

Domestic Violence Survey – Shocking Results!

In December 2014, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) released the results of a survey that was developed in collaboration with the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children of Western University in Ontario, on the impact of domestic violence on the lives of workers.

Based on more than 8,400 responses, this survey finds that one third of all workers have experienced DV at some time in their lives (33.6%). The rate is higher for working women, since 37.6% have experienced domestic violence. Today, 7% of all women workers are currently victims of domestic violence.

In more than half of these cases, domestic violence follows its victims at work (53.5%). Most often, it takes the form of abusive phone calls or text messages (40.6%). In 20.5% the victim was stalked or harassed by her spouse near the workplace, and in 18.2% of the cases, the abuser physically came to the workplace.

Domestic violence negatively affects a person's work performance. Overall, 81.9% of the persons who are victims of domestic violence said that it made them distracted, or feeling tired, or unwell. Over a third of the victims say that it affects their ability to get to work. Sadly, 8.5% of victims of domestic violence have lost their jobs because of it. This is a dramatic outcome, since having a job is often the only way a woman can eventually leave her abusive partner.

What this means for PSAC members

If we translate these statistics in concrete terms for our PSAC members, we realize that a huge proportion of our membership is affected by this. PSAC has 180,00 members. Of this number, approximately 100,000 are women. If we apply the percentages that have been found in the survey this means that:

- 37,000 PSAC sisters have or will experience domestic violence at least once in their lifetime.
- 7,000 sisters are going to work every day after leaving an abusive spouse.
- 3,745 experience some form of domestic violence at or near their workplace
- 1,500 receive harassing phone calls or text messages at work
- 750 are followed or harassed by their abuser when they go to work
- 680 women are confronted to their abuser in their workplace
- 3,070 women's work performance was negatively impacted by DV
- Almost 600 women lost their job because of the consequences of DV on their work performance

Canadian employers are acknowledging responsibilities

In 2014, the Conference Board of Canada did a survey to better understand how Canadian employers are addressing domestic violence issues. The results of the survey were released in the November 2015 document entitled "*Domestic Violence and the Role of the Employer*". They found that:

- 71 per cent of employers reported experiencing a situation where it was necessary to protect a victim of domestic abuse.
- Almost 80% of employers in large organizations reported that they had had to take measures to protect an employee.
- But the public service ("government") had the lowest rate, with just over 55%.

Almost one in five employers (18%) have adopted stand-alone domestic violence policies. And 45% say that DV is covered by another policy, such as codes of conduct, sexual harassment policies, workplace bullying and workplace violence policies.

What can be done?

Violence against women has been a longstanding priority for PSAC members. Several resolutions have been adopted throughout the years at the National Women's Conferences. And at National Convention 2015, members adopted a resolution to develop a domestic violence education training program.

In December 2015, PSAC organized a Women's Forum on Domestic Violence at Work. This Forum explored what the PSAC can do to better support our members who are affected by domestic violence at work. PSAC sisters proposed a series of measures that can be taken to reduce spousal violence in the workplace and lessen its impact on the working lives of victims, including:

- Training First Line Responders to understand the dynamics of domestic violence, recognize the warning signs, know how to discuss the issue with affected members, how to raise it with managers, bring it to the attention of health and safety committees and use any other mechanism available to support our members.
- Developing a DV at Work Protocol, on recognizing warning signs, carrying out risk assessments, doing security planning in the workplace, providing accommodation, workplace flexibility and transfer, when necessary, and bridging with local shelters and community groups
- Developing a "survival kit" for our members, with a list of local resources, and advice on the importance of hiding your passport, keeping an extra copy of important papers, opening a personal bank account, having a second house key, etc

- Integrating domestic violence in Health and Safety policies, naming the “harms” of domestic violence, and recognizing that workplace violence can be a “hazard”. Holding employers accountable for their “duty to care”, and expanding prevention strategies. Amending federal and provincial health and safety legislation, to include domestic violence
- Putting the issue on the bargaining table, and getting paid leave to deal with the ramifications of domestic violence: this has already been done by PSAC in the Yukon. Bargaining for Women’s Advocate positions, as has been done by UNIFOR, or social delegate positions, as done in CUPW agreements.
- Lobbying to amend provincial and federal employment standards to give workers the right to apply for flexible work arrangements and special leave for spousal abuse; this was recently done in Manitoba.

PSAC is working in collaboration with the Canadian Labour Congress and affiliates to pursue this agenda.

The issue was raised last year by the Canadian trade union delegation at the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The CLC has been participating in high level meetings at the International Labour Organization to develop a Convention on violence in the workplace that would establish the basic principles for the prevention of violence in the workplace.

CAN WORK BE SAFE, WHEN HOME ISN'T?

Initial Findings of a Pan-Canadian Survey
on Domestic Violence and the Workplace



**Western
Education**

Centre for Research & Education on
Violence Against Women & Children



Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada



**Western
FIMS**

Faculty of Information & Media Studies

“My employer simply said to me, take whatever time you need and if you need any help with anything just let me know. I was very fortunate to have such an understanding and flexible employer.”

“People just knew, I was ashamed, they didn’t have much respect for me.”

“My coworkers were worried and disturbed by the physical and emotional evidence of the abuse.”

SURVEY BACKGROUND

The Impact of Domestic Violence on Workers and Workplaces

Canadian employers lose \$77.9 million annually due to the direct and indirect impacts of domestic violence¹ (DV), and the costs, to individuals, families and society, go far beyond that. However, we know very little about the scope and impacts of this problem in Canada.

The evidence linking economic independence, being in paid employment and DV has been steadily developing, and we now know that: 1) women with a history of DV have a more disrupted work history, are consequently on lower personal incomes, have had to change jobs more often, and more often work in casual and part time roles than women without violence experiences²⁻⁵; and 2) being employed is a key pathway to leaving a violent relationship; the financial security that employment affords can allow women to escape the isolation of an abusive relationship, and maintain, as far as possible, their home and standard of living, both for themselves, and their children⁴⁻⁶.

Being a perpetrator of DV also significantly impacts a worker and their workplace. A recent study found that 53% of offenders felt their job performance was negatively impacted, 75% had a hard time concentrating on their work, and 19% reported causing or nearly causing workplace accidents due to their violent relationship⁷. Their behaviours lead to a loss of paid and unpaid work time, a decrease in productivity, and safety hazards for their co-workers.

Surveys to gather data about the prevalence and the impact of DV in the workplace are just starting to emerge. A ground-breaking survey by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse (ADFVC) at the University of New South Wales was conducted through a partnership with organized labour and was completed by over 3,600 union members⁸. As a result of this project, over 1,600,000 Australian workers are now covered by domestic/family violence workplace benefits, including dedicated paid leave, protection from adverse action and flexible work arrangements.

To support advocacy and improve workplace DV policies in Canada, and contribute to the international knowledge base on this issue, Canadian data is urgently needed. Therefore, researchers at the University of Western Ontario, in partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), conducted the first ever Canadian survey on DV in the workplace. Ultimately, stronger evidence will help to shape legislation, policies, and practices that promote violence prevention and safety in workplaces, that hold abusers accountable for their behaviour, and that lift the burden from victims so they need not deal with DV alone.

Survey Methods

The online survey launched on December 6, 2013 and was open until June 6, 2014. Participants were recruited via the extensive networks of the CLC and its affiliates, and the survey was promoted through national media at its launch. The survey was offered in both French and English and was open to men and women aged 15 years and older, whether or not they had directly experienced DV.

The survey consisted of over 60 questions focused on people's experiences with DV and the workplace, including questions on if they were personally experiencing, or had ever experienced DV, and if they knew of anyone at their workplace who was experiencing or perpetrating DV. Those with personal DV experience were asked additional questions such as how the DV impacted their work and their coworkers, whether they discussed the violence with anyone at work, and what types of workplace supports they received. The survey was reviewed and approved by Western's Research Ethics Board.

For this survey, domestic violence was defined as any form of physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, including financial control, stalking and harassment. It occurs between opposite- or same-sex intimate partners, who may or may not be married, common law, or living together. It can also continue to happen after a relationship has ended.

“The domestic violence caused unease between me and my co-workers because I had to miss work or sometimes cried. Also, some people felt helpless; they would have liked to intercede, but did not dare for fear of endangering me or themselves.”

“[The abuser] would phone my workplace to see what time I had left, and phoned when I arrived to make sure I was actually going to work.”

SURVEY RESULTS

Who Took Part?

TABLE 1: Age

15 - 24	2.7%
25 - 34	17.5%
35 - 44	23.7%
44 - 54	31.8%
55 - 64	21.1%
65 - 74	2.5%
75+	.3%
No response	.5%

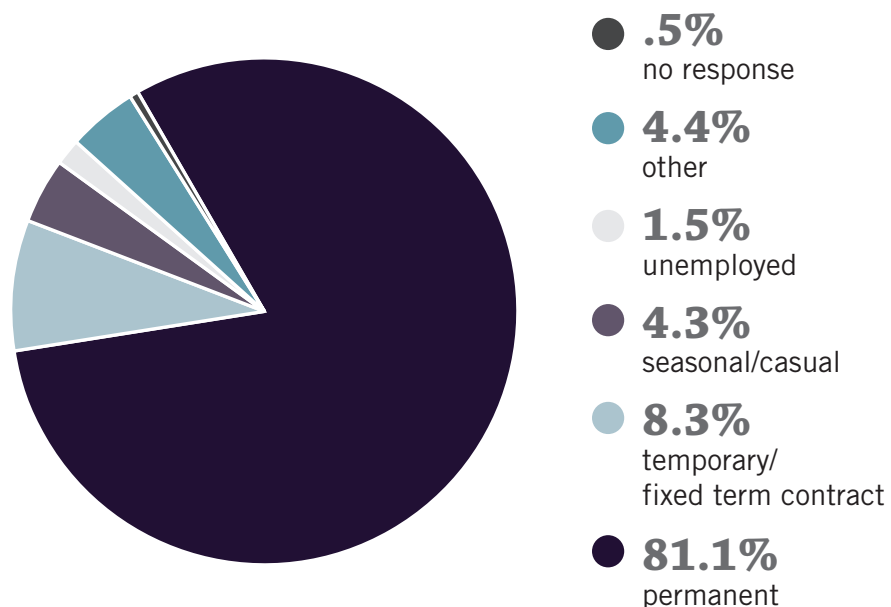
“I could see how my situation could place others in danger and was lucky that none of the threats were brought forth or followed up.”

“Dealing with my ex-husband left me feeling anxious, tired due to lack of sleep. It affected the pleasure my work usually gives me.”

A total of 8,429 people completed the survey, 95.5% of them in English and 4.5% in French. Overall, 87.7% of the sample reported being born in Canada, and 4.7% indicated they were Aboriginal. Most respondents were female (78.4%); the remaining identified as male (20.4%), transgender (0.2%), ‘Other’ (0.2%), or did not respond to this question (0.7%). Half the sample lived in Ontario (49.8%), 21.6% in BC, and the rest was distributed across the provinces and territories. Most people (94.1%) were between 25 and 64, with 2.7% between 15 and 24 years, and 2.8% 65 and over (Table 1). In terms of sexual orientation, 86.1% reported they were heterosexual (4.8% did not respond to the question about sexual orientation). A total of 18.7% of the sample reported one or more disability.

Reflecting the recruitment strategy, the vast majority (93.7%) of the sample was employed in permanent, temporary/contract or seasonal/casual work (Figure 1). The remaining were unemployed, indicated “other” (e.g., retired, on disability leave, or multiple types of employment) or did not respond to the question. Most respondents were unionized (81.4%), or had been in their last job, if currently not employed. Over half the sample reported working in the educational (28.2%) or health care and social assistance (23.8%) sectors. All other sectors (which were derived from the North American Industry Classification System⁹) were less than 9% each, and 8% indicated “other”.

FIGURE 1: Employment Status

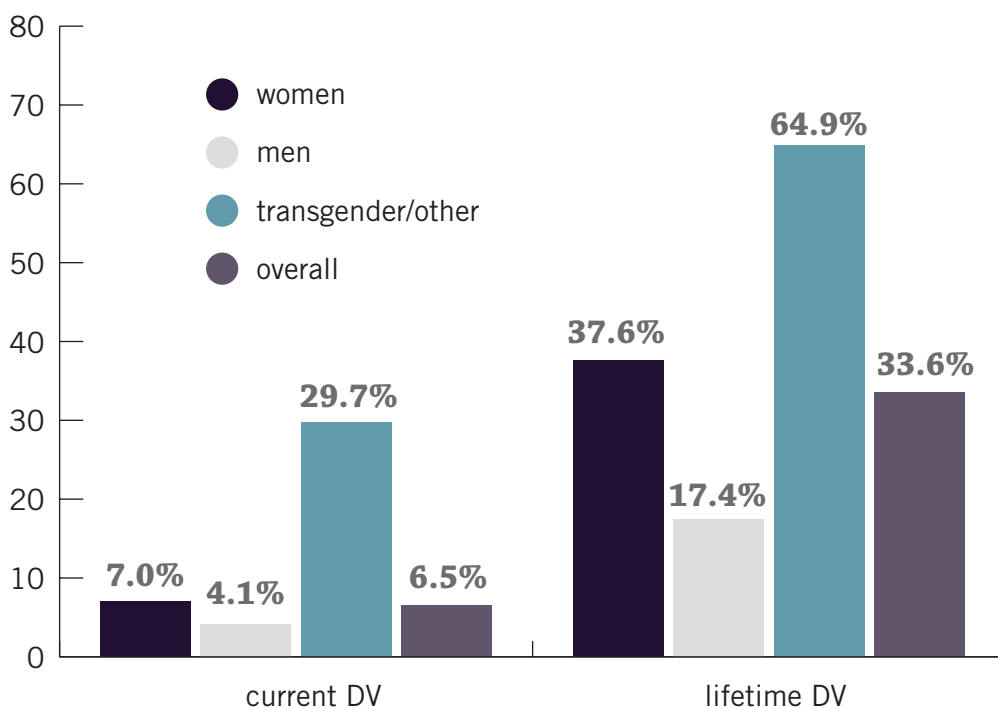


Experiences of Domestic Violence

A third (33.6%) of respondents reported ever experiencing DV from an intimate partner, and there were differences by gender (Figure 2). Aboriginal respondents, respondents with disabilities, and those indicating a sexual orientation other than heterosexual (e.g., lesbian, gay or bisexual) were particularly likely to have reported experiencing DV in their lifetime. Prevalence rates were very consistent with previous national surveys^{10,11}.

In terms of indirect DV experience, 35.4% of respondents reported having at least one co-worker who they believe is experiencing, or has previously experienced, DV and 11.8% reported having at least one co-worker who they believe is being abusive, or has previously been abusive, toward his/her partner.

FIGURE 2: DV Prevalence and Gender

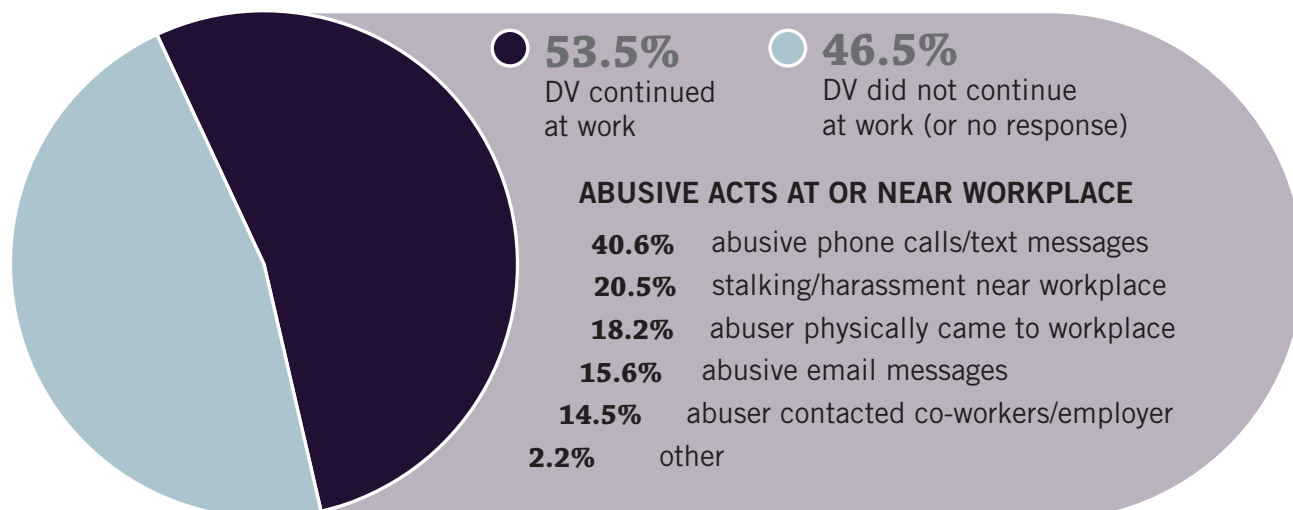


“I would have to find a safe house because of violence at night. Then I would be without work clothing or school uniforms for the kids. My children and I would be too emotionally upset to go to work and school the next day.”

“I was in trouble for missing a lot of work and now I can’t miss work without a doctor’s note.”

“My ex-husband threatened to call my employer to tell them lies about me.”

FIGURE 3: DV in the Workplace



Among those exposed to DV...

38%

reported that DV affected their ability to get to work

8.5%

had lost a job due to DV

“He pretended to be security and dragged me out of work.”

The Impact of DV on Workers and Workplaces

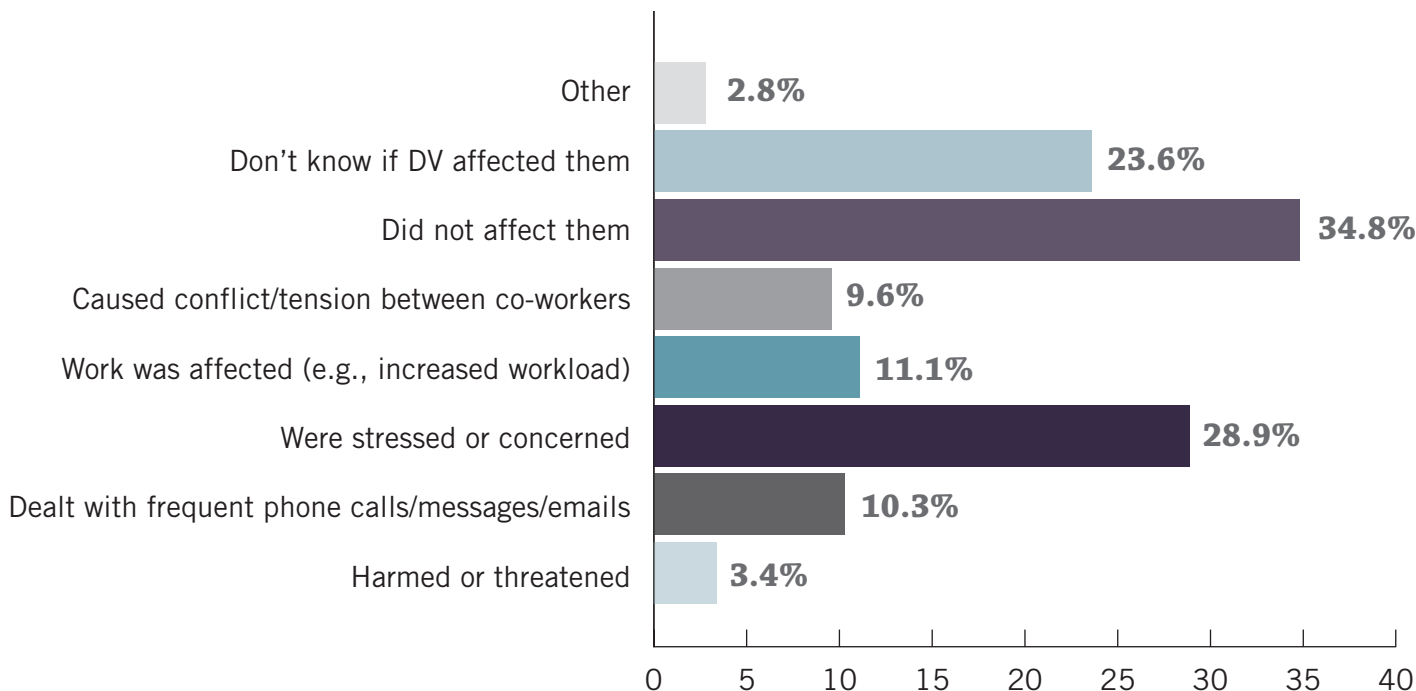
Of those who reported DV experience, 38% indicated it impacted their ability to get to work (including being late, missing work, or both). In total, 8.5% of DV victims indicated they had lost their job because of it.

Over half (53.5%) of those reporting DV experiences indicated that at least one type of abusive act occurred at or near the workplace. Of these, the most common were abusive phone calls or text messages (40.6%) and stalking or harassment near the workplace (20.5%; Figure 3).

Those who reported experiencing DV were also asked how it affected their work performance. Overall, 81.9% reported that DV negatively affected their performance, most often due to being distracted, or feeling tired and/or unwell.

Those experiencing DV are not the only ones affected by it; many (37.1%) reported that their co-workers were affected too. Of those who reported at least one impact on co-workers, the most common response was that co-workers were stressed or concerned about the abusive situation (28.9%; Figure 4).

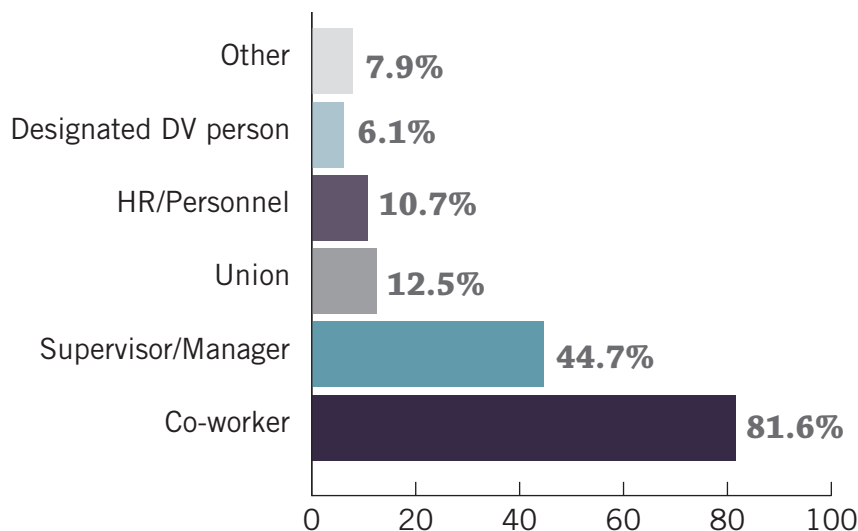
FIGURE 4: Impact of DV on Co-workers



Disclosure of DV in the Workplace and Support Received

Overall, 43.2% of those experiencing DV reported they discussed it with someone at work. There are apparent differences according to gender, with men being particularly unlikely to discuss DV at work. Among those who did discuss it, nearly half did so with more than one person. The most common people disclosed to were co-workers (81.6%) and supervisors/managers (44.7%; Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: Disclosure of DV in the Workplace



Among those exposed to DV...

81.9%

found that DV negatively affected their work performance

"I was tired and distracted yet work was a place where I felt safe."

“[I] lied about injury and absence due to fear and not able to admit to abuse at that time.”

“The support from the few co-workers and the employer Psychologist was empowering. The gossip was malicious and not at all helpful.”

“...there’s no doubt it had impact, but I took pride in my ability to stay focussed and on task with a professional presentation. However, those were very difficult times.”

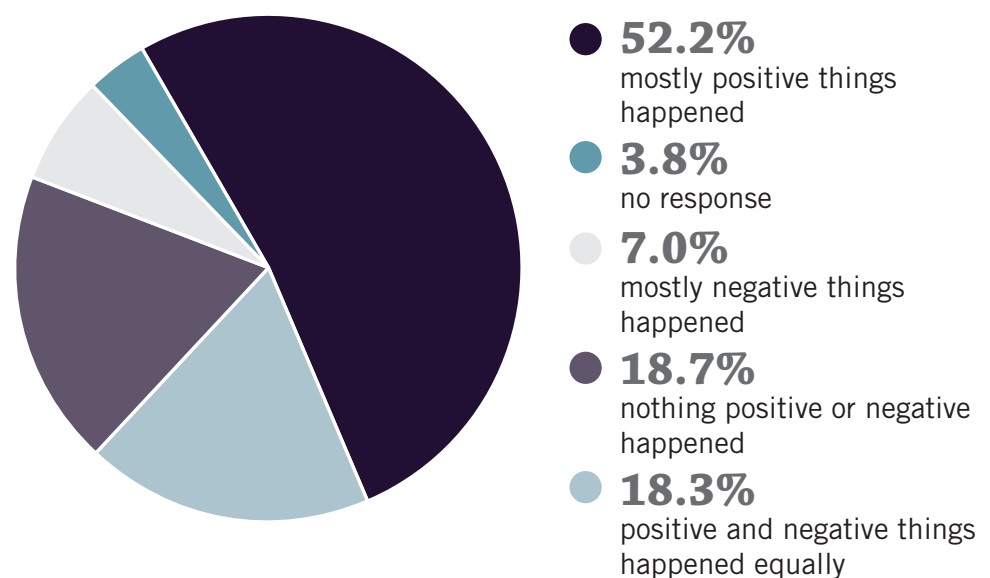
Generally people who discussed the DV at work found the individual(s) “helpful”, but the specific ways they were helpful varied. For example, co-workers most often “provide a listening ear”, and designated people to handle DV most often helped by developing a safety plan. Unions, supervisors/managers and HR most often provided paid time off.

When asked about the “sum total” of having discussed DV in the workplace (with anyone) just over half (52.2%) said “mostly positive things happened”, while only 7% said “mostly negative things happened”. Equal numbers (18.3% and 18.7%, respectively) said that positive and negative things either “happened equally”, or that “nothing positive or negative happened” at all (see Figure 6).

Among all respondents, 28% said they had received information about DV from their employer. Among unionized respondents, 27.2% received information about DV from their union.

Only 10.6% of all respondents think that employers are aware when DV is affecting their workers, but among those who said yes, 62.3% believe employers act in a positive way to help workers experiencing DV. Similarly, only 11.3% of all respondents think union officials are aware when DV is affecting members, and among them, 86.6% believe unions act in a positive way to help members.

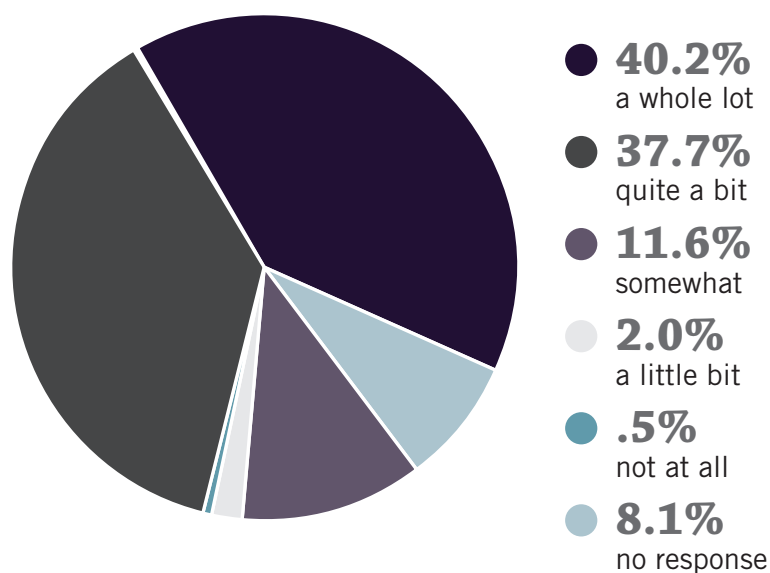
FIGURE 6: Outcomes of Discussing DV in the Workplace



Beliefs About DV in the Workplace

Most people understand that DV has a significant impact on victims, perpetrators and their co-workers, and on the workplace as a whole. In fact three-quarters of all respondents think workplace supports such as paid leave and safety policies for DV can reduce the impact of DV on the work lives of workers. Among all respondents, 91.5% think that DV impacts the work lives of workers exposed to DV at least ‘a little bit’, with the majority believing it impacts ‘a whole lot’ (40.2%; Figure 7).

FIGURE 7: Perceived Impact of DV in the Workplace



Among all respondents...

91.5%
think that DV impacts the work lives of workers

“There are some co-workers who will listen; however most don’t really want to get involved. The only concern my boss had was how soon was I going to return to work.”

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT Ontario was the first province to amend its Occupational Health and Safety legislation. Domestic violence is interpreted in a manner consistent with the workplace violence definition when it may occur in the workplace (http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm#BK50). Manitoba proposed an amendment to its workplace safety legislation to include domestic violence and stalking/harassment (web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/39-4/b219e.php). To support this, the Manitoba government provides to workplaces a toolkit on DV (www.gov.mb.ca/fs/fvpp/toolkit.html).

“...confiding in co-workers helped alleviate the stress of being attacked going to the car, the unending phone calls over and over and over and the extreme fatigue both physically and mentally.”

“Constant phone calls prevented me from doing my job properly, as it tied up the phone required for business.”

SUMMARY

- Consistent with national population-based surveys, over a third of respondents reported personal experience with DV at some point in their life. This was higher for women, gender diverse and Aboriginal people, those with disabilities and those reporting a sexual orientation other than heterosexual.
- Among those who had experienced DV, over a third reported that the violence affected their ability to get to work.
- Over half of those who had experienced DV reported that it continued at the workplace in some way, for example, harassing phone calls from the abuser, and stalking.
- Of those who had experienced DV, the vast majority reported that it affected their work performance in some way, for example, due to being distracted, tired, or unwell.
- Over a third of those who had experienced DV discussed the violence with somebody at work. The most common people to whom DV was disclosed were co-workers and supervisors/managers.
- The vast majority of respondents, whether or not they had personally experienced DV, believed that it impacts the work lives of those experiencing abuse ‘quite a bit’ or ‘a whole lot’. And yet, most respondents also thought that employers and union officials are not aware when DV is affecting workers.
- Most respondents believed that workplace supports such as paid leave and safety policies for DV can reduce the impact of DV on the work lives of workers.

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT The Yukon Teachers’ Association has negotiated special leave that can be used when workers need time off due to DV (www.yta.yk.ca).

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) has a network of social stewards who are provided training to develop listening skills, learn about available resources, and assist in prevention of a range of difficulties, including family-related problems. The program is particularly effective in Quebec (http://www.cupw.ca/index.cfm/ci_id/6075/la_id/1.htm).

WHERE FROM HERE?

This research has identified the scope and impact of domestic violence on workers and workplaces, but is only a first step. Immediate next steps include encouraging use of these results by governments, unions and employers to establish proactive practices to address the impact of DV at work, such as:

- following the lead of Ontario and Manitoba in amending Occupational Health & Safety legislation to place positive obligations on employers to protect workers from DV
- including DV-related amendments in federal and provincial Employment Standards that give the right to request flexible working arrangements and entitlement to paid DV leave
- prohibiting discrimination against those who experience DV by including it as a protected ground in Human Rights legislation
- negotiating specific supports into collective agreements, including (as in Australia and Yukon) paid domestic violence leave
- developing innovative programs like Unifor's Women's Advocate Program and CUPW's Network of Social Stewards, especially the Quebec approach
- building on successful employer-led initiatives to enable employers to protect and support their workers
- educating managers, supervisors and workers about DV in the workplace, and providing specific protocols and tools to protect and support victims and intervene with perpetrators (e.g., www.makeitourbusiness.com)

Ongoing analysis of the survey data will help us answer questions like:

- Are some groups more or less impacted by DV? How does this affect their work?
- How are co-workers affected, and what DV warning signs should they be aware of?
- What can help improve support for workers experiencing DV?

A planned parallel survey of offenders will help us understand how interventions in the workplace can reduce their use of violence and its impact on productivity and safety. At an international level, we are comparing the Canadian data to other national surveys and linking this work via the new DV@Work Network, an international collaboration led by our Canadian research team.

Improving the workplace response to DV will require a multi-pronged approach by legislators, employers, unions and advocates to protect and support victims, and assist perpetrators in changing their behaviour. Ultimately, preventing violence and its consequences is a collective social challenge; one place that positive change can happen – for victims, offenders and employers – is the workplace. These survey results will help us take steps in the right direction.

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT

Unifor has negotiated over 300 Women's Advocate positions in workplaces across the country, including 40 hours of basic training which is often paid for by the employer.

In a number of collective agreements, Unifor has also successfully negotiated language that waives the usual two week (unpaid) waiting period for Sickness and Accident benefits for women entering a shelter.

"I ended up taking a lot of time off and for the most part no one really understood exactly why I was gone for so long."

“Sleep deprivation affected [my] ability to focus at work or get there on time.”

“I was extremely nervous about sharing my situation... understanding that it may have a negative impact on how my supervisor viewed me and my work. However, that was unfounded and so far they have been very helpful and understanding and have also respected my privacy and been careful not to intrude.”



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Acknowledgements

This research has been a collaborative effort between the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children (MacQuarrie), Western's Faculty of Information and Media Studies (Wathen, MacGregor) and the Canadian Labour Congress. We would like to acknowledge the contributions that the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and the CLC made to the translation of the survey, the responses, and this report, respectively, as well as the CIHR-funded PreVAiL Research Network for significant in-kind contributions and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding to support data analysis.

How To Cite This Document

Wathen, C. N., MacGregor, J. C. D., MacQuarrie, B. J. with the Canadian Labour Congress. (2014). *Can Work be Safe, When Home Isn't? Initial Findings of a Pan-Canadian Survey on Domestic Violence and the Workplace*. London, ON: Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women and Children.

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Canada

Lori Dupont: A Case Study

We created this case study as a learning activity about warning signs and risk factors to help build safer workplaces. The facts were gathered from a series of articles printed in the Windsor Star. We have tried to be as factual as possible. We take responsibility for any unintentional assumptions or errors in this document. We want to honour Lori's experience.

Lori Dupont worked as a registered nurse in a hospital PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit) in Windsor, Ontario. In late 2002 or early 2003, she began an intimate relationship with Dr. Marc Daniels, an anesthesiologist whom she met at work.

Within about six months of getting together, Marc moved to the small town near Windsor where Lori and her daughter lived with Lori's parents.

At first, Lori seemed happy, but friends said she never smiled around him, never said she loved him, and never openly called him her boyfriend. Lori tried to end the relationship many times. Each time she tried, Marc threatened to kill himself, so Lori stayed.

In summer 2004, Lori bought a house near her parents and accepted financial help from Marc. Marc moved into the house. Lori became withdrawn, refused social engagements and stopped taking care of herself. A friend who visited them found the interaction awkward and uncomfortable.

In November 2004, at her birthday party, Marc proposed and gave her an engagement ring. After trying to ignore it, she unwrapped it in front of everyone amidst tension.

She rarely wore the ring and when she did, she covered it or turned the stone inward. One of Lori's friends reported that Marc told her about the engagement by saying, "I sprang it on her in front of her family and friends. She couldn't say no."

In early 2005, Lori continued to pull away and rarely socialized. When she did socialize with friends, they noticed she wasn't caring for her appearance and was drinking, which was unusual.

In February 2005, after a tense disagreement, Lori ended the relationship. In her presence and blaming her, Marc attempted suicide by injecting himself. Lori called 911 and she and her mother resuscitated him.

Marc was hospitalized for two weeks. Lori told her friends and family more about what she had been experiencing. She feared for her safety. Marc called her from the hospital many times and each time she insisted the relationship was over. She switched to an unlisted number. He called and begged Lori to take him back. He also called her close friends and co-workers to ask them to help plead his case with Lori.

Lori took stress leave from work around this time. When she returned in March 2005, Marc Daniel was on administrative suspension. After her first day back, a friend took her to see a professional counselor and then out for dinner. When Lori returned to her car, there was a note in Marc's handwriting wedged in the door.

Lori discovered that Marc had used his security pass to access the PACU and get information about her work schedule. He had also questioned her co-workers. Marc confronted Lori at work, followed her, and threatened her parents. Lori began driving her father's car to work and friends escorted her in and out of her shifts. Meanwhile, Marc applied to have his privileges reinstated so he could return to work.

Lori and her union rep met with hospital management and the head of security. She asked for a copy of the hospital's harassment policy and advised them that Daniel was capable of violence.

After the meeting, the hospital issued notices to its security guards with photos of Daniel advising them he was a doctor at the hospital who had been causing problems for a staff member. They were instructed to act only if a problem arose in the OR area in particular, or any other area of the building. They were also told not to discuss the matter with anyone.

The hospital also implemented two security measures: providing escorts to and from her car, and allowing her to park next to the guard's office. Lori applied for a restraining order, which Marc opposed, and a hearing date was set.

Marc Daniel had been flagged as a problem physician long before Lori complained. In January 2005, Daniel had been put on one-year probation by the hospital over these complaints. Rather than lose his privileges, he agreed to the hospital-imposed conditions during this time. The hospital allowed Marc to return to work, with some restrictions, at the end of May.

Both security provisions for Lori were withdrawn by mid-June. Meanwhile, Lori became involved in a new relationship.

Marc Daniel's name reappeared on the OR schedule without warning. The hospital did not communicate Daniel's restrictions to Dupont or the union rep. Staff who raised their concerns for Lori's safety were told this was a personal matter and they should mind their own business. Whenever Marc brought a patient into PACU, staff took it upon themselves to intervene and take reports from him so Lori did not need to speak with him.

In late July 2005, Daniel's full privileges were reinstated. Within weeks, two of his co-workers reported that Daniel appeared on the edge and that he always stared at Dupont. One doctor told a manager he feared Daniel could be violent.

On November 3rd or 4th, during a hectic shift, Lori & Daniel came face to face. A nursing colleague who witnessed this described it this way: "He stared her down. He was almost in a trance."

On November 12, 2005, Marc and Lori were on the same weekend on-call schedule. Lori was one of two nurses in the PACU that morning when Marc Daniel—concealed behind a pillar in the workspace—stepped out, stabbed Lori multiple times and left the hospital to kill himself.



**Domestic Violence Doesn't Stop
When You go to Work:**

How to get Help or Support a Colleague who may Need Help



If you are experiencing abuse at home or at work, you are not alone. Whether you are a victim or a concerned colleague, people in your workplace and community can help. This brochure describes the warning signs of domestic violence and the steps you can take to get the help you need or offer support to someone at work who needs it.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another with whom he/she has or has had an intimate relationship. This pattern of behaviour may include physical violence, sexual, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and using electronic devices to harass and control.

Who are the victims of domestic violence?

Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, whatever their age, race, religion, sexual orientation, economic status or education. The abuser may be a current or former spouse or intimate partner, relative or friend.

Domestic violence can occur between:

- current or former intimate partners;
- adults or adolescents;
- people of all racial, economic, educational and religious backgrounds;
- people in heterosexual and same-sex relationships who are:
 - living together or separately,
 - married or unmarried,
 - in short- or long-term relationships.

While men can be victims of domestic violence, women are the overwhelming majority of such victims.

Is domestic violence common?

Between 2002 and 2007, Ontario reviewed 230 domestic violence-related deaths (142 women, 23 children and 65 men).

- Most male deaths were abuser suicides after killing or attempting to kill their partners or ex-partners.
- The victims were female in 92 per cent of the cases, and the abusers were male in 92 per cent of the cases.
- The most common risk factor in domestic homicide was actual or pending separation.

The Annual Report of the Ontario Coroner's Domestic Violence Death Review Committee noted that the victims were female in most cases, and the abusers were male. For this reason, this brochure uses "she" when referring to victims and "he" when referring to abusers.



Warning signs of domestic violence*

If you've seen these behaviours, or done some of these things yourself, it may be time to take action:

Abuser

- He puts her down.
- He does all the talking and dominates the conversation.
- He checks up on her all the time, even at work.
- He suggests he is the victim and acts depressed.
- He tries to keep her away from family and friends.
- He acts as if he owns her.
- He lies and exaggerates to make himself look good.
- He believes he is superior and more important than others in his home.

Victim

- She is apologetic and makes excuses for the abuser, or sometimes becomes aggressive and angry.
- She is nervous when the abuser is nearby.
- She is sick more often and misses work.
- She tries to cover bruises.
- She makes excuses at the last minute when she cancels or postpones meetings with friends/family members.
- She tries to avoid friends and family on the street.
- She seems sad, lonely, withdrawn and afraid.
- She uses drugs or alcohol to cope.

*Note: Research relating to domestic violence warning signs and risk factors has focused on abusers who are male and victims who are female. It is not known whether the same warning signs would apply in situations where the abuser is female and the victim is male, or where the abuser and victim are the same sex.

Signs of high risk

The danger may be greater if:

Abuser

- Has access to her and her children.
- Has access to weapons.
- Has a history of abuse with her or others.
- Has threatened to harm or kill her if she leaves him, saying things like, "If I can't have you, no one will."
- Threatens to harm her children, her pets or her property.
- Has threatened suicide.
- Has hit and/or choked her.
- Is going through major life changes (e.g. job, separation, depression).
- Is convinced she is seeing someone else.
- Blames her for ruining his life.
- Doesn't seek help for his behaviour.
- Has trouble keeping a job.
- Takes drugs or drinks every day.
- Watches her actions, listens to her telephone conversations, reads her emails and follows her.
- Has little or no respect for the law.

Victim

- Has just separated or is planning to leave.
- Fears for her own life and for her children's safety.
- Is in a custody battle, or has children from a previous relationship.
- Has injuries that she is hiding from others.
- Is involved in another relationship.
- Has no access to a phone away from work.
- Faces other obstacles (e.g. does not speak the language, is not yet a legal resident of Canada, lives in a remote area).
- Does not have family or friends outside work.

Many deaths related to domestic violence in Ontario happened when the relationship was ending or following separation. If you have an abusive partner and have recently separated or are thinking about it, reach out for help. Talk to someone you trust.

Take stalking seriously. Stalking has been identified as one of the primary risk factors for attempted and actual murder of female partners in intimate relationships. Even if you have a restraining order, there is no guarantee that the abuser will respect it. Let the police and your employer know if you are being stalked or if a restraining order is breached.



How domestic violence can affect you at work

Domestic violence doesn't stop when you leave for work. It can follow you into work, or continue there if your abuser works in the same organization.

Here are some ways abusers may try to control you outside the home.

Attempt to prevent you from getting to work or looking for work, by doing things like:

- Interfering with transportation by hiding or stealing your car keys or transportation money.
- Hiding or stealing your identification cards.
- Threatening deportation if you are sponsored.
- Failing to show up to care for your children.
- Physically restraining you.

Interfering with you while at work by:

- Phoning you often or sending lots of emails.
- Stalking and/or watching you.
- Showing up at the workplace and pestering your co-workers with questions about you (where you are, who you're with, when you will be back, etc.).
- Lying to co-workers (you're sick today, you're out of town, you're home with a sick child, etc.).
- Threatening co-workers ("If you don't tell me, I'll...").
- Verbally abusing you or your co-workers.
- Displaying jealous and controlling behaviours over your relationships with others such as coworkers.
- Destroying your or the organization's property.
- Physically harming you and/or co-workers.

Remember that both the victims and their work colleagues can be harmed by such behaviour.

Recognizing the behaviours, tactics and signs of domestic abuse is not always easy, even if you are living with them. Domestic abuse is much more than physical violence, and victims in abusive relationships consistently report that the situation gets worse over time.



How to help a colleague

Here are some suggestions on how to support a victim:

- Talk to her about what you see and assure her that you are concerned. Tell her you believe her and that it is not her fault.
- If she is reluctant to tell you about the abuse right away, you could gently say, “I’ve noticed you seem upset and I’m concerned about you and your safety. Please know that when you are ready, I’m here for you.” Be patient; she may open up to you in time.
- Let her know you are concerned for her and her children’s safety and that help is available. Abuse doesn’t go away; it increases over time.
- Listen in a non-judgemental way to what she says, being careful to show concern and support and not suggest an action she could take.
- Encourage her not to confront her partner if she is planning to leave. Her safety must be protected.
- Let her know that you or she can call the Assaulted Women’s Helpline, your local shelter, or, in an emergency, the police. Offer to support her when she talks to her employer.

Here are some suggestions for supporting an abuser:

- Choose the right time and place to have a full discussion.
- Approach him when he is calm.
- Be direct and clear about what you have seen and note that his behaviour is inappropriate.
- Tell him that his behaviour is his responsibility. Avoid making judgmental comments about him as a person. Don’t validate his attempt to blame others for his behaviour.
- Inform him that his behaviour needs to stop and that he can seek help from the Employee Assistance Program or community counselling.
- Tell him you are concerned about the safety of his partner and his children.
- Never argue with him about his abusive actions, nor intervene physically. Recognize that confrontational, argumentative approaches may make the situation worse and increase the risk to a victim.
- Let your supervisor or employer know if you suspect that one of your colleagues is being abusive.
- Call the police if you think the victim’s safety is in jeopardy.
- **Always keep yourself safe. Don’t get into the middle of an assault. Call the police in an emergency.**

Colleagues can best help a victim by maintaining her trust, keeping confidence and being concerned for her safety. Talk to her, let her know you believe her and encourage her to get help.

Speaking to the abuser may feel difficult. You may be afraid his violence will turn to you or your coworkers. However, be sure not to ignore the abuser’s behaviour because doing nothing could make it worse. Police and counsellors are trained to respond to violence. Reach out for help if you have safety concerns.



Asking your employer for help

Employee safety is a priority for your employer. By working with you, an employer can minimize the risk of violence.

Your employer is in a position to help you. Your employer should maintain your confidentiality on a need-to-know basis but may be able to take some steps to protect you and your co-workers. Here are some actions you can take:

- Ask your employer for help in creating a safety plan that considers your needs at work.
- Keep your employer informed of all threats and abusive actions.
- Ask if your calls can be screened or if you can change your phone number and/or have your abuser's emails blocked.
- Ask for priority parking near the building or escorts to public transportation or your vehicle.
- Ask to be relocated and that your new location not be disclosed.
- Explore alternative work arrangements (e.g. adjust start and finish times) so your work pattern becomes less predictable.
- Provide a recent photo or description of the abuser to security/reception so they can identify him.

Once an employer becomes aware that domestic violence has or could enter the workplace, the employer must take steps to protect all workers, including the victim.

Other things you can do to increase your safety:

- Get counselling through your Employee Assistance Plan, community-based therapists, a local women's shelter or the Assaulted Women's Helpline.
- Keep a record of all incidents of abuse (include date, what was said and/or done, who witnessed it) and keep all threatening voice messages and emails.
- Mention your workplace in protection/restraining orders; tell your employer and provide them with copies of such orders.

For more information, see the brochure titled Domestic Violence Doesn't Stop When Your Worker Arrives at Work: What Employers Need to Know to Help.

Your safety is vital. If you are concerned about your safety or the safety of those around you, call the police.



Additional safety actions

Ask for help. Getting support is important if you or any colleagues are being abused. If you don't feel you can tell someone at work about your situation, call your Employee Assistance Plan for counselling. You can also turn to your local women's shelter for a range of services including counselling, safety planning, shelter and legal advice.

Another option is the Assaulted Women's 24-hour Helpline (1-866-863-0511 and TTY 1-866-863-7868). They can help you develop a safety plan, find space in a local women's shelter, or connect you with other services in your community. The service is anonymous and confidential and the toll-free number won't show up on your phone bill. Services are available in up to 154 languages.

If you are a concerned colleague, the helpline can also support you. They will discuss the signs of abuse and give you practical advice on ways to help. You can also get more information through www.NeighboursFriendsandFamilies.on.ca. This website explains how to help women at risk of abuse, how to talk to men who are abusive and how to plan for safety.

For more information about the services of the Assaulted Women's Helpline visit: www.awhl.org.

If you are concerned about your immediate safety, call the police.

All persons in Ontario, including professionals who work with children, must promptly report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) when they have reasonable grounds to believe that a child is or may be in need of protection. If you have concerns, contact your local CAS. You can supply details without having to provide identifying information. They will tell you if you need to make a formal report.

This brochure was developed in partnership with the Ontario government, Ontario Women's Directorate, and the Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario and with input from the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children.

- Disponible en français
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February 2010

Product # PH-BV100-E-020410-TOR-002

Domestic Violence Resources

1. Department of Justice-Canada

Get Help with Family Violence:

<http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/help-aide.html>

This website contains basic information on the criminal law system and family law issues, parental child abduction, links to government of Canada resources, links to provincial and territorial resources, safety planning, and information on treatment programs for men who abuse their partners.

2. ShelterSafe

<http://www.sheltersafe.ca/>

To find someone you can reach out to, anytime, day or night, everywhere across Canada

3. Other Domestic violence agencies

Hot Peach Pages:

<http://www.hotpeachpages.net/canada/>

This website provides links to shelters, rape crisis centers and other women's groups, in the different provinces

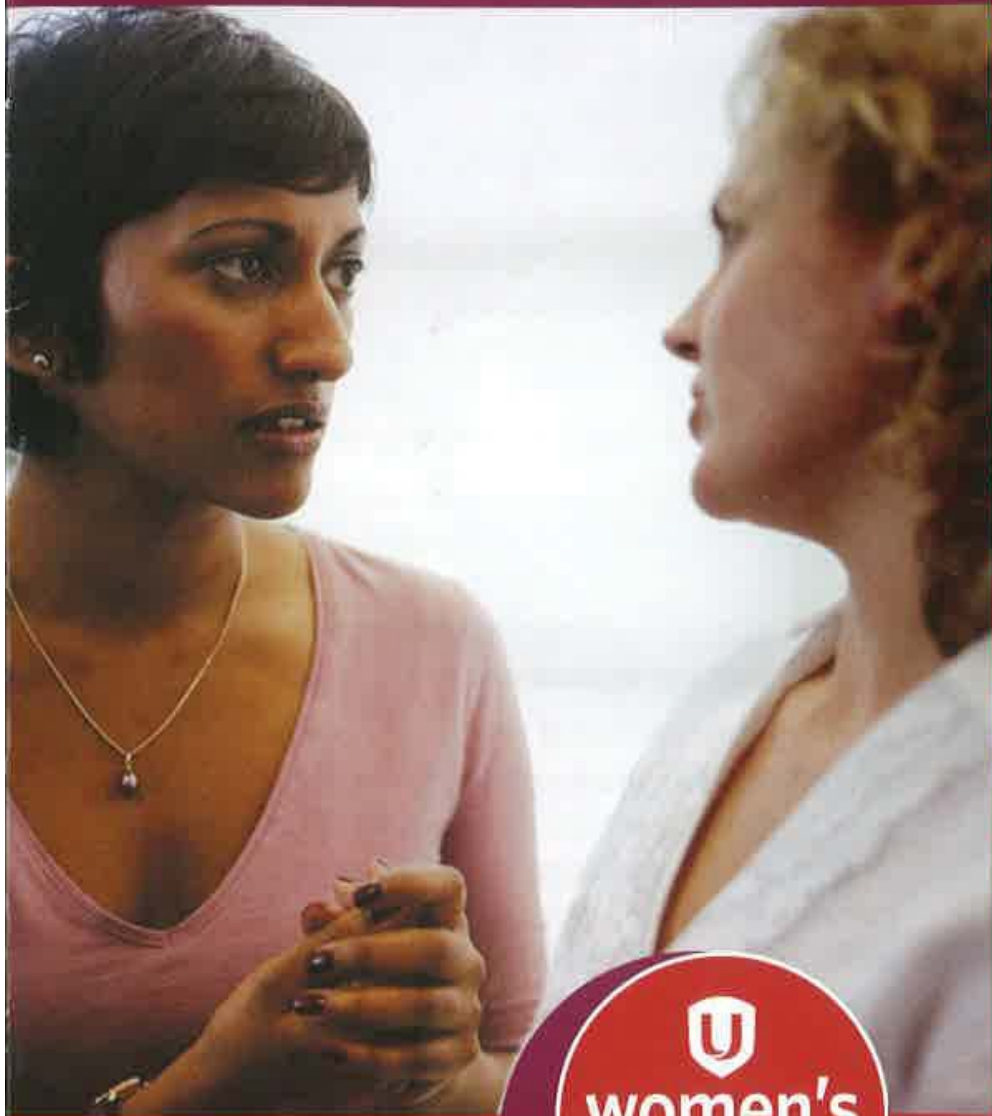
HANDOUT 6

<http://documents.clc-ctc.ca/whr/DV-Leaflet-EN.pdf>

TIRÉ À PART N° 6

<http://documents.clc-ctc.ca/whr/DV-Leaflet-FR.pdf>

What if we had a
Women's Advocate
in all Unifor workplaces?



unifor
theUnion | lesyndicat



"All women need an Advocate at work."

-Jerry Dias, Unifor National President

When we came together to create Unifor, it was with hope and optimism that when we are united we can be a strong force for equality and social justice. As part of our commitment to equality, it is essential that women have a strong voice in our union.

We can make significant gains for the women in our workplaces by making women's issues a priority at the bargaining table. We must also work with community partners to make gains for all women, including the eradication of violence against women.

The issue of violence against women is very near to my heart. I have three daughters whom I adore, and a son who was raised understanding the importance of women's rights and the need for men to take on the issue of violence against women.

I am incredibly proud of Unifor's groundbreaking Women's Advocate Program. These specially-trained, easy to contact workplace representatives have been instrumental in creating healthier workplaces and safer communities. They work closely with management ensuring strong cooperation to achieve this goal.

One of the best tools the union has to prevent violence against women and workplace harassment is the Women's Advocate Program.

Make it a priority to negotiate this tremendous resource in your workplace and work to end violence against women. I want to see a women's advocate in every Unifor workplace. Working together, we can make this a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerry Dias".

Jerry Dias

Women are five times more likely
to speak to someone they know...

Advocates play a frontline role.



FAQs on the Women's Advocate Program

Q What is a Women's Advocate?

A Women's Advocate is a specially trained workplace representative who assists women with concerns such as workplace harassment, intimate violence and abuse. The Women's Advocate is not a counsellor but rather provides support for women seeking workplace and community resources. The Women's Advocate Program is an excellent example of a successful joint union/management workplace initiative that helps to create healthy, respectful and safe workplaces.

Q What role does a Unifor Women's Advocate perform in the workplace?

The most important role is to assist women who are faced with situations of harassment, violence or abuse in the workplace or in their personal lives. Women are five times more likely to speak to someone they know when they are looking for help. The Advocate is there to help women access workplace or community services and support them through this process.

Women who were helped had this to say...

"I like that I was not judged and was given options rather than advice."

"Because of the support and quick referral to counselling I was strong enough to carry on when I was in hard times: being at work was my only place of sanity and safety."



Q How does the Women's Advocate Program benefit the employer?

By affecting the bottom line. If a Women's Advocate can keep just one woman working who is experiencing violence, the employer will have benefited. Early prevention strategies minimize the effects of violence for women by providing avenues through which they can seek assistance. When women are provided with assistance and support from their Women's Advocate they are more often able to remain at work.

Q What is the role of the employer?

The employer assigns a female management support person to work jointly with the Unifor Women's Advocate from the bargaining unit. The role of the employer is to provide the Women's Advocate with training, support and adequate resources to effectively fulfill her role as Women's Advocate.

Q Why does a Women's Advocate have to be trained?

Women who are in abusive relationships risk further violence, even death, as they seek to leave or break contact with the abuser. The Advocate needs to be trained to recognize signs of abuse, make appropriate referrals and work with the employer to consider safety planning for the workplace if necessary.

Q What is the cost of training?

The week long training costs include lost time, travel, accommodation and registration.

Q Who are the victims of violence?

While some men do experience violence within an intimate relationship, the vast majority of victims are women.

According to Family Violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2011, family violence accounted for 26% of all police-reported violent crime in 2011. About half

(49%) of the nearly 95,000 victims of family violence were in a current or previous spousal relationship with the accused, including both common-law and legally married partnerships. As in previous years, the majority of victims of family violence were females. They represented 80% of spousal victims.

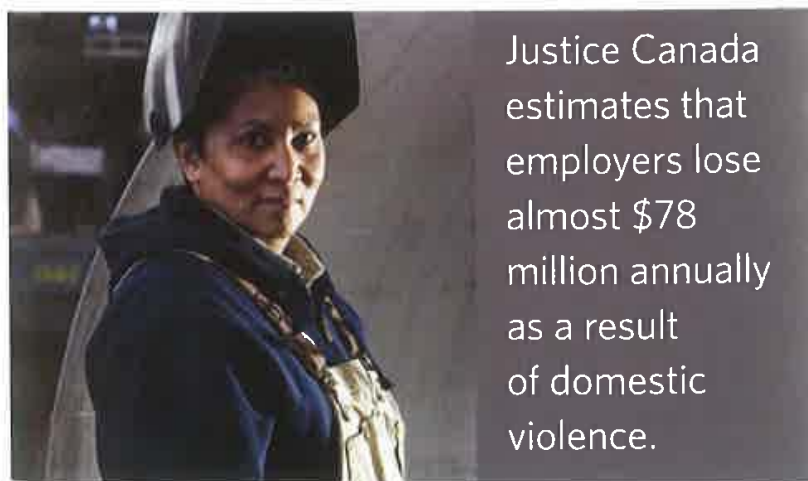
Q Does an employer assume added liability?

No. Although employers sometimes fear that they will expose themselves to added liability, in fact they have an obligation to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstance for the protection of a worker. Violence is a recurring issue and if not addressed through workplace violence prevention programs it can often end tragically.

By having proper tools in place in the form of a formal workplace violence prevention program employers can protect their employees and at the same time do what is required under the law.

Q Does violence against women have significant impact in the workplace?

When workers experience domestic violence at home the impacts are felt in the workplace. A recent study by Justice Canada highlights this fact by estimating that employers lose \$77.9 million annually as a result of domestic violence. But the costs, both financial and personal go far beyond that number.



Justice Canada estimates that employers lose almost \$78 million annually as a result of domestic violence.

3

REASONS

why every workplace
should have a Women's
Advocate Program



1

ST REASON

It makes economic sense

A recent study by Justice Canada estimates that employers lose 77.9 million annually as a result of domestic violence.

A recent Canadian study called "Can Work be Safe, When Home Isn't?" (2014) reported that one-third of respondents experienced domestic violence from an intimate partner. Of those, 53.5% said domestic violence continued at work and 38% indicated it impacted their ability to get to work.

2ND REASON

A safe workplace is an employer's responsibility

Violence against women is a security and liability concern. An abuser's interference in the workplace or in the work success of his "target" is one of many ways that an abuser exercises and flaunts his power and control.

3RD REASON

It's our collective responsibility

Employers can make a difference in their workplaces and in the lives of employees who are facing abuse by sending a clear message that they are on the side of ending violence.

Recognizing it is the first step. Taking the warning signs seriously and being supportive can make a real difference. We all have a role to play.

"After what happened I wanted to curl into a little ball and die. The Advocate at my workplace was supportive and linked me to someone trained to help. She was a life saver."



"Programs like the Women's Advocate Program raise awareness about violence and better allow women a way out of violent situations. The Unifor Women's Advocate Program is a model program which should be implemented in all workplaces across the country."

—Barb MacQuarrie, community director of the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children , Western University

Role of the Women's Advocate



In the workplace:

Listen, believe, validate and assist.

Respect confidentiality.

Respect a woman's right to make her own decisions.

Promote access to community services.

When necessary help plan for future safety.

Work with leadership.

In the community:

Lobby for child care, housing and funding for women's programs.

Promote women's equality campaigns.

Network with coalition partners.

Speak out, take action!

Get involved. Be a voice.

Negotiating Women's Advocate Program language

To find out more about the Women's Advocate Program or view model language please go to www.unifor.org/women, email women@unifor.org or call 1-800-265-1891.

Women's Advocates are trained to recognise risks

"Sometimes women don't realize how much danger they're in. The six month window after the end of a relationship is the most dangerous time. As an Advocate I'm trained to identify risks and refer women to the appropriate agency."





Ending violence through equality

—Lisa Kelly, Director, Unifor Women's Department

Ending violence against women requires actions by all of us. As a union, we have many avenues to help address this issue collectively. One of those ways is at the bargaining table. The Women's Advocate program can let women know they are not alone; it is their right to be free from violence; and that there are community resources and support needed to leave a violent relationship. Women's Advocates can work to ensure women's jobs are protected when they need time off work to find safety.

Hundreds of Unifor women have contacted Unifor Women's Advocates and have felt supported, believed, validated and empowered. These were the first steps in living a life free from violence.

We know we cannot end violence against women at the bargaining table alone. The Women's Advocate Program provides women with support and resources when often there is nowhere else to turn.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lisa Kelly'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Lisa' and last name 'Kelly' clearly distinguishable.

Lisa Kelly

A Women's Advocate:

Someone who can listen and help when a woman is...

- facing violence or abuse in her relationship
- experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace
- in need of community resources

When there's nowhere else to turn, the Women's Advocate is there.



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