

# Manitoba's Multi-year Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy

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Available in alternate formats upon request.

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## Ministers' Message

On behalf of the provincial government, we are pleased to present Manitoba's Multi-year Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy.

This strategy outlines new actions to support people who have been harmed by domestic violence, ways to deal with those who commit this crime, and training for people who encounter families in the course of their work. It also represents a significant shift in our approach to domestic violence.

In forming this strategy, the Manitoba government consulted with members of the public, service providers, academics and other stakeholders to determine priorities and needs of families affected by domestic violence. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who provided insight. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude to the survivors, family members, friends and other loved ones who participated in the consultation process. We were inspired by your willingness to share your experiences to improve the lives of others, and we are grateful for your invaluable contributions.

We would also like to thank the members of the strategy review committee (listed at right). Your expertise was critical to ensuring a comprehensive and meaningful plan for addressing domestic violence in our province.

As we move forward with implementing this strategy, the Manitoba government remains committed to working with our community partners. Only by working together can we end domestic violence and build a province where all families are healthy and strong.



Jennifer Howard  
Minister of Family Services and Labour

### Strategy Review Committee members (non-governmental):

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Jennifer C. Warkentin  
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*Total funding for FVPP programs has increased by 104 per cent since 2000, to over \$12 million in 2012/13.*

*Annually, Manitoba spends \$1.3 million on facilities that house family violence programs. This includes maintenance, utilities, etc. As well, nearly \$500,000 has been spent on upgrades in the past two years.*

## Introduction

In November 2011, the Manitoba government committed to developing a multi-year domestic violence strategy. This document provides an overview of the strategy development process, and outlines specific actions that the Manitoba government will undertake to better prevent and respond to the issue of domestic violence. Priority areas for action and specific commitments were informed by province-wide public consultations, a review of the residential facilities, a review of funding provided to agencies, feedback from the strategy review committee, current research and best practices from other jurisdictions.

## Strategy Preparation Process

In the spring of 2012, the Manitoba government held public consultations to gather information on how to improve prevention efforts and services for those affected by domestic violence. Three options were available for Manitobans to share their ideas and opinions: province-wide public consultation meetings, an online survey and submissions via mail. In total, 240 individuals participated in the public meetings and 170 written submissions were received.

The Manitoba government also reviewed its support for agencies working in the domestic violence sector. The review included interviews with Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP)-funded service providers, a survey of other provinces and territories, a review of emerging research, and analysis of FVPP program use data. The cross-jurisdictional survey found that Manitoba's funding model remains strong in comparison with other jurisdictions. It also found a strength that remains unique to our province – Manitoba is the only province where all domestic violence shelters are purchased, owned and maintained by the province.

As well, Manitoba Housing assessed its buildings that house the 10 provincially-funded women's shelters, the men's crisis unit and several longer-term residential programs. In all cases, maintenance issues related to health and safety were addressed immediately. The assessments identified current capital requirements, future needs, as well as other opportunities to support shelter providers in the delivery of residential family violence services.

In preparing the strategy, the Manitoba government also reviewed current research on domestic violence and how best to promote healthy, equal relationships. As well, a research day was held for the strategy review committee to help inform their work. We are grateful to the following researchers for sharing their time and expertise:

- Nahanni Fontaine, Special Advisor on Aboriginal Women's Issues to Aboriginal Issues Committee of Cabinet
- Dr. Tuula Heinonen, Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba
- Lucia Madariaga-Vignudo, Qualtrica Associates
- Dr. Janice Ristock, Vice President (Academic) and Provost and Associate Professor, Women's and Gender Studies, University of Manitoba
- Dr. Jane Ursel, Director of RESOLVE Manitoba and Professor, Sociology, University of Manitoba
- Lana Wells, Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary

## Background on Domestic Violence

We know that domestic violence remains a pervasive problem in our society. In 2009, over one million Canadians reported being victimized physically or sexually by their partner or spouse within the past five years and one in five said they experienced emotional or financial abuse in their current or previous relationship.<sup>1</sup> From 1974 to 2009, there were at least 199 spousal homicides in Manitoba.<sup>2</sup> In the 2011/2012 fiscal year, Victim Services (Manitoba Justice) assisted victims in over 18,000 domestic violence incidents where police services were received. We also know these numbers represent only a small fraction of all those who have been affected, including victims, friends, family members, co-workers and neighbours.

In addition to the physical and emotional costs to victims of abuse, we know that domestic violence results in significant economic costs to all citizens because of expenses related to police services, legal aid, courts, crisis intervention, health care, social services and even lost productivity at work. Studies estimate that these costs range in the billions of dollars.<sup>3</sup>

We know that both women and men experience domestic violence at the hands of their partners. Women, however, constitute the majority of victims (80 per cent) in dating and spousal violence incidents reported to police.<sup>4</sup> Women are also more likely than men to be victims of severe forms of domestic violence, including being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked or threatened with a gun or a knife. As well, women are more than twice as likely to be injured as a result of the abuse.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, promoting gender equality is an important component of prevention efforts.<sup>6</sup>

*We know that friends and family are helping each other in situations of domestic violence. Some people turn to a health care worker, Elder, teacher, police, etc. Some people go to a shelter, resource centre, etc. It is important to tell someone about the abuse. In any situation, you have the right to be safe.*

Research tells us that most victims of domestic violence turn to informal sources of support including their friends, family members and co-workers. Less than one-quarter of victims surveyed by Statistics Canada in 2009 said they reported the abuse to police.<sup>7</sup> Only 15 per cent of women who reported experiencing spousal abuse contacted a crisis centre or crisis line.<sup>8</sup>

We know that younger Canadians, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence.<sup>9</sup> In particular, Aboriginal women are at a much greater risk of experiencing domestic violence. In 2009, 15 per cent of the Aboriginal women who had a current or former spouse reported being a victim of spousal violence in the five years before the survey (about two and a half times higher than the proportion of non-Aboriginal women).<sup>10</sup>

Consistent with national statistics, the majority of women who access Manitoba's family violence shelters are young and have children. In 2011/12, sixty per cent of all people who stayed at an emergency shelter due to domestic violence were in the 20 to 34 year age group and 56 per cent had one or more children in their custody.

For children, the negative effects of witnessing domestic violence can be severe. Children who witness violence in the home are more likely to have behavioural, emotional, social, cognitive and physical difficulties. They may also be at increased risk of injury and death as a result of being abused and neglected. As reported in the 2009 General Social Survey (GSS), over half (52 per cent) of all spousal violence victims with children reported that their children heard or saw the assaults.<sup>11</sup> As these children grow into adults, it can be harder for them to have healthy relationships.

We recognize that domestic violence initiatives in Manitoba must consider the unique needs of our diverse population. Domestic violence has to be addressed on multiple fronts and requires citizens, governments, communities, service organizations, employers and unions to be engaged.

## Moving Forward

Based on feedback from the public consultations and other work, Manitoba is moving forward with efforts to end domestic violence in the following areas:

- supports for victims and families
- interventions for people with abusive behaviours
- prevention, awareness and training

The definition, vision and guiding principles were developed in collaboration with strategy review committee members.

### Strategy Definition and Scope

Domestic violence takes many forms. Violence can be physical, psychological and sexual in nature. In most cases, domestic violence is perpetrated by men and mainly against women and children. However, there are also female perpetrators. Violence exists in many types of intimate relationships: in heterosexual and same-sex relationships (currently or formerly dating, married, or living together). While certain factors may increase the risk of abuse, domestic violence happens to people from all walks of life.

Other forms of abuse that happen within families can also have serious impacts, for example elder abuse, abuse by immediate and extended family members, etc. While this strategy deals with domestic violence, it also includes work that begins to address the broader issue of family violence. Therefore, this document uses the term domestic violence, except when referring to specific initiatives that have a broader scope.

### Vision

We envision a province where people live free from violence and abuse in their relationships and have opportunities to reach their full potential and contribute to the well-being of their families and communities.

We envision a province where all Manitobans know how to respond to domestic violence, and those experiencing domestic violence know where to go for help.

## Guiding Principles

- Preventing and ending domestic violence is a shared responsibility of all Manitobans.
- Everyone has the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Both women and men can be victims of domestic violence; however, women are much more likely to be seriously harmed than men.
- All Manitobans have the right to access appropriate and responsive services regardless of ethnicity, culture, ability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or economic status.
- Domestic violence touches all of us, even if we do not experience it directly, damaging individuals, families, children, friends, neighbours, communities and society.
- The effects of experiencing domestic violence, or being exposed to it as a child, can be serious and long-lasting, and addressing these effects requires holistic and individualized approaches.
- Services for people with abusive behaviours should use effective interventions and foster accountability.
- Collaborating and engaging with communities is critical to effectively address domestic violence.

# Working Together to End Domestic Violence

The Manitoba government supports a continuum of domestic violence services, as well as prevention programming and public awareness initiatives. Each year, the government invests over \$15 million in programs to help support victims of domestic violence and their children.

## Supports for Victims and Families

### What we are doing

*Counselling, crisis accommodations, specialized programs, court orders, legal help*

Services are a critical source of support for victims and their children, helping them find safety and begin the process of rebuilding their lives. Currently, the Manitoba government supports the following:

- a provincial, toll free, domestic violence information/crisis line (1-877-977-0007) for people seeking help due to violence in their families or in the family of someone they know
- protection orders, prevention orders and peace bonds for victims of stalking and domestic violence
- support for protection order applicants, available through Manitoba Justice Victim Services and community-based agencies (Protection Order Designates)
- agencies that provide counselling and other services for families, children and individuals affected by domestic violence, including women's resource centres, crisis shelters, residential second-stage programs, supervised children's access/exchange services, including specialized programs for Aboriginal people, newcomers and Francophone people
- supports for those moving from emergency shelters to independent living in the community
- specialized programs for older victims of abuse<sup>†</sup>
- help for victims of domestic violence when criminal charges have been laid and assistance for individuals where calls to police services do not result in charges, but there are signs that family conflict might escalate, through the Domestic Violence Support Service

<sup>†</sup> For additional elder abuse resources, please see [www.manitoba.ca/shas/](http://www.manitoba.ca/shas/) or call the Seniors Abuse Support Line at 1-888-896-7183.

*A three month snapshot of people who accessed shelters showed that 59 per cent had stayed in shelter before. Of these, 29 women had been in shelters more than 10 times.*

- financial support for victims and children through the Compensation for Victims of Crime program for costs related to counselling and medical expenses
- individual and group therapy for family members of homicide victims, including those affected by domestic violence homicides
- free cell phones, pre-programmed to dial emergency services, for people at high risk of domestic violence and stalking, through the Cellphone Emergency Limited Link-up (CELL) Program
- Safe Pet, a program that provides options for families entering crisis shelters who do not want to leave a pet behind (in recognition of the link between domestic violence and animal abuse)
- increased confidentiality of address information when requested by victims (through various Manitoba government departments)
- protection for victims and their families through the common practice of requesting no-contact conditions, weapons prohibitions and drug and alcohol abstinence conditions in domestic violence matters
- Legal Aid support for family law matters
- a range of conflict resolution services for families going through separation or divorce, through Family Conciliation Services
- legislation to help protect victims and families (see Appendix: Legislation)

#### **Priorities identified through the strategy preparation process**

- counselling for children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence
- focus on the over-representation of Aboriginal women and children in Manitoba's shelter system
- a range of services to help foster healthy families, including couples counselling
- legal supports, including supports for victims involved in family law proceedings
- supports for women who access women's shelters frequently and for extended periods of time<sup>‡</sup>
- supports for men seeking services as victims
- consider broader social issues affecting victims, including financial stability, housing, child care and addictions services

<sup>‡</sup> We recognize that the cycle of domestic violence leads many women to seek out formal services repeatedly. However, there may be an opportunity to better support the needs of women who frequently access shelters.

## What we will do

*Supporting victims of family violence, funding for legal support, working to help service providers recruit and retain staff, improving shelter facilities*

The Manitoba government is committed to strengthening efforts to support victims of domestic violence, their children, and other loved ones. New initiatives and enhancements to existing services will be launched within the next five years. Specifically, the Manitoba government will:

- offer accessible and appropriate supports for people abused by family members who are not intimate partners (ex: parents, siblings, grandparents, extended family members) through shelters, women's resource centres, residential second stage programs, etc.
- develop supports for agencies and individuals to address the needs of women who use multiple FVPP-funded shelters frequently and for extended periods of time, including:
  - develop a protocol in partnership with provincially-funded women's shelters to provide guidance for women who experience repeat victimization
  - explore a partnership with Addictions Foundation of Manitoba to better meet the needs of clients leaving abusive relationships who also have addictions issues
  - adopt Housing First principles in the implementation of a pilot project aimed at reducing barriers for victims
  - review policies that may be a barrier to victims achieving stable housing
- provide ongoing, stable funding for A Woman's Place to support a lawyer to help women who have been victims of domestic violence with their legal matters
- develop strategies to enhance staff recruitment and retention efforts of community service providers
- explore ways to better support family members, friends, etc. who are concerned about a loved one involved in an abusive relationship
- provide interpreters to assist those applying for protection orders
- provide a single point of contact for domestic violence shelter providers for all facility-related capital and maintenance issues
- spend over \$1 million on capital improvements to shelters and other family violence facilities owned by Manitoba Housing

*Broader supports, such as accessible housing, child care, financial resources, and addictions resources are particularly critical for families experiencing abuse and those who have left an abusive relationship. For more information on the Manitoba government's commitments in these areas, please see:*

- *Manitoba Housing and Community Development's Strong Communities: An Action Plan;*
- *Manitoba Family Services and Labour's Family Choices: Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care;*
- *ALL Aboard: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy;* and
- *Manitoba Healthy Living, Seniors and Consumer Affairs' Breaking the Chains of Addictions: Manitoba's Five Point Strategic Plan.*

- continue to increase the number of accessible social housing units to accommodate people with disabilities and large families, which will help remove barriers for low-income Manitobans leaving abusive relationships who require these types of units
- develop a streamlined intake process and assessment of supports for victims of domestic violence who apply for social housing
- update the publication, *Family Law in Manitoba*, which provides information on marriage, separation and divorce, custody, support and more
- expand counselling opportunities for families and children who are affected by domestic violence
- explore options to provide follow-up services through Family Conciliation, allowing parents/guardians the opportunity to review whether custody and access arrangements are working (reducing the need to resolve disputes through the courts)
- explore legislative options to protect victims from harassment by in-custody offenders
- develop a sexual assault prevention strategy
- work with service providers to improve supports for men leaving abusive relationships
- review current policies and practices concerning the Manitoba Victim Impact Statement Program to ensure it aligns with best practices
- seek reimbursement from the Government of Canada for shelter services provided to women who usually reside on reserves, similar to the federal arrangement with Alberta, Yukon and the Atlantic provinces
- explore new guidelines for collecting and storing forensic and other evidence gathered at health care facilities to support the prosecution of domestic violence matters

## Interventions for People with Abusive Behaviours

### What we are doing

*Specialized court, prosecutions unit and probations unit; community-based counselling; collaboration*

Programs to help eliminate abusive behaviour, manage risk and hold domestic violence offenders accountable for their actions are of key importance in effectively addressing the issue of domestic violence. Currently, the Manitoba government supports the following:

- a specialized Domestic Violence Unit within Manitoba Prosecutions Service
- a specialized Family Violence Court in Winnipeg designed to deal sensitively with abuse prosecutions
- the internationally recognized Provincial Court Front End Project, which has cut trial delays for domestic violence cases dramatically
- the Criminal Organization High Risk Offender Unit (COHROU), a specialized unit within Winnipeg Probation Services, provides intensive interventions and monitoring for very high-risk family violence offenders
- Manitoba Crown attorneys, Victim Services and Corrections (Institutional Corrections and Probation Services, including COHROU) work together to case-manage high-risk files and flag concerns
- domestic violence prevention programming for offenders
- a partnership between Manitoba Justice and the Winnipeg Police Service to develop a Family Violence Risk Checklist to identify high-risk situations and ensure information is accurately communicated to complainants and other relevant stakeholders
- community-based agencies that offer counselling to people with abusive behaviours in urban, rural and northern settings

### Priorities identified through the strategy preparation process

- programs for men who use abusive behaviours, including culturally-appropriate services
- counselling that addresses the root causes and prior trauma of people who use abusive behaviours
- accountability through the justice system
- stricter enforcement of orders and better monitoring of offenders

## What we will do

*Piloting a new diversion program, supporting law enforcement and piloting a family court support worker program*

Manitoba has implemented innovative, progressive services to better serve families involved in criminal justice proceedings. Continuing in this spirit, the Manitoba government commits to the following actions to enhance our current services for domestic violence offenders:

- continue to pilot the new diversion program for men convicted of domestic violence offences, offered by the Salvation Army
- expand healthy relationships and dating violence programming at the Manitoba Youth Centre and Agassiz Youth Centre
- work with police to explore improved documentation of injuries in domestic violence matters
- pilot a family court support worker program through Victim Services that will offer support for victims of domestic violence who are also involved in a family court proceeding
- expand COHROU to allow more high risk offenders on probation to be intensively supervised
- pilot the use of electronic monitoring, in consultation with police and courts, with domestic violence offenders
- continue to pilot Making a Connection, an intensive program for adult domestic violence offenders
- ensure appropriate training is available to those in the justice system who come into contact with victims and offenders, including first responders
- review existing police procedures regarding domestic violence situations that involve members of a police service
- seek advice from the Manitoba Police Commission on standardized domestic violence training for Manitoba's law enforcement agencies

## Awareness, Prevention and Training

### What we are doing

*Awareness campaigns; information for seniors, Aboriginal women, people with disabilities; family programs; training for professionals*

The Manitoba government supports various programs and resources that promote healthy relationships and raise awareness of the impacts of domestic violence. These activities not only help families affected by domestic violence, but also work toward changing social, cultural and gender-based attitudes and norms that condone abuse and inequality. Some key activities in this area include:

- annual recognition of November as Domestic Violence Prevention Month, including sponsoring various events and publications to raise public awareness, and producing a public awareness campaign (in formats accessible to all)
- Family Violence Prevention Program website information relevant to specific groups including youth, seniors, Aboriginal women, people with disabilities, people in same-sex relationships, men and newcomers to Canada ([www.manitoba.ca/fs/fvpp/](http://www.manitoba.ca/fs/fvpp/))
- Victim Services brochures and fact sheets on domestic violence in 10 different languages (English, French, Chinese, German, Tagalog, Arabic, Punjabi, Ojibway, Cree and Spanish)
- The Family Law Branch's handbook, *Family Law in Manitoba*, which raises awareness of family law issues
- publications that promote gender equality and healthy relationships, including *4 Girls Only!* (aimed at girls in Grades 6 through 8), *Parenting on Your Own*, *Living in Manitoba: A Resource Guide for Women with Disabilities*, and *Living in Manitoba: A Resource Guide for Immigrant Women*
- Kindergarten through Grade 12 curricula and programs that address healthy relationships, conflict resolution, addictions and other related topics
- workshops on healthy relationships and domestic violence in schools upon request (through Victim Services and various community agencies funded by the Manitoba government)
- extensive preventive programs that promote healthy families and relationships, such as Healthy Child Manitoba's Triple P, Families First, Parent Child Coalitions, PAX Good Behaviour Game, Roots of Empathy and Seeds of Empathy

- Protection Order Designate training through Victim Services to community service agencies, to enable staff to become designated to assist protection order applicants
- domestic violence training for police, schools, community-based agencies and frontline provincial government staff
- ongoing expert clinical consultation to domestic violence service providers across Manitoba
- WISE (Workplace Initiative to Support Employees) on Family Violence, a program that promotes awareness and encourages employers to create supportive policies
- training material for school guidance counsellors, focusing on how to best support children/youth affected by, and involved in, domestic violence relationships

#### **Priorities identified through the strategy preparation process**

- education and awareness for young people, focused on healthy relationships as well as domestic/dating abuse
- public awareness using new approaches such as social media
- public awareness that engages men and boys as allies
- awareness for, and engagement with, Aboriginal people, newcomers, people with disabilities and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender (LGBT) communities
- domestic violence awareness for justice professionals across the province
- training for community-based domestic violence service providers
- training for those who come into contact with families in the course of their work (ex: health professionals, religious leaders, educators, child protection workers)
- opportunities for collaboration, including joint training opportunities and new models for service co-ordination

## What we will do

*Launching campaigns to engage men and boys, developing resources for youth, collaborating with communities to develop resources, training service providers and other professionals*

Challenging the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence is an important component of addressing the issue. In addition to the ongoing public awareness initiatives already in place, the Manitoba government will:

### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

- work in partnership with schools to support prevention programming
- develop a healthy relationships/dating strategy for youth, including exploring relevant evidence-based programs
- launch a male youth to youth social media campaign featuring a prevention message, in partnership with Broadway Neighbourhood Centre's JustTV Program
- offer interactive workshops for young girls across Manitoba, focusing on issues such as self-esteem, healthy relationships and body image
- update *4 Girls Only!*, a guide (hardcopy and online) for girls in Grades 6 through 8 that provides information on issues including self-confidence, body image, bullying, online safety, healthy relationships and diversity
- produce a handbook (hardcopy and online) for boys in Grades 6 through 8 that provides information on issues and concerns relevant to them, in partnership with community stakeholders
- support Child and Family Services (CFS) of Western Manitoba to implement stage two of Safer Families, a pilot project for families involved with CFS who are experiencing domestic violence, which includes enhancing existing services, introducing a best practice model, collaborating with community partners and an evaluation component
- support new and effective initiatives for children exposed to domestic violence, for example, in schools, child care and Child and Family Services

### **ENGAGING MEN AS ALLIES**

- launch an ongoing campaign featuring sports celebrities speaking out about violence against women, including social media components
- work with Aboriginal stakeholders to develop a campaign featuring Aboriginal men that provides positive messages and takes a stand on violence against women
- work with the Men's Resource Centre to host a men's roundtable and create actions to end domestic violence

#### **OTHER AWARENESS AND PREVENTION INITIATIVES**

- work with ethno-cultural communities and newcomer-serving organizations to host a series of roundtables to develop culturally-relevant awareness material in multiple languages
- support gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and transgender (GLBTT) communities to develop awareness materials
- create family violence awareness fact sheets for older Manitobans
- update the Manitoba government's brochure for victims of family violence
- host information sessions on family abuse for older women, through the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council
- develop awareness materials for men who are victims of family violence, in partnership with community service providers
- update the Manitoba government's domestic violence website ([www.gov.mb.ca/domesticviolence](http://www.gov.mb.ca/domesticviolence)), adding additional information and simplifying navigation
- partner with members of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Status of Women forum to update Statistics Canada's Measuring Violence Against Women report
- continue to enhance data collection on domestic and family violence

#### **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- enhance training opportunities for staff working in community-based domestic violence organizations:
  - provide diversity training for those working with domestic violence victims to address working with Aboriginal, newcomer and GLBTT populations and people with disabilities
  - host a summit (urban and northern) for domestic violence service providers, focused on best practices to support families affected by domestic violence
  - provide training on case management practices and how information can be shared while meeting privacy requirements
  - invite federally-funded Manitoba shelters to participate in training offered to provincially-funded organizations

- provide training for other occupational groups that serve families and individuals harmed by domestic violence:
  - expand training about the dynamics of domestic violence to government staff who provide frontline services in areas such as Employment and Income Assistance, Manitoba Housing, and Family Conciliation
  - continue to build on training workshops for educators on the effects of domestic violence on children, with workshops and opportunities for online learning
  - explore professional education opportunities for professionals working in the legal system
  - work with health professionals to develop awareness and training materials
  - work with faith-based organizations to produce awareness and training materials
  - create a guide with Child and Family Services (CFS) authorities and other stakeholders on how best to serve families experiencing domestic violence
  - enhance existing domestic violence training for child protection workers to include training on follow-up services for children
  - develop on-line information materials for use by frontline Manitoba government staff on family violence, including how best to help clients who may be the victims of family violence
  - expand the WISE (Workplace Initiative to Support Employees) on Family Violence initiative for workplaces to include online training

## Implementation and Monitoring

To guide implementation of this strategy, the Manitoba government will form an implementation committee consisting of representatives from community-based organizations, law enforcement, government and other key stakeholders. Their input will help us as we continue to refine and expand efforts to prevent and respond to domestic violence. We will report on our progress in the *Family Services and Labour Annual Report*.

## Conclusion

The above commitments represent a comprehensive approach in our work toward ending domestic violence. With innovative awareness campaigns and training opportunities, we will engage new groups in the conversation about healthy, equal relationships and strengthen our focus on prevention. Services for victims of domestic violence will be enhanced to provide an even broader continuum of supports. We will ensure that interventions for people with abusive behaviours are based on the best evidence available.

However, we recognize that our work is not yet done. In addition to the commitments listed above, the Manitoba government will continue to listen to the needs expressed by communities and work collaboratively with stakeholders. Only through the collective efforts of government, service organizations, businesses, communities, families and individuals can we achieve our vision of eliminating violence, intimidation and harassment in intimate relationships.

## Appendix: Legislation

Legislative changes to enhance victim safety and supports include:

- *The Protection from Domestic Violence and Best Interests of Children Act* (2010), which amended existing legislation:
  - requiring courts to consider specific factors regarding the best interests of children in deciding custody and access cases, including the impacts of domestic violence
  - requiring courts to assess risks related to domestic violence and stalking before making an order to disclose a person's address information
  - to create exceptions to certain protection orders to allow parties to attend court or court-ordered processes such as mediation, while ensuring appropriate protection for victims
- *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act* (2005), which allows out-of-province, Canadian civil protection orders to be enforced in Manitoba and acted upon by police whether or not the order is registered in the Manitoba courts
- *The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* amendments (2005) that strengthened civil remedies for victims by expanding the categories of people the act applies to and by improving protections for children
- *The Victims Bill of Rights* (2001) mandates and protects victims' rights to information and input in dealings with police, prosecutions, courts and corrections for specific criminal offences
- *The Residential Tenancies Act* amendment (2012), which ensured that tenancy agreements are not a barrier to victims who want to leave violent situations

## End Notes

- 1 Statistics Canada. 2011. *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-224-X. Ottawa, ON. 53 p. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2010000-eng.pdf> (accessed July 2012.)
- 2 Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. 2011. Special tabulation, based on Homicide Survey 1974-2009.  
Note: "Spousal homicides" includes homicides in which the victim and accused were legally married, common-law, separated, separated common-law, or divorced and, as of 1997, also includes current and former same sex spouses. The figure is likely an underestimate, as it does not include unsolved homicides. As well, the figure does not include other victims (e.g., children, extended family members, bystanders) killed in incidents of domestic violence.
- 3 Statistics Canada. 2006. *Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006*. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-570-XIE. Ottawa, ON. 97 p. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-570-x/85-570-x2006001-eng.pdf> (accessed May 2011.)
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