



# Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence in Rural Communities

Domestic violence is an all-too-common reality across Canada, and rural communities are no exception. In fact, rural and remote communities have higher rates of domestic violence compared to urban settings.\* Helping someone who is experiencing domestic violence can be a sensitive matter, but there are signs to watch for and ways to offer support.

## Warning signs someone is potentially abusive

- Isolating their partner and not allowing them to see family or friends
- Belittling their partner
- Controlling finances
- Requiring their partner ask permission to do/buy something
- Manipulation
- Dominating behaviour
- Constantly monitoring their partner's movements and checking in on them
- Threatening or intimidating behaviour
- Threatening to harm pets or farm animals
- Acting like their partner is their property

## How to help

- Start a conversation and express concern without being critical.
- Let them know you are there to support them.
- Do not pressure them into talking.
- If they deny being abused, tell them they can talk to you at any time.
- Always stick to the facts; do not speculate what you think has happened.
- If they confide in you, tell them you believe them and it is not their fault.
- Tell them about local services.
- Offer to drive and accompany them places.
- Encourage the person to make a safety plan, including strategies for leaving quickly.
- Have them create a communication check-in schedule with you.
- Let them use your computer or other device if they are worried about their partner monitoring their online actions.
- Offer to watch their children or pets while they access services.

**IF YOU WITNESS VIOLENCE DIRECTLY, CALL 9-1-1 AND CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHILD PROTECTION HOTLINE IF CHILDREN ARE IN DANGER. REMEMBER THAT IT IS NOT YOUR JOB TO RESCUE SOMEONE; ALWAYS KEEP YOUR OWN SAFETY IN MIND.**

\* <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/FEWO/Brief/BR11575288/br-external/StatisticsCanada-Brief-e.pdf>