

Purple Ribbon Campaign



Myths and Facts about Violence Against Women

Myths	Facts
Violence against women is rare.	Violence toward women is extremely common, with half of Canadian women having survived at least one incident of physical or sexual violence throughout their lifetime.
The problem is not really violence against “women.” Women are just as violent as men.	In about 90% of domestic assaults, the man is the perpetrator. This may be uncomfortable but it is true.
Domestic violence only occurs in low-income, poorly educated, minority or dysfunctional families.	Violence occurs in all socioeconomic classes and in all types of families.
Domestic violence is usually an isolated incident.	Violence is a pattern of behaviour that exists in some relationships and gets worse and more frequent over time.
When there is violence happening in the family, all members of the family are participating in the dynamic, and therefore everyone must change their behaviour for the violence to stop.	Only the perpetrator has the ability to stop the violence. While many victims attempt to change their behaviour in hopes of stopping the violence, the perpetrator must be the one to change.
People who are violent towards others have mental health issues.	An extremely small percentage of perpetrators suffer from mental health issues. Most perpetrators are charming, persuasive and rational. The use of personal power to control others is a behavioural choice.
If women really wanted to leave a violent relationship they would.	Abused women leaving their partners are faced with the reality of severe physical assault or even death. Abusers may isolate their partners, depriving them of jobs and educational opportunities while maintaining control. This combined with unequal opportunities for women makes it difficult for a woman to leave a violent relationship.
The community places responsibility on the perpetrator where it belongs.	Most people blame the victim for staying in a violent relationship rather than questioning why the perpetrator continues the violence or why the community allows the violence to happen.
Men who batter are often good fathers and should have joint custody of their children.	At least 70% of men who batter their partners sexually or physically victimize their children as well. All children suffer from witnessing violence against their mother.
Alcoholism and poor anger management cause violence.	While a correlation exists between substance abuse and violence, no causal relationship exists. Abusers are not usually violent toward others in their life besides their partners or children, and can control themselves in social situations.

Purple Ribbon Campaign
Violence Prevention Initiative
Women’s Policy Office
PO Box 8700, 4th Floor, West Block
Confederation Building
St. John’s, NL A1B 4J6

T: (709) 729-5009
F: (709) 729-2331
vpi@gov.nl.ca

www.gov.nl.ca/vpi
www.respectwomen.ca
www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/wpo

