

# Family Violence

## What you need to know

### Know who it affects

Family violence can happen to people of all ages, abilities, cultural and spiritual backgrounds, gender identities and sexual orientations. Victims can be in romantic relationships, divorced, children (birth, step, adopted or foster), grandparents, or individuals with guardians or caregivers.

**Call 911 if you or someone you know is in immediate danger.**

For local help or information, call, text or [chat](#) with the Family Violence Info Line, available 24/7 at 310-1818.

### Know the behaviours

Abusive and violent behaviours may include:

- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial abuse (access to money is restricted or controlled)
- Criminal harassment or stalking
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Spiritual abuse (being forced into or restricted from practicing religion)
- Pet cruelty

### Know the warning signs

Victims of abuse will often show the following warning signs:

- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Not going out or doing activities they used to enjoy
- Not having access or control of personal finances
- Have unexplained bruises or other injuries
- Show signs of depression or anxiety
- Children may be left alone, hungry, dirty or not dressed for the weather
- Seniors may seem frightened or withdrawn

**Shelters across Alberta help women, their children and older adults fleeing abuse.**

Visit [alberta.ca/Shelters](http://alberta.ca/Shelters)

### Know your plan

- Plan your exit strategy – know where you would go in an emergency and how you would get there
- Tell someone you trust about the abuse
- Find out what help is available
- Seek professional help
- Spend time with people who are positive supports
- Talk to your children and help them understand they are not to blame

## Know how to be an ally

- Spread the word about the Family Violence Info Line **(310-1818)**
- Participate in Family Violence Prevention Month (November) by wearing a purple ribbon, supporting local events and following @YourAlberta on Twitter
- Offer to help at your local women's shelter
- Set up workplace family violence prevention protocols and awareness workshops
- Sign up for bystander intervention training
- Join clubs and associations that prevent family violence and promote gender equality
- Nominate someone in your community for an Inspiration Award: [alberta.ca/InspirationAwards](https://alberta.ca/InspirationAwards)

## Know how to help

It is important to be supportive if someone tells you they are experiencing family violence, or if you suspect they are being abused. Here's how you can help:

- Learn more about family violence to know the warning signs
- Ask in a caring way if someone is hurting them, and believe them when they tell you
- Listen without judgement
- Help them access the professional help and resources they want

**Together, we can prevent family violence and support survivors.**

Visit [alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence](https://alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence) for additional resources.

## Know your rights

A victim of family violence and abuse has a right to:

- Be free and safe from violence
- Be treated with courtesy, compassion and respect
- Get information about their legal rights
- Press charges for criminal actions
- Have the maximum protection from abuse including restraining or protection orders

An Emergency Protection Order ([EPO](#)) provides legal protection to victims. For more information, call the Provincial Legal Aid Office toll-free at **1-866-845-3425**.

## Know the resources

- Emergency financial assistance is available if you need help with expenses to start a new life. Call toll-free at **1-866-644-5135**
- HealthLink provides healthcare advice 24/7. Dial **811**
- If you are Indigenous and need help with court or other community resources, visit Native Counselling Services of Alberta at [ncca.ca](https://ncca.ca)
- Clare's Law gives people who feel at risk of family violence from their new partner a way to get information about their partner so they can make informed choices about their safety. Apply at [alberta.ca/clares-law.aspx](https://alberta.ca/clares-law.aspx)
- The Safer Spaces program helps victims of family violence to end their lease at no cost. Apply at [alberta.ca/SaferSpaces](https://alberta.ca/SaferSpaces) or call **1-877-644-9992** (toll-free)
- Emergency shelters provide shelter, protection and support. Contact the Family Violence Info Line at **310-1818** to find the emergency shelter closest to you