

COVID-19 SUPPORT REPORT

EMPOWERING E-NEWS AND RESOURCES FOR BC'S ANTI-VIOLENCE SECTOR

ISSUE 1: April 23, 2020



Coming to you every two weeks with tremendous thanks and gratitude for all the challenging work you do in your communities.

REMEMBER: YOU ARE ALL HEROES.

Image: Sheila Norgate

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WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

Watch for our latest COVID-19 updates

Welcome to our debut issue of **COVID-19 Support Report**, full of e-news, practical tips, and inspiration on how to stay safe and aware during this pandemic. For more frequent updates, please also see the [new features](#) we've added to our website. We've got links and information on **Health and Wellness**, **Webinars**, **Government and Partner Updates for Anti-Violence Workers** and lots more.

In the **COVID-19 Support Report**, we'll provide as much **new content** as possible, besides some of the most important links from our website. Let us know what you'd like to see here. Share your own news, tips, and inspirational COVID-19 stories. Send your comments or content to conn@endingviolence.org.

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Our ongoing actions respond directly to your needs

Every day during this pandemic, EVA BC staff have been working hard, both in the office and from home, to try and make your **frontline jobs easier under COVID-19**. Here are some of our recent and ongoing activities:

- We have secured a large number of cell phones for you and your clients. Stay tuned for an announcement soon.
- We're working with the **BC Women's Health Foundation** to raise funds for a bulk buy of laptops for your use.
- We've set up a **fast-track protocol for high-risk cases** that might fall through the cracks. Included are the RCMP, Municipal Police, MCFD, Corrections, Family Law. This will serve as a last resort when all efforts to solve an issue locally have failed. We are inviting **Police Based Victims Service of BC** and the **BC Society of Transition Houses** to be part of this network. Watch for the protocol on our listservs.

- We've written to judges in the **Provincial and Supreme Courts** to give them information on domestic violence risk factors to aid them when considering a case adjournment and release of an offender.
- We've created **five PSAs** to be presented by **BC Lions players** and shared on social media. These are aimed at urging survivors to reach out for support, to encourage potential offenders to seek help, to thank frontline workers (like you!), and to encourage everyone to stay safe and speak up if they are worried about a survivor/victim.
- We're producing a series of **one-pagers** on specific topics you've requested, from ***Managing Safety in Your Home During COVID-19*** to ***Are You Worried About Increased Intimate Partner Violence During COVID-19?***
- We're **working closely with government** and teleconferencing with executive directors, CBVAP staff, STV counsellors, STV outreach and multicultural outreach workers, VAWIR and ICAT chairs, and others.
- We are also in close communication with the **Representative for Children and Youth** related to the needs of vulnerable children and their mothers.

UPDATES FOR ANTI-VIOLENCE WORKERS & THE PUBLIC

Free counselling available

More than 200 registered psychologists from the **BC Psychological Association** are available to provide **free counselling and mental health support** during the pandemic.

To get support, call 604-827-0847 or go online to the [BCPA's website](#) and fill out a form. The support, launched by University of BC Okanagan psychology professor Lesley Lutes, was originally available only to people in essential services but grew so popular, it's now open to everyone.

See [Global News story](#)

BC SPCA to provide emergency animal boarding and outreach

The BC SPCA is providing temporary animal boarding support for those **in crisis from domestic and sexual violence**, fire, medical emergencies etc. This includes people admitted to hospital due to COVID-19 who have no other support, such as family, friends, colleagues, to help with animals. **Referrals from health authorities will determine priority**. Animals involved will require 14-day segregation.

The BC SPCA is offering the same support to **homeless individuals exposed to COVID-19** who cannot isolate with their pets, have no other social supports, and who have exhausted all municipal animal services. **Referrals from social agencies will determine priority**. These animals, too, will require 14-day segregation.

The BC SPCA will **distribute pet food and supplies** to vulnerable community members and it plans to provide at-place support for self-isolated people suspected or confirmed of having COVID-19 who have exhausted all other social support options.

For more information about COVID-19 and animals, see [this SPCA webpage](#) or contact the BC SPCA **animal helpline** at 1-855-622-7722.

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THE PANDEMIC IN OUR PROVINCE

Indigenous communities remember smallpox epidemic

Since early April, the offices of **137 Indigenous Bands** across British Columbia have closed while 44 First Nations have declared states of emergency due to COVID-19. As many communities are located in **rural or isolated areas** with no immediate access to a hospital, they have every reason to take today's pandemic threat seriously.

"We've heard stories from **the 1918 flu, the smallpox** that simply decimated our nations' communities, some communities seeing a death rate of 90 per cent," says Terry Teegee, Regional Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations, in a recent Global News report.

See [Global News story](#)

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Helpful links for Indigenous communities and COVID-19

The **Government of Canada** provides [pandemic-related information](#) and a list of links and access to support for Indigenous individuals, communities, and organizations.

The Government of Canada's [Indigenous YouTube account](#) offers videos on valuable COVID-19-related safety information, stressing the importance of physical distancing. This includes a message from Dr. Tom Wong, the Chief Medical Officer of Public Health at Indigenous Services Canada.

The above information is available in [a variety of Indigenous languages](#). Internet users can choose from Mohawk dialects and Michif Cree to Inuktitut and others.

A variety of [fact sheets about COVID-19](#), aimed at **northern and Indigenous partners**, such as the Assembly of First Nations, focuses on meeting people's basic needs, creating community awareness, and the **safety of the whole community**, including the environment and those incarcerated. The information gives distinct attention to populations directly impacted by the virus such as **elders and people living with pre-existing conditions**.

[COVID-19 in prisons](#) stands to be a death sentence for over-incarcerated Indigenous peoples, charges the **BC First Nations Justice Council**

The BC First Nations Justice Council reinforces that the [rights of Indigenous people](#) must be respected during COVID-19.

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GOVERNMENT ROUND-UP

BC Government assures safe space anywhere in BC

Mitzi Dean, **BC's Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equality**, offers this reassurance to people experiencing gender-based violence during the pandemic: "We know that **social isolation** is making life harder for women and children who live in unstable or violent situations. If you reach out for help, we will make sure there is **a safe space** during this emergency – **no matter where you live in BC.**"

She notes that **BC Housing** is working with partner organizations to support women and children who would otherwise be trapped at home in dangerous situations. If you or someone you know is experiencing violence or abuse, please contact **VictimLinkBC** at 1-800-563-0808 or [by email](#). This service is available 24/7 with support in multiple languages.

See [BC Government news story](#)

Self-assessment to safety tips, all in one place

The **Government of Canada** has a [comprehensive web page](#) devoted to COVID-19. If you think you have symptoms, an **online self-assessment** is available. You'll find information about non-medical masks and face coverings, safety and security tips, travel, an **interactive case map and data**, and a focus on vulnerable groups from health professionals to Indigenous communities. The content is clear and concise with many helpful links. Check it out.

Federal and provincial emergency funding support

During this time of layoffs, **financial crises and uncertainty**, it has been a challenge for both individuals and small businesses to learn the changing eligibility rules for **emergency government funding**. Whether it's **provincial or federal assistance**, there are so many different websites to source out and the information can be confusing. We keep hearing new announcements.

That's why we've provided this [list of provincial and federal government links](#) all in one place, to make your search easier. Thank you to DMCL Chartered Professional Accountants for compiling most of this information.

STAY AWARE WITH WEBINARS

Help your children play and communicate better

During COVID-19, **self-isolation with children** can be a daily challenge for parents, especially for families impacted by trauma, past or present. During the pandemic, many counsellors are providing **free online services** such as webinars.

One choice on YouTube is [Parent Coaching Through Telehealth](#) with Brooke Ingersoll and Anna Dvortcsak. This 1.5-hour session with the creators of **Project ImPACT** offers an evidence-based approach that combines **behavioural and developmental strategies** to boost children's social communication and play skills during daily activities.

For links to more webinars, see EVA BC's [featured website section](#).

THE WELLNESS WINDOW

Acknowledge historical impact of trauma on First Nations

The **First Nations Health Authority** (FNHA) provides a validating message from Dr. Nel Wieman, its Senior Medical Officer, Mental Health and Wellness. She notes: "First Nations people have a history of suffering **adverse health impacts due to infectious disease** Due to the historical, intergenerational, and contemporary trauma that many First Nations individuals live with, **the pandemic can also be a**

trigger for symptoms related to trauma including increased distress, irritability, avoidance, and feeling overly emotional.”

[See FNHA story](#)

For links to more self-care content, please see [Health and Wellness Resources](#) on EVA BC's website.



“Choosing with integrity means finding ways to speak up that honour your reality, the reality of others, and your willingness to meet in the centre of that large field. It’s hard sometimes.”

-- Terry Tempest Williams

Image: [Yellow Flowers Field Nature](#) by [Discover Me!](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



Free colouring book available for survivors and their loved ones

WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre staff have produced a free colouring and activity book called *Colouring Resistance: A colouring and activity book for healing from sexualized violence*. They invite people to [download the entire book](#) and share it widely as a resource for survivors.

Image: WAVAW

**Ending Violence Association of BC | conn@endingviolence.org
| 604-633-2506 ext. 16 or toll-free (members only) 1-877-633-2505 |
Endingviolence.org**

See what's happening on our social media sites:

