

# Are You Worried About Someone's Safety During COVID-19?

## **It Is Understandable to Be Concerned About Violence**

This pandemic is a difficult time for many, with orders to stay home, uncertainty, money concerns, and stress, all of which can increase risk of domestic violence. According to Statistics Canada, almost 1 in 5 Canadians are concerned about violence in the home during COVID-19. If you

know someone already experiencing violence at home, you may be even more worried about their safety now. Victim services and anti-violence support workers are here to help.

## **You Can Still Help While at Home**

We understand you might feel helpless and unsure of what to do. If you are worried about someone's safety, there are ways you can help while staying physically

distant. As friends, family members, co-workers, neighbours, and community members, we can all play a role.

## **Stay connected.**

It is important for a person suffering harm to know they are not alone.

- Abuse often involves isolating someone from their family, friends, neighbours, and other supports. During these

times of physical distancing, it is vital for people experiencing violence to stay socially connected.

- [Find safer ways to communicate with them securely.](#) A person causing harm may be home more than usual, and monitoring communications (phone calls, texts, and emails) more closely. It is likely that the person causing harm may be listening – talking about the violence may put the person experiencing harm at increased risk. The person at risk can keep a phone with them at all times as they move through their space, clear their phone log if calling for help or support, and clear their search history more frequently.

## **Help them with their needs.**

Trust that a person experiencing violence knows their situation best, and what they need to manage their safety. Leaving an abusive partner may increase risk of violence. Support their decisions – whether they decide to leave or stay in the home. Help them connect with a victim services or anti-violence support worker who can help them make a safety



plan for themselves and/or their children.

[Victim services and anti-violence support workers across BC](#) are still available remotely (e.g., online, by phone, text messages) to provide emotional support, help with safety planning, and assistance to access other services (e.g., emergency housing, child protection, financial benefits). Referral pathways may be a bit different right now as agencies are trying to best meet client needs through remote options.

## **How to Get Help**

VictimLinkBC is a toll-free, confidential, multilingual telephone information and referral service for victims of crime that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 1-800-563-0808, email [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca), or visit [www.victimlinkbc.ca](http://www.victimlinkbc.ca).

**Call 1-800-663-9122 if you think a child or youth (under 19 years of age) is being abused or neglected.**