

Helpful Resources	Phone Number
<b>911</b> Immediate assistance in case of emergency.	
<b>Police/RCMP</b> Can help you assess your safety and take action against someone committing a crime.	<b>Estevan City Police</b> 306-634-4767 <b>Estevan RCMP</b> 306-637-4400 <b>Weyburn City Police</b> 306-848-3250 <b>Weyburn RCMP</b> 306-848-4640 <b>Carlyle RCMP</b> 306-453-6707
<b>Legal Information</b> Can share general information about the law, the legal system, and your rights.	<b>Pro Bono Law</b> 1-855-833-7257 <b>Family Law Info Centre</b> 1-888-218-2822 <b>Legal Aid</b> 1-877-424-1903
<b>Victim Services</b> Can refer you to counselling and inform you about programs and services for victims of crime.	<b>Estevan</b> 306-634-8040 <b>Weyburn</b> 306-842-4797
<b>Mental Health Office</b> Can offer information or counselling on depression, stress, and mental health issues.	<b>Estevan</b> 306-637-3610 <b>Weyburn</b> 306-842-8665 <b>Toll Free</b> 1-800-216-7689
<b>Mental Health ~ ATV Program</b> Can offer help for the abusive individual.	<b>Weyburn</b> 306-842-8665 <b>Toll Free</b> 1-800-216-7689



Envision is a non-profit, community-based organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors from Southeast Saskatchewan.

Envision helps individuals, families and couples embrace healthy choices to feel empowered, by providing therapeutic counselling, support, in-home services, groups, workshops and education.

**Estevan Office**  
Box 511  
Estevan, SK  
S4A 2A5  
P: 306-637-4004  
F: 306-634-4229

**Weyburn Office**  
120 3rd St. S  
Weyburn, SK  
S4H 2C2  
P: 306-842-8821  
F: 306-634-4229

**Carlyle Office**  
Box 1017  
Carlyle, SK  
S0C 0R0  
P: 306-453-2405  
F: 306-634-4229

**Oxbow Office:** 306-483-5555

[info@envisioncounsellingcentre.com](mailto:info@envisioncounsellingcentre.com)

We do not subscribe to call display. Collect calls accepted.

Envision receives funding from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Services, United Way of Estevan, United Way Regina and the community.



Donations from private groups, organizations, corporations, or individuals are gratefully accepted to assist Envision in serving communities in Southeast Saskatchewan.



[www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com](http://www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com)

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Serving Southeast Saskatchewan since 1994

# Helping Someone in an Abusive Relationship



**Making a difference.**

## Understanding the Issue:

When someone you care about is experiencing abuse, it is hard to know what to say or do. Some people may suspect that abuse is happening in a friend or family member's relationship, but do not know what to look for. Others are fearful of getting involved, not knowing what to do.

In order to better understand the situation, learning more about partner abuse, is essential in making those steps to helping someone close to you.

Dating violence/partner abuse occurs when one person gains power and control in the relationship through verbal, emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse.

The dominant characteristics of an abusive relationship are jealousy, possessiveness, and over-exaggerated attention. These may be perceived as flattery and loving devotion.

Most individuals in long-term abusive relationships identify that there were signs and symptoms of abusive behaviour when they were dating their partner. Therefore, it is important that there is awareness to recognize and understand the seriousness of abuse.

## What to Look for:

Are they:

- Reluctant to talk about their feelings?
- Appearing to be afraid of their partner?
- Drinking or medicating to calm their nerves?
- Showing any physical injuries?
- Trying to avoid you or cancel your visits?
- Being checked up on by their partner?
- Losing interest in school, friends, work, family, activities, etc.?
- Apologizing for their partner's behaviour to you and others?
- Behaving or even dressing differently?

If you have answered yes to one or more of these questions, you have reason to be concerned.

## How to Help:

- **Be supportive.** Listen to your friend, keep in mind that it may be very hard for them to talk about the issues. Assure them they are not alone, and that others are there to help.
- **Show concern about their safety.** Be honest. Tell them about times when you were worried. Help them to see that what they are going through is not right. Let them know you want to help.
- **Offer specific help.** You might offer to help with childcare, provide transportation, or even just to listen.
- **Don't place shame, blame, or guilt.** It is unhelpful to say, "You just need to leave". Instead, say something like, "I get scared thinking about what might happen to you". Acknowledge that their situation is very difficult.
- **Help make a safety plan.** Safety planning includes picking a place to go and packing important items.
- **Encourage your friend to talk to someone.** Offer to help find local agencies that can provide support and counselling.
- **Continue to be supportive.** Your friend may decide to stay in the relationship, or may leave and go back many times. It is important that, no matter what your friend decides to do, your continued support is most needed.
- **Encourage your friend to do things outside of the relationship.** It is important for them to see friends and family.
- **Keep in mind that you can't 'rescue' your friend.** They have to be the one to decide it's time to get help. Support them no matter what their decision.
- **Remind them you will always be there for them.**

*You may be the only person they trust. Be attentive, non-judgmental, and believe what they say. Tell them you care and show you are willing to help.*

## Why do They Stay?

You may often wonder, why wouldn't they just leave? But understand that breaking up can be more complicated than it seems.

There are many reasons why individuals stay in abusive relationships. If you have a friend in an unhealthy relationship, support them by understanding why they may choose to not leave immediately.

### Conflicting Emotions

- Fear
- Believing abuse is normal
- Embarrassment
- Low self-esteem
- Love

### Pressure

- Social/Peer pressure
- Cultural/Religious reasons

### Distrusts of Adults or Authority

- Distrust of police
- Language barriers/Immigration status

### Reliance on the Abusive Partner

- Finances
- No where to go
- Disability

If you have friends or family members who are in unhealthy or abusive relationships, the most important thing you can do is be supportive and listen. Understand that leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship is never easy.

## Taking Care of Yourself

Helping a friend who is in an abusive relationship is often stressful and can be dangerous. You need to look after your own physical well-being.

Talk with someone about your feelings, fears, frustrations, and reactions to the abuse. You can do this without identifying the person you care about.

*There are no simple, easy solutions. If you know someone who is hurting, don't ignore the abuse or the person.*