list, develop a list of the phone numbers of local women's shelters, children's aid societies and municipal social services departments. Keep it handy for quick referral to callers seeking help.
- Incorporate some of the tips in your staff or client group newsletters.
- Encourage victims of violence and perpetrators to read the fact sheets so they can easily recognize the signs of abuse and seek help.
- Undertake other initiatives which you think could be beneficial to both victims and perpetrators of violence.

Media Literacy

- Tell members of your organization and your clients about the material on media literacy.
- Re-print the Media Literacy fact sheet and distribute it.
- Invite media literacy experts to participate in seminars or workshops on this issue.
- Work with other community groups to hold 'town hall' meetings. Invite participants to discuss how the media works, what messages it conveys to us, and what effects it has on all of us as consumers of video, audio and printed materials.
- Display the Media Literacy fact sheet in your reception area for use by your staff and members of the public.
- Contact or refer people to the organizations listed at the end of the media literacy print material to obtain additional information.

The partners of the "Violence: You *Can* Make a Difference" campaign would like to express their appreciation to the following organizations for their support and assistance in distributing this material to the public: The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Child Welfare League of Canada, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, the YWCA of Canada, the Media Awareness Network.

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The following federal government partners are proud to be involved in this campaign:

Canadian Heritage

Health Canada

Department of Justice Canada

Status of Women Canada

Human Resources Development Canada

National Defence

Royal Canadian Mounted Police



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Violence you CAN make a difference

Violence against women

Do you think your husband/partner/boyfriend is abusing you?

Signs of abuse...

Does your husband/partner/boyfriend:

- Hit, slap, kick, punch or push you around?
- Hurt you or threaten to hurt you in other ways?
- Treat you like a possession, not a person?
- Force you to have sex against your wishes?
- Constantly put you down, make you feel stupid and worthless?
- Make it hard for you to leave?
- Not let you have your own friends?

"If any of this sounds familiar, chances are you're part of an abusive relationship. Get help."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

The first step is often the hardest. If nothing is done, the abuse will not stop, even if he says that he loves you and promises that it will never happen again.

Help is available.

If you think you have been abused...

- **Call a friend or family member you trust.** Be sure it is someone who understands that violence is never okay nor justifiable, that you are not to blame for his abusive behaviour and that your safety and your children's safety must be the top priority. If the person you tell is not supportive, don't stop, keep looking until you find someone who is.
- **Call a woman's shelter or crisis line.** (#'s in front pages of phone book) A woman's shelter can provide safety, support and help with your future plans. You don't have to stay at a shelter to get help. You can talk to someone over the phone. They can help you make the choices that are right for you and find the resources you need.
- **Call the police.** (#'s in front pages of phone book) Remember, violence is a crime. It is against the law to physically or sexually assault someone.
- **Join a support group.** You are not alone. Self-help groups, where assaulted women meet, are extremely useful in helping women find ways to protect themselves and deal with the emotional, physical and financial changes in their lives. Check with your local shelter or crisis line to find out about support groups in your community.
- **See a counsellor.** Find a counsellor who values your right to freedom from abuse and will work with you, believe you and support your choices and decisions.

Do you think you are an abuser in your relationship?

Ask yourself about your behaviour...

As a husband/partner/boyfriend:

- When you are in a relationship, do you always have to be the one in charge?
- Do you believe that it is okay for you to behave in a certain way but not okay for your partner?
- Have you ever forced or pressured your partner to do something against her wishes in order to get what you want?
- Do you blame your partner for everything that goes wrong, insult her or put her down?
- Are you so jealous that you stop your partner from going places or seeing other people without you?
- Have you ever pushed, slapped or hit your partner? Has it happened more than once?
- Have you ever been told that the way you treat your partner is abusive or unacceptable?

Controlling behaviours create fear in your partner, not love. Take a closer look at your behaviour and get help.

"Violence is not a loss of control. It's an attempt to gain control."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

Violence is a learned behaviour - you can change if you get help.

Changing violent behaviour takes work and time but it's worth it!



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Help for men who abuse...

Steps to take to end your controlling behaviour:

- **Take responsibility for your actions.** You are responsible for your own behaviour. You can change if you get help.
- **Stop blaming** your partner, alcohol, drugs, stress or anything else for your abusive behaviour. Blaming others for your own anger and jealousy is just a way to avoid taking responsibility. Blaming prevents change.
- **Learn new ways of coping with your feelings.** For example, take a "time out". Stop and think about what you are doing. Walk away from the scene and allow yourself time to cool down. When you return to discuss the issues, give your partner time to express her viewpoint.
- **Seek professional help** with a counsellor or in a group for abusive men. Be sure you are going for yourself, not just to get your partner back. Your community crisis line or local shelter for abused women can tell you where groups are available.

Material adapted from *Vis-à-vis* (Vol. 11, No. 4), a national newsletter on family violence, funded by Health Canada.

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Violence you **CAN** make a difference

Violence against women

"What begins with control, emotional and verbal abuse, often becomes physical violence."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

What you can do to help an abused woman – friend, relative, co-worker or neighbour

- **Give her clear messages.**
 - Violence is never okay or justifiable.
 - Her safety and her children's safety are always the most important issues.
 - Wife assault is a crime.
 - She does not cause the abuse.
 - She is not to blame for her partner's behaviour.
 - She cannot change her partner's behaviour.
 - Apologies and promises will not end the violence.
 - She is not alone.
 - She is not crazy.
 - Abuse is not a loss of control, it is a means of control.
- **Help her make a safety plan.**
 - Talk with her about planning for her and her children's safety.
 - Help her identify a wide range of choices. To stay or to permanently leave her relationship must not be seen as the only choice.
 - Encourage and support her to make her own decisions.

• **Things to have her consider when making a safety plan.**

- Make a plan about what to do and where to go if you are in danger. Tell your children about the plan if they are old enough to understand.
- If you have a vehicle, make sure it has gas. Hide an extra set of keys.
- Hide some money to use if you have to get away.
- Have a safe hiding place to go to – trusted friend, neighbour, relative, a women's shelter.
- Work out a code word that can be used on the phone with someone you trust if you are in danger.
- If you think you may have to leave your home, some items you may want to have ready to bring with you are: identification (birth certificates, health and social insurance cards, drivers' licences, immigration or citizenship papers, passports) bank books, charge cards, keys for your home and car, essential medicines, basic supplies for your children including a favourite toy or blanket.
- Keep emergency numbers (including the police's) handy but hidden.

"Have a plan for your safety and get help."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

- **Find out about the resources in your community.**

- Look in the front pages of your telephone book for emergency numbers of police, crisis or distress lines, shelters.
- Prepare a list of names and numbers of the emergency resources in your community so you can give it to a woman if you think she is being abused.

An abused woman needs your support and encouragement to make choices that are right for her. However, there are some forms of advice that are not useful and even dangerous for her to hear:

Don't

- Don't tell her what to do, when to leave or when not to leave.
- Don't tell her to go back to the situation and try a little harder.
- Don't rescue her by trying to find quick solutions.
- Don't suggest you try to talk to her husband to straighten things out.
- Don't tell her she should stay for the sake of the children.



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What you can do in your community to make a difference

- Learn more about violence against women and its impact on women in your community: read articles, listen to radio programs, watch TV documentaries, attend community events about abused women.
- Volunteer at an organization that works with and for abused women. Provide transportation, raise funds, donate clothing, offer your time.
- Practice and support relationships of respect, co-operation and equal partnerships in families. Challenge relationships that are built on power and control over women and children.
- Work with others in your community to develop more and better services for abused women and their children – support groups, crisis lines, emergency shelters.

Material prepared by Denham Gillespie Associates, Social Work Consultants.



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Violence against women

Early Warning Signs of Dating Violence

Are you going out with someone who...

- Is jealous and possessive, won't let you see other friends, checks up on you or won't accept breaking up? Justifies these behaviours by saying that he acts this way because he loves you so much?
- Pressures you to have sex and thinks of women and girls as sex objects? Tries to make you feel guilty by saying, "If you really loved me you would..."? Gets too serious about the relationship too quickly?
- Tries to control you by being very bossy, criticizing the way you dress, talk, and dance, making all the decisions and ignoring your opinions?
- Is violent, has a history of fighting, a bad temper or brags about mistreating others?
- Abuses drugs or alcohol and pressures you to take them?
- Blames you when he mistreats you?
- Has a history of bad relationships, blames the other person?
- Believes that men should be in control and women should be submissive?
- Is described by friends or family members as scary or dangerous?

"Jealousy and possessiveness are not a sign of true love. They are an early warning of abuse. Recognize the signals and get help."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

Feeling sorry for him doesn't change his behaviour... instead:

- **Learn to recognize the warning signs** - if it feels scary, it's abuse. Abuse can be emotional, verbal, sexual, mental or physical. Whatever form it takes, you do not deserve to be treated that way.
- **Decide what is best for you**, set your own limits, stick to them and feel good about taking charge of your life.
- **Get some help and support for yourself**. You are not to blame for his behaviour. Find a person you trust and respect, and share your problem. The right person for you could be a friend, parent, school counsellor or teacher, doctor, crisis line worker or staff person at a women's shelter. (Check the front pages of your telephone book for emergency numbers.) If you have told someone and that person wasn't helpful, keep trying until someone really listens to you.

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If you think your friend is **being abused...**

- **Listen and believe her.** Keep what she tells you to yourself. If you're worried about her safety tell her that together you need to tell someone who can help protect her.
- **Identify abusive behaviour** and talk about what is happening to her. Remind her that jealousy and possessiveness do not equal love.
- **Tell her that she does not deserve to be hurt.** Tell her that she is not to take the blame for his behaviour. Help her separate love and caring from abusive behaviours.
- **Don't tell her she's wrong** if she wants to stay in the relationship. Keep talking and challenging her denial and his abusive behaviour.
- **Continue to be her friend.** Don't abandon her even though at times you may feel frustrated and upset over her refusal to make changes or over the choices she is making. She needs you!
- **Get new ideas on how to help** your friend from people who understand about violence in relationships. Phone a crisis line or women's shelter. All calls are treated confidentially.
- **Increase your own understanding** about dating violence. Read articles, listen to radio shows, watch TV programs that deal with the issue. This will help you if you are finding yourself getting angry and frustrated with your friend.

If you think your friend is **abusing** his **partner...**

- **Confront your friend and name abusive attitudes and behaviours** when you see them. Jealousy and possessiveness are an early warning of abuse.
- **Challenge his stereotyping** and put-downs of women. Don't laugh at jokes or comments that make fun of women.
- **Talk about the consequences of violence.** Abusive behaviour builds fear, not love. Physical and sexual assault are against the law.
- **Encourage him to get help.** Let him know it will probably happen again and may be worse the next time. Phone a crisis line or women's shelter to find out about resources in your community. (#'s in front pages of phone book)
- **Stand by him as a friend** as he accepts responsibility for his actions and gets help.

Material adapted from *Vis-à-vis* (Vol. 9, No. 4), a national newsletter on family violence, funded by Health Canada.

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Violence you CAN make a difference

Violence against women

"Jealousy and possessiveness are not a sign of true love. They are an early warning of abuse. Recognize the signals and get help."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

Dating violence can be prevented

As an individual you can...

- **Help young people build their self-esteem.**
 - Acknowledge the positive things they do.
 - Listen respectfully when they are telling you something.
 - Believe what they say and take it seriously.
 - Allow them to make decisions appropriate to their abilities.
- **Help young people be self-reliant.**
 - Teach them to resolve conflicts without violence.
 - Teach them that the use of force and insults is not acceptable in a caring relationship.

- Teach them that no person has the right to possess or control another person.
- Teach them that excessive jealousy is not a sign of love but a sign of insecurity and a need to control.
- **Practice what you preach.**
 - Treat other people with respect.
 - Use non-violent ways to deal with conflict and anger.
 - Speak out against attitudes and behaviours that are abusive.
 - Learn more about violence in relationships and the resources available in your community that help young people in trouble.

As a community person you can...

- Tell representatives of the media or advertisers that the portrayal of violence as a way to solve problems, control other people or get one's own way is not acceptable.
- Encourage your local school to include programs that promote the building of self-esteem and positive ways of relating to people.

Material adapted from *Dating Violence* fact sheet, Alberta Office for the Prevention of Family Violence.

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Violence you CAN make a difference

Violence against children

Emotional abuse of children - what is it?

Emotional abuse of children means: not showing love; not holding, cuddling or talking gently to a child; speaking cruelly; expecting children to do or understand things that are too difficult for someone their age.

An emotionally abused child may...

- Act unpredictably - be very quiet one minute, then violent and angry the next.
- Be timid and withdrawn.
- Be overly active.
- 'Abuse' toys - spank dolls and tell them 'you are bad'.

Words can hurt children.

"Kids do listen."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

Words that hurt

stupid
clumsy
worthless
useless
helpless

dumb
slow
ugly
hopeless
bad

Words that help

smart
funny
helpful
co-operative
quick
beautiful
creative
helpful
clever
good

To grow emotionally, children need to **feel...**

Safe

They need to know that nothing and no one will hurt them.

Secure

They need to know that when they need care or comfort, they will get it.

Loved

They need to be told and shown that they are loved and are important to someone.

When children feel safe, secure and loved, they can become happy, independent, loving people.

On being a **parent...**

Parenthood is always harder than anyone thinks it will be. Children learn by trying and doing and trying again. So do parents. Believe that you can be a good parent to your children. When you like yourself, it is easier for you to teach your children to like and trust themselves.

If you want to raise emotionally healthy kids...

- **Encourage and praise** your children every chance you have.
- **Try not to make too many rules.** Explain rules clearly and then stick to them once they are made.
- **Respect your child's feelings.** Don't make fun of their fears and worries.
- Give your children lots of **choices and chances** to do things for themselves.
- **Practice what you preach.** Model behaviour that is co-operative, respectful, encourages problem solving and uses non-violent ways to deal with anger and conflict. Children learn to be nice if you are nice to them.
- **Take a break.** Parenting is hard work and you need time for yourself. Make time to be with your friends, read a book or just relax.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with parenting...

- **Find someone to talk to** who will listen, understand your problems, give you helpful ideas or suggestions and care about what happens to you. This may be a friend, a neighbour, a family member or a counsellor.
- **Don't bottle up your feelings,** but don't spill them on your children. If you're feeling angry or depressed, go for a walk; find a way to get rid of your frustrations safely; take a time out.
- **Change what you can.**
 - Have a partner or friend share child care.
 - Talk to other parents for support and new ideas.
 - Attend a parenting group.
 - Join or start a play group.
- **Get help** to handle the things you can't change on your own.
 - Community services, social agencies, child mental health agencies may have programs to support parents.
 - Call a help line or crisis line for information on the services in your community. Look for emergency numbers in the front of the phone book. If one place you've contacted for help can't give you what you need, ask them for other places to try.

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If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, report your concerns to the child welfare authorities or police in your community.

Material adapted from *Nobody's Perfect*, a program for parents, Health Canada.



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Violence against children

"Don't talk yourself into doing something you'll regret later. Take a time out."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

Anger is an emotion
- **child abuse**
is a behaviour. They don't
need to be **connected**.

If you sometimes feel so angry that you are afraid you'll hurt your child, physically or emotionally, then ...

Learn how to **manage**
your **anger**

Some Do's

1. Recognize your anger.

Admit it to yourself. Remember that anger is a healthy human emotion. It's okay to get angry. It's not okay to hit someone or be emotionally abusive. Pay attention to the signs of hidden anger - tensed muscles, accident-proneness, feelings of frustration or disappointment and a tendency to use sarcasm.

2. Identify the cause of your anger.

Sometimes it may be obvious. At other times, the cause of your anger may not be what it seemed at first. You may be stressed out from a bad day at work, frustrated by a traffic jam which is making you late, worried about paying your bills so you come home and start pushing or yelling at your child.

3. Take a time out and calm down.

Walk away from the situation if you can. Try some deep breathing to help you relax. Think about what you are trying to do. Are you trying to defeat the person or are you trying to solve the problem? If your motive is negative, the results will be too.

4. Decide what to do.

Decide what choices and options you have to solve the problem that caused your anger. Listen to other people's point of view. Pick constructive solutions and try them. If they aren't working, look at more options and try again.

5. Ask for help.

If you are having trouble managing your anger in a way that doesn't hurt others, or if you are getting angry too often, then get help. Phone your local crisis line, distress centre, child welfare agency or community family services for numbers and places. Look in the front pages of the phone book for emergency numbers.

Learn how to **manage** your **anger**

Some Don'ts

- **Don't get personal.** Insults and name calling create more anger.
- **Don't avoid the issue.** Be direct and straightforward.
- **Don't make accusations** that you will regret later.
- **Don't jump to conclusions.** Listen carefully to your child.
- **Don't get physical or violent.** Avoid hitting or pushing the child with whom you are angry. Don't throw or break objects. Don't use your anger to put others down.

Material prepared by Denham Gillespie Associates, Social Work Consultants.

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**"Talk about it to someone
who can help."**

*Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence
Radio and Television Campaign*

Helplines and Crisis Lines

Telephone counselling, information on other sources of help and referrals.

Family and Social Service Agencies

Counselling, referrals, "drop-in" programs and parent support groups.

Transition and Safe Homes

Emergency shelter and protection for abused women and their children.

Child Welfare Services

Protection of children at risk and support services for troubled families.

Police Departments

Intervention and protection. Many departments have special units that deal with violence in families.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Al-Anon and Alateen

Support for when drug and alcohol abuse is a factor accompanying violence.

Legal Aid Centres

Legal help for victims who cannot afford a lawyer.

Look in the front pages of your telephone book to find out how to locate the emergency support services in your community.

The cost of services should not get in the way of your getting help. Many services are free or have sliding fee scales based on your ability to pay.

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Break the cycle of violence – give children a chance

"I wish my mom and dad would stop fighting. He gets mad and hurts her."

Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence Radio and Television Campaign

What you can do to help a child who is living in an abusive family

- **Listen and believe.** If children disclose information on the violence in their homes they are saying they trust you. Listen and believe them!
- **Important messages for children to hear are:**
 - Violence is not okay; no one deserves to be abused.
 - It's not your fault. You are not to blame for the violence.
 - All feelings are okay. Feeling angry is okay, but it's not okay to hurt others because you're angry.
 - You have the right to be safe and happy.
 - If you are feeling sad or scared, tell someone. We don't have to keep secrets that make us feel that way.

Violence against children

- Give them the **Kids Help Phone # 1-800-668-6868.** Young people can call and talk about a problem that's bothering them. Nobody else needs to know and it's free.
- Help children work out what they can do when they are scared and need to get away from the violent outbursts at home. Help them **make a safety plan.**
- **Be a friend to a child.** Show her or him by example that adults can settle problems without violence.
- **Provide a place of warmth** that is "safe" where children can get away from the pressures at home.
- **Pay attention** to the overly aggressive child, the withdrawn and submissive child, or the child who is failing to thrive. These are often signs that there is abuse within the family.
- **Involve children in community activities.** Friendships can help them gain the security they are missing in their families.

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What **you can do** to make your **community** better for children and women

- **Learn more about child abuse and violence against women.**

Violence against women and children can no longer be treated as a "private family matter". It's a serious social problem that makes victims of us all. Find out more about how your community responds.

- What services and supports are in place for children who witness or experience violence in their families?
- How well informed is your doctor, spiritual leader, child care worker and teacher about child abuse and violence against women?
- Do your local politicians support services for women and children?

- **Work for change on a very personal and family level.** As adults we need to "practice what we preach" if we are to be good role models for children.

- Encourage co-operation rather than competition.
- Follow a "no hitting" rule. Avoid spanking as a form of discipline or control of children.
- Treat others with respect and dignity.
- Model non-violent ways to deal with conflict.
- Challenge sexist attitudes and behaviours.

- **Volunteer.** Community organizations concerned with family violence issues need volunteers to help them carry out their work.
 - Train to work on the youth crisis line.
 - Raise funds for your local women's shelter.
 - Help organize a family violence awareness event with your community association or your children's school.
- **Speak up for new services.** If your community doesn't have the services needed to support children, work with others to start something.
 - Support the establishment of a group for children who witness violence.
 - Find out about promoting organizations that provide positive social and learning environments for children.
 - Write letters to the newspaper protesting funding cuts to community support services for children at risk.

Material prepared by Denham Gillespie Associates, Social Work Consultants.



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Media literacy

Just what is media literacy anyway?

Simply put, it's understanding how the media works, what messages it conveys to us, and what effects it has on all of us as consumers of video, audio and printed materials.

When it comes to television, media literacy most often means helping children develop critical viewing skills, because sometimes they don't fully understand what they see and hear on TV. Television can have a strong influence on children. Therefore, it is important that children and parents understand how to get the most from it.

A family strategy...

- Begin early. By the age of three, most toddlers have a favourite television show. But at that age, they don't understand the difference between fantasy and reality.
- Get the whole family to help make a plan on how to manage television watching.
- Jointly work out the ground rules for which types of programs are acceptable in your family and why.
- Set limits on what times of the day the television can be turned on and for how long. There may be two sets of rules, one for school days, another for weekends.

Make a plan on how to manage television viewing...

- Review the TV listings for programs that offer new experiences for your child.
- Talk about which programs you and your children like and dislike, and why.
- Set up a family TV schedule of favourite shows with the times and channels clearly indicated.
- Post the list on the fridge or the side of the TV.
- Set time aside to watch programs with your children. If you cannot watch, ask "What did I miss?", to get them to think about what they have viewed.
- Build a family tape and/or movie collection. Younger children enjoy watching favourite shows over and over again.
- Exchange and share tapes with other parents.
- Follow up a TV show with a library visit to let children find out more about what they have seen on a particular program.
- If there is a large age spread between your children, set the rules on what can be watched by the older ones when younger children are around.
- Work out the rules for what your children are allowed to watch in other people's homes and make sure those parents are aware of them.

**"Watch by the show,
not just to fill time."**

*Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence
Radio and Television Campaign*

Help your children be critical TV viewers...

- Help your children learn not to accept everything they see on television as real.
- Encourage your children to question what they see and hear on television.
- If you see something which sends out the wrong messages or values to your family, talk about it *as the show is happening*, and explain your concerns.
- Ask your children if they would want to be a particular TV character, and why.
- Talk about how to tell the difference between reality and imagination or fantasy on television.
- Talk about how the world shown on television often does not reflect what life is really like, in terms of: how much money most people have; how people get along and solve their problems; or the realities of the lives of many women, newcomers to Canada, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, and other groups.
- Talk about behaviour, violence, and language used in television programs. Ask if what happened in the program is an experience your children or their friends have had, or might ever have, in real life.
- Point out the technical tricks program producers use to tell a dramatic story, such as special effects, music, lighting, sound, camera angles and editing.
- Ask your children if they worry about what they see on TV, and why.

Talk about commercials...

- Explain that companies use commercials during television programming to promote and sell their products.
- Explain that commercials help pay for the shows they watch.
- Talk about the message of the commercials, about the difference between buying necessities and luxuries.

Discuss what you see on the news...

- Television news can often make the world seem like a scary place, more frightening than it really is. Talk frankly about "real-life events" reported on newscasts. Also explain, however, that these are exceptional events and, for the most part, people's lives are not threatened in this way.
- Have a globe or atlas at hand during newscasts, to show where the stories they see are happening.

**"It's up to you to help
your children develop
critical television viewing
habits. It takes time.
But it's worth it."**

*Excerpt from Canada's Private Broadcasters' 1996 Anti-Violence
Radio and Television Campaign*

The T.L.C. rule for television

TALK about television with your children.

LOOK at television with your children.

CHOOSE programs for them when they are young, choose with them as they grow up.

Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming

In 1987, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) developed its first Code to address the portrayal of violence in television programming. Revised and strengthened in 1994, the current *CAB Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming* is today the toughest of its kind in North America.

Among the Code's key provisions are:

- An outright ban on programming containing gratuitous violence, and on programming which sanctions, promotes or glamorizes violence;
- Detailed rules for the depiction of violence in children's programming, which are among the most rigorous in the world; and
- A "watershed hour" where programming containing violence intended for adult viewers is scheduled after 9:00 p.m.

What you can do

The **Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC)** is an independent organization, established in 1990 by Canada's private broadcasters. The CBSC administers the *CAB Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming*, as well as industry codes dealing with ethics and sex-role portrayal. The CBSC helps Canadians voice their concerns and resolve their complaints about private radio and television programming.

The first step in registering a complaint is to call, write or fax the station. Most complaints are settled this way. Viewers and listeners not satisfied with the station's response should forward their complaint to the CBSC for further action.

For more information, contact CBSC, P.O. Box 3265, Station D, Ottawa, Canada, K1P 6H8, tel: (613) 233-4607, fax: (613) 236-9241.



Want more information?

Sources consulted in the development of this material include:

The Alliance for Children and Television (ACT), in co-operation with Health Canada, developed *Prime Time Parent*, a media literacy workshop kit available on loan from community groups, parent-teacher associations, and from some Board of Education Offices. Contact the ACT in Toronto at 344 Dupont Street, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 1V9, tel: (416) 515-0466, fax: (416) 515-0467 or in Montréal at 1000 Fullum Street, Suite C-242, Montréal, Québec, H2K 3L7, tel: (514) 527-0933, fax: (514) 873-7464.

The Media Awareness Network is Canada's first and only national on-line organization dedicated to gathering and disseminating information on media education and child-centred media issues. Resource material is free. Call toll-free 1 (800) 896-3342, fax: (613) 947-2537, Internet: <http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca/MediaNet>
E-mail: Media.Awareness@nfb-onf.ca

Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO) is an association of Canadian media literacy groups from across Canada. Its goal is to advocate, promote and develop media literacy in Canada. For more information, contact CAMEO at 47 Ranleigh Avenue, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario, M4N 1X2, tel: (416) 488-7280, fax: (416) 488-8360, E-mail: pungente@epas.utoronto.ca

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence distributes resource materials on family violence prevention, including publications on media violence. Call toll-free 1 (800) 267-1291, fax: (613) 941-8930. TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf) users can call toll-free 1 (800) 561-5643.



Également disponible en français



The Canadian
Association of
Broadcasters

In partnership with:
Canadian Heritage
Health Canada
Department of Justice Canada

Status of Women Canada
Human Resources Development Canada
National Defence
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

'Suggestions for Station Programming and Community Action'

Every radio and television spot offers a 'Tip for Action Against Violence'. The enclosed fact sheets expand on the tips and were developed around the themes of: Violence Against Women, Violence Against Children and Media Literacy. Try the following ideas at your station ... 'You *Can* Make a Difference'.

Violence Against Women and Children

- Circulate the 'Tips for Action Against Violence' fact sheets, for use by talk show producers/hosts and newsroom assignment desks, when covering these issues on phone-in lines, talk shows, interviews, magazine shows, television features/series, etc.
- Ask the news department to make a list of the phone numbers of local women's shelters, children's aid societies and municipal social services departments. Post it at the switchboard and in the newsroom for quick referral to callers seeking help.
- Radio members could cull some "what you can do" suggestions from the fact sheets and prepare a series of "announcer tags" for on-air talent to read after a particular spot goes to air.
- Make copies of the fact sheets available at your switchboard for access by staff and members of the public.
- Suggest that your Human Resources or Communications department incorporate some of the tips in your staff newsletters.
- Make copies of the on-air spots and tips for action available to community groups for use at their public meetings and community outreach programs.
- Offer tapes of the on-air spots for classroom use.
- Add your station's logo to the back of the fact sheets and photocopy for distribution.

Media Literacy

- Poll your listeners and open the lines to opinions and comments on issues concerning media violence.
- Promote the media literacy tools you already provide to viewers, such as viewer advisories, the 9 p.m. watershed hour, and editing feature films for television broadcast.
- Think about a special news series which will follow a reporter to show how a news report is done and how a newscast is assembled.
- Promote your station's membership in the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council.
- Offer station tours or stage open house events in co-operation with local school boards.
- Let teachers know your news staff will talk to students about the media.
- Re-print the Media Literacy fact sheet, adding your own logo and phone number, and distribute it to school boards, community centres, and at community events, etc.
- Invite media literacy experts to participate in your phone-in and magazine shows to publicize the issue and the station's initiatives, policies and practices.
- Work with community groups to hold 'town hall' meetings. Invite participants to discuss what they see on television and talk about your station's operations, standards and practices.
- Display the Media Literacy fact sheet and a copy of the CAB Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming in your station reception area for use by your staff and members of the public.

The following federal government partners are proud
to be involved in this campaign:

Canadian Heritage

Health Canada

Department of Justice Canada

Status of Women Canada

Human Resources Development Canada

National Defence

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Violence
you **CAN** make
a difference



*The Canadian
Association of
Broadcasters*