

Help for Victims of Domestic Violence

After an assault, a Victim Services worker will contact you to offer you support.

Some of these services include:

- Counselling and support
- Attend DVTO Court with you, or on your behalf.
- Keep track of what is going on in court with your partner
- Help you make a safety plan (for you and for your children)

A Victim Services worker can help you look at some of your options for making changes.

Children's Program

The DVTO Court has a program in Whitehorse for children who have witnessed or heard domestic violence.

OWLS - Our Way of Living Safely - is for children age 4 to 17 years. It provides individual counselling and age-appropriate group programs. Children learn how to live safely through fun activities.

The OWLS counsellor works closely with each child's parent(s) to make positive changes and promote safety in the family.

Referrals can be made through Victim Services, Adult Probation, the Family Violence Prevention Unit, or Family and Children's Services.

For more information:

Adult Probation Services

667-5231 (Whitehorse)

536-7565 (Watson Lake)

Or toll free: 1-800-661-0408 ext. 5231

Family Violence Prevention Unit

667-3581 (Whitehorse)

or toll-free 1-800-661-0408 ext. 3581

Victim Services:

Whitehorse: 667-8500

Watson Lake: 536-2541

Dawson City: 993-5831

or toll-free 1-800-661-0408 ext. 8500

Or by mail:

Yukon DVTO Court

Main Floor, Law Courts Building

2134 2nd Avenue

Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5H6

Or through the DVTO Court website:

www.yukoncourts.ca/courts/territorial/dvtoc.html

The Yukon DVTO Court is a partnership between:

- Territorial Court of Yukon
- Yukon Department of Justice
- Yukon Legal Services Society
- Public Prosecution Service of Canada
- Yukon Department of Health & Social Services
- RCMP



Yukon DVTO Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court

*Working with
Yukon families
to stop
domestic violence*

What is DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence or abuse is the harming of an intimate partner through verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual violence. People often confuse abuse with anger and arguments. Anger is a healthy emotion that everyone experiences. Arguments and disagreement are a normal and healthy part of a relationship. Abuse is the behaviour some people choose to use when they are angry. Healthy disagreements do not involve hitting, pushing, yelling, or putting someone down.

What are the effects of being abused?

The impacts of abuse on a person can vary from fear to anger. There can also be direct physical injuries, and long-term physical impacts.

What are the effects on children?

Children are always affected by witnessing or hearing abuse. They often feel scared, anxious, angry, and responsible for the abuse.

Witnessing abuse can interfere with their ability to learn at school and to form healthy relationships. If children see repeated abuse, they often believe this is normal behaviour.

What are the effects on the person using abuse?

Most people who abuse a partner lose self-respect and respect from others in their family and community. Most people who use violence feel ashamed of their behaviour. They often experience pain as a result of becoming isolated and lonely.

Yukon DVTO: A Different Approach

The Yukon Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court (DVTO) is a special criminal court in the Yukon. It is for individuals who have been charged with spousal assault. There are also services for victims of the assault.

For the individual who has abused his/her partner, DVTO provides assessment, counselling, support and supervision. The individual has the opportunity to learn how to change his/her abusive behaviour and to do safety planning.

For the victim, DVTO provides support, counselling, help with safety planning and reports on what is happening in court. There is also a program for children who have witnessed violence in the home.



The DVTO Court is a voluntary program. If the person who was charged with the assault wants to participate, they have to take responsibility for their abusive behaviour before they can start the program. Victims of an assault can access supports at any time.

How does the DVTO Court work?

Step 1: An individual is charged with spousal assault and he/she makes his/her first court appearance in the DVTO Court.

Step 2: If the individual is interested in the DVTO program, he/she is referred to the Spousal Abuse Program for a suitability assessment.

Step 3: If the individual wants to participate in the DVTO program, he/she must plead guilty for the spousal assault charge, or the spousal related offence.

Step 4: The individual participates in the Spousal Abuse Program. He/she goes back to court for regular “check-ins” with the DVTO Judge.

Step 5: The individual is sentenced. If he/she did well in the Spousal Abuse Program, he/she may get a reduced community-based sentence.