The Coalition to End Violence Against Women

The Coalition to End Violence Against Women (CEVAW) is a diverse collective voice of organizations from the Niagara Region that is working toward ending gender-based violence against all women, and their children, by raising public awareness, educating, sharing information, networking, and identifying and breaking down systemic barriers that perpetuate violence.



The Coalition to
END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
C.E.V.A.W

Creating a SAFETY PLAN for Individuals Experiencing Abuse

We can create a safety plan for you 24/7

ABUSE CRISIS LINES

Gillian's Place
905-684-8331

Fem'aide (francophone)
1-877-336-2433

Birchway Niagara
905-356-5800

Assaulted Women's Helpline
1-888-951-7708

Gender-based abuse can take many different forms. If any of the following apply to you, there are options to help keep you safe. A Safety Plan may be one of them.

Does your partner or someone in your home:

- ☐ **Insult you,** call you names, or threaten you? Make you feel stupid, crazy, or worthless?
- ☐ **Control** where you go, what you wear, or who you hang out with?
- ☐ Accuse you of cheating, and **act constantly jealous?**
- ☐ Pressure you, or **force you to** have sex with them or someone else for money, drugs, or a place to stay?
- ☐ **Control a**ll the money, or withhold money for food, diapers, rent or other basic needs?
- ☐ **Forbid you** from seeing your family or your friends?
- ☐ **Hurt** your pets or break your belongings?
- ☐ **Threaten** to have you deported?
- ☐ Threaten to take away your children or call Family and Children's Services?
- ☐ **Punch** holes in the walls?
- ☐ **Push** you, **shove** you, or **hit** you?
- ☐ **Threaten suicide** if you ever left?
- ☐ **Make you feel like you are "walking on eggshells", or living in fear of the next violent outburst?**
- ☐ Control your housing, vehicle, bank accounts, or loans that are in your name?
- ☐ Control or make you remove your social media accounts?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, this is abuse. There are options to keep you safe. For further assistance, please refer to the community resources at the back of this book which can offer support .

Many individuals have escaped and survived abusive situations. This information package was put together by those who have survived, and experts in the field.

Table of Contents

Introduction — 4
I. During a Violent Incident — 5
II. An Emergency Escape Plan — 6
III. Creating a Safer Environment
1. At Home — 8
2. When Not Living with Abusive Partner — 9
3. In the Neighbourhood — 10
4. At Work — 10
5. Phone Safety — 12
6. Computer and Internet Safety — 14
7. Protecting Yourself from GPS Surveillance and Recording Devices — 16
IV. An Emotional Safety Plan — 18
V. A Child's Safety Plan — 19
VI. Employment Standards Act – Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave — 21
VII. Resources in Niagara — 22



Introduction

A Safety Plan

is created individually to ensure it is specific to you and your children, based on your own unique needs and requirements.

- ☐ Although you cannot control your (ex) partner's violence, it may be possible to increase your own and your children's safety.
- ☐ A safety plan is needed whenever the possibility of abuse is identified.
- ☐ This safety plan information is specifically designed to provide guidance on actions that you can take.
- ☐ This safety plan information also includes actions you can take to increase your children's safety.
- ☐ It is important to become familiar with and to review and/or revise your safety plan regularly. Abusive situations and risk factors can change quickly.

This basic safety plan is only the first step in planning for the safety of you and your children.

You are encouraged to contact a worker who can assist you in completing a more personal and detailed safety plan.

Please refer to the back of this booklet for resources.

- ☐ Remind yourself that you have an Emergency Escape Plan and go over it in your mind.
- ☐ Start to position yourself to get away quickly and/or near a phone so you can call 911, if necessary.
- ☐ Do not warn your partner that you are about to call the police.
- ☐ Sound your car alarm using your remote keyless entry device. Ask a trusted neighbour to call the police if they hear your car alarm sounding.
- ☐ Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons, or in rooms without access to an outside door. During arguments, try to move to a space where the risk is the lowest.
- ☐ Use your judgment and intuition – do whatever may keep you safe. Use techniques that you have used in the past to keep yourself safe.
- ☐ Remember, you can call 911 anytime you are feeling unsafe or at risk. You do not need to wait for a physical incident to call 911. When calling 911, give your location first, and then additional information. Tell them you have been assaulted by your partner.

I. During a Violent Incident

One cannot always avoid violent incidents. However, to increase your safety, here are some things you can do:



II. An Emergency Escape Plan

- ☐ When you leave, take the children if you can. If you try to get them later, the police cannot help you remove them from their other parent unless you have a valid court order.
- ☐ The Emergency Escape Plan focuses on the things you can do in advance to be better prepared in case you have to leave an abusive situation very quickly. Where possible, try to arrange to speak with a gender-based abuse expert to assist you.

- ☐ Do not tell your partner that you are planning to leave.
- ☐ Open a bank account in your own name and arrange that no bank statements or other calls be made to you, or arrange that mail be sent to a friend or family member.
- ☐ Save and set aside as much money as you can.
- ☐ Plan your transportation and any associated costs, e.g., walk, bus, cab. Note, shelters will send a cab and cover the cost of your taxi trip to the shelter
- ☐ Plan your emergency exits.
- ☐ Plan and practice the steps you will take if you must leave quickly and learn them well.
- ☐ Start a new routine (e.g., going for a walk at 10 am), which may allow you to flee without suspicion.
- ☐ Hide extra clothing, house keys, car keys, money, etc., at a trusted friend's house.
- ☐ Have a code word for trusted family and/or friends so they can call 911 for you.

The following is a list of items you may need:

Take a photocopy or photo of the following items and store them in a safe place, away from the originals. Hide the originals somewhere else if it is safe for you to do so. Do not try to get your identification from your partner if they are holding on to it. If you are unable to make copies, take pictures with your phone and email them to a trusted friend/ family member. Delete the pictures and emails sent from your phone when done.

- ☐ important papers, custody documentation, court orders, restraining orders
- ☐ marriage certificate, passports, birth certificates, immigration papers, for all family members
- ☐ driver's license and registration
- ☐ medications, prescriptions, and medical records for all family members
- ☐ all cards you usually use, e.g., credit and bank cards, phone, and social insurance card
- ☐ health cards for yourself and family members
- ☐ lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage papers
- ☐ bank records, insurance papers, and/or income tax records
- ☐ a list of all current and relevant phone numbers
- ☐ school and vaccination records
- ☐ picture of spouse/partner

The Police can meet you back at your home later to remove additional personal belongings, if it is arranged through the local division. To arrange this, call the police non-emergency phone number and request a "Keep the Peace" service.

III. Creating a Safer Environment

There are many things you can do to increase your safety. It may not be possible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be implemented step by step. Here are a few suggestions:

1. At Home

If you are living with your abusive partner/spouse

- ☐ Create your Emergency Escape Plan and review it often.
- ☐ Make arrangements with friends or family so that you can stay with them if necessary.
- ☐ Know how to contact your local shelters and where they are located.
- ☐ Teach your children how to use the telephone (and your cellular phone if you have one) to call 911 to contact the police.
- ☐ Plan your emergency exits, teach your children, and know them well. You can contact a shelter to plan for transportation.
- ☐ Teach your children their own Safety Plan. Contact a local shelter for help creating one.
- ☐ Be aware that your partner may be able to access recently called numbers or those who call you. Be mindful to delete them. If your partner has access to your detailed billing, they can review these numbers on the phone bill.
- ☐ **Use caution when storing numbers on your cell phone and/or using your computer. See page 12, phone safety.**
- ☐ Be aware of potential weapons in your home and remove them or make them harder to access.

2. If you are not living with your abusive partner/spouse

- ☐ Change the locks on the doors, and ensure that windows lock securely. Install a peephole in the door. Change the locks on your garage and mailbox.
- ☐ Teach your children not to answer the door.
- ☐ If you have a restraining order, custody and/or access documents, always keep them with you.
- ☐ Have your telephone number unlisted, including cell phone numbers, and/or block your number when calling out.
- ☐ Pre-program the numbers of people you may need to call on your cell phone.
- ☐ If you live in an apartment, be aware of your surroundings; check the halls clearly when getting off the elevator. Look in mirrors and be aware of doorways in hallways. Speak to security or make an anonymous call to request safety in your building.
- ☐ List your name in your apartment building directory as OCCUPANT, rather than your own name.
- ☐ Consider the advantages of getting a dog.
- ☐ Install an outdoor motion detection lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to your house.
- ☐ Ensure all entry/exit areas are well-lit.
- ☐ Always lock your car and check your car before getting in.
- ☐ Consider any available additional security measures, such as a security system, additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, door alarms, an electronic system, etc.
- ☐ Be aware of your surroundings at all times, especially when entering or exiting your home.
- ☐ Keep your curtains closed.

3. In the Neighbourhood

- ☐ Ensure that the people who care for your children know who has permission to pick them up.
- ☐ Tell people in your neighbourhood that your partner no longer lives with you and ask trusted neighbours to call the police if they see your partner near or at your home.
- ☐ Ask your neighbours to look after your children in an emergency.
- ☐ Hide clothing and your Emergency Escape Plan items at a trusted neighbour's house.
- ☐ Vary your routine. Use different bank branches, grocery stores, and shopping malls, and shop at hours that are different from when you were living with your abusive partner.
- ☐ Notify your doctor, dentist, insurance company, bank, cell phone company, and any other service providers not to give out any information to your partner/spouse.
- ☐ Yell "fire" to get attention if you are at risk.
- ☐ Take well-populated and well-lit routes.
- ☐ Inform family/friends/co-workers of your destination and the estimated time of return or arrival.
- ☐ Keep your cell phone fully charged, with you, and in your hand when possible. Ensure it has pre-programmed emergency numbers.

4. At Work

It is up to you to choose if and/or when you will tell others that your partner is abusive and that you may be at risk. Friends, family, and co-workers may be able to help protect you. However, you should carefully consider who to ask for help. If you are comfortable, you may choose to do any or all of the following:

- ☐ Tell your boss, the security supervisor, and other key people or friends at work about your situation.
- ☐ Ask to have your calls screened at work. It would also help to have these calls documented.
- ☐ Discuss the possibility of having your employer call the police if you are in danger from your (ex) partner.

When arriving or leaving work:

- ☐ Let someone know when you will be home.
- ☐ Carry your keys in your hands.
- ☐ Get a remote or keyless entry car door opener.
- ☐ Walk with someone to your car.
- ☐ Scan the parking lot.
- ☐ Look in the windows before you get in.
- ☐ Keep your cell phone easily accessible; make sure it is always charged.
- ☐ Consider whether your partner has keys to your vehicle.
- ☐ Always lock your car.
- ☐ If your partner is following you, drive to a place where there are people to support you, e.g., a police station or a well-populated area. Keep your car in drive, windows and doors locked, sound your car alarm or horn. Call 911 and wait in your vehicle for police to arrive. If you drive to a police station, remain in your vehicle, call 911 and wait for an officer to come to your vehicle.
- ☐ Keep a sign in your car saying, "Call police".
- ☐ If you are walking, take a route that is populated and well-lit.
- ☐ Change the patterns of when you arrive and leave work, and the routes you take home.
- ☐ If you see your partner on the street, go to a public place immediately.

5. Phone Safety

You can call 911 for free on most public phones and any cell phone, even when it is no longer in service or has no minutes left.

- ☐ If you have cordless phones in your home, carry one with you while in your home. Make sure your phones, including cell phones, are always fully charged.
- ☐ Have one **corded phone** in your home.
- ☐ **Keep a cordless phone charged or an old cell phone (it can be used to call 911) in a safe room/place,** preferably with a locked door. Teach your children always to keep this phone in this room and charged.
- ☐ **Call collect or use a prepaid phone card.** Remember that if you use your own cell phone, the phone numbers that you call may be listed on the monthly bill. Keep in mind that if you leave and your ex-partner still lives at your home, the bill may be sent to them. They may be able to see the numbers you have called and those that call you. Ensure your cell phone provider knows not to provide information to your abuser.
- ☐ **Check your cell phone settings**. There are cell phone technologies your abuser can use to listen in on your calls or track your location. Your abuser can use your cell phone as a tracking device if it has GPS, is in "silent mode," or is set to "auto answer." So, consider turning it off when not in use, disabling location services, or leaving it behind when fleeing your abuser.
- ☐ If you have an iCloud account attached to your phone, **change your password to** one that you have not used before. If your partner knows the password to your iCloud account, they can control settings on your phone and have access to everything you have done on it.
- ☐ **Get your own cell phone**. Consider purchasing a prepaid cell phone or another cell phone that your abuser does not know about. Some domestic violence shelters may be able to offer you a free cell phone.

- ☐ **Turn off location settings on all your technology devices,** including apps and social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat.
- ☐ **Know your cell phone's settings for emergencies**. For example, some phones allow you to call 911 by rapidly press the side button 5 times or press and hold the side button along with the volume button. Some will send an automatic message to a listed emergency contact. The message will inform the emergency contact that you called 911 and will also give your current location.
- ☐ **Use your own phone charger and laptop charger**. It is possible to hack USB ports to obtain information from phones and laptops. Try not to use public or charging devices you are not used to, and consider purchasing a USB data blocking device to protect your data.



6. Computer and Internet Safety

Abusers often monitor their partner's activities, including their computer use. Trust your instincts. Abusers, stalkers, and perpetrators are often very determined to maintain control over their victims, and technology is one of the many tools they use to do this. If it seems that the person knows too much about you, they could be getting that information from various sources, like monitoring your devices, accessing your online accounts, tracking your location, or gathering information about you online.
While there are ways to delete your internet history, doing so can be a red flag to your partner that you are trying to hide something, so be very careful and cautious. Even if you think you have cleared your device of all evidence of the websites that you have visited, there may still be a way to retrieve this information.

- ☐ **Use a safe device.** If you seek help online, it is safest if you use a computer outside of your home. You can use a computer at work, a friend's house, the library, your local community centre, or a shelter or agency that serves people experiencing abuse.

- ☐ **Be cautious with email, messaging, and apps.** Email, messaging apps (like WhatsApp or Messenger), and social media platforms are not a safe way to communicate. Be especially careful when sending email, as your abuser may know how to access your account. If possible, create a new, secure email address on a private device that your partner doesn't know about or can't access.

- ☐ **Review connected devices and accounts:** Some browsers (Like Google Chrome, Safari, Edge) and apps sync data across devices through shared accounts. Check for devices linked to your accounts and log out of any that aren't secure. Consider turning off sync features and updating your privacy settings.

- ☐ **Change your usernames and passwords.** Create new usernames and passwords for your email, social media, online banking, and other accounts. Even if you do not think your abuser has your passwords, they may have guessed or used a spyware or keylogging program to get them. Choose passwords that your abuser cannot guess (avoid birthdays, nicknames, and other personal information). Use strong passwords with numbers and characters (e.g., Starship23#).

- ☐ **Use two-factor authentication:** Wherever possible, enable two-factor authentication (2FA) for an added layer of security. This typically requires a second code sent to your phone or authentication app.

- ☐ **Search for your name on the Internet**. Major search engines such as Google and Yahoo, may have a link to your contact information. Do a full search for your name in quotation marks: "Full Name".

- ☐ **Use social media carefully:** Social media can expose your location or activities. Adjust your privacy settings, turn off location sharing, and ask friends and family not to tag or post about you without your permission. Be aware that even "private" accounts can sometimes be accessed or screenshotted.

- ☐ **Clear browsing data safely:** If you need to clear your browser history, use private or incognito mode instead when searching for help. This prevents your activity from being saved in the first place.

Tip: If you're worried about someone monitoring your phone or computer, consider reaching out to a local support agency. They can help you assess whether your device may be compromised and guide you on next steps.



7. Protecting yourself from GPS surveillance and recording devices

Today's surveillance tools are widely available and easy to use - your abuser does not need to be tech-savvy to monitor your movements or conversations. Be aware hidden cameras (including "Nanny Cams," and small wifi enabled devices), audio recorders, smart home devices or even baby monitors can be used to spy on you. GPS trackers can be small enough to hide in your car, purse, clothing, or other objects you carry with you. Abusers may also use smartphone apps, Bluetooth trackers (like AirTags or Tiles), or vehicle navigation systems to monitor your location.

Steps to protect yourself:

- ☐ **Don't remove devices right away.** If you find a GPS tracker, hidden camera, or recording device, do not immediately remove or disable it unless it's safe to do so. Turning it off could alert your abuser, which might escalate the situation. If possible, wait until you're ready to leave or are in a safe location before taking action.

- ☐ **Be aware of smart technology:** Devices like smart speakers (e.g. Alexa, Google Home), smart TVs, connected thermostats, or baby monitors may have microphones and/or cameras. If your abuser had access to the setup of these devices, they may be using them to listen or watch remotely. When safe, consider disabling or disconnecting smart home features.

- ☐ **Watch for Bluetooth or GPS tracking:** Bluetooth trackers (i.e. Apple AirTags, Samsung SmartTags) can be placed in your bag, car, or belongings. If you have an iPhone, it may notify you of "unknown AirTag moving with you." You can use tracker detection apps like "Tracker Detect" (Apple) or "AirGuard" (Android) to scan for unauthorized devices.

- ☐ **Check your car and belongings:** Regularly inspect your vehicle, bags, and items you carry daily. Look for unfamiliar objects or wires. If you're unsure, consider asking a trusted mechanic or tech professional to help.

- ☐ **Look for patterns.** Take some time to think through what kind of technology may be being used to stalk, monitor, or harass you. Narrowing down the potential source of technology can help you create a safety plan and document the abuse.

- ☐ **Document the incidents**. Start a secure log (digital or written in a safe location). Documenting a series of incidents can show police or the court a pattern of behaviour that fits a legal definition of stalking or harassment. Documentation can also help you identify if things are escalating and help you with safety planning.

- ☐ **Report the incidents**. You may want to report the incidents to law enforcement or seek a protective order. If the harassing behaviour is online, you can also report it to the website or app; if the behaviour violates the platform's terms of service, the content may be removed and/or the person may be banned. Remember to document the content before it is removed.



IV. An Emotional Safety Plan

The experience of being abused and degraded is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of surviving and building a new life requires much courage and incredible energy. To conserve your emotional energy and to support yourself during emotional times, try some of the following, if it feels safe to do so:

- ☐ Connect with appropriate counselling and support services; see the list of resources at the back of this book.
- ☐ Spend time with supportive people in your life and participate in social activities.
- ☐ Become involved in community activities or join groups to reduce feelings of isolation and strengthen your relationships with other people.
- ☐ Take a part-time job to reduce isolation and to improve your finances.
- ☐ Enroll in school to increase your skills.
- ☐ Take care of your physical, sleep, and nutritional needs.
- ☐ Take time for yourself to read, meditate, play music, or anything you find enjoyable.
- ☐ Keep a personal journal to write about your feelings, especially when you are feeling low or vulnerable. If you cannot keep it in a safe place, then destroy it.
- ☐ Keep relevant documents available and up to date to help you feel prepared for upcoming events, such as medical appointments.
- ☐ Take time to prepare yourself emotionally before entering stressful situations like talking with your partner, meeting with lawyers, or attending court.
- ☐ Try not to overbook yourself - limit yourself to one appointment per day to reduce stress.
- ☐ Be creative and do whatever makes you feel good.
- ☐ Write something positive about yourself every day - your own personal affirmations.
- ☐ It is OK to feel angry and find positive and constructive ways to express your anger.
- ☐ Remember that you are the most important person to take care of right now.

V. A Child's Safety Plan

This plan was developed to help teach children some basic safety planning. Children generally cannot stop abuse, although they often try by distracting the abuser or directly interfering in the abusive episode. It is important to tell the child that the best and most important thing for them to do for themselves is to keep safe and get away from the situation.

Children who experience or witness abuse can be profoundly affected. It is very traumatic for them to be faced with violence directed at them or at someone they love. Personal safety and safety planning are extremely important and necessary for children whose families are experiencing violence. There are several ways to help you develop a safety plan with your children.

- ☐ Stress the importance of being safe, and that it is not the child's responsibility to make sure that his/her parent is safe. Ensure the child is aware that they should not intervene in adult conflicts.
- ☐ Have your child(ren) pick a safe room/place in the house, preferably with a lock on the door and a phone. Teach them never to remove this phone and to always keep it charged. The first step of any plan is for the children to get out of the room where the abuse is occurring. You can practice the safety plan like a fire drill. Make the child(ren) aware not to tell your partner about the safety plan.
- ☐ Teach your children how to call 911 for help. It is important that children know they should not use a phone that is in view of the abuser. This puts them at risk. Talk to your children about using a neighbour's phone if they are unable to use a phone at home. If you have a cell phone, teach your children how to use it. Instruct children not to hang up the cell phone to ensure police can locate them.
- ☐ Teach your children who the safe people are that they can approach for help (e.g., police/neighbour).
- ☐ Teach your children never to answer the door unless you have confirmed it is safe to do so.
- ☐ Ensure your child/children know their full name and address (and, if applicable, their Concession and Lot #).



Rehearse what your child/children will say when they call for help.

For example:

Dial 911.

An operator will answer:

“Police, Fire, Ambulance.”

Your child says:

Police.

Then your child says:

My name is _____.

I am ____years old.

I need help. Send the police.

Someone is hurting my mom.

The address here is _____.

The phone number here is _____.

- ☐ Pick a safe place to meet your children, out of the home, once the situation is safe for you and for them.
- ☐ Teach your children the safest route to the designated place of safety .

VII. Employment Standards Act – Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave



Ontario workers have protections in place if they are experiencing domestic violence. Under Bill 168 - part of the Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act - employers are required to have policies and programs that address workplace violence, harassment, and domestic violence that may impact the workplace. This includes safety plans to help employees feel secure at work.

Workers may also be eligible for Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave, a job-protected leave that provides up to 10 days and/or 15 weeks per calendar year if the employee or their child has experienced or been threatened with domestic or sexual violence. The first five days are paid; the remaining leave is unpaid.

More information is available at: Ontario’s Guide to Employment Standards – Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave.

For more information about this leave, eligibility, and rights during the leave, please visit: https://www.ontario.ca/document/your-guide-employment-standards-act-0/domestic-or-sexual-violence-leave

VII. Resources in Niagara

Police

Niagara Regional Police
Emergency 911
Non-Emergency 905-688-4111

24-Hour Crisis Support Lines for Individuals Experiencing Abuse

Gillian's Place:
St. Catharines, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, and surrounding areas
905-684-8331 (call/text, call collect)

Birchway Niagara:
Niagara Falls, Welland, Wainfleet, Port Colborne, Pelham, and surrounding areas 905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)

Fem'aide 1-877-336-2433

Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre (CARSA) 905-682-4584

Victim Services Niagara – 24/7 Response Line 905-682-2626

Shelters

Gillian's Place:
St. Catharines, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, and surrounding areas 905-684-8331 (call collect)

Birchway Niagara:
Niagara Falls, Welland, Wainfleet, Port Colborne, Pelham, and surrounding areas 905-356-5800 (call collect)

Counselling Services for Individuals Experiencing Abuse

Centre de Santé Communautaire
Crisis Line 1-866-885-5947
After Hours Crisis Fem'aide 1-877-336-2433
Office 905-734-1141
A multi-disciplinary agency serving the French-speaking population of Niagara. Services include anti-violence programs.

Design for a New Tomorrow
Provides support to individuals who have experienced abuse in intimate adult relationships. 905-684-1223

Gillian's Place:
Provides shelter, safety planning, counselling, legal advice, child and youth support, practical supports and linkages, transitional housing, and housing support. Services are available to individuals living in the shelter or in the community. All services are free and confidential.
905-684-8331 (call/text, callcollect)

Birchway Niagara
Provides shelter and outreach services (Niagara Falls, Welland, Wainfleet, Port Colborne, Pelham, and surrounding areas) for women and children experiencing abuse. Services include transitional support, child and youth support, counselling, safety planning and referrals. All services are free and confidential.
905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)

Victim Services Niagara
Provides immediate support to victims of crime through the Victim Quick Response Program Plus (VQRP+). 24/7 Referral Line.
905-682-2626

Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre (CARSA Inc.)
Provides support and counselling to individuals who have experienced rape, sexual assault, incest, and childhood sexual abuse.
Office 905-682-7258
Crisis Phone 905-682-4584

Family Counselling Centre Niagara
Provides a range of professional counselling and support programs to individuals, couples,and families.
(Toll free) 1-888-394-3226 or 905-937-3226

Bethlehem Housing and Support Services
Provides supportive, transitional, and permanent affordable housing, and community outreach services. Services are available for individuals and families.
905-641-1660, ext. 227

Sexual Assault/ Domestic Violence Treatment Program Niagara
Provides 24-hour medical service, collection of forensic evidence and follow up counselling to recent victims of sexual assault or domestic violence reporting to emergency departments in the Niagara Region.
Marotta Family Hospital (St. Catharines) 905-378-4647, ext. 45300

YWCA Niagara Region
Provides 24/7 emergency shelter for women and children. The YWCA also supports survivors of human trafficking through crisis housing. Other programs include supportive transitional housing and life skills.
Office 905-988-3528
St. Catharine's Shelter 905-329-4609 or 289-273-4308
Niagara Falls Shelter 289-267-0411
Family Shelter 289-686-0927

Legal Services

Gillian's Place (advice provided by a Family Law Lawyer)
905-684-8331 (call/text, call collect)

Birchway Niagara
905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)

Niagara Community Legal Clinic
905-682-6635 (call collect)

Legal Aid Ontario: 1-800-668-8258
press "0" to speak with a representative.
Service available in 120 languages
Monday – Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm
1-866-641-8867

Victim Witness Assistance Program
St. Catharines and Niagara Falls 905-685-2671
Welland 905-735-4326

Support Services for Individuals Experiencing Abuse

Gillian's Place 905-684-8331 (call/text, call collect)
Birchway Niagara 905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)
Bethlehem Housing and Support Services 905-641-1660 ext. 227
Bridges Niagara Immigrant and Refugee Services 905-685-6589
Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre 905-732-5337
Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre 905-871-8931
Niagara Regional Native Centre 905-688-6484
Fort Erie Multicultural Centre 905-871-3641
Victim Services Niagara (24/7 Emergency Referral Line)
905-682-2626
Centre de Santé Communautaire 905-734-1141
Toll Free 1-866-885-5947
Distress Centre of Niagara Inc (24/7 Crisis Line)
St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Area 905-688-3711
Port Colborne, Wainfleet and Area 905-734-1212
Fort Erie and Area 905-382-0689
Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln and Area 905-563-6674

Children Exposed to Family Violence Programs

Pathstone Mental Health (Crisis and Support Line)
1-800-263-4944

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

Mothers in Mind Program
Support Groups for mothers with children under 4 years old
(Toll-free) 1-888-394-3226 or 905-937-3226

Side by Side Program
Support Groups for mothers and children ages 4-16 yrs
(Toll-free) 1-888-394-3226 or 905-937-3226

For Me and My Mom Program
Individual and Family Counselling for mom/children
(Toll-free) 1-888-394-3226 or 905-937-3226

Contact Niagara
for Children's and Developmental Services
(Toll-free) 1-800-933-3617905-684-3407

Gillian's Place 905-684-8331 (call collect)

Birchway Niagara 905-356-5800 (call collect)

Niagara Regional Native Centre, Children's Mental Health Program
905-688-6484

Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara
905-937-5435, ext. 301

Partner Assault Programs for Men

Partner Assault Response Program (PAR):
Family Counselling Centre
(Toll-free) 1-888-394-3226 or 905-937-3226

Design for a New Tomorrow 905-684-7713

Food Banks

Community Care St. Catharines and Thorold
St. Catharines 905-685-1349
Thorold 905-227-9240

Salvation Army (St. Catharines) 905-935-4311, ext. 300

Newark Neighbours (Niagara-on-the-Lake) 905-468-3519

Pelham Cares Inc. 905-892-5300

GBF Community Services (Grimsby) 905-309-5664

West Lincoln Community Care 905-957-5882

Community Care of West Niagara 905-563-5822

Project Share (Niagara Falls) 905-357-5121

The Hope Centre (Welland) 905-788-0744

Open Arms Mission (Welland) 905-788-3800

Salvation Army Fort Erie 905-871-1592

Community Outreach Program (Fort Erie) 905-871-2526

Port Cares (Port Colborne, Wainfleet and Fort Erie) 905-834-3629



Housing

Eviction and Housing Loss Prevention
Project Share (Niagara Falls) 905-357-5121
Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold 905-984-8955

Niagara Regional Housing
(Toll-free) 1-800-263-7215 or 905-980-6000

Bethlehem Housing and Support Services 905-641-1660 ext. 227

YWCA Niagara Region 905-988-3528
St. Catharines' Shelter 905-329-4609 or 289-273-4308
Niagara Falls Shelter 289-267-0411
Family Shelter 289-686-0927
Southridge Shelter (Emergency Housing) 905-682-2477
Gillian's Place 905-684-8331 (call/text, call collect)
Birchway Niagara 905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)
The Hope Centre (Welland) 905-788-0744
Port Cares (Port Colborne, Wainfleet and Fort Erie) 905-834-3629

Financial Assistance

Ontario Social Assistance/Ontario Works Offices:
St. Catharines (Toll-free) 1-866-627-1110 or 905-641-9960
Niagara Falls (Tollfree) 1-866-627-1110 or 905-354-3561
or 905-641-9230
Welland (Toll-free) 1-866-627-1110 or 905-734-7975
Port Colborne (Tollfree) 1-866-627-1110 or 905-734-7975
or 905-834-4445
Fort Erie (Toll-free) 1-866-627-1110 or 905-641-9230

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
(Toll-free) 1-800-263-5413 or 905-354-3561

Credit Canada Debt Solutions 905-684-9401

Project Recover (debt recovery for survivors of human trafficking)
1-416-808-7066

Victim Services – VQRP+ 905-682-2626

Addiction Services

Mental Health and Addictions Access Line
(Toll Free) 1-866-550-5205

A Better Choice (ABC) Program 905-378-1075

Out and About Clinic 289-479-5090

New Port Centre 905-378-4647, ext. 32500

Women's Addiction Recovery Mediation (WARM) 905-359-1045

Community Addiction Services of Niagara 905-684-1183

Segue Clinic 905-688-1827

Rapid Access to Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic
905-378-4647, ext. 49463

Withdrawal Management Services 905-682-7211

Health Care Services

Quest Community Health Centre (St. Catharines) 905-688-2558

Niagara Falls Community Health Centre 905-356-4222

Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
(French-speaking services, located in Welland) 1-866-885-5947

Bridges Community Health Centre (Port Colborne, Wainfleet)
289-479-5017

Bridges Community Health Centre (Fort Erie) 905-871-7621

Reach Niagara 905-730-5647

Niagara Health, Indigenous Health Services
905-378-4647 ext.43211

De Dwa Da Dehs Nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre 905-688-6484

2SLGBTQI+ Services

Gillian's Place
(serves all gender and sexually diverse people)
905-684-8331 (call/text, call collect)

Birchway Niagara
(serves female-identifying individuals)
905-356-5800 (call/text, call collect)

OutNiagara info@outniagara.org

Rainbow Niagara 2SLGBTQI+ Services,
Quest Community Health Centre 905-688-2558

Queer Justice Project Niagara, Niagara Community Legal Clinic
905-682-6635

LGBTQ+ Youth Group, Niagara Falls Community Health Centre
905-356-4222

For Additional Information on Other Services in Niagara
Visit **https://niagara.211centralsouth.ca or call 211**





WEBSITES

www.awhl.org (Assaulted Women's Hotline)
www.sheltersafe.ca (Shelter Info Canada Wide)
www.pathstonementalhealth.ca (Pathstone Mental Health)
www.cevaw.com (Coalition to End Violence against Women)

www.kidshelpphone.ca
www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca

Production and Distribution of this booklet have been created as a collaboration of Niagara's CEVAW member organizations.

www.cevaw.com