

# Severe and Lethal Risk Identification For Interpersonal Violence

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**ENDING VIOLENCE**  
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# A Word About Language

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- Using she and her to refer to those harmed
- Using he and him to refer to those doing the harming
- Not to say that women are not violent/abusive or that men are not hurt
- Overwhelming evidence suggests these are gender based crimes

# Overview

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- International Agencies such:
  - United Nations,
  - World Health Organization,
  - Amnesty International
- Have identified violence against women as a global human rights issue

# Overview

- Women are more likely than men to be the victims of the most severe forms of spousal assault, as well as spousal homicide, sexual assault and stalking.

# General Stats - DV

- In 2009, 47,000 incidents of DV cases were reported to police in Canada,
- Representing 11% of all police-reported violent crime in Canada
- This represents an increase from an estimated 46,000 incidents in 2004.

# General Stats - DV

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- GSS data indicates that nationally, the rate of police reporting of DV to police has dropped from 28% of cases reported in 2004 to only 22% in 2009
- If these reporting rates are applied to police reported data, estimated that domestic violence risen from 164,189 in 2004 to 213,264 in 2009

# General Stats - SA

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- Nationally, self-reported SA have increased from just over 500,000 in 1999 to 677,000 incidents in 2009
- It is conservatively estimated that only 5% of sexual assaults are reported to police
- Growing gap between the level of police reports and the level of self - reported assaults indicate that fewer cases of sexual assault are being reported to the police

# Overview

- Reasons for not reporting to police are varied:
- Fear of further violence
- Distrust of police
- Having no options
- Fear of being blamed
- Assume nothing will be done
- Shame and embarrassment
- Reluctance to become involved with police and courts



# General Stats

- Relationship and dating violence rates are highest among those aged 15-24

# Overview

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- Children exposed to family violence are more likely to develop social, emotional and/or behavioral problems than those who are not
- A child's exposure to the father abusing the mother is the strongest risk factor for transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next

(American Psychological Association, Violence and the Family: Report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family, 1996)

# Overview

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- Indigenous women, immigrant women, refugee women, poor women and transgendered people are more vulnerable to violence

# Homicide data:

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- Murder of a female partner is most likely to occur in the context of marital separation or divorce
- (J.C. Campbell et. al. 1993; M. Daly & M. Wilson (1998). M.D. Smith & M. Zahn (Eds.), Homicide: A sourcebook of social research (pp. 58-71). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

# Homicide data:

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- Over the last 20 years in BC alone, 253 people have died as a result of domestic violence
- Most of them women and children, or new boyfriends
- In half of all cases of killings of female ex-partners, the woman was killed within two months of leaving the relationship.

(BC Coroner DV Death Review Reports, 2010 and 2016)

# Homicide data:

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- *We are getting better at wound care*
- Many attempt murder victims surviving because of medical interventions
- Need to also look at attempt murder and aggravated assault

# Important Features Make Violence Against Women Different From Other Crimes

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- The likelihood of repeat violence is common
- The abuser is known ahead of time - the woman usually has had, or is in, an intimate relationship
- The woman's ties with the abuser are complex; typically they do not end with intervention

# Its About Power and Control

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- It's not love and not about sex
- Power and Control is a system
- Women controlled by physical threats, sexual abuse, financial dependence, fear of children, others or animals being harmed



# DV - Reluctance to Leave

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- It should not be assumed, woman not ready to leave does not want any services or support
- This should be our goal, support, pre planning for safety
- Reluctance should be seen as a risk factor
- System reluctance to prosecute is also a risk factor

# Safety Planning Considers Many Factors

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- Abuser risk factors
- Woman's individual situation
- Her support network
- Level of system's response
- Coordinated, cross sector safety

## Husband kills wife, daughters and self

Quebec man, 45, could not bear looming breakup with his spouse

BY TU THANH HA, MONTREAL

A Quebec grandmother got the worst possible telephone call yesterday morning when her son-in-law rang her up at 5 a.m.

Jacques Picard told her he had just killed her daughter and her two granddaughters.

The son-in-law then hung up the phone and shot himself, ending a triple-murder-suicide that wiped out his family of four.

In what has become an all-too-familiar pattern, Mr. Picard killed his wife and his two teen-aged daughters because he couldn't bear to face an impending separation from his spouse.

Mr. Picard, 45, and his wife, Manon Houde, 42, had moved from Quebec City to Otterburn Park, a leafy bedroom community southeast of Montreal. They had two daughters, Marie-Hélène, 15, and Catherine, 12.

A keen outdoorsman, Mr. Picard had a dozen legally registered hunting rifles at home. Captain Richard Gauthier of



RUAN REMORZUCANAMAN PRESS

The body of one of the victims of a triple murder and suicide is removed from a house in Otterburn Park, a leafy bedroom community southeast of Montreal.

# OFFENDER RISK FACTORS

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## Works Cited:

- BC Summary of Domestic Violence Risk Factors, 2015
- Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Model. Metropolitan Police Service, London, UK, 2003
- BC Institute Against Family Violence. Aid to Safety Assessment & Planning (ASAP) For Women who Experience Violence in Their Relationships, 2005

# SEPARATION

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- Women trying to leave violent relationships are frequently at risk of being killed
- Many incidents happen over the battle for child custody
- Women are particularly vulnerable in the first 2 months after separation

# ESCALATION

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- As violence is repeated it can worsen and becomes more serious
- Previous violence is the most effective indicator that it will occur again
- 35% of households have a repeat incident within 5 weeks of the first
- Research shows that as violence continues, the time between each incident shortens

# PAST ASSAULT OF INTIMATE PARTNER OTHER RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

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- Men who have demonstrated assaultive behaviour are at a greater risk of assaulting again
- Stress & relationship conflict put women at a greater risk for abuse

# VIOLENT THREATS, INTENTION OR IDEATION

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- Men who make credible threats are at increased risk of repeat violence
- Offenders who have threatened to use a weapon are at increased risk for repeat violence and spousal homicide

# RECENT SUICIDAL OR HOMICIDAL INTENTION

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- Major risk factor for domestic violence lethality
- Men who make threats of death, have attempted suicide or homicide are at an extreme risk to commit repeat violence
- When the abuser is suicidal, it is an indicator that he is in a state of 'crisis' - an increased risk for homicide



# ACCESS TO WEAPONS

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- Offenders who acquire weapons after separation are at heightened risk of using them against their partners
- Includes offenders who have access to guns or other weapons through employment
- Access to any kind of weapon is a risk factor, hunting rifles, knives

# EXTREME MINIMIZATION OR DENIAL OF SPOUSAL ASSAULT HISTORY

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- Denying/trivializing the violence
- Blaming the victim
- Serious and frequent offenders engage in this behaviour

# STALKING

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- Includes persistent calling, texting, writing, following, etc.
- Stalkers are more likely to be violent if they had an intimate relationship with the victim
- Stalking and physical assault are strongly associated with murder and attempted murder

# SEXUAL ASSAULT

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- Women who have been sexually assaulted are subject to more serious injury
- 1 in 12 of all reported sexual offenders are considered high-risk and potentially dangerous offenders
  - Raises the question for those who have sexually abused pets

# CHILD ABUSE

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- Research shows that domestic violence and child abuse often occur in the same household
- Behavioural problems in children can often indicate child abuse
- Men who are violent towards spouse often abuse their children

# ANIMAL ABUSE

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- There is a strong correlation between cruelty to animals and domestic violence
- It is estimated that 88% of pets living in homes with domestic violence are abused or killed
- According to a 1998 study by the Ontario SPCA, 61% of women leaving abusive relationships had a pet abused or killed by their abuser
  - Can we invite animal welfare to join our high risk DV teams?

# MENTAL HEALTH AND DEPRESSION

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- Certain types of mental health issues are associated with violent behaviour - violence against women in particular
- Research suggests a link between being a danger to oneself and to others
- Personality disorders are characterized by anger, impulsivity and behavioural instability – increases risks for violence toward women

# ISSUES OF CONTROL/UNPREDICTABILITY

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- Men who believe that they have the right to control women
- Complete control over women and extreme jealousy are both associated - severe violence
- Violence functions as control to deter women from activities the offender does not wish her to do, have friends, work, connect with family



# EMPLOYMENT OR FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

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- A sudden, recent change in employment status is associated with an increased risk of violence
- Low income, unemployment and financial stresses are the most common risk factors
- Increased psychological stress is linked to violent behaviour

# SUBSTANCE OR ALCOHOL ABUSE

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- Offenders with a history of domestic violence are more likely to abuse substances
- Substance abuse and violence against women are often reported to exist together
- Substance abuse may contribute to assaults resulting in more serious injury or death

# VIOLATION OF CIVIL & CRIMINAL COURT ORDERS

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- Research shows that offenders who violate the terms of conditional release or community supervision are more likely to commit repeat violence
- Abusers with a lower stake in the law are more likely to violate protection orders
- It is indicated that a lack of enforcement of protective orders increases the risk of further harm

# Safety Planning

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It can't be emphasized enough that the problem of domestic violence can't be resolved by changes in the victim's/survivor's behavior

No victim has control over her partner's behavior, and it is not realistic to expect her to "stop the violence."

The problem is the offender's conduct; his sense of entitlement to coercive, controlling and intimidating behaviours.

# Refer to Specialized Services

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## Most Provinces Have Extensive Networks

- Community Based Victim Service Programs
- Transition Houses
- Counselling Programs
- Women's Centres
- System Based Services

# A Note about Coordination and Referral

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- Research shows that coordinating the work of the various response systems is crucial to keeping women and others safe. \*
- A woman's safety will be jeopardized if institutions / community resources responding to her requests for aid are inaccessible, unresponsive and/or uncoordinated

\*Gamache, D., J. Edleson and M. Schock, "Coordinated police, judicial and social service response to woman battering..."

# How to make an effective referral

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**How** a referral is made is as important as whether or not the information is given. Some suggestions are:

- If you are confident that a survivor will accept a direct referral, give her the name and phone number of the agency or individual
- If a survivor seems slightly hesitant, talk about any concerns or suggest that you arrange the contact and have her follow up

# Referrals, cont...

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## Find Help Across Canada

If you are in immediate DANGER or fear for your safety, please CALL 911.

The following service providers offer services across Canada, contact the provider nearest you.

### British Columbia

#### Victim Services

- [Ending Violence Association of BC](#)
- [British Columbia Society for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse](#)
- [British Columbia Victim Services](#)
- [Police Victim Services of British Columbia](#)

#### Domestic Abuse Centres

- [Ending Violence Association of BC](#)
- [BC Society of Transition Houses](#)
- [Domestic Violence: It's Never OK](#)
- [Women's Transition Housing – 24/7 Staffed Shelters](#)

Search

Go

#### PARTNERS & FOUNDING MEMBERS



#### Find Help Across Canada





# Thank You

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Treat every case of domestic violence as a potential serious and lethal threat if some of these risks are present and until you know otherwise

Reach out to your local anti violence program to get connected before you have a situation

A coordinated response saves lives

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