



Camrose Community Approach to **Family Violence**

Created by the Camrose Family Violence
Response Council

Revised December 2013



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Section 1 Introduction and Background

The Camrose Family Violence Response Council

This document is part of a project begun by the Camrose Family Violence Response Council in 2006 to explore, establish and articulate the individual and collaborative practices of Camrose organizations that directly or indirectly serve people affected by family violence.

Both the project (known as “the collaboration protocols project”) and this document are meant to enhance the individual and collective capacity of local agencies to respond effectively to family violence. To some extent, this resource formalizes roles by outlining current and best practices. The document is intended to be an organic, working guideline for maintaining and enhancing interagency collaboration on an ongoing basis.

Camrose Family Violence Response Council (FVRC), est. 2005, is coordinated by the Family Violence Action Society (FVAS), through its Program Director. Council activities are supported by a grant from Alberta Children and Youth Services, through the Coordinated, Collaborative Community Response fund. The FVRC serves to address both local community objectives as well as a provincial strategy for enabling Albertans to better address the issue of family violence and bullying.

The Council exists to assist its members in working more cooperatively to continue to:

- Keep people safe from the direct and indirect impacts of family violence
- Help strengthen each member agency’s capacity to fulfill its own mandate with respect to addressing family violence
- Develop ways to enhance inter-agency referral, communication, case-conferencing, and follow-up

support

- Organize joint programs and activities addressing education and community empowerment (professional development opportunities; public awareness initiatives, etc.)
- Mobilize the community to take more responsibility for accepting family violence and violence in general as “the norm”
- Find concrete ways to help each citizen reduce the violence in his/her life, including family, school, work and other social circles

From these, the Council has four ongoing action areas:

1. Create a handbook of service summaries of each member agency (as services pertain to family violence) for use by FVRC members
2. Assess and meet some cross-sector training needs in our community
3. Develop a public awareness strategy and/or undertake joint public awareness activities
4. Develop interagency collaboration protocols for Camrose and area programs and services





History of “Interagency Collaboration Protocols”

Having identified the protocols project as one of its activity areas, FVRC members spent some time exploring this area. In April 2006, the Council was given permission to adapt protocols from two other communities: the Domestic Violence Action Team in Lethbridge, Alberta; and the Durham Response to Woman Abuse Committee in Durham, Ontario.

Lethbridge and Durham had spent considerable effort developing comprehensive manuals covering many aspects of interagency cooperation. Their respective documents included:

1. Lengthy introductions exploring “best practices” with respect to family violence, as well as the history and purpose of the initiative
2. Mission statement(s) and guiding principles
3. Detailed sections outlining individual agency and/or service sector roles and responsibilities

The Camrose Family Violence Response Council adopted the general format of the two other documents, but decided to streamline the content for something shorter, simpler and more accessible. We wanted an organic, working document that would be helpful to a variety of service sectors in their dealings with people affected by family violence.

We also realized that community “buy-in” regarding the initiative would have to be nurtured. There was no way our document could be perceived as anything but voluntary. At the same time, we wanted to ensure that it would not simply be shelved. We had to create something that would inspire and guide individual organizations – something they would **choose** to use because it was helpful and not externally imposed. Something that was genuinely voluntary.

Nurturing this level of community acceptance is as much about process as it is about the end result or product. Each agency or sector had to be given meaningful opportunities to participate in the protocol development process.

Agencies and service sectors were first invited to review and comment upon that portion of the Lethbridge and Durham protocols that was relevant to their own particular work. From this input, draft revisions were made and further scrutinized by the relevant agencies. The Camrose Family Violence Response Council was responsible for the introduction, mission and guiding principles, although these, too, were reviewed by all of the other contributors.

A final draft was then developed and circulated – not for approval, but a sense of acceptance. In our view, we had developed a document that everyone could live with, that everyone would find useful, and that would help establish a common, consistent community approach to family violence for Camrose and the surrounding area.

Unlike the Lethbridge and Durham experiences, the Camrose project was greatly aided by the October 2005 publication of a new *Domestic Violence Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors in Alberta*. Because the *Handbook* outlines best practices for sectors within Alberta Justice and the Attorney General, it is an essential appendix to our own document.

The *Domestic Violence Handbook* highlights the role of education in nurturing community “buy-in”. The *Handbook* was written by Valerie Campbell, a Crown Prosecutor serving as the Co-ordinator of Family Violence Initiatives with Alberta Justice. Ms. Campbell has also given many training seminars to a wide range of professionals working in the family violence field. That training has helped ensure that the *Handbook* really would be used, and that its ultimate purpose – helping communities “effectively respond to domestic violence and, hopefully, save lives in the process” – would be achieved.

The Camrose Family Violence Response Council certainly encouraged local agencies to view their participation in this project as a learning opportunity. They would receive information and training, and would also have an opportunity to reflect upon how they were already responding to family violence. Current practices would then combine with best practices to create a more effective response to family violence for our community.

FVRC members extend their gratitude and appreciation to Val Campbell, the Domestic Violence Action Team in Lethbridge and the Durham Response to Woman Abuse Committee in Ontario. Their work and respective documents have made an invaluable contribution to our own process.





Mission, Scope and Outcome Statements

Mission A Camrose Community Approach to Family Violence is a set of guidelines for use by local agencies and other professionals. The guidelines will strengthen individual sector services and enhance interagency cooperation, thereby providing a common, consistent and effective approach to family violence in our community.

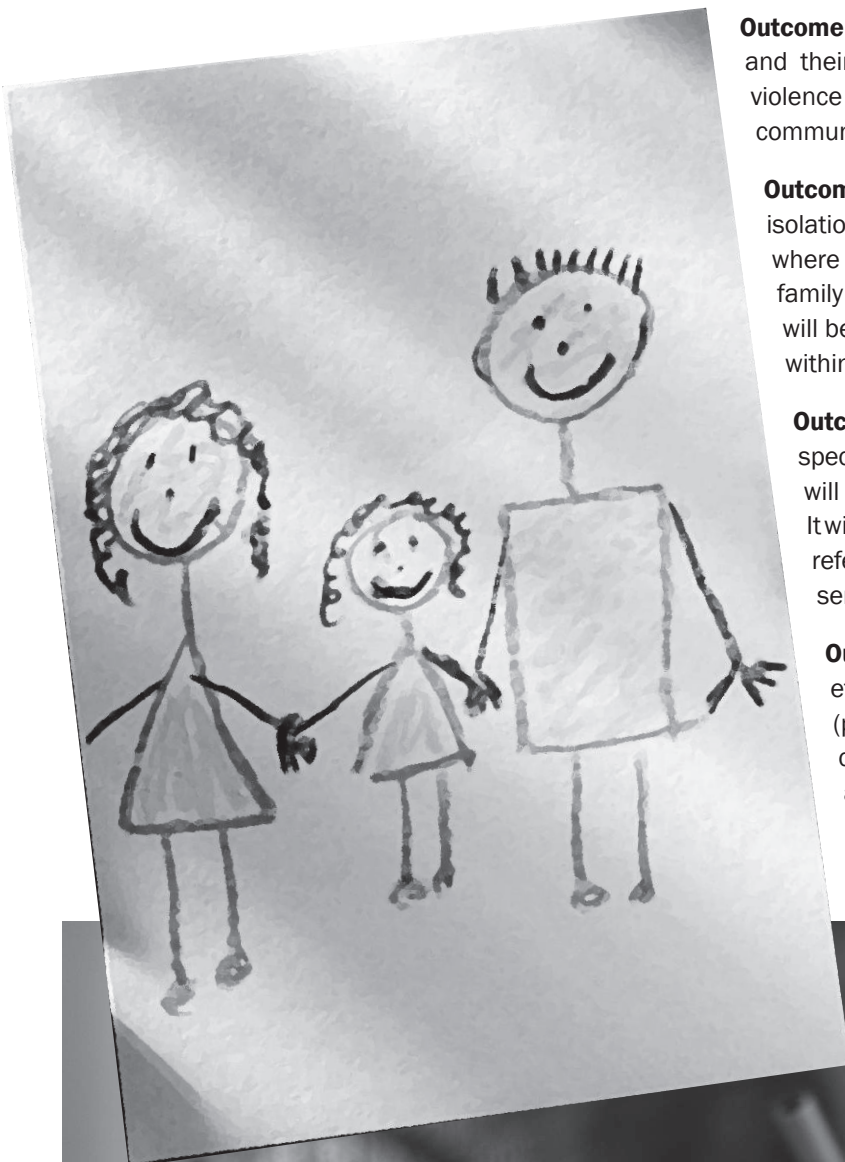
Scope The common approach applies to many sector areas (see Section 3), including government and non-government agencies, and all staffing levels. The approach will encompass a variety of services, including enforcement, early intervention, referral and follow-up, treatment and counselling, and other related supports.

Outcome The common approach will help ensure that all sectors and their staff have similar knowledge of family violence, family violence “best practices”, and will be familiar with available community resources.

Outcome The common approach will help staff overcome isolation and increase confidence when responding to situations where clients disclose family violence, as well as situations where family violence may be suspected but not directly disclosed. Staff will be enabled to follow best practices regarding family violence, within the context of their own service mandates.

Outcome The common approach will ease the workload of specific service sectors insofar as addressing family violence will be recognized and practiced as a shared responsibility. It will increase interagency communication, enhance interagency referral and follow-up, and allow for a multi-disciplinary style of service delivery as appropriate.

Outcome The common approach will increase service effectiveness for all family violence clients, including victims (people who are abused), offenders (people who are abusive), children who are exposed to family violence, and people who are indirectly affected by family violence (family, friends, co-workers, etc.) Victim safety and offender accountability will be enhanced.





Our Common Understanding

What is family violence?



- Family violence occurs within a family context and can involve a variety of groupings: spouse to spouse; parent to child; child to parent; adult family members to elders.
- For the purpose of this document, the term “family violence” will primarily be used with respect to spousal abuse, which is also known as “intimate partner abuse”. However, other forms of family violence are not intended to be excluded.
- Spousal abuse occurs in a variety of relationships, including marriage, common-law, dating, and co-parenting (when living apart).
- Spousal abuse can continue when a relationship ends, even if there is no co-parenting (often referred to as “post-separation abuse”). The risk for escalating abuse, including criminal harassment (stalking), physical injury and homicide/suicide, is highest in the weeks and months immediately following separation.
- Family violence, or spousal abuse, is centred in an imbalance of power within intimate relationships. It involves the abuse of the power of one partner or family member over another, in order to control the other partner or family member(s).
- Abuse presents in different forms, including emotional, psychological, sexual, physical, financial and spiritual abuse. Within these forms, abuse manifests itself in various ways and can be quite subtle and difficult to identify.
- Abuse usually escalates. It occurs over time, and worsens over time. It is complex.
- Family violence is not about anger or losing one’s temper. It is not caused by stress, substance abuse, poverty, mental illness or any other extenuating circumstance. It may be exacerbated by such circumstances, however, and other issues may, in turn, be exacerbated by family violence.
- Abuse is not limited to abusive behaviour. It also occurs in attitudes and beliefs that give rise to, or reinforce, abusive behaviour. Abuse often stems from a sense of entitlement; sexism is often present with abusive attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.
- Family violence is detrimental to the whole family unit. It presupposes and creates a break-down of family support and the loss of the family as a place of safety, nurture and well-being.
- Exposure to spousal abuse is considered to be a form of child maltreatment; there is a statistical correlation between spousal abuse and child abuse.
- Family violence is learned behaviour, and may present over several generations. It may present within a cultural context. It may be intentional or unintentional behaviour. It may be viewed as “normal” by the abuser, the abused, and even other family and friends who are indirectly affected by the abuse. Whatever the belief or however it presents, family violence is still wrong.
- Family violence can be treated. With significant help and appropriate supports, people can change, families can become safer, and the intergenerational cycle of abuse can be broken.



Guiding Principles



- It is the community's responsibility to work towards addressing and reducing family violence. Everyone has the right to live violence-free.
- Family violence is a crime and will be approached as such. Family violence is harmful to the individuals directly involved, and is detrimental to the entire community. Our common approach to family violence balances harm-reduction and criminal enforcement.
- Change can only occur when "victim safety" and "offender accountability" are attended to.
- The safety and well-being of people who are directly abused will be at the forefront of all decisions regarding family violence intervention and support. This includes children who are negatively affected by spousal abuse.
- Offender accountability is also of primary concern. Decisions regarding family violence intervention and enforcement will work to ensure that offenders identify, acknowledge, understand, and take full responsibility for their abusive attitudes and behaviour.
- Legislation specific to family violence will be respected. The Domestic Violence Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors in Alberta will be used as a corollary to this document.
- The Camrose Police Service and the Camrose RCMP will properly respond to all family violence reports and endeavour to uphold provincial and national policy and practices regarding investigative procedures, including the Domestic Violence Handbook (see above).
- When children are known to be living in a home where family violence is present (including post-separation abuse), Children's Services will be informed, as per provincial legislation.
- All agency staff will have a common understanding of family violence, including common or consistent training as feasible. Agency staff will have a solid awareness of the services that are available in the community. They will be familiar with – and apply – their own policies and procedures with respect to family violence. They will be familiar with the Camrose Community Approach to Family Violence and utilize it as a guideline.
- Agencies will work together to ensure the most effective response to family violence. Attention will be paid to timely referral and follow-up. Interagency cooperation and confidentiality (FOIPPA) will be balanced to ensure effective service, including victim safety and offender accountability.
- Agency mandates, policies and practices will be respected. At the same time, the internal workings of specific sectors will not be used to decrease the overall effectiveness of the common approach. Instead, we will continue to work together to enhance our individual and collective effectiveness within the common approach model.
- Family violence intervention and support will be non-paternalistic. Agencies work with people in order to empower safe choices and healthier behaviour. With the exception of enforcement, agencies will not normally make choices on behalf of their clients.
- We appreciate that family violence occurs within a context that may include different cultural and religious beliefs, and different education, employment and income levels. We are respectful of such differences and will show respect and concern to all people at all times. However, such differences will not be used to tolerate or uphold violence or abusive attitudes and behaviours.

Initial Screening: Assessment Tools Everyone Can Use

Who are the Family Violence “Front-line Workers”?

- Addictions Counsellors (applies to all counsellors and therapists)
- Brownie and/or Cub Scout Leaders (applies to all youth group leaders)
- Emergency Room Nurses (applies to all other nurses, including public health)
- Family and friends; colleagues and acquaintances (of the abused and the abuser)
- Family Physicians (and Emergency Room Physicians)
- Hockey Coaches (applies to all Sports Coaches)
- Lawyers
- Mediation Specialists
- Ministers and Priests (applies to all Laity Leaders)
- Parenting Teachers/Mentors/ Support Workers
- Personal Care Attendants
- Police and other Law Enforcement Personnel
- Social Workers
- Teachers (applies to school and “private lessons” teachers: music; dance, etc.)
- Whoever else might be working with the abused or the abuser in whatever capacity

Although domestic violence (also called “intimate partner abuse”) can happen to anyone – male or female; straight or gay; married or dating – in about 80% of all reported cases, victims are heterosexual women. As many as 30% of all Canadian women are likely to experience abuse at some point in their lifetime.

Almost two-thirds of people experiencing abuse do not contact the police – even when the violence results in injuries. Early intervention and appropriate support can prevent the escalation of intimate partner abuse. It can prevent injury, save lives, and decrease the amount and severity of harm done to children who are exposed to abuse within their home environments.

Recognizing the signs

Because family violence is not something people easily or willingly disclose, supporting others begins with educating one’s self. Learn to recognize the signs that someone may be being abused or may be being abusive. The more signs you see, the more likely the issue is one of abuse.

Signs that a person is abusive

- **Jealousy and possessiveness:** Accuses partner of cheating; wants to be with partner all the time; must know where partner has been (and with whom) when not together.
- **Controlling behaviour:** Questions partner about friends and activities; partner needs permission to do certain things. Justifies control with “concern” for partner’s safety and well-being.
- **Quick involvement:** Love at first sight; pressure for commitment; needy; often living together or engaged within six months or less after first meeting.
- **Unrealistic expectations:** Places partner on a pedestal with excessive compliments and flattery. Expects partner to be perfect – always there for him/her.
- **Isolation:** Cuts partner off from friends and family; limits use car, telephone, internet; interferes with work, school, and other activities. Approach is “you and me against the world.”



- **Blames Others:** Won’t take responsibility for behaviour/feelings; blames others (boss, partner, family; partner’s family, etc.). “You make me mad; you hurt me by not doing what I ask.”
- **Hypersensitivity:** The abuser is easily insulted and sees most things as personal attacks. He or she often looks for fights, or blows things out of proportion, and is unpredictable.

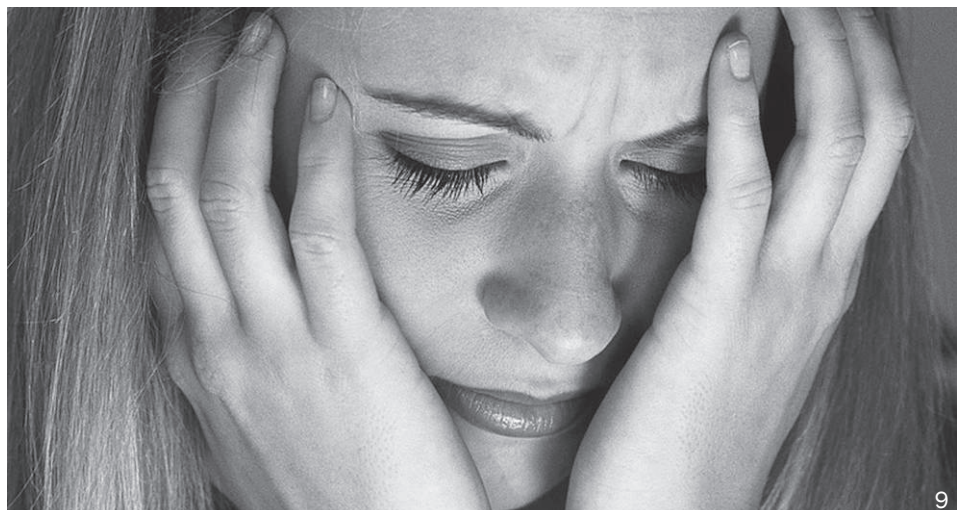
Recognizing the signs continued...

Signs that a person is abusive continued...

- **Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde:** Frequent, sudden, and extreme mood changes; appears charming and rational to outsiders, but is nasty, controlling, mean-spirited and often outraged at home.
- **Rigid gender roles:** Males favour “traditional” roles; believe women are inferior; and need to be “king of the household”. They also believe people are “meant” to be in relationships.
- **Use of force during sex:** Force is excused as “playful”, but shows little concern for the comfort level or needs of the partner. He/she also makes sexually degrading jokes about the partner.
- **Disrespectful or cruel to others:** Generally dismissive; punishes children and animals a lot; teases children until they cry; insensitive to the pain and suffering of others.
- **Verbal abuse of any kind; physical abuse of any kind; threats of any kind; harming property in any way:** All these behaviours create a controlling atmosphere based on fear, and intimidation.
- **Past Abusive Relationships:** Eventually, people may learn that a partner was abusive in past relationships. The abusive person may say that is a lie; protest that the former partner is crazy or vengeful; or will minimize the abuse or characterize it as unique to the former relationship. Abuse is a pattern that will continue in all relationships without appropriate intervention.

Signs that a person is being abused

- **The person's partner exhibits several of the signs listed above:** Though the abused person exhibits no outward signs, the partner appears to be abusive, based on the above.
- **Withdraws from others:** Reduces communication with family, friends, colleagues; has little or no social life; stops attending events or participating in activities formerly enjoyed.
- **Personality and/or mood changes:** Seems more guarded; less outgoing; has mood swings; depressed and/or anxious; may seem more “hyper”, “fearful”, etc.
- **Won't make decisions:** Increasingly indecisive; may be “flustered” due to eroding self-esteem; needs to ask or consult with partner about almost anything.
- **Limited access to money:** Rarely has money for personal spending; often says “can't afford” that; needs to ask partner for money; has to justify or explain purchases (even groceries).
- **May hint about problems:** May refer to conflict or arguments at home; wonder how to make the relationship work; refer to a partner's “anger”, “temper”, or “stress”, etc. – increasingly.
- **Chronic health problems; bruises/injuries not adequately explained:** Frequent headaches, colds, etc; absenteeism; weird explanations (falls down a lot, walk into things, etc.).
- **Uses drugs and alcohol to “self-medicate” or cope:** Increased drinking; prescribed medications (anti-depressants, pain-killers, etc.) – deals with the effects of abuse, not the abuse itself.
- **Talks about partner's substance abuse:** May use substance abuse to explain or justify partner's behaviour; remember, however, that substance abuse does not cause domestic abuse.





Recognizing the signs continued...

Signs that a child or teen is exposed to intimate partner abuse

- **Appears to be neglected:** Clothing and hygiene unkempt; parents late to pick up/drop off at school/other activities; missed appointments; lunches, forms, library books, etc., forgotten; etc.
- **Changes in personality/behaviour:** May become passive/withdrawn, or aggressive and angry; may become easily distracted or overly focused; may have mood swings; may be a bully, etc.
- **Hyper-vigilant or overly responsible:** Needs to be perfect (“good”), defers to/takes care of others; at home, is overly responsible for housework, siblings, care of abused parent, etc.
- **Fearful of parental reactions:** Guarded and watchful around parents; “in tune” with parents’ feelings, moods, etc; may visibly flinch if parents become even slightly angry, etc.
- **Talks about parents’ anger and fighting:** Fighting may be spoken of as normal, “joked” about or downplayed; likely warned not to talk about “family secrets” but may do so anyway.
- **Smokes and/or abuses substance:** Older children (11+) may use substances to self-medicate or feel cool or in control (“adult”); may have easy access to substances within the home.
- **“Excessive” non-compliance:** Breaks school/social rules; socially immature; poor academic achievement; disrespectful; verbally abusive; petty crime; high risk behaviour; runs away, etc. (Behaviour is due to neglect and exposure to abuse; punishment is not an effective response.)
- **Mistakenly “diagnosed” as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder:** Many of these “signs” are similar to behaviours commonly associated with ADHD – avoid making assumptions or mis-diagnosing based on behaviour alone.
- **At risk of being directly abused:** About 60% of children exposed to spousal abuse are them-selves abused; high risk of physical and sexual abuse; along with the above, may have poorly explained injuries/illnesses; may have inappropriate knowledge of sex/sexual behaviour, etc.

Creating a safe context

Abused people will usually avoid talking about the abuse for a long time. There are many things to consider if you suspect that abuse is happening.

- The person may be too afraid to talk about what is going on. Abusive partners often threaten divorce, injury, talking the children and other harmful consequences if the abuse is disclosed.
- The person may be ashamed to talk about what is going on.
- The person may love his/her abusive partner and choose to deny or minimize the abuse.
- The person might think the abuse is normal:
 - He/she was raised in an abusive home.
 - Believes a husband has a right to control his wife.
 - A wife is responsible for her husband’s care; he has a right to be mad if she neglects him.
- The person might deny the abuse and get angry if questions are asked.
- The person might want to be asked questions so she can finally acknowledge the abuse, but without the risk or responsibility of bringing it up herself.

It is important to create a safe, confidential context when asking someone about his or her situation. Bring up the topic in a general way: “In my work, I see a lot of situations / injuries / absenteeism that sometimes indicates a person isn’t being treated well at home, or has some concerns about their safety. How are things going with you?”



Asking the questions

Front-line workers hearing (or nurturing) disclosures for the first time do not need a detailed assessment tool. Instead, a few key questions will suffice.

- The following questions are also given in an attached form, which may be photocopied for use with individual clients.
- You are looking for indicators of control and jealousy as well as physical abuse.
- The questions will be more or less applicable. Use your discretion.
- The person may volunteer information after the first few questions are asked. Listen carefully.
- An initial assessment should be short (five to fifteen minutes). It is not a counselling session.
- You are not required to provide direct services, including safety or refuge. Be honest about what you can and cannot do for the person at that time.
- You are required to provide information about accessing appropriate services. This requirement is sometimes a legal one; it is always an ethical one.



PART ONE General Safety and Well-being (for front-line worker; initial screening)

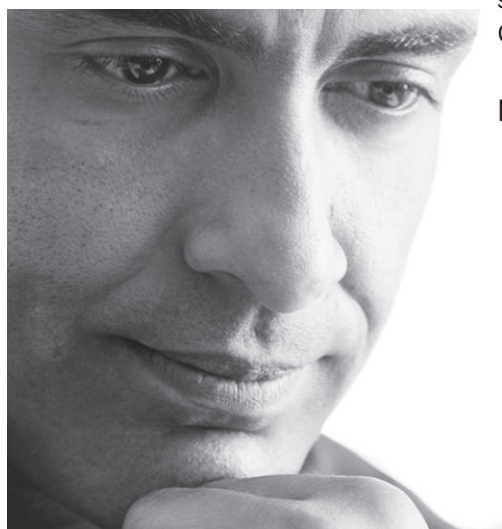
- How are things going at home? How is your relationship with your partner (husband/wife; girlfriend/boyfriend)? OR, if the person is separated or divorced: Do you and your former partner communicate? How is that going? How do you feel after you have met with him/her, or spoken with him/her?
- Have you ever been afraid?
- Has your partner ever harmed you physically (for example, shoved, kicked, choked/strangled, hit you or thrown something at you), or threatened to harm you?
- Have you thought about what you would do if s/he did harm you, or harmed you again? Do you have somewhere you can go?

If applicable, provide contact information for services that can assist with safety planning and other types of support (see attached). Encourage the person to consider calling police. Police can help with immediate safety and decide about laying charges; charges are not the client's responsibility. Explain that abusers need to be held accountable and get help for their behaviour in order to change, and that police involvement is often necessary for this to occur.

Note: The "Part Two" and "Part Three" questions that follow can be asked during the initial screening if time permits or depending upon a client's response. Or, they can be asked during subsequent visits or follow-up by a hospital/clinic social worker or similar staff. Staff will want to incorporate introductory comments connecting "Part One" responses with the rest of the screening.

PART TWO Escalating Risk (for follow-up and/or initial screening)

- How often has the abuse occurred? How many times has your partner harmed you or threatened to harm you in the last six to twelve months, or more?
- Does the abuse seem to be happening more often, less often or about the same?
- Have the threats or things s/he has said or done gotten worse? How?
- Are you afraid? (If the abuse is becoming more frequent and/or severe, the risk of injury and lethality increases. Again, refer to community services and encourage the person to call police.)





PART THREE Other Associated Factors (for follow-up and/or initial screening)

- Are you concerned about your partner's drinking or use of prescriptions or other drugs? Would you say your partner has a drug or alcohol problem? (Remember: substance abuse does not cause family violence, but may worsen it and will also need to be addressed.)
- Is your partner employed or unemployed? Are there employment stressors that affect his or her behaviour at home?
- How about his mental health in general? Is he anxious? Depressed? Does he ever talk about harming himself? (Talk of suicide is a huge risk factor. Without scaring the client, you can again encourage her to seek more information from another service.)
- Would it be safe for you to give you partner some information about services that can help him or her deal with these issues? (If the answer is yes, provide some information. If not, stress how important it is for the client to take care of him/herself and the children, if any.)

Ending the conversation

- Admire the client's courage and express appreciation for her honesty.
- Show concern for his situation without being fearful or anxious yourself.
- Remind her that the abuse she is experiencing is not her fault, and is not OK.
- Again, encourage your client to contact local services for help. If he is a regular, let him know that he can talk about the situation with you again the next time you see him.
- If you are concerned about her immediate safety, tell her so. Again, encourage her to consider calling the police.

What not to do at any time during your conversation

- Do not express doubts about your client's perception of the situation. She may over or under express it. Believe them and direct the focus to services that can best help her.
- Show concern, but avoid reacting emotionally to the abuse she describes. Do not belittle her partner. She will have mixed feelings about him, and may "come to his defence" and shut down avenues for help.
- Do not tell your client what to do – ever. That is what the abuser does!
- Do not make promises you cannot keep. Do not promise that "things will work out". Dealing with abuse and establishing safety are both challenging and take time.
- Do maintain professional boundaries and be honest about the service you are able to offer. Refer. Be patient and follow-up as you can. It may take months or more before your client is ready to fully deal with the situation.

Remember

- Everyone is legally obliged to report suspected child abuse to Alberta Children's Services. Exposure to partner abuse is considered to be child abuse. You can report anonymously.
- Everyone has a legal and moral obligation to call police if a person's safety appears to be at immediate risk, or if they are at immediate risk of harming another person.
- If you have an ongoing relationship with the client, follow-up on any referral suggestions at sub-sequent visits. Did she call the family violence service? Can you call and get information on his behalf? How can you help her get the help she needs?





Section 3 Specific Services

Alberta Health Services Community Addiction and Mental Health

Mental Health Information

Phone: Camrose adult: 780-679-1241
Camrose children: 780-679-1764
Killam: 780-385-7161

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday:
8:00 to 4:30; Camrose clinic open
during lunch; 24 Hour Help Line:
1-877-303-2642.

Mental Health Mandate: Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness on a voluntary basis to individuals of all ages experiencing one or more mental illnesses. Priority: those with severe and persistent mental illness. Short-term services for more transient / temporary conditions. Support, consultation and information for family members, caregivers and community at large.

Addiction Information

Phone: 780-672-1181

Areas Served: Camrose, Camrose County, Killam and Tofield

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday:
8:00 to 4:30; open during lunch.

Addiction Mandate: Treatment, prevention and information services in relation to alcohol, drugs, gambling and tobacco reduction, whether their own use, or someone else's. Referrals to a continuum of services including residential, detoxification and outpatient. Clients may be victims or perpetrators of family violence and bullying.

Practice regarding family violence

No mandated policy specific to family violence. We contact Child and Family Services regarding minors exposed to family violence; in the case of adults, police may be contacted. Family violence is discussed with clients and supportive intervention is provided by assisting clients with building a safety network. Focus is client centered, based on unmet needs.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Release of information forms used in collaboration with the Health Information Act. Youth (14 years and older) sign for themselves, provided they met requirements as mature minors under the *Health Information Act*.

Limits to working with family violence

Service hours Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30p.m. Safety of staff is carefully managed due to high potential of risk of clients using stimulants and clients with assault charges.

Inter-agency collaboration

Multidisciplinary team process; case conferencing with the client present, as well as case planning and follow up. Release forms are signed to allow communication and coordination with other agencies.

Alberta Health Services - Camrose Public Health

Agency Information

Phone: 780-679-2980

Area: City of Camrose, County of Camrose

Hours: Monday to Friday: 8:00 to 4:30

Mandate: Advocates on behalf of residents to promote wellness, health, and improve quality of life. Services are family centered and respect choices made by the client.

Service Summary

Public Health Nurses routinely enquire about safety issues or violence in the home; other department staff may/will also enquire if there is indication or suspicion the client is not in a safe environment. **Programs:** Public Health Nursing, Sexual Health, Early Intervention Program, Community Genetics, Community Nutrition, Oral Health and Health Promotion.

Information: Offered to clients through the different program streams including a listing of local resources and support. **Prevention:** Information is provided to clients who may be in situations where there may be a potential for violence i.e. shaken baby syndrome, post partum depression. **Referral:** Staff do not make direct client referrals but support the client's decision to access services (or not). Clients are advised of resources including continued support from staff. **Reporting:** Suspected child abuse must be reported as per provincial legislation.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Governed by provincial legislation pertaining to all client information.

Inter-agency collaboration

Staff collaborate with other agencies to increase awareness, education and prevention of family violence i.e. RCMP, East Central Alberta Child & Family Services Authority, area FCSS offices.

Limits to working with family violence

Staff do not provide treatment. Activities are directed toward education, awareness and prevention which respect client need and choice.



Association of Communities Against Abuse (ACAA)

Agency Information

Phone: 403-742-3558

Toll Free: 1-866-807-3558

Area Served: Camrose, Camrose County, Beaver County, MD of Wainwright, County of Flagstaff, Stettler, County of Stettler, County of Paintearth, Special Area 2

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 9:00 to 4:30; some evenings and weekends

Mandate: Provide assessment and treatment interventions for child abuse victims, adult survivors of abuse, family members and juvenile offenders. ACAA strives to promote and protect the safety and well being of children by providing appropriate preventive education for children, parents, professionals and the public. ACAA hopes to reduce the long-term impact of abuse and prevent or reduce the incidence rate of child abuse, family violence and bullying within the region.

Cost: Most services free; therapy is free/subsidized

Service Summary

Therapy: Treatment is provided by a team of seven part-time professional therapists located throughout East Central Alberta. Once a referral is made, an Intake Worker contacts the client by telephone to determine program eligibility. Once eligibility is determined, a therapist is assigned. Treatment begins with an initial assessment, treatment goals and a treatment plan. ACAA therapists are trained to treat physical, sexual and emotional abuse. A Clinical Supervisor oversees the work of the therapists.

Preventive Education: ACAA offers a variety of school- and community-based education programs, including:

- **Yellow Brick Road:** an educational program for children three to six that fortifies them with skills to help deal with potentially abusive situations,

and develop healthy ways of solving conflict and getting along with others. The program is offered in partnership with day care centres and schools, teaches young children.

- **Raising Healthy Children:** a program that helps parents become more effective in their relationships with their children, through increased knowledge, improved confidence and new parenting practices. Parents are better able to communicate, solve problems, resolve conflict and discipline their children. Especially helpful for parents who have witnessed or experienced abuse as children.
- **You Choose:** a bullying program for students in grades three to six. Through discussion, videos and interactive exercises, students look at the bully, the victim, the bystander and their roles in allowing bullying to continue. We also examine excuses used by bullies, and explore healthy relationships.
- **Options:** a program for students in grades seven to nine that explores healthy and unhealthy relationships, including each person's responsibility within a relationship. It also examines relationship abuse.
- **The Other 3R's:** a high school program that looks at dating violence, sexual harassment, date rape, date rape drugs, body image and self-esteem. Students acquire information and skills to keep themselves safe after graduation, especially within a post secondary education setting.
- **Community Education:** presentations to local agencies and community groups on abuse, family violence and bullying. Regional Local Advisory Committees help identify community issues and potential presenters.

Practice regarding family violence

(See above)

FOIPPA/Release Forms

ACAA is required to follow FOIPPA. All adult clients sign a "consent for service" form agreeing to treatment and identifying details regarding exchange of information (specific agencies and purpose). Child forms are signed by a parent or guardian. ACAA is obliged to report suspicions of recent or ongoing child abuse, homicide or suicide to the appropriate agency.

Inter-agency collaboration

ACAA began as a response to a community need in East Central Alberta, and tries to work closely with communities and other agencies to provide the best possible service to rural Alberta clients. ACAA's most frequent referral sources include Alberta Health Services, Community Addictions and Mental Health, Camrose Women's Shelter, Family School Liaison Workers, FCSS programs, family doctors, RCMP, Victim Services and self-referrals.

Limits to working with family violence

(N/A)

Battle River School Division #31

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-6131

Area Served: City of Camrose; Camrose County; Beaver County; Flagstaff County

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 8:15 to 4:30; school days differ slightly

Mandate: To provide K – 12 education to 37 schools within the public school system for the BRSD #31 service area. BRSD #31 has adopted policy on Safe and Caring Schools. A full range of school programs (including extra-curricular) is available. BRSD #31 operates a Family School Liaison Worker program within the region.

Service Summary

(See below)

Practice regarding family violence

BRSD is in compliance with the Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act with respect to reporting disclosed or suspected child abuse or neglect. When student welfare is a concern (even if there has been no conclusive disclosure), staff report information that may warrant an investigation by Children's Services; they do not conduct their own preliminary investigation.

Prevention: Every school within the district addresses bullying in their 3-year plan. Staff receive training on prevention of bullying and share this information with parents and students through newsletters, assemblies, and the local newspaper. Mentor groups within the schools provide a platform to discuss bullying, learn strategies and coping mechanisms, understand where help is available, and role-play options.

Intervention and Support: School achievement and behaviour are often the first indicators that intervention is required. Even though there is no written policy on referral, there is a practice of referral. Typically, schools refer students as necessary to Family School Liaison Workers (FSLW), the district crisis

management coordinator, the district behavior consultant, AB Child and Family Services and Alberta Health Services (AHS) Addiction and Mental Health. Recommendations for counseling are forwarded to AHS Addiction and Mental Health, The Open Door, or local offices of Family and Community Support Services. Follow-up services are provided to the students by the district behavior consultant and FSLW. Contact with the student is maintained to ensure that welfare issues are taken into consideration.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

District personnel strictly adhere to FOIP protocol. Confidential information is shared first with parents and agreed-upon parties. Consent is required for any intervention outside of immediate school personnel, and must be obtained from the parent unless the reported violence is attributed to the family. Reporting and communication practices require consent of the parent when Family School Liaison Program is involved. Open communication exists between BRSD, Children's Services (CFSA) and AHS Addiction and Mental Health.

Inter-agency collaboration

(See above)

Limits to working with family violence

BRSD #31 has limited capacity for dealing with bullying that occurs outside of school hours and off school property. Intervention is limited to information-sharing and student instruction during school hours. Schools do not have the capacity to intervene or dictate changes in family practices and defer to other agencies to provide this service. Services are available at the school during school hours to support student needs as recommended by the crisis counsellor, behaviour consultant, FSLWs, and school counsellors.

Educators are not obligated to address issues outside the parameter of school concerns. However, as caring professionals, we sometimes provide services outside of normal working hours, or in addition to contracted obligations. When the question of a child's safety is an issue, immediate contact is made with Child and Family Services.

Service Gaps:

- BRSD has policies on Welcoming and Caring as well as Healthy School Communities and Workplaces.
- There are a limited number of counsellors with Masters degrees in School Counselling
- Regional Collaborative Service Delivery model works to support families with complex needs.





Camrose and District Support Services (CDSS)

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-0141

Area Served: Camrose; Camrose County; Bawlf, Bittern Lake, Edberg, Ferintosh, Rosalind, Hay Lakes

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 8:30 to 4:30; some after-hours programs. **Drop-in:** All drop-in/telephone clients receive immediate initial assessment and are then referred to appropriate services.

Mandate: CDSS is an FCSS (Family and Community Support Services) program, with a mandate to provide preventive social services to enhance the well-being of individuals and families.

Service Summary

Family violence is mainly addressed via the Family Violence Action Society (FVAS), located within the CDSS office.

Practice regarding family violence

It is CDSS practice to direct all family violence inquiries/clients to FVAS; however, all CDSS staff may “debrief” all kinds of calls and drop-in clients to ascertain the nature of the crisis or issue.

If the FVAS Program Director is unavailable at the time of a call or drop in, and depending upon the situation, staff will address the crisis or issue with the client to determine immediate needs and suggest immediate sources of support. Depending upon the nature and urgency of the situation, CDSS will then opt for one or more of the following:

- Refer the client to FVAS. The client will be invited to leave a voice mail message, or contact information. FVAS follows up on all referrals by attempting to contact clients at least three times over two weeks following receipt of the message.
- Occasionally, clients will choose not to leave a name and contact information, preferring to call back themselves, or pursue alternative services.
- If immediate protective support is thought to be necessary, CDSS staff will encourage the client to contact the Women's Shelter and/or police services. CDSS may also encourage calls to Alberta Health Services Community Addiction and Mental Health and/or visits to St. Mary's Walk-In Psychiatric Clinic.
- If information regarding other services is requested or thought to be helpful, CDSS staff will make additional referral suggestions. These most frequently include Alberta Human Resources and Employment; Neighbourlink; Emergency Clothing and Furniture Depot; Family Mediation Services; Association of Communities Against Abuse; The Open Door; and legal aid and/or a lawyer (no particular names offered).

FOIPPA/Release Forms

CDSS programs are bound by FOIPPA; appropriate release forms must be signed by clients prior to any exchange of information. This practice may be foregone in the case of child abuse, or suspected immediate risk of suicide/homicide.

Inter-agency collaboration

CDSS programs work with a wide range of local and regional human services, government sectors and businesses. (See above for specific collaboration with respect to family violence.)

Limits to working with family violence

Capacity to work with family violence is challenged by limited resources (for example, specialized counsellors for referral); reluctance of some sectors to become more engaged in community collaborative responses and reluctance or incapacity of individuals affected by family violence to disclose and/or seek help. As an FCSS program, the CDSS mandate is limited to preventive/early intervention support.





Camrose and District Victim Services

Agency Information

Phone: Office: 780-672-4570

Fax: 780-672-2929

RCMP: 780-672-3342

Camrose Police: 780-672-4444

Area Served: City of Camrose; County of Camrose within the RCMP catchment area

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 8:30 to 4:30; 24 hr crisis support

Mandate: Victim Services provides support, information and referral to victims of crime, trauma, and tragedy, free of charge. VS advocates are trained volunteers. Clients are referred by the RCMP and Camrose Police Services. May also be self-referred or by other agencies.

Service Summary

Victim Services does not provide any type of counselling service, but refers clients to appropriate agencies within the community. Victim Services assists in finding financial help for those who need it – either through programs offered by the Justice System, or other programs in the community.

Practice regarding family violence

Victim Services works closely with police and RCMP, which influences the general VSU practice with response to family violence. Resource information is provided to all clients who may be affected by family violence. Victim Services also strives to ensure that all volunteer advocates have some training in family violence.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Any victim service advocate is bound by and must adhere to a strict confidentiality policy as per the enhanced security clearance that must be obtained prior to providing services.

Inter-agency collaboration

Victim Services assists clients in accessing Women's Shelter and Family Violence Action Society services, and also works closely with the court system.

Limits to working with family violence Cannot be on Scene – unless secured by Police

Camrose Boys and Girls Club

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-8004

Area Served: Camrose and area

Hours of Operation: Office, Monday to Thursday: 10:00am to 3:00pm

After School Program, Monday to Thursday: 3:00pm to 6:00pm (Oct - May)
Tuesday: 12:00pm to 6:00pm (Early Dismissal)

Teen Program, Monday & Wednesday: 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Summer Program, July & August: Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

Mandate: To provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.

Cost:

After School Program . . . \$25/mo/child

Teen Program \$10/yr/youth

Summer Program . . . \$100/wk/member

. \$125/wk/non-members

Service Summary

After School Program (KidWay): Kids ages 6 –12, pickup service, snack & nutrition program, variety of social, recreational & educational activities. I.e. girls group, boys group, skating, homework help, random acts of kindness, fieldhouse activities, theme parties, crafts, outside fun, song birds & caroling, yoga, tobogganing, floor hockey, BG store (earn BG bucks and redeem for items in the BG store), assorted games & recreation equipment, and conflict resolution.

Teen Program: Youth ages 13 - 17, Keystone Leadership Training (5 key areas are leadership, teamwork, healthy choices, service to club and community, learning for life), recreation equipment, jamming, music and fundraising.

Summer Program: Kids ages 6 –12, activities are based on a theme, kids enjoy an out of the ordinary summer experience, activities include: river boat ride, build-a-bear, zoos, lakes, camping, amusement parks, water parks, museums, special events, etc.

Practice regarding family violence

We routinely do conflict resolution and promotion of anti-bullying. We have also attended children's individual case conferences. Our teens regularly discuss many issues including family violence, dating violence, bullying, healthy relationships and conflict resolution. The nature of our programs is to build personal and social skills in all our youth. We hope by doing so it will reduce negative social skills.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

We follow FOIPPA. We ask for releases and consents for all our programs and activities. When working with other agencies around a youth, we have the appropriate permission to do so.



Camrose Police Services

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-4444; 911

Area Served: City of Camrose

Hours of Operation: Always Open

Mandate: Law enforcement; assess and respond to all types of emergencies within the city of Camrose, including mental health crises. CPS is committed to providing a safe community which includes freedom of violence within our homes.

Service Summary

CPS are the first to respond when victims report domestic abuse situations by calling police. The police determine if family violence has occurred. If grounds exist, they may arrest and charge the accused under the Criminal code, and conduct bail hearings with requests for conditions of release. If no arrests or criminal charges are laid, police will assess the situation to determine if an Emergency Protection Order from a Justice of the Peace is warranted. Investigators also help the complainant navigate the legal system, respond to cases referred to police by external agencies, and provide assistance to Crown Prosecutors.

Practice regarding family violence

Camrose Police Service has adopted the Domestic Violence Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors in Alberta (Alberta Justice, October 2005).

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Camrose Police Service has policy and procedures with respect to the release of information to other agencies, and any agency seeking the release of information from the Camrose Police Service should consult with the CPS FOIPP Coordinator.

Inter-agency collaboration

Camrose Police Service works closely with other agencies within our community and with agencies outside of the Camrose community involving investigations in which a team approach can reach the target goal of those involved. This working/team approach must be confined to the context of the law to ensure a successful conclusion in the event of criminal charge(s) being pursued through the courts.

Limits to working with family violence

The nature and potential of specific charges with respect to the following list of possible criminal charges depends upon each set of circumstances.

- Forcible Entry
- Use of a Firearm in Commission of Offence
- Use of Imitation of Firearm in Commission of Offence
- Pointing a Firearm
- Breach of Court Order (Emergency Protection Order)
- Resisting or Obstructing a Peace Officer
- Public Mischief
- Failure to Comply with Conditions of Recognition or Undertaking
- Failure to Provide Necessities (food, clothing, shelter, medication, etc.)
- Criminal Negligence Causing Death/Bodily Harm
- Administering a Noxious Substance (poisoning, date rape drugs, etc.)
- Uttering Threats (promise to do harm – immediate or otherwise – to victim/someone else)
- Criminal Harassment (includes “stalking”)
- Common Assault (unwanted touching, hitting, etc.)
- Assault With a Weapon
- Assault Causing bodily Harm
- Aggravated Assault
- Assault of a Peace Officer
- Sexual Assault (any unwanted sexual activity)
- Sexual Assault With a Firearm
- Sexual Assault With a Weapon
- Aggravated Sexual Assault
- Forcible Confinement (the victim is not free to move around on his/her own initiative)

In addition, CPS also provides assistance in obtaining Criminal Code Peace Bonds and Provincial Emergency Protection Orders.



Camrose RCMP Detachment

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-3342; 911

Area Served: County of Camrose

Hours of Operation: Office hours are 8:00 to 4:00 – members on duty or on call 24 hours

Mandate: Law enforcement; assess and respond to all types of emergencies within the rural Camrose area including mental health crises. The RCMP is committed to providing safe rural communities which includes freedom from violence.

Service Summary

RCMP are the first to respond when victims report domestic abuse situations by calling police. The police determine if family violence has occurred. If grounds exist, they may arrest and charge the accused under the Criminal Code, and conduct bail hearings with requests for conditions of release. If

no arrests or criminal charges are laid, police will assess the situation to determine if an Emergency Protection Order from a Justice of the Peace is warranted. Investigators also help the complainant navigate the legal system, make necessary referrals to Victim Services, Women's Shelter or any other available community network.

Practice regarding family violence

RCMP have adopted the Domestic Violence Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors in Alberta.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Camrose RCMP have policy and procedures with respect to the release of information to other agencies. Any agency seeking the release of information from the RCMP should consult with the NCO i/c of the Camrose Detachment.

Inter-agency collaboration

Camrose RCMP works closely with other agencies within our community and county in cases where a team approach could bring a successful conclusion to the incident being investigated.

Limits to working with family violence

As a policing agency we are bound by specific charges which ultimately depend upon each individual set of circumstances. Camrose RCMP members provide assistance in obtaining Criminal Code Peace Bonds and Provincial Emergency Protection Orders.

Camrose Women's Shelter Society

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-1035

Toll Free Crisis Line: 1-877-672-1010

Website: www.brigantiaplace.org

Area Served: Camrose and outlying communities.

Hours of Operation: 24/7 Crisis Intervention Services 365 days/year

Mandate: To assist women and children who are experiencing the effects of family violence towards attaining a life-style free of abuse.

Service Summary

Emergency Shelter Services: Provides a safe, supportive residence and support for women and children who are escaping family violence. Admission is based upon individual need. Length of stay is generally 21 days with possible approval of extensions. Capacity is 22 beds, seven bedrooms, and one bedroom is available for persons with disabilities.

Practice Regarding Family Violence

Crisis Intervention Workers provide 24-hour crisis support to shelter residents and non-resident community individuals who are affected by family violence. The Crisis Intervention team will encourage and arrange appropriate referrals to assist in meeting individual needs. Risk assessments and safety plans are developed for all clients and domestic violence information resources are available.

Individualized support is provided to women and children after leaving the Shelter through the Community Outreach Program. Outreach services are also available to women and families who have not stayed at the shelter but have been affected by family violence. Life Skills support and information, parenting support, and various wellness groups are available. Community presentations pertaining to family violence are provided upon request.

Additional Services

Basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, supportive counseling, childcare, referrals, safety planning, information and life skills groups. The shelter has an on-site school for grades 1-9 funded by Battle River School Division and students in grades 10-12 access our PACE outreach school. There are also a variety of volunteer opportunities available.



Community Corrections (Probation)

Agency Information

Phone: 780-679-1234

Area Served: boundaries are between Hiway 21 and secondary road 870 east west and between hiway 53 and 14 going north south with a few exceptions around the borders

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 8:30 to 12 noon; 1:00 to 4:30

Service Summary

The Community Corrections and Release Program offers community based programs to adult and youth offenders through a network of 41 community corrections offices and two attendance centers located in 36 separate geographic locations in Alberta.

Staff supervise adult offenders involved in community based programs such as probation and conditional sentence supervision temporary absence, pre-trial release, fine option and alternative measures.

Community based programs are offered to young offenders who receive bail orders, probation, community service orders, or other community sentences are supervised by probation officers.

Offenders under the supervision of the community corrections offices are offered the opportunity to participate on a referral basis in rehabilitative programs that promote positive and productive behaviours delivered by agencies other than community corrections.

A variety of rehabilitative services are available. These include:

- Mental health
- Specialized treatment programs
- Education programs
- Life skills training

Provincially funded agencies also offer programming for offenders convicted of various types of offences, including sexual offences and domestic/family violence.

Adult community corrections programs include:

- Attendance centre program
- Community work service program
- Fine option program
- Pre-trial release
- Probation and conditional sentence supervision
- Temporary absence program

Youth community corrections programs include:

- Community service
- Conditional and community supervision deferred custody and supervision
- Extrajudicial sanctions program
- Fine option
- Intensive support and supervision
- Probation
- Reintegration leave

Practice regarding family violence

- Probation Officers have the responsibility of supervising individuals on Pre-Trial Release, Probation, Conditional Sentence, Peace Bond or Temporary Absence and enforcing conditions ordered by the Court.
- Conditions imposed by the Court may include requirements to report to a Probation Officer, attend counselling, abstain from alcohol and drugs, and not to have contact with the victim(s) of the offence, along with any other conditions the Court chooses.
- The supervision of domestic violence cases includes contact between the Probation Officer and the victim when possible. This contact may be ongoing throughout the term of supervision, to enable the Probation Officer to monitor the offender's compliance with conditions, the primary concern being the safety of the victim.
- If counselling is ordered by the Court, the Probation Officer may refer the individual to a domestic violence treatment program in their community, either for group or individual counselling.



East Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority

Agency Information

Phone: 780-608-1800 (Camrose Children's Resource Centre); 780-310-1818 (Family Violence Info Line); Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-387-KIDS (5437)

Area Served: Camrose and surrounding area

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 8:15 to 4:30; closed at noon

Mandate: We support and strengthen families and collaborate with our communities to develop nurturing and safe environments for children, youth and individuals. No cost for Intervention services.

Service Summary

Information: The Ministry of Human Services a broad range of information sheets, posters and booklets available at no cost to community groups.

Prevention: Child and Family Services' Community Incentive Fund supports local initiatives that increase awareness of family violence and bullying, and helps communities address more specific topics such as preventing abusive relationships and addressing elder abuse. In 2007-08, \$3 million was provided to 87 community-based projects across Alberta.

Treatment: Intervention and Family Enhancement services and supports

CFSA Referral: Will refer to appropriate local agencies & services. The CFSA works closely with other agencies through multi-disciplinary teams.

Legislation regarding family violence

The amended Protection Against Family Violence Act (PAFVA) took effect on November 1st, 2006. The law adds stalking to the definition of family violence, which means Emergency Protection Orders can be issued to protect those who are experiencing this form of abuse from a family member. Alberta is only the second jurisdiction in Canada to include this provision. This legislation also helps children exposed to family violence by requiring judges and justices of the peace to consider the exposure when determining whether an Emergency Protection Order should be granted. In addition, an order by the Court of Queen's Bench can authorize children to receive counseling with the consent of one parent. This will ensure that an abusive parent cannot stand in the way of the child getting the help he or she needs. The legislation also protects vulnerable people, such as seniors who are being abused by a family member, regardless of whether they live together. It provides a more comprehensive explanation of family violence and gives frontline case workers, police and judges a common understanding of the dynamics of family violence.

The CFSA's frontline staff help victims of family violence understand the benefits of an Emergency Protection Order (EPO):

- There is no cost for applying for an EPO or Queen's Bench Protection Order
- CFSA staff & police can apply on a victim's behalf 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Police are required to serve an abuser with a copy of the EPO
- Adult victims can apply for their own EPO at provincial court

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Client confidentiality is a critical component in protecting family members from family violence. It is enshrined in Section 8 of the Protection Against Family Violence Act.

Inter-agency collaboration

The CFSA collaborates with regional partners, including East Central Health, Justice, FCSS, Sexual Assault Centre, Interval Home, other agencies throughout the region to raise awareness of family violence. The CFSA works closely with Brigantia Place in Camrose to provide shelter and safety for families that are experiencing violence and abuse in their homes. The Alberta government created the Interdepartmental Committee on Family Violence and Bullying to address the issue from a government-wide perspective. Nine partnering ministries led by Child and Family Services work together through the implementation of Alberta's Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Initiative. The committee has identified five key areas for ongoing action: prevention; protection; intervention/treatment; education/coordination; and policy.

Limits to working with family violence

The CFSA in collaboration with agencies and communities will continue efforts to raise public awareness of family violence. However, incidents of family violence can only be addressed when a report of such an incident is made to a CFSA office, through the Child Abuse Hotline, or disclosed at a regional Emergency Room site.



Family Justice Services

Agency Information

Phone: 780-679-1777, Camrose
310-0000/780-361-1308, Wetaskiwin

Area Served: Wetaskiwin Judicial District, (includes Camrose, Wetaskiwin, Ponoka, Leduc, Killam and all surrounding area)

Hours of Operation: Wetaskiwin office, Monday to Thursday: 8:15 to 4:30; Camrose office, Friday: 8:15 to 4:30

Mandate: Family Justice Services is a group of programs and services offered by Alberta Justice in collaboration with the courts of Alberta. Family Justice Services works directly with individuals and also with the judges of the Provincial Court and the Court of Queen's Bench to help people get appropriate solutions for their family law issues. Family Court Counsellors provide services, at no cost, to families who are involved in parenting disputes and are living separate and apart. The service is designed for people who are not represented by a lawyer.

Service Summary

Information: Brochures, pamphlets and books free of charge; Web site: www.albertacourts.ab.ca; Community agency presentations. Involved with Interagency in Camrose and Wetaskiwin. **Client Intake Services:** By Appointment

Referral: Will refer to appropriate agency/service if request is beyond our mandate.

Practice regarding family violence

Family Justice Services does not have policy specific to family violence, but will report cases where there is danger to self and others. This is based on Intake assessment, on case by case by case basis, at discretion of court counselor. When there is family violence or suspicion there is discussion with the client and appropriate information/referrals are provided. It is the responsibility of the individual to make contact and follow through. Clients are referred to a wide range of services within the community and outside of each community as well.

Release Forms

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. FJS has no release form. If there is the need to speak with another agency, verbal consent is provided by the client.

Inter-agency collaboration

Although there is ongoing contact with various agencies, there is no case conferencing with these agencies. There may be some information exchange on an informal basis.

Limits to working with family violence

The limit to this agency is the ever growing demand/need for services and the inability to respond to all due to current workload and one staff person in the area.

Family Violence Action Society (FVAS)

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-0141

Area Served: Camrose, Camrose County and surrounding area; less so Counties of Flagstaff, Beaver, Stettler and Wetaskiwin.

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday: 8:30 to 4:30; Programs: daytime and evenings.

Drop-in: The director provides initial consultation support (often over the telephone) and will meet with drop-in clients as possible. Other services are by appointment or registration.

Mandate: Address family violence and other forms of abuse in a variety of ways, ranging from interagency liaison, partnership development and community awareness to client-

based services offered through the Interspousal Violence Program. FVAS co-ordinates the Camrose Family Violence Response Council. Most services are available free of charge. Donations are welcome.

Service Summary

Adult Individual Counselling: Short-term individual counselling is available for adult clients and may support group preparation or follow-up. When clients are unable to attend group, they may receive extra individual counselling. People affected by elder abuse may also access this service.

Changing Ways: A 14 week physio-education group for men who have been abusive within their intimate relationships (marriage; common-law; dating; parenting-after-separation, etc.). Group meets weekly for two evening hours. 100% attendance required. Offered twice per year, starting September and February.

Choices: A group for women who have experienced abuse within their intimate relationships. Choices meets weekly for 14 weeks for two evening hours. Offered twice per year, starting September and February.

Parenting After Violence: Education and support group helps parents learn how family violence impacts children and parenting relationships. Emphasis is on positive parenting. Open to parents with at least one child age 6 or under. Offered in partnership with Camrose Family Literacy, once per year for ten weeks.



Family Violence Action Society (FVAS) continued...

Service Summary

Adult Anger Management: A group for adults experiencing chronic anger and rage not related to an intimate relationship. Group meets weekly for two evening hours over eight weeks, and is offered once in the fall and again during the winter/spring period.

Children's Counselling: For children ages 6-12 who have witnessed abuse or who have anger or bullying issues.

Youth Anger Management: Programmed one-to-one anger management with a counselor for youth ages 13 to 18. Program is 10-16 weeks in length, depending on the needs of the individual.

Camrose Family Violence Response Council: Coordinated by FVAS, priority action areas include creating interagency collaboration protocols (including A Camrose Community Approach to Family Violence and Elder Abuse Linking Protocols), coordinating cross-sector professional development training related to family violence and bullying (or facilitating access to other non-Council training opportunities), and public education including prevention education, which may be pursued collaboratively or independently by individual member agencies.

Referral and registration: Clients may be referred by other agencies or counsellors, or may contact FVAS on their own. Agencies may call FVAS prior to referring a client; however, clients must contact the office to initiate program registration.

The first client contact is with the Program Director, who provides general program information and consultation support, and may refer a client to other services. Participation in an individual intake session with group facilitators is required prior to joining Changing Ways, Choices or Anger Management.

Children and youth require written permission of parents or guardians to

attend Individual Counselling.

Practice Regarding Family Violence

FVAS considers group counselling to be the most effective means of addressing family violence. FVAS supports and works to achieve a collaborative approach to family violence.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

FVAS has a referral/consent form consistent with FOIPPA, as well as a "consent to service" form that clients sign at their first intake/counselling session. Exchange of information may occur without client consent in the case of mandated clients who have followed-up on their referral by the mandating agencies if homicide/suicide/stalking is suspected, or according to legal obligation with respect to child abuse.

Clients sign a "pledge of confidentiality" form at the first group meeting, which states their obligation to respect the confidentiality of other participants and repeats other aspects of the "consent to service" form.

Inter-agency collaboration

FVAS works closely with many agencies via the Camrose Family Violence Response Council, and shares strong inter-referral relations (including follow-up and monitoring) with Child and Family Services and Community Corrections (Probation). FVAS also refers clients to, or receives referral from, other community agencies, most frequently Alberta Health Services, ACAA, Women's Shelter, BRSD Family School Liaison Workers, Camrose Police Service/Victim Services, St. Mary's Hospital Walk-In Psychiatric Clinic, and The Open Door.

Limits to working with family violence

FVAS capacity to work with family violence is challenged by limited resources. There may be waiting lists for group and counselling services; however, FVAS does not have the resources to increase services (number of groups; number of individual counselling hours) at this time. The reluctance of some sectors to engage in community collaboration is also a challenge that likely discourages some people from seeking specialized, appropriate assistance. Many individuals are reluctant (unwilling or unable) to disclose abuse and/or seek help.

Participation restrictions: Any client may be refused registration if they are deemed unsuitable or unsafe, (significantly violent background; behaviour/mental health disorders that may jeopardize group cohesion and participant confidentiality; etc.). Clients must abstain from substance abuse while participating in the program.

The Family Violence Response Council helps to address gaps in the community by maintaining this guidebook. Copies are provided for all agencies described herein, and to other agencies who wish to have this information, to enhance community capacity to share service options with individuals and family, and to support them in making choices to meet their needs. Training on family violence is provided for any agency upon request.



Messiah Lutheran Church

Agency Information

Phone: 780-672-3444

Area Served: Camrose & surrounding area

Hours of Operation: Office: Monday to Friday: 10:00 to noon; 1:00 to 2:00.
Sunday Services: 10:30

Mandate: Mission: "Sharing Jesus Christ with all people". Core values: God loves everyone; Jesus is Lord; We seek to be led by the Holy Spirit; We rely fully on the Word of God; God gives everyone gifts to share. Counseling is provided free of charge, but donations are always welcome.

Service Summary

The Messiah Lutheran Church Pastoral Counsellor/Diaconal Minister is available for individual or couple counselling on

an appointment basis. Certified with CAPPE and experienced in the area of family violence. All services are available free of charge but donations are accepted if people can afford to support the service.

Practice regarding family violence

In keeping with the mission, "Sharing Jesus Christ with all People," Messiah Lutheran Church is committed to being a safe place for all persons.

Messiah Lutheran Church has an active abuse prevention committee and an active abuse prevention policy which governs paid staff and volunteer positions. This policy is available on the church website: www.messiahcamrose.ca. Messiah also endorses the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. If there is reasonable suspicion of abuse of children or family violence, staff and volunteers will respond by contacting the proper authorities.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

Confidentiality is respected in all counselling, with the exception that all staff including the pastoral counsellor will report abuse of children to the appropriate agency. Also, if an individual is thought to be a danger to others, the staff person, counsellor, or volunteer will report the danger to appropriate person(s) and agencies.

The Open Door

Agency Information

Phone: Office, 780-679-6803;
Helpline, 780-679-4357

Area Served: City of Camrose and outlying communities

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 5:00; 24 hour helpline

Mandate: The Open Door provides services to Camrose and area youth who find themselves at risk.

Service Summary

Outreach Workers provide consultation support service during regular office hours, are on the streets talking with youth on weekend evenings, and staff the 24 hour helpline. The Open Door also provides emergency food and shelter to youth, as well as a variety of other services that vary depending upon needs and interests. A Registered Psychologist is available two days a week for individual and family counselling at no cost. The Open Door also provides support for adults with FASD.

Practice regarding family violence

The Open Door does not have a policy specific to family violence. We occasionally have crisis calls or clients that have family violence issues. If we suspect family violence, or it has been disclosed, we discuss this with the client and refer to agencies in Camrose.

FOIPPA/Release Forms

The Open Door has specific release forms that are signed by youth. After six months of inactivity a file is closed. If a file is reopened the release forms are signed again.

Inter-agency collaboration

The Open Door is very involved in working with other organizations. We work closely with CFSA, NeighbourAid, Emergency Clothing and Furniture Depot and others. Open door staff participate in numerous committees and task forces supporting other agencies/projects.

Limits to working with family violence

Violence is a common feature in the lives of many youth that we work with; however, we see a limited number of family violence cases. Most of these are referred to our Psychologist or to other professionals. The Open Door provides the support that we can and then connects youth with others when necessary.



Initial Screening Questions for All Front-line Staff/Professionals

Client's Name: _____

Date: _____

Your Name and Agency: _____

FOIP Statement: The personal information recorded on this form is being collected solely to provide a service to you and is protected by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The form will be kept confidential. It is your choice as to whether you wish to answer a question. If the recorder has any reason to believe a child in your care is being harmed, he/she is legally obliged to report his/her concerns to Alberta Children's Services. (Provide your agency FOIP contact number if the person has any questions or concerns.)

PART ONE General Safety and Well-being **(for front-line worker; initial screening)**

- a) How are things going at home? How is your relationship with your partner (husband/wife; girlfriend/boyfriend)? OR, if the person is separated or divorced: Do you and your former partner communicate? How is that going? How do you feel after you have met with him/her, or spoken with him/her?

- b) Have you ever been afraid?

- c) Has your partner ever harmed you physically (for example, shoved, kicked, choked/strangled, hit you or thrown something at you), or threatened to harm you?

- d) Have you thought about what you would if s/he did harm you, or harmed you again? Do you have somewhere you can go?

If applicable, provide contact information for services that can assist with safety planning and other types of support (see attached). Encourage the person to consider calling police. Police can help with immediate safety and decide about laying charges; charges are not the client's responsibility. Explain that abusers need to be held accountable and get help for their behaviour in order to change, and that police involvement is often necessary for this to occur.

Note: The "Part Two" and "Part Three" questions that follow can be asked during the initial screening if time permits or depending upon a client's response. Or, they can be asked during subsequent visits or follow-up by a hospital/clinic social worker or similar staff.



Initial Screening Questions for All Front-line Staff/Professionals Cont...

PART TWO Escalating Risk (for follow-up and/or initial screening)

- e) How often has the abuse occurred? How many times has your partner harmed you or threatened to harm you in the last six to twelve months, or more?
- f) Does the abuse seem to be happening more often, less often or about the same?
- g) Have the threats or things s/he has said or done gotten worse? How?
- h) Are you afraid? (If the abuse is becoming more frequent and/or severe, the risk of injury and lethality increases. Again, refer to community services and encourage the person to call police.)

PART THREE Other Associated Factors (for follow-up and/or initial screening)

- i) Are you concerned about your partner's drinking or use of prescriptions or other drugs? Would you say your partner has a drug or alcohol problem? (Remember: substance abuse does not cause family violence, but may worsen it and will also need to be addressed.)
- j) Is your partner employed or unemployed? Are there employment stressors that affect his or her behaviour at home?
- k) How about his mental health in general? Is he anxious? Depressed? Does he ever talk about harming himself?
- l) Would it be safe for you to give you partner some information about services that can help him or her deal with these issues?

(If the answer is yes, provide some information. If not, stress how important it is for the client to take care of him/herself and the children, if s/he has any. Encourage her/him that can help.

Other Comments:

Family Violence Action Society: Agency Referral and Consent Form

Please complete all applicable information with your client. Fax with a cover page marked "Confidential" and assure your client of confidentiality and discretion regarding this exchange of information.

Fax to Sheralyn Dobos at 780-672-2833. Client must also call (780)672-0141 to register.

Name of Client: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____(cell); _____(home); _____(work)

Name of client's partner: (if applicable): _____

Partner's primary phone number: _____

Name and ages of client's children (if applicable):

_____ age: _____ _____ age: _____

_____ age: _____ _____ age: _____

Program (please indicate program for client; and program for children/partner if applicable):

Changing Ways for men: _____ *Choices* for women: _____

Anger Management: _____ *Parenting Without Violence*: _____

Counseling for children who witness abuse (ages 6-17) _____

Interim Counselling for adults for anger or family violence _____

Referring Agency: _____ Phone: _____

Agency Representative: _____ Email: _____

Reason for referral: _____

Release of Information

I, _____, hereby give my consent to release the information above to the Family Violence Action Society (FVAS). I understand that the information will be kept confidential and used only as necessary with respect to my participation in the FVAS Interspousal Violence Program.

I also give permission to FVAS to confirm with (insert referring person and agency) _____

_____ whether or not I (and my children if applicable) have:

- Have contacted FVAS to register for the program to which I / we are referred;
- Registered for the program indicated above;
- Been attending and participating in the program, or referred by FVAS to a more suitable program.

Signature of Referred _____

Date _____

Witness/Agency Rep _____

Date _____

