

What can you do when someone discloses domestic violence to you?

- * **BELIEVE** them.
- * **Listen sensitively** and without judgment.
- * **Tell them** they are not alone, not their fault and that there are resources to support them.
- * **Ask them** if they have safety concerns at the moment. If so, find out more and together examine their options.
- * **Assist** them to make an emergency Safety Plan. For example they can carry a cell phone, keep money in a secret place, have an escape route planned, ensure windows and doors are secure, tell family/friends and seek their support, know the Transition House number, teach children how to call for help, and talk to the RCMP. Find out if they have supports they can count on in an emergency.
- * **Be aware** that talking to her while her partner is present puts her at increased risk. She cannot answer truthfully in his presence.
- * **Know** that Northern Society for Domestic Peace has free confidential services to support women, children and youth who have been impacted by domestic or sexual violence.
- * **Educate yourself.** For example, be aware of the 'victim blaming' social phenomenon (eg. Why don't you just leave?) which keeps abused women invisible and silent and unbelievably, and diverts attention from the fact that the law is being broken and the perpetrator should be held responsible.
- * **Ask for permission** to refer them to NSDP, and ensure that the contact number they leave is a 'safe' one for staff to call.
- * **Acknowledge** that they have found ways to keep themselves and their children safe.
- * **Support** them 'where they are' without telling them what they should do. They are the best judge of their own safety.
- * **Remember** that you have an obligation to report child abuse or an intention to harm to the RCMP.

Northern Society for Domestic Peace...

offers services in Smithers, Telkwa, Houston, Moricetown & area.
Programs include:

Victim Services – support and information for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, criminal harassment and all other types of crime.

Children Who Witness Abuse – support counselling & play therapy for children & youth who have witnessed domestic violence.

Sexual Abuse Intervention – counselling and play therapy for children & youth who have experienced sexual abuse.

Pregnancy Outreach Program – support for pregnant women and women with small infants. Resources include videos, books, food vouchers, peer support, drop-ins and presentations

Stopping the Violence Counselling – counselling and outreach for women who have experienced violence in intimate relationships.

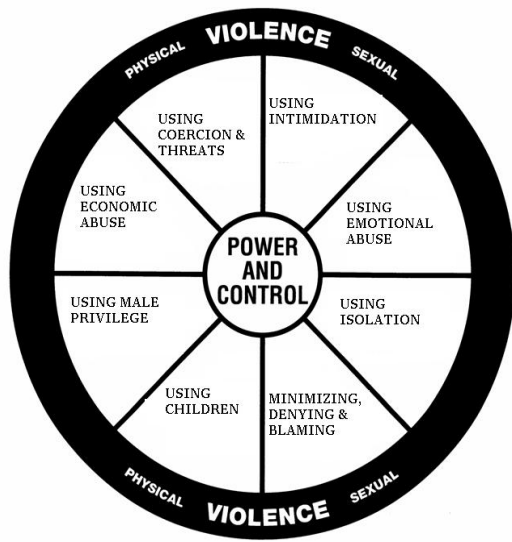
Passage Transition House – a safe haven for women and their children who are fleeing violent relationships.
Staffed 24 hours a day. 847-2595.

For more information on Northern Society for Domestic Peace, visit their website at: www.domesticpeace.ca or call 847-9000. Fax referrals to 847-8911.

What if she came to YOU?



... information for community and professional workers who suspect or hear disclosures of
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT
205 West Fourth Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55806
218-722-4134

Domestic violence is about power and control in intimate relationships. This wheel illustrates some of the ways power imbalances can play out.

Domestic Violence can be physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, sexual and neglectful. It doesn't have to leave marks to be abusive. It can happen to people in any walk of life, in any economic group, and at any age.

Violent relationships escalate when extra stressors are present. For example, when a woman is pregnant she is 30% more likely to be abused. Employment and financial concerns, substance abuse and mental health issues all add extra stress.

What signs may indicate that domestic violence could be occurring?

- * Unusual bruises or broken bones
- * Anxiety when partner is present or is mentioned
- * Defers to partner's decisions regularly
- * Unusual shyness or quiet, especially when partner is present
- * An isolated lifestyle
- * May say partner gets angry when he drinks, or that they sometimes fight
- * Is overly concerned with schedules
- * Keeps children tightly 'in line'

Cycle of Violence



Domestic violence is often characterized by a cycle that involves increasing tension, a violent incident and a making-up period, in that order. This cycle is repetitive and often accelerates in both speed and in the level of violence involved.

You may wonder: Why Don't Abused Women Just Leave?

They may....

- * **Have** limited financial means to support their family without him.
- * **Have** a religion, culture or background that does not support them in speaking out or in leaving the relationship.
- * **Fear** that the pets they leave behind will bear the brunt of his rage.
- * **Have** no support system to rely on.
- * **Do not want** to remove the children from their father, their school, their friends, and their routines.
- * **Have fear** of the unknown, and believe that life without him could be worse than life with him.
- * **Believe** that they will lose friends and family members if they leave him.
- * **Believe** that if they leave and he comes after them, there is no true safe place for them to hide.
- * **Do not believe** that the system will support and protect them if they go to the RCMP.
- * **Feel shame and embarrassment.**
- * **Are unaware** that there are services that can support them to make changes in their lives
- * **Feel** that things will get better if they are only willing to 'keep trying.'
- * **Feel guilty and fearful** because they have hit back or have substance abuse issues, and believe that this may justify his violence and/or may get them in trouble with the law if they ask for help.
- * **Fear** that their children will be taken away from them if the violence is becomes known.
- * **Believe** that people would doubt them because everyone thinks 'he is such a nice guy.'