

ROW

RESOURCES FOR OLDER WOMEN

Greater Toronto Area



NICE

National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly

Initiative nationale pour le soin des personnes âgées

We care together

Ensemble pour le bien-être des aînés

www.nicenet.ca

What Is This Information Booklet About?

This information booklet is for older women who feel uncomfortable or unsafe in their home because they are being treated badly by someone who lives or visits there.

The information will help you decide: if what you are experiencing is abuse, **why** you should seek help, and **how** and **where** to find the help you need to be safer.

If you think there is a good chance that your abuser might read the information inside and mistreat you further, do not keep the booklet.

Part One of this booklet was created in 2009 by a group of older Ontario women with ‘lived expertise’ of abuse. The project was supported by the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE) and received financial assistance from Status of Women Canada (SWC).

Part Two of this booklet is the resource list put forward by the NICE “Bridging Aging and Women Abuse” project team in Ontario. Inclusion of an organization/program in this resource directory does not imply endorsement, nor does exclusion imply lack of endorsement.

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Are You Being Abused?

The following six examples will help you determine whether you are experiencing abuse and what type of abuse it is.

“He was raised to believe spanking and strict rules are a part of running a home. With the kids gone he’s been more frustrated with me. He’s slapped me a few times but only when he was really angry.”

If anyone causes you physical harm by hitting, burning or rough handling you; or keeping you from moving about or leaving a room (using physical force, alcohol or medication), **this is physical abuse.**

“I moved here to help my daughter during her divorce. But, she’s so angry and depressed. I can’t have visitors and she keeps the phone from me. She rarely lets me go places without her and times my trips when I go alone.”

If anyone is controlling your comings and goings, your activities in or outside the home and/or who you talk to, **this is emotional abuse.**

“When my husband comes home drunk, he forces me to have sex. Saying ‘no’ doesn’t stop him. I’m his wife; maybe I shouldn’t say no.”

If anyone (including your husband) exposes him/herself or touches you against your will, or forces you to look at sexual material, have sex or perform other sexual acts, **this is sexual abuse.**

“I am grateful to my daughter-in-law, who’s been caring for me since my stroke. But, I wish she wouldn’t leave me alone so often without my lunch or medication or a way to use the bathroom.”

If the person providing your care consistently leaves you alone, without food, medication or a way to go to the bathroom, **this is neglect which is a form of abuse.**

“I try to cook nice dinners but my partner Maria ruins it by drinking too much and screaming that I’m a bad cook, a bad mother and can’t do anything right.”

If anyone does or says something to make you afraid, to make you uncertain about yourself or to cause you emotional pain by calling you names, yelling, insulting or threatening you, **this is emotional abuse.**

“My son helps me with my banking and when he deposits my cheque he takes a lot of money for himself. I don’t say anything because he’s my son and I’m supposed to help him, right?”

If someone close to you is taking your money, wrongly spending money you've given them access to, or making you feel like you have to give them money, **this is financial abuse.**

Why Take Action?

These are some of the reasons why you might not want to take action and get help, and why you should act to be safer.

You may not be seeking help because:

- You **don't want the abuser to get in trouble or go to jail**
- You **believe the abuse is not intentional** because it is by someone you trust and care for OR by someone who 'can't help' their behaviour
- You **think no one will believe you** because the abuse didn't leave a mark OR it only happened once
- You **believe the abuse will get worse** if you seek help OR you think it's not a big deal and **hope it will get better** over time
- You **believe that you are not able to take action** because you provide care for someone, you depend on someone for care, you don't have money OR you don't know where to turn

- You **believe that what happens in your home is private and family comes first** so you are embarrassed OR you believe you must accept your situation so your family stays together

Abuse Is Not Your Fault, Is Always Wrong And There Are Ways To Get Help!

How Can You Be Safer Now?

These are actions that you can take yourself or with the help of people you trust.

If you are living with your abuser:

- Don't be ashamed - talk to people about what's going on
- Carry \$15 for a taxi and change for a pay phone
- Open your own bank account (\$5 to start) and request that no bank mail come to your home
- Get a cell phone, keep it charged and program numbers in speed dial
- Avoid the kitchen and rooms with one exit when abuse is possible
- Create a telephone code word with someone to signal danger and ask them to call 911 if they think you're in danger
- Ask someone to help you find services and go with you to appointments

- Have someone take photographs or notes as evidence of the abuse
- Join activities outside your home (art or fitness classes)

If you are leaving your home:

- Leave an emergency bag at a safe location or with someone you trust, with copies of your identification, prescriptions, phone numbers, health/credit/drug/bank cards and spare glasses/cane
- Bring a picture of the abuser to show police, neighbours and co-workers; record the abuser's licence plate number
- Make arrangements for dependent adult children, spouse/partner and pets because it may be difficult to get them out of the home once you've left

If your abuser lives outside your home:

- Change/strengthen the locks and install a peephole
- Inform your neighbours that your abuser shouldn't be around
- Change the places you go and consider changing your doctor, dentist and/or lawyer if shared with your abuser
- Carry restraining, custody and bail orders with you

How Can You Get The Help You Need?

When you call for help it is very important that the person you speak to understands the type of abuse, and the most important help you need right now.

When contacting someone for help:

- **Say that you are experiencing abuse and name it** - physical, sexual, financial, emotional or neglect
- **Make sure voice messages are very specific** - name the kind of abuse, what you need help with and whether it is safe to call you back/leave a message
- Tell them if you have **dependent adult children, spouse/partner or pets who will need care** if you are not around
- **Ask them to make the call for/with you** if they suggest you contact another agency
- **Don't stick with services that aren't helpful** - don't let a bad experience stop you from continuing to look for help
- **Know you have the right to consent, or not, to share your information** with others without losing your service provider's support (but know this may limit their ability to connect you with other services)

Where can you find help?

The following directory includes services to help older women throughout the GTA who may be experiencing abuse to find the help they need.

Guide To Using This Directory

Services were selected by the project team & limited by the space available on this card, so only a few examples are provided for each type of support.

An expanded service directory can be found on the NICE website at www.nicenet.ca. For further help with services, call 211 (free from most pay phones).

The symbols next to the listings are explained in the legend below. The team checked each listing, but be aware that programs may have wait lists, closed lists and eligibility requirements, serve specific areas of the city, or provide different services at different times. Ask for these details when you call.

T = Toronto

TN = Toronto North

TE = Toronto East

TW = Toronto West

TC = Toronto Central

E = Etobicoke

S = Scarborough

FR Service available in French only

ML Service available in multiple languages

IN Service available through interpreters

BF Service is located in a barrier free building

W Focus is women

OA Focus is older adults

DV Focus is domestic violence

LGBT Focus is lesbian/gay/bisexual/trans people

Who can you call if you are in immediate danger?

DIAL 911: request a family violence officer 

24-hour crisis lines:

Assaulted Women's Helpline 416-863-0511;

TTY 416-364-8762 

Fem'Aide 1-877-336-2433; TTY 1-866-860-7082

Gerstein Crisis Centre 416-929-5200 

Senior Safety Line 1-866-299-1011

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre 416-597-8808 

Mobile Crisis Teams offer crisis intervention in the home/community:

Scarborough Hospital 416-289-2434 **S**

St. Elizabeth Health Care 416-498-0043 **TN** 

St Joseph's Health Centre 416-530-6486 x 4423 **TW**

Toronto East General Hospital 416-289-2434 **TE**

Victim Services Program of Toronto has a Support Line 416-808-7066 plus 2 programs for women at high risk of violence (call for eligibility):

SupportLink 416-808-7059 provides a free cell phone for 911 only

Domestic Violence Emergency Response System 416-808-7077 provides a personal alarm system

Where Can You Get Help With Translation & Interpretation?

Access Alliance 416-324-2731 **TW**

Multilingual Community Interpreter

Services 24-hour crisis 416-422-5984 **TN**

Who Do You Contact To Replace ID?

Woodgreen Community Services

416-469-5211 x 1175 **TE**



The Stop Food Community Centre

416-652-7867 x 228 **TW** 


Where Can You Get Legal Or Court Support?

Legal Aid Ontario & Legal Clinics assist low income individuals 416-979-1446. Some clinics support specific groups:

Aboriginal Legal Services 416-408-3967 **TC**  

Advocacy Centre for the Elderly focuses on legal & other support to individuals 60+ 416-598-2656 **TC**  





ARCH Disability Law Centre provides legal advice & referral to persons with disabilities 416-482-8255;

TTY 416-482-1254 **TE** 


Parkdale Community Legal Services assists assaulted women with court accompaniment, peace bonds, restraining orders, etc. 416-531-2411 **TW** 

Legal support is also available through:

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

416-323-9149 x 278; TTY 416-323-1361 **TW**    

CLEO's 24-hour Legal Referral Hotline 1-866-667-5366 


Victim Support Line & Victim /Witness Assistance Program (while going through a criminal court process)
416 314-2447 **TC** 

Where Can You Find A Place To Stay?



Women Abuse/Domestic Violence Shelters offer temporary residence & support (typically women of all ages & all types of abuse - call to be sure):

Ernestine's Women's Shelter 416-746-3701  

North York Women's Shelter (shared rooms)

416-635-9630 

Red Door Shelter (4 beds for older abused women!)
416-423-0310

Redwood Shelter 416-533-8538  

Yorktown Shelter for Women 416 394-2999 


YWCA Arise 416-929-6944  & **Women's Shelter**
416-693-6978  

Women's Homeless Shelters may have counsellors & provide referrals; some require you to leave during the day-ask if this will put you at risk:


Anduhyaun Shelter (native women)

416-920-1492 x 221 **TN**

FCJ Refugee Centre (refugee women)

416-469-9754 **TN** 

Fred Victor Centre Women's Hostel

416-368-2642 **TC** 

Salvation Army's Evangeline Residence

416-762-9636 **TW**  

St Vincent de Paul's Elisa House 416-259-2528 **E** 

& Mary's Home 416-595-1578 **TC**

If you don't go to a shelter & need help finding permanent housing contact:

Housing Help Centres (also financial assistance for rent & utilities): EYET Housing Help 416-698-9306 **TE** & York Community Services 416-653-5400 **TW**

Transitional & Housing Support Workers (must be fleeing abuse & NOT in a shelter): **Yorktown Family Services** 416-394-2960 x 236 **TE** & Ernestine's 416-746-3701 x 2034 **TW**

Where Can You Get Help With Money?

For emergency financial assistance: YWCA December 6 Fund 416-652-7176 & Victim Services Program of Toronto 416-808-7066

For longer term financial assistance:

UNDER 65 contact **Ontario Works** 416-392-8623;
TTY 416-392-2594

If you also have a physical/mental disability contact
Ontario Disability Support Program 416-325-0500



65 AND OVER contact **Service Canada** to find out about pensions have your cheque redirected; priority timing for women fleeing abuse. See “Under 65” above if waiting for pension income, or if not eligible for federal pensions. Also, see www.canadabenefits.gc.ca and www.gov.bc.ca/seniors/benefits for federal benefits. English 1-800--277-9914; French 1-800-277-9915; TTY 1-800-255-4786 **TN**

For assistance during the waiting period contact
Service Ontario 1-800-267-8097

For help with government forms contact the
Bloor Information and Life Skills Centre
416-531-4613 **TW**  

Where Can You Get Health Care?

Community Health Centres may NOT require ID or a health card (OHIP). **Some centres support specific groups:**

Anishnawbe Health 416-360-0486 **TE**  

Centre Francophone de Toronto 416-922-2672 **TC**  





Davenport Perth Neighborhood and Community Health Centre 416-656-8025 **TW**    

Rexdale Community Health Centre





416-744-0066 **E**   





Some **hospitals** have specialized programs:

Scarborough Hospital 416-495-2555;

TTY 416-498-6739 **S**    

St. Joseph's Health Centre 416-530-6850;

TTY 416-530-6820 **TW**    

Women's College Hospital 416-323-6040 **TC**    

Community Care Access Centres make referrals for home care, transportation, day programs, meals & long term care 416-310-2222

Where Can You Get Counselling Or Social Support?

Counselling:

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

416-535-8501 x 2875 TW ML BF OA W

Centres d'Accueil Héritage

416-365-3350 TC BF FR OA

Circle of Care

416-635-2860 TN ML BF OA

Family Service Toronto

416-595-9618 TC ML BF OA W LGBT

Oasis Centre des femmes


















416-591-6565 FR W DV

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre

416-465-6021 TE ML W DV

St. Christopher House

416-532-4828 x 236 TW ML BF W DV OA

Women's support groups:**Malvern Family Resource Centre**416-281-1376 S    **Opportunity for Advancement: Breaking the Cycle**416-787-1481 X 225 TC   **Rexdale Women's Centre**416-745-0062 TW   **Working Women Community Centre**416-532-2824 TW   **YWCA Choices for Living**416-961-5446 TN  **Drop-ins for social support & snacks/meals:****416 Community Support for Women**416 Dundas St E 416-928-3334 TE **519 Church Street Community Centre**416-392-6874 TC  **Sistering 962 Bloor St W TW & outreach site**220 Cowan Ave 416-926-1946 TW  

How Can You Get Help With Transportation & Assistive Devices?

Some community agencies provide low cost transportation such as:

Community Care East York

416-422-2026 x 259 **TE**

Etobicoke Services for Seniors

416 243-0127 x 255 **E**

Silver Circle: West Toronto Support Services for Seniors

416-653-3535 **TW**

St. Clair West Services for Seniors

416-787-2114 x 214 **TW**

Wheel-Trans: for persons with physical disabilities; anywhere within the City of Toronto - regular TTC fare - 416-393-4111.

Canadian Red Cross: for those not eligible for Wheel-Trans who have a physical/mental challenge & can't use public transit - nominal fee - 416-236-3180

Ontario March of Dimes 1-866-765-7237 & the **Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care** Assistive Devices Programs 416-327-8804 provide financial assistance for **walkers/scooters**; Rentals are available at **Starkman's** 416-534-8411 **TN** & through **AdvoCare** 416-248-1444

This is one in a series of tools in the NICE tool kit designed to detect, intervene in, and/or prevent abuse of seniors. For more information about this, or any of the other tools and related training events, please visit **www.nicenet.ca**

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Canada

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