



Survival Strategies

Information for ABUSED WOMEN

An abused woman has many difficult choices to make. She may not know where to go or what to do. Basic information about the law and social services can help the abused woman make informed choices. The courts, the police, and the community can all help. No matter what form the abuse takes, women do not have to live it. Everyone deserves to live without fear or violence.

What is woman abuse?

Woman abuse happens when your husband or partner mistreats you. It takes many forms:

- *Physical abuse* includes, for example, hitting, pinching, slapping, pushing, punching, kicking, burning, stabbing or shooting. It may also include threats to cause you harm.
- *Sexual abuse* is unwanted or forced sexual touching and activity.
- *Psychological or emotional abuse* includes constant threats to leave you, threats to harm your pets or farm animals, threats of suicide, insults, damage to your belongings, and control of what you do and who you see.
- *Financial abuse* is when he takes control over all the money.

What are the signs that I am being abused?

If you answer *yes* to any of these questions, it could be a sign that you are an abused woman:

- Does your partner ever hurt you in any way?
- Does your partner break objects when he's angry?
- Does your partner threaten to hurt you or the children or the pets?
- Does your partner force you to have sex when you don't want to?
- Does your partner think he's always right?

- Does your partner constantly put you down?
- Does your partner decide what to do, where to go, and when to do it?
- Does your partner tell you what clothes to wear, how to wear your hair?
- Does your partner criticize you all the time?
- Does your partner call you humiliating names?
- Does your partner want you all to himself?

When is woman abuse against the law?

When it takes the form of physical or sexual harm to you, your children or your pets, or threats of harm, it is against the law. Some people think they can do anything in the privacy of their own home. That is wrong!

How can I plan for a crisis?

In case of emergency it might help to:

- make a safety plan with an escape route out of your home;
- hide a set of car keys in a safe place;
- keep some spare money;
- know the phone numbers of the police, taxi and transition house.

What should I do if my husband or partner harms me?

As soon as he harms you or threatens to harm you, get to safety and call the police.

What if I can't get away?

If your husband or partner physically harms you and you can't get away:

- scream loudly;
- fall to the floor;
- curl yourself into a ball with your knees up and your head covered with your arms;
- leave as soon as you can; (Make arrangements

- for the children, pets, farm animals and so on, once you get to safety.)
- call the police as soon as possible.

How do I contact the police?

In an emergency, call 911. If it is not an emergency, you can look up the number of the appropriate policing authority for your area in your telephone book.

How can the police help?

The police will come and make sure that you are safe. They can help you get to a safe place such as a hospital or transition house. If your husband or partner has committed a crime, the police can charge him. They may even arrest him. The sooner you call, the easier it is for the police to investigate the crime.

What if I have an injury?

Get medical help immediately. The police can help you get to a doctor's office or to a hospital. You should tell the doctor or nurse:

- To give you privacy;
- Details of what happened;
- To take colour photos of your injuries for evidence.

Where can I go if I leave the abuse?

You can go to the nearest *transition house*. A transition house is a safe place for you and your children to get away from abuse at home. The staff at the transition house can provide counselling and give you information about legal options and social services. Transition houses are open 24 hours every day, seven days a week. You and your children can stay there free of charge for about one

month. Staff at the transition house can help you through a time of crisis.

What should I take with me when I leave?

You will probably want to bring some clothes and personal items. However, in a crisis your safety and that of your children is most important. Just leave. Transition houses can help you out with clothes, toys, diapers, toothpaste and other supplies that you and your children will need.

Can I get help over the phone?

Yes. You can call the transition house and get advice, support and referrals over the phone even if you do not plan to go there. They do not need to know your name.

How can I contact the nearest transition house?

Passage House
P.O. Box 1284
Bathurst, NB
E2A 4J1
546-9540

Women in Transition House Inc.
P.O. Box 1143
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5C2
459-2300

Escale Madavic
P.O. Box 411,
Stn. Main,
Edmundston, NB
E3V 3L1
739-2625

Crossroads for Women Inc.
P.O. Box 1247
Moncton, NB
E1C 8P9
853-0811

Maison Notre-Dame
P.O. Box 158
Campbellton, N.B
E3N 1G4
753-4703

Miramichi Emergency Shelter for Women
P.O. Box 249
Miramichi, NB
E1V 3M3
622-8865 (crisis)
662-8861 (office)

Hestia House
P.O. Box 7135,
Station A
Saint John, NB
E2L 4S5
634-7570 (hot line)
634-7571 (office)
632-5616 (outreach services)

Fundy Region Transition House
P.O. Box 73
St. Stephen, NB
E3L 2W9
466-4485

Serenity House
P.O. Box 511
Saint-Anne-de-Kent, NB
E4S 5G2
743-1530

Sussex Vale Transition House
P.O. Box 4862
Sussex, NB
E4E 5L9
432-6999 (hot line)
433-1649 (office)

Accueil Sainte-Famille Inc.
P.O. Box 3685,
Main Office
Tracadie-Sheila, NB
E1X 1G5
395-1500

Sanctuary House
P.O. Box 4294
Woodstock, NB
E7M 6B7
325-9452
1-866-247-0286
(toll-free)

Gignoo Transition House Inc.
P.O. Box 3385, Station B
Fredericton, NB
E3A 5H2
458-1224
1-800-565-6878
(toll-free)

This pamphlet does not contain a complete statement of the law in the area and changes in the law may occur from time to time. Anyone needing specific advice on his/her own legal position should consult a lawyer.

PLEIS-NB receives funding and in-kind support from the Department of Justice Canada, the New Brunswick Law Foundation and the New Brunswick Department of Justice. Project funding to update this pamphlet was provided by Justice Canada

We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the New Brunswick Coalition of Transition Houses and Centres and the Public Prosecutions Branch of the Department of Justice.

**Published by: Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1**

Tel: (506) 453-5369
Fax: (506) 462-5193
Email: pleisnb@web.ca
www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca

Revised and reprinted: March 2005

ISBN: 1-55237-157-X