

*“One morning I came in late, again, and couldn’t look anyone in the face. Dan, the IT guy, came over and said, ‘Hey, are you okay?’ I told him yes, and he said, ‘You sure? I’m worried about you.’ Something clicked. I told him I was fine but inside – for the first time – I knew what was happening to me was wrong.”*

- a woman recovering from an abusive relationship

## Did you know . . .

- Every year, an average of 12,000 women and children take refuge in Alberta shelters
- Alberta’s rates of domestic assault and spousal homicide-suicide are among the highest in Canada
- You can help end the violence:

## Be Aware. Take Action.



320, 10310 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5J 2W4

[www.acws.ca/workplacedv](http://www.acws.ca/workplacedv)

**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**  
& your workplace  
BE AWARE. TAKE ACTION.

**Domestic violence  
happens everywhere.**

Help make your workplace  
violence-free.

In 2005 Lori Dupont was murdered by her ex-partner. She was a nurse, he was a doctor. An inquest identified 84 visible warning signs and chances to intervene.

In 2005, Liana White was murdered by her husband. She disappeared on her way to work.

*These are only two horrifying examples of what happens to women living with domestic violence.*

## BE AWARE

“70% of domestic violence victims are impacted at work.” *Resolve data cited in Dr. Jane Ursel “Women Seeking Safety” (2008)*

As an employee you play an important role in ensuring that your workplace is equal, inclusive and respectful to everyone. Many people believe that domestic violence is none of their business but, like any form of violence, we all need to take a stand to help someone living through it. The first step is simple and you can start today. Help create a healthy workplace for everyone. Some behaviours that seem innocent enough actually diminish others and lead to a less healthy work environment. Take the lead, become aware of some of the most common types of workplace aggression:

- spreading false rumours
- interrupting a person when they are speaking

- acting in a condescending manner
- ridiculing a person’s opinion in front of others
- failing to return calls or emails
- giving the “silent treatment”
- staring, dirty looks
- insincere, sarcastic praise
- showing up late for meetings

## TAKE ACTION

In addition to making sure you contribute to making a healthy workplace, you can help your co-workers by watching for any of these signs that may indicate they are living in domestic violence:

- bruising or injuries, often blamed on clumsiness or accidents
- unseasonable clothing (turtlenecks) that may cover bruising
- changes in ability to concentrate
- unexplained absences
- upsetting phone calls throughout the day
- uncharacteristic sadness, withdrawal, or exhaustion
- uncharacteristic fear or anxiety
- hints about trouble at home (partner’s bad temper, alcohol use, third-party concerns)
- controlling behaviour of spouse

Sometimes the workplace is the only place a person feels safe and can access resources.

They may feel powerless to discuss their situation and fear further violence if the abuser finds out that she discussed the violence.

## HOW TO HELP

While your first reaction to seeing a co-worker in pain is to offer advice, this is not your place. As much as you want to tell them to leave the abusive relationship, a women’s risk for homicide increases when she does leave. Your most important job is to listen and to be a link to the right resources to get the help that is needed. Show your support by:

- listening
- showing concern
- restraining the impulse to give advice or bad mouth the perpetrator
- maintaining the confidentiality of your co-worker
- **providing this number 1-866-331-3933** – The Women’s Shelters 24-hour line which provides outreach services including support during crisis, personal safety planning and referrals to other services.

