


Breaking the Cycle of Violence Resources for **Literacy** Workers

Produced by:
Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy



Access to the written **world** 

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MTML is a network of organizations and individuals who are involved in and support adult literacy. We are an independent non-profit organization. We provide leadership and work actively to develop and promote adult literacy in Toronto and York Region.

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Introduction

In 2002/2003, MTML received funding from the City of Toronto's Breaking the Cycle of Violence program for the project *Linking Counselling and Literacy: Supporting Women, with Limited Literacy, to Access Greater Safety*.

MTML worked with the Women's Counselling Referral and Education Centre (WCREC) on this project, which was designed to help literacy learners to access counselling services by bringing workers in both the counselling and the literacy fields to a better understanding of each other's work.

As part of this project MTML and WCREC delivered three workshops. A daylong workshop for counsellors:

- ***Linking Counselling and Literacy: Supporting Women, with Limited Literacy, to Access Counselling.***

and two workshops specifically aimed at literacy workers:

- ***Linking Counselling to Literacy***, a daylong workshop for adult literacy practitioners.
- ***Working with Survivors of Abuse***, a tutor development night for volunteer literacy tutors.

Some very useful materials were developed for these workshops. These materials are collected here.

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Supporting Women, With Limited Literacy, to Access Counselling

MTML/WCREC Workshop
November 1, 2002

Facilitator: Jenny Horsman PhD
Community Educator and Researcher

This daylong workshop was for workers in the counselling field. It focussed on the challenges faced by people with limited literacy skills when they attempt to access counselling services. This workshop was designed to start ongoing discussion about, and work on, making information and referral to counselling services easier for adult literacy learners.

The following resources helped stimulate discussion:

1. *Too Scared to Learn - Brief Notes*. This is available online at <http://www.jennyhorsman.com>. Follow the link to "Articles".
2. *Assumptions about Literacy*
3. *Assumptions about Violence*
4. *What Can You Do?*





Assumptions about Violence

Violence is pervasive and takes many forms

It is important to see the whole range of violence in one picture – including state and individual, public and private. Violence includes childhood sexual, emotional, and physical violence; “domestic” violence and stalking; rape and the threat of rape in the public sphere; dangerous working conditions; state-sanctioned violence. Racism, ableism, homophobia, poverty, sexism, and other oppressions foster violence.

Different forms of violence are intertwined

All kinds of violence build upon each other in one person’s experience. When a woman is made vulnerable by one form of oppression, each additional incidence of violence has an increased impact and deepens the first violation.

Violence affects all of us

All women are vulnerable to and shaped by the presence of violence. Whether or not we experience life-threatening violence directly, we all live with the possibilities of violence, and all women, and many marginalized men, are diminished daily by society’s acceptance of violence.

Violence is institutionally supported

Violence is not only perpetrated by individuals, it is also systemic. The institutions and systems of society support and allow violence to continue. When a court gives a suspended sentence to an abusive husband, when the limitations of welfare leave a woman trapped with an abusive partner, when the only jobs available in a racist, sexist society do not allow a woman to afford safe transportation, daycare or accommodation, institutions are perpetuating violence.

Institutions harm; we all participate in those institutions.

We cannot avoid participating in institutions that perpetuate the violence our society supports.



Assumptions about Literacy

Literacy is best described as a set of social practices, rather than simply a skill

If we think of literacy only as a skill then it is easy to slide into seeing the person as simply lacking something she should have, and needing remediation to counteract the deficit. If we see it as a set of social practices then it is easier to see that some societies have chosen to privilege literacy and that using print is only one way to obtain knowledge or to communicate.

Illiteracy is a social problem not an individual problem

Although society's practices and policies construct illiteracy, individuals who fail to learn to read well are judged lazy, unmotivated, stupid, and an economic drain on the rest of "us."

Illiteracy does not cause other social problems

Many social problems - such as poverty, violence, racism and ableism - are interconnected with illiteracy. They are not caused by illiteracy. In a society shaped by inequality and oppression, illiteracy is one factor that can lead to marginalization and mistreatment.

Violence contributes to learning difficulties

When children are hurt, abused, or put down they learn that they are stupid and worthless. When they are humiliated or discriminated against because of their class, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, or some other aspect of their selves, learning is made harder.

Illiteracy is created through the education system

Because schools share societal assumptions they teach and validate the forms of literacy practised and taught within white, middle-class families, and devalue and even obscure awareness of the diverse literacy practices and multitude of different ways of knowing, practised within other cultures and communities. Students who fit, learn.





Assumptions about Literacy

(continued)

People who have difficulties with literacy are not childlike

Nor are they stupid, helpless, imprisoned, “poor souls” or abnormal. They have strengths and weaknesses and “read” many things well. These stereotypes lead people who do not easily understand print or professional language to avoid professionals, or to conceal their difficulties, for fear of being judged.

Spiral Community Resource Group.

Draft written for MTML/WCREC Workshop, November 2002



What Can You Do?

- name that many people experience violence and that violence can affect learning¹
- avoid shame - make it OK for women to have difficulties with literacy
- avoid using long words and expecting reading. Encourage clients to ask for explanations of words, or ask for help with reading
- help clients feel valued and worthy
- build trust and create connections
- create possibilities for clients to explore control
- help clients to develop hope and meaning
- create a comfortable place to nurture the whole self – e.g. music, times of silence, flowers, snacks, easy chair/s, beautiful pictures, inspirational quotes
- work in a way that engages and nurtures the whole person – body, mind, emotion and spirit

Draft

WOMEN, VIOLENCE, AND LEARNING:

For more information on the issues go to: <http://www.jennyhorsman.com/>

¹ Although some women may escape from the violence they experience by retreating into their mind and excelling in school, many more will have difficulties with learning.





Linking Counselling to Literacy

MTML/WCREC Workshop
March 28, 2003

Facilitators: Iren Tajbakhsh, M.Ed. in Counselling Psychology; Direct Service Coordinator, Women's Counselling Referral and Education Centre (WREC)

Sandra Iafrate, MSW Student, University of Toronto; Practicum Student at WCREC in Individual Counselling

Designed by WCREC for workers in adult literacy programs who may be working with victims of abuse and violence, this full-day workshop focused on developing basic counselling skills, dealing with crisis, providing referrals for counselling, and developing coping skills and learning to take care of yourself.

Participants in the workshop were provided with the following materials:

1. Workshop Notes (overheads)
2. Code of Ethics and Boundaries for Community Workers
3. Resources



Workshop Notes

Overheads from the MTML/WCREC *Linking Counselling the Literacy Workshop*, March 28, 2003.

Basic Counselling Skills^{*}

- **Unconditional Positive Regard**

“...respect clients and express this respect by being available to them, working with them, and ultimately placing the expectation on them that they will do whatever is necessary to handle their problems in living more effectively...”

- *The Skilled Helper*, by Gerald Egan

- **Empathy**

“...is about being able to put yourself in another person's shoes and see the world as they see it. It is putting yourself, your own needs, feelings, and wishes to one side and experiencing what the client is experiencing ...”

- **Active Listening**

“...listening is an art, a skill, a discipline, it needs self-control; where the counsellor develops the necessary self-mastery to be silent and listen. Listening is based on hearing and understanding what others say to us. Hearing becomes listening only when we pay attention to what is said and follow it very closely...”

Skills to enhance effective listening:

- Encouraging
- Clarifying
- Restating/Paraphrasing
- Reflective
- Validating
- Summarizing

- **Warmth**

“...quality which reflects the way the counsellor acts or reacts to the client. It involves being non-judgemental, non-defensive, and willing to get close to the client within the counselling relationship...”

Workshop Notes

Basic Counselling Skills (continued)

- **Genuineness**

“...genuine caring concern for another human being, being open with the client and not getting into stereotyped role, behaviours...”

- **Concreteness**

“...helping the client to clarify confused unfocused thinking to put into words things that are perhaps only being hinted at and which needs to be brought into focus - be more specific...”

- **Immediacy**

“...clients tend to talk about the past, blaming present difficulties on past events as a way of escaping from facing up to the problems of the here and now. Counsellors need to remind clients of the importance of the here and now...”

It is also important for some clients to understand the past in order to move into the present. i.e., coping skills.

* *The Skilled Helper*, by Gerald Egan

- **Confidentiality**

- Be careful not to relay information that you have gained to anyone except as required or justified by law.
- Clarify what measures will be taken to protect confidentiality and responsibilities you have to each other for the protection of each other's confidentiality.
- Share confidential information with others only with the informed consent of those involved, in a manner that the individual involved cannot be identified except as required or justified by law or in circumstances of external or possible harm or death.

Overview of Basic Counselling Skills

- The client knows what's best for him/her.
- Interpretation of client issues should be avoided.
- Advice is rarely helpful.
- Different personal worlds of client and worker.
- Listening is the basis of the counselling relationship.
- Techniques should not be over-used.



Workshop Notes

Ethics and Boundaries

The “Code of Ethics and Boundaries for Community Workers” presented in this workshop focuses on four areas:

- Respect for the dignity of others.
- Responsible caring.
- Integrity in relationship.
- Responsibility to society.

Crisis Counselling

Ten elements of crisis intervention

- Education.
- Discovering and using potential.
- Observation and awareness.
- Understanding the problem.
- Creating necessary structure.
- Challenging irrational beliefs.
- Challenging unrealistic expectations.
- Breaking vicious cycles and addictive behaviour.
- Create temporary dependencies.
- Facing fear and emotional pain.



Workshop Notes

Crisis Counselling (continued)

How to Help a Woman in Crisis

- Find a safe time and place to discuss the situation.
- Build trust by listening and supporting her in a non-judgemental manner.
- Provide resources for practical assistance. i.e. child care, transportation, financial assistance.
- Acknowledge the potential danger and complexity of the situation.
- Respect her autonomy.
- Validate her experience, feeling, and fears.
- Be aware of the possibility of secondary trauma.
- Discuss options and plans for safety. Explore any use for community resources.
- Respect her process, timetable, and decision.
- Support and admire the courage, strength, and wisdom it took for her to initiate action by asking for help.
- Acknowledge small successes along the way, one step at a time.
- Keep things in positive perspective. Draw on your sources of inspiration.
- Know that she may recover as others have recovered in the transition from victim to survivor.
- Be good to both of you.



Workshop Notes

Taking Care of You

Developing Coping Skills and Self Care

- Be gentle with yourself; remind yourself that you are an enabler, not a magician.
- Find a quiet spot and use it daily.
- Give support, encouragement, and praise to peers and co-workers; learn to accept it in return.
- Remember that in all the pain we see we are bound to feel helpless at times. Admit it without shame.
- Caring and being there are sometimes more important than doing.
- Change your routine often, and tasks when you can.
- Learn to recognize the difference between complaining that relieves stress and complaining that reinforces negative stress.
- On the way home, focus on a good thing that occurred during the day.

Immediate Stress-Relieving Activities

- Go for a 25-minute walk during lunch or coffee break. Be active.
- Eat sensibly.
- Know and respect your limits. If you feel exhausted and need time off, take it.
- Spend time with family and friends. Talk to them. Listen to their stories. Listen to them if they become concerned with your health and well-being.
- If you have trouble sleeping, get up and do something relaxing and enjoyable.
- Be on the lookout for any changes in your habits, attitudes, and moods.
- Share your own and clients' reactions and issues with colleagues. Do not hesitate to ask others for advice.
- Include yourself on the list of people you're taking care of. Taking care of yourself will put you in better shape for taking care of others.
- Be self-nurturing and do not forget to laugh.



Code of Ethics

Prepared by Iren Tajbakhsh, Women's Counselling Referral and Education Centre (WCREC)

Revised from the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, and the Ontario Society of Psychotherapists Code of Ethics.

Distributed at the MTML/WCREC *Linking Counselling the Literacy Workshop*, March 28, 2003.

I. Respect for the Dignity of Others

General Rights and Respects:

- Show respect for the knowledge, insight, experience, and areas of expertise of others.
- Do not use demeaning descriptions of others, including jokes based on culture, nationality, ethnicity, colour, race, religion, gender, etc. which reflect adversely on the dignity of others.
- Make a habit of using language that conveys respect for the dignity of others (e.g. gender-neutral terms) in all forms of communication.
- Refrain from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment.
- Avoid/refuse to participate in actions disrespectful of the legal, civil, or moral rights of others.
- Respect the right of clients receiving services from you, of employees, of supervisors, of students, and of others, to safeguard their own dignity.
- Encourage others to respect the dignity of persons and to expect respect for their own dignity.



Code of Ethics

Non-discrimination:

- Do not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of unjust discrimination.
- Act to prevent or correct practices that are unjustly discriminating.

Informed Consent:

- Seek full and active participation from others in decisions that affect them.
- Respect and integrate as much as possible the opinions and wishes of others regarding decisions which affect them.
- Establish and use signed consent forms which specify the dimensions of informed consent or which acknowledge that such dimensions have been explained and are understood. In certain circumstances such consent is required by law or the agency providing the service.
- Recognize that informed consent is the result of a process of reaching an agreement to work collaboratively, rather than simply having a consent form signed.
- Ensure, in obtaining informed consent, that at least the following points are understood:
 - Purpose and nature of the activity.
 - Mutual responsibilities.
 - Likely benefits, risks, and alternatives.
 - The likely consequences of non-action.
 - The option to refuse or withdraw at any time without prejudice or coercion.
 - Over what period of time consent applies and to rescind consent if desired.



Code of Ethics

Freedom of Consent:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that consent is not given under conditions of coercion or undue pressure.
- Take all reasonable steps to confirm or re-establish freedom of consent, if consent for service is given under conditions of duress or conditions of extreme need.
- Respect the right of the individuals to discontinue participation in services at any time, and be responsive to non-verbal indications of a desire to discontinue if the individual has difficulty with verbally communicating such a desire.

Fair Treatment/Due Process:

- Work and act in spirit of fair treatment to others.
- Abide by due process or other natural justice procedure for issues of legal nature.
- Compensate others justly for the use of their time, energy, and intelligence, unless such compensation is refused in advance.

Confidentiality:

- Be careful not to relay information, which you have gained, to any one except as required or justified by law.
- Clarify what measures will be taken to protect confidentiality and responsibilities you have to each other for the protection of each other's confidentiality.
- Share confidential information with others only with the informed consent of those involved or in a manner that the individual involved cannot be identified except as required or justified by law or in circumstances of external or possible serious physical harm or death.



Code of Ethics

II. Responsible Caring

General Caring:

- Protect and promote the welfare of clients/colleagues.
- Avoid doing harm to clients/colleagues.
- Accept responsibility for the consequences of your actions and encourage the same for clients and colleagues.
- Refuse to advise, train, or supply information to anyone who will use the knowledge or skills to harm others.
- Make every reasonable effort to ensure that knowledge is not misused, intentionally or unintentionally, to harm others.
- Encourage others to act and care responsibly.

Competence and Self Knowledge:

- Carry out only those activities for which you have established competence.
- Do not delegate activities to persons not competent to carry them out.
- Take immediate steps to obtain knowledge and/or consultation if it becomes apparent the issues are beyond your competence.
- Keep up to date with relevant knowledge and research, through relevant literacy, peer consultation, and continuing educational activities.
- Evaluate how your own experiences, attitudes, cultures, beliefs, values, social context, individual differences, and stress influence your interaction with others, and integrate this awareness into all efforts to benefit and not harm others.
- Engage in self-care activities, which help avoid conditions that could result in impaired judgement and interference with your ability to benefit and not harm others.



Code of Ethics

III. Integrity in Relationships

Accuracy and Honesty:

- Do not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or misrepresentation.
- Accurately represent your own qualifications, education, experience, competence, and affiliations in all spoken, written, or printed communication, being careful not to use descriptions or information that would be misinterpreted.
- Carefully protect your own credentials from being misrepresented by others and act quickly to correct any such misrepresentation.
- Accurately represent your activities, functions, and likely outcomes of your work in all spoken, written or printed communication.
- Acknowledge the limitations of your knowledge, methods, findings, interventions, and views.
- Take credit for your own work and ideas only, and not that of others.

Objectivity and Lack of Bias:

- Evaluate how your persona, experiences, attitudes, values, and social context influence your activities and thinking, integrating this awareness into all attempts to be objective and unbiased in your services to clients.
- Take care to communicate as completely and objectively as possible and to clearly differentiate facts, opinions, theories, hypotheses, and ideas, if communicating your knowledge and views.
- Present instruction and information accurately, avoiding bias in the selection and presentation of information and publicly acknowledge any personal values or biases which influence the selection and presentation of information.



Code of Ethics

Straightforwardness and Openness:

- Be clear and straightforward about all information needed to establish informed consent or any other valid written or unwritten agreement, e.g., concerns, mutual responsibilities, ethical responsibilities, purpose and nature of the relations, etc.
- In understandable language, provide suitable information about all issues and activities concerning clients.
- Fully explain reasons for your actions to clients.
- Honour all promises and commitments included in any written or verbal agreement, unless serious and unexpected circumstances occur, such as illness, accident, etc. In such circumstances, you must be honest and give full explanations to those involved.
- Make clear whether you are acting as private citizens or as members of specific organizations or groups when making statements, or when involved in public activities.
- Encourage the free exchange of ideas between yourselves and your clients.

Avoidance of Deception:

- Do not engage in any form of deception in any service activity.
- Act to re-establish with a client any trust which might have been lost due to the intentional/unintentional deception or interpreted deception by the client (e.g. perceiving that a certain deceptive act is in the benefit of the client).

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest:

- Do not exploit any relationship established to further personal, political, or business interests and/or at the expense of the interest of the client. For example:
 - Soliciting a client's expertise for your own benefit or hiring a client to do personal work for you.
 - Taking advantage of trust and dependency to engage in sexual activity.
 - Frightening clients into receiving service.
 - Prejudicing others against a colleague for reasons of personal gain.



Code of Ethics

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest (continued)

- Avoid dual relationships and other situations which might present a conflict of interest or which might reduce your ability to be objective and unbiased in your determination of what might be in the best interest of clients.
- Inform all parties involved if a real or potential conflict of interest arises of the need to resolve the situation in a manner that is consistent with respect for the dignity of persons and responsible caring, and take all reasonable steps to resolve the issue in such a manner.

IV. Responsibility to Society

Beneficial Activities:

- Participate in and contribute to continuing education, growth of self and colleagues.
- Engage in regular monitoring, assessment, and reporting, e.g. through peer review, in-program review, case management reviews, and reports.
- Help with developing, promoting, and participating in accountability process and procedure related to your work.
- Uphold ethical and boundary standards and responsibility to society by promoting and maintaining the highest standard of boundaries and ethical values.
- Contributing to the general welfare of society, e.g. improving accessibility to services.
- Uphold responsibility by bringing incompetent, unethical behaviour and boundary violation issues to the attention of your group for informal resolution or correction of the situation if possible.



Code of Ethics

IV. Responsibility to Society (continued)

Respect for Society:

- Acquire adequate knowledge of the culture, social structure, and customs of a community before beginning any work with that community or person.
- Convey respect for, and abide by, prevailing community mores, social customs, and cultural expectations in your professional activities.
- Abide by the laws of the society in which you work. If those laws seriously conflict with your ethical values/principles you must do whatever you can do to uphold your ethical values/principles. If upholding these values/principles would have serious personal consequences, the final decision for action would be considered a matter of personal conscience.
- Consult with colleagues if faced with an apparent conflict between keeping a law and following your ethical principles, unless in an emergency seek consensus as to the most ethical course of action and the most responsible, knowledgeable, effective and respectful way to resolved the issue.
- Speak out in a manner consistent with the ethical and principle values mentioned here.
- Do not contribute or engage in any activity, which promotes or is intended for use in torture of persons, the development of prohibited weapons, destruction of environment, any other act that is against the international laws.
- Encourage others, if appropriate, to exercise responsibility to society.



Resources

Prepared by Sandra Iafrate, Women's Counselling Referral and Education Centre (WCREC)

Distributed at the MTML/WCREC *Linking Counselling the Literacy Workshop*, March 28, 2003

Women's Counselling Centres:

**Women's
Counselling
Referral and
Education Centre
(WCREC)**

489 College St., Ste. 303B, Toronto
416-534-7501 (counselling line) Mon. & Wed.,
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tue. & Thu., 12 to 4 pm.,
and 6 to 9 p.m. - Referrals to services sensitive
to women's needs, including screened therapists
and counsellors with fees on a sliding scale,
alternative mental health resources,
assessment, and referral; includes emotional
support and crisis counselling.

**Barbara Schlifer
Commemorative
Clinic (Free)**

489 College St., Ste. 503, Toronto
416-323-9149, ext. 234 or 252 Mon. to Fri.,
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Individual and group
counselling - Information and referral to
community agencies -Transitional support
program assists victims of spousal abuse
re-establish themselves in the community.

**Catholic Family
Services of
Toronto (Sliding
Scale Fee, \$15)**

1155 Yonge St., Toronto
416-595-9230 - Individual, groups, and family
counselling for persons of all ethnic, cultural,
racial and religious backgrounds.

**East End
Community Health
Centre (Free)**

343 Coxwell Ave., Toronto
416-778-5858; 416-694-5622 - Psychological
counselling - referrals to social services

**Elizabeth Fry
Society (Free)**

215 Wellesley St. E., Toronto
416-924-3708 - Group and individual counselling
and support for women who have been sexually
abused and/or have had conflict with the law.



Resources

Women's Counselling Centres:

Etobicoke Sexual Abuse Treatment Program (Free)

65 Hartsdale Dr., Toronto
416-913-7540 - Individual and group counselling to mothers who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Family Services Association of Toronto (Sliding Scale Fee, \$15)

355 Church St., Toronto
416-595-9230 - Counselling and educational programs for those seeking support in dealing with relationships and family problems, parenting, depression, anxiety, job loss, separation, divorce and new relationships, sexual abuse and childhood trauma, life transitions, and other issues.

Jewish Family Services (Free)

4600 Bathurst St., Toronto
416-638-7800 - Range of services for persons with social and emotional problems.

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto: Counselling & Psychoeducational Clinic (Sliding Scale Fee, \$20)

252 Bloor St. W., Rm 7-296, Toronto
416-923-6641, ext. 2584 - Counselling for adults, parents, and adolescents - individual psychotherapy - literacy centre for children - remedial and corrective reading - tutoring - special education services - clients may be seen by OISE/UT staff or by graduate students - all services provided by or supervised by registered psychological personnel,

Queen West Community Health Centre (Free)

168 Bathurst St., Toronto
416-703-8482, ext. 211 - One-to-one counselling referrals, and advocacy, in the harm reduction room Mon. to Fri., 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centre of Peel

Square One Post Office, Box 2311, Mississauga
905-273-3337; 905-273-9442 (crisis line) - Women 16 years and over who have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives, and their families and friends - crisis line - individual counselling - group counselling - accompaniment to hospital, court, or police - information and referral - public education - advocacy.



Resources

Women's Counselling Centres:

St. Joseph's Health Centre:
Women's Health Centre (free counselling under OHIP)

30 Queensway, Toronto, 416-530-6850
Individual counselling, group support, education, advocacy, referrals - prenatal and postnatal issues, postpartum depression, women who have experienced violence, multicultural health education, family life program including menopause, PMS and infertility counselling.

West-End Walk-In Counselling Centre
(Free)

2468 Eglinton Ave. W., Toronto, 416-394-2424, ext. 34 - Counselling sessions offered by mental health professionals to address concerns such as parent/child conflict, difficulties at work and school, effects of stress, depression, issues related to separation and divorce, family violence, problems with anger - referrals to other community services as needed.

Women's College Ambulatory Care Centre: Brief Psychotherapy
Centre for Women/
Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence
Centre (Free Individual Counselling)

2 Carlton St., Ste. 1806, Toronto
416-591-2000 Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

416-323-6040; 416-351-3713 Mon. to Sun., 24 hours - Men and Women - medical assessment and treatment - collection of medical and legal evidence at request of client - psychological and social support - follow up medical and psychological services as required - safety planning - cultural interpreters

Lesbian-Gay-Bi-Trans Counselling:

David Kelley Lesbian and Gay Community Counselling Program (Sliding Scale Fee, \$10)

355 Church St., Toronto
416-9618 - Short to medium term individual, couple, family and group counselling for lesbians, gay men, and related populations dealing with coming out, sexuality and identity, isolation, discrimination, relationship issues, parenting, self-esteem, violence, or other issues.

519 Church Street Community Centre
(Free)

519 Church St., Toronto, 416-392-6974 ext. 335- Cultural, social, and recreation programs for all ages - community counselling for persons in distress - wide variety of groups - Gays and Lesbians in the Mental Health System.





Resources

Youth Counselling:

Central Toronto Youth Services
(Free)

65 Wellesley St. E., Ste. 300, Toronto
416-924-2100 - Mental health centre for youth ages 13- 24 - counselling - outreach, individual client support in own community.

Oolagen Community Services (Free)

65 Wellesley St. W., Ste. 500, Toronto
416-395-0660 - Individual, family, and group therapy for a variety of problems, for youth 13-19 years and their families - services for physically and sexually abused adolescents, and for adolescent predators.

Youthlink (Free)

34 Huntley St., Toronto
416-967-1773 - Individual, family, and group counselling for youth 12-21 years.

Victim Assistance Programs:

Abuse Recovery Counselling Services (Sliding Scale Fees)

416-481-4662 (Toronto) - Counselling for victims of childhood abuse or trauma.

Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin

905-450-1608 (Brampton) - Provides counselling to women and men who have experienced childhood and adolescence physical, emotional, sexual, verbal abuse.

Family Services of Peel

905-270-2250 (Peel) - Individual counselling and groups for women. Groups are free; there is a sliding scale for individual counselling.

Resources

Women's Clinics:

Hassle Free Clinic Women's Clinic	556 Church St., Toronto 416-922-0566 www.hasslefreeclinic.org/DirectoryWomen.html
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	489 College St. Ste.200, Toronto 416-323-9986
Sherbourne Health Centre	333 Sherbourne St., Toronto 416-324-4180 www.sherbourne.on.ca
St. Joseph's Women's Health Centre	30 The Queensway, Toronto 416-530-6850
Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre	2 Carleton St. Ste. 500, Toronto 416-593-7655; 416-593-1815 (clinic)

24-Hour Crisis Lines:

Assaulted Women's Helpline	416-863-0511
Distress Centre	416-408-4857
Gerstein Crisis Centre	416-929-5200
Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centre of Peel	905-273-9442
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre	416-597-8808
York Region Women's Sexual Assault Helpline	416-231-7499; 905-895-7313





Resources

Women's Shelters

Abrigo Centre for Victims of Family Violence	416-534-3434 (Toronto)
Anduhyaun Residence	416-920-1492 (Toronto)
Armagh	905-855-0299 (Mississauga)
Assaulted Women's Helpline	416-365-4144; 416-863-0511 (crisis line) (Toronto)
Denise House Shelter and Support Services	905-728-7311 (Oshawa)
Emily Stowe Shelter for Women	416-264-4357; 416-264-4357 (crisis line) (Scarborough)
Ernestine's Women's Shelter	416-743-1733; 416-746-3701 (crisis line) (Rexdale)
Homeward Family Shelter	416-724-1316 (Scarborough)
Interval House	416-924-1491 (Toronto)
Juliette's Place	416-724-1316 (Scarborough)
Nekenaan Second Stage Housing	416-243-7669 (Toronto)
Nellie's	416-461-9849; 416-461-1084 (crisis line) (Toronto)
North York Women's Shelter	416-635-9427; 416-635-9630 (crisis line)

Resources

Women's Shelters

Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses	416-977-6619
Redwood Shelters	416-533-8538 (Toronto)
Robertson House	416-392-5651; 426-392-5650 (Toronto)
Salvation Army, Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre	905-451-4115 (Brampton)
Salvation Army, Evangeline Shelter	416-762-9636 (Toronto)
Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Centre	416-323-6040 (Toronto)
Street Haven at the Crossroads	416-967-6060 (Toronto)
Women in Transition - Spadina House	416-967-5655; 416-967-5227 (crisis line) (Toronto)
Women's Habitat of Etobicoke	416-252-1785; 416-252-5829 (crisis line)
Woodgreen Red Door Family Shelter	416-469-3457; 416-469-3610 (Toronto)
YMCA Women's Shelter	416-693-7342
Yorktown Shelter for Women	416-394-2950; 416-394-2999 (crisis line) (Toronto)





Working with Survivors of Abuse

MTML Tutor Development Night
January 30 and June 4, 2003

Facilitator: Andrea Purdon
Placement Student, Assaulted Women
and Children Counsellor/Advocate
Program
George Brown College

This workshop was designed for literacy tutors, both new and experienced, who are interested in improving how they work with learners who may have experienced abuse. The workshop focused on creating a safe learning environment, and also looked at what can be done if a learner discloses that she or he is a victim of abuse.

Facilitator's Notes:

1. Agenda
2. Facilitator's Agenda
3. Role Play Exercise
4. Facilitator's Notes: Possible Responses to Role Play Exercise
5. Handout: *Creating a Safe Environment*
6. Handout: *Boundaries*
7. Handout: *Counselling and What to Do*
8. Handout: *Resources*
9. Handout: *Creating a Safety Plan*



Agenda

This is a skeletal agenda for this workshop and can be used in conjunction with the detailed version on the next page. This is a 2-hour workshop but it could easily turn into 2.5 hours and it requires the use of a flip chart.

The audience that this workshop is created for is **Literacy Tutors**.

1. Brief paragraph about why this workshop will be useful.
2. Question: How do you think violence/abuse would impact a person's ability to learn? Discuss / flip chart
3. How could we make a safe space for learners? Creating safety when facilitating groups. Discuss / flip chart
Discuss the importance of Ground Rules / Group Agreement in groups - Flip chart.
What are examples of Ground Rules? -Discuss / flip chart
4. Handout: *Creating a Safe Environment*.
Tutors can add suggestions from previous exercise.
5. Discussion on Boundaries
Handout: *Boundaries*
Pair up tutors. Discuss the question - one person as designated speaker. Go around the room (option - write ideas on flip chart if you like) Think about your own boundaries. What are you comfortable with? (Just ask this question and leave it with tutors to think about)

BREAK

6. Handout: *Counselling and What to Do*.
Everyone should read it through silently.
Handout: *Creating a Safety Plan* (or make copies and whoever wants one can pick it up at the end of workshop) Questions?
7. Role Play
I've created 4 scenarios but you can create your own if you like.
Two volunteers to play tutor and learner and act out scenario.
8. Discussion on Role Play: What was it like for tutors? Ask the group if they have any ideas or suggestions to add to what the tutor said.
Questions?
9. Handout: *Resources*
If there is time, go over the *Resources* handout with group.



Facilitator's Agenda

(Note: This was my safety net agenda, filled with possible responses - it is a little detailed. I include it here if anyone needs some ideas to do the workshop. - Andrea)

Why is this workshop useful?

Some learners are going to have past experience with abuse, some may be in an abusive situation. The effects of abuse and trauma can be profound. It can definitely affect the way a person learns. Research has shown that experiences of violence can severely hinder the learning process.

As a tutor you may come across a learner who discloses abuse to you. As you are a tutor and not a counsellor, you might find yourself at a loss for words, or just plain don't know what to do with the situation.

This workshop will help generate ideas and provide information on how to deal with disclosure and how to create a safe place to learn for both you and the learner.

1. To get started, I think it is important to get a better idea of how abuse could impact a person's ability to learn. (flip chart)

Ideas: create isolation, distraction, can't concentrate or focus, fear of being judged, feelings of shame, feeling stupid could prevent someone from trying.

All of these things could create barriers to learning. So for a learner who is coming to you to assist in their learning process, they are really taking a lot of risks on many different levels. It means building trust with that person and providing a safe place for learning to happen.



Facilitator's Agenda

2. How could we make a safe space for learners? Brainstorm (flip chart)

Creating safety in groups. Ground rules, which could also be called the "Group Agreement", will help keep the group working together, promoting unity, safety, and empowerment. All you need is a flip chart or a chalkboard and let the group make the rules. After writing down all the ideas on the flip chart, ask everyone if they agree with these rules or agreement and if they can abide by them while in the group.

Why is it better if the group makes the rules? You will have an idea in your head of what some of them should be and can always make suggestions but each person should speak. This will generate feelings of inclusiveness and each individual will be making a valuable contribution in structuring the group and creating a safe space for everyone. Each voice will be heard and validated.

It will also lesson the power dynamic between facilitator and the members.

If there is **conflict** in the group between people you can always try to resolve it by referring back to the ground rules. If you can, try and keep the rules in the open all the time. Keep it simple. What would this group like to see for ground rules?

(flip chart Ground Rules)

Ideas: confidentiality, don't interrupt, don't be judgmental, respect each other as equals, respect other people's differences -religion, don't swear, don't wear strong perfume (some people may be allergic)

Handout: *Creating a Safe Environment*. Tutors can add suggestions on the page.



Facilitator's Agenda

3. Handout: *Boundaries*

This exercise is to get you thinking about personal boundaries to help you create a safer environment for both you and your learner. If everyone could look at the handout entitled boundaries and pair up with the person beside you.

(Read the questions) Just try and come up with one or two answers, when we come back into the large group one person from each pair will read out one example that they thought of.

Ideas: **Right now I have so much on my mind I don't think I could listen very well. Perhaps we could talk another time or perhaps I could help you find someone, like a counsellor.**

I may not be the best person to talk to about this but I will definitely help you find someone you can talk with.

Always be empathetic and honest with the learner about what you can and cannot give to them.

BREAK

4. Handout: *Counselling and What to Do*

These are some ideas and suggestions about what you can do if a learner discloses abuse. Have everyone read it on her or his own.

I've mentioned in the "what to do" paper the possibility of writing up a safety plan; this would be appropriate for a woman experiencing domestic violence. On the information table I've set a copy of how to make a safety plan, written by Safe Horizon - a nonprofit victim assistance, advocacy, and violence prevention organization located in New York. This information is written in its format for a tutor so you could use their ideas and suggestions to help a learner create her own. If anyone wants a copy of it I can make one for you after the workshop.



Facilitator's Agenda

5. Role-play

Now that everyone has read ideas on what to do if a learner discloses, this next exercise is a role play. I'm going to ask for two volunteers to play the role of tutor and learner. I will give the learner a scenario and the two will have a brief dialogue. Focus on the tutor's response. This is a difficult role play, so don't worry if the words don't come out exactly as you might expect.

After each role-play, ask: 1) How the learner felt with the tutor's response. 2) Ask the group if they have any ideas or suggestions to add to what the tutor said.

Thank the role players for participating in such a difficult activity. Thank everyone for their ideas and suggestions.

6. Questions?

Hand out resource sheet and hostel / legal sheet. If there is time go over it quickly.



Role Play Exercise

Cut out each situation and hand out (one role play at a time) to the volunteer who is playing the learner.

1. Learner:

Well, I didn't get much sleep last night. My husband Bill knocked me down and I stayed awake most of the night. (Pause, looking at the table.)

2. Learner:

I'm feeling pretty sad today. Last night I had a dream about my father. He's dead now but he used to hurt me badly in so many ways. I don't know if I can do any work right now.

3. Learner:

You know, I've been feeling so depressed lately I can barely find the energy to get up in the morning. Nothing makes sense to me anymore. I don't know if I want to bother with living.

4. Learner:

I can't concentrate. I hate this stupid exercise. If George finds out I came back here he'll kill me. I should never have come.



Role Play Exercise: Possible Responses

1. Learner:

Well, I didn't get much sleep last night. My husband Bill knocked me down and I stayed awake most of the night. (Pause, looking at the table.)

Possible responses:

- Acknowledge what she said, be empathetic: That is terrible, I'm sorry that happened.
- Naming it: That's abuse.
- Ask: How are you feeling? Are you hurt? Do you need to see a doctor? Have you considered going to a shelter? (Give information on shelter if she wishes or just talk to her about options, safety plans.)

2. Learner:

I'm feeling pretty sad today. Last night I had a dream about my father. He's dead now but he used to hurt me badly in so many ways. I don't know if I can do any work right now.

Possible responses:

- Ask if she wants to talk or write about it. If she doesn't want to write about an experience maybe she could practice writing about some of her feelings.
- Ask her what she **would like to do** in the time she has with you. For example, does she want to draw a picture about how she feels?



Role Play Exercise: Possible Responses

3. Learner:

You know, I've been feeling so depressed lately I can barely find the energy to get up in the morning. Nothing makes sense to me anymore. I don't know if I want to bother with living.

Possible responses:

Can you tell me more about this? How long have you been feeling this way? Has something happened in your life that makes you feel this way? Are you thinking about suicide?
(See Handout: *Counselling and What to Do*)

4. Learner:

I can't concentrate. I hate this stupid exercise. If George finds out I came back here he'll kill me. I should never have come.

Possible responses:

Can we talk about this? You are doing so well in our time together, what's happening for you to change your thoughts on being here? What you said about George concerns me: are you safe at home?

Suggestions if the learner is angry, and you can listen: Let the person know that you are there to listen and that they can say as much or as little as they wish. You want them to be there and maybe you can help them with whatever they are struggling. If the person doesn't know where to start or how to start talking, tell them they can start anywhere, ask them what they are feeling right now, ask them what they are really worried about.

If you DON'T think you can listen: Acknowledge what she says, be empathetic. "I can't imagine what it must have been like for you. I don't know if I'm the best person to talk to about it but I could certainly help you find someone, like a counsellor."

You can always suggest writing or drawing, but let her know that you wouldn't be a good person to hear the details but you want to support her in other ways.



CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Be aware of space

Many survivors are very aware about personal space and anyone moving too close into their space could create feelings of discomfort or fear. Observe how the student is with touching. Don't take touching for granted or being O.K. Take cues from the student but remember to respect your own boundaries. Kindly let her know that maybe you're only good for a handshake.

If there is a choice of tables and where to sit than let the student decide for both. For example, (for various reasons) some people may need to have their back against a wall to have a view of the whole room. Some people may need to sit where they can see the door or windows.

Be aware of the power imbalance

This is important. Whether the learner has experienced violence in her life or not there is still a power dynamic in the relationship between tutor and learner just as there is between student/teacher, counsellor/client. The very nature of violence and abuse sets up a power dynamic between abuser and victim. Sometimes this dynamic plays itself out in various relationships in that person's life. Being a tutor, a teaching/assisting role, you may be perceived as being on the other side of the fence; another person who is going to judge the worth of the learner. You could be the target for some of their hopes. There are many shades in between. Be encouraging and promote equality and self-empowerment.

Trust

People who have survived abuse often have little trust for others including trust in themselves. One way to build trust is to be consistent in both your time and in your support. If you need to cancel with a learner, let them know as soon as possible with explanation. This will minimize the potential for misunderstanding. You can let her know that canceling that week has nothing to do with her.

note: Some feelings engendered by exposure to violence and abuse are:
fear, isolation, helplessness, hopelessness, anger, rage, hate, feeling overwhelmed,
nervous/anxious.



Handout:

BOUNDARIES

What are boundaries?

They are the limits that allow for a safe connection. When these limits are altered, what is allowed in the relationship becomes ambiguous. Such ambiguity is often experienced as an intrusion into the sphere of safety.

Why do we need boundaries?

- To ensure clarity in the relationship
- To maintain safety in the relationship
- To ensure accountability and respect

Think about your own boundaries. What are you comfortable with?

What are some examples of “crossing boundaries” that could occur with a learner who discloses abuse? What would be an appropriate response that would respect both the learner and your boundaries?

For example, if a learner said, “You’re the only person who can help me”, a possible response could be, “It may seem that way now but I can help you find a good counsellor who has more experience and knowledge with these kinds of issues.”

[illegible]

Handout:

COUNSELLING AND WHAT TO DO

People have different ideas about counselling. Some people may have negative connotations to counselling, whether through past experience, experiences related to them by people they know, or a belief in negative counselling stereotypes (i.e. only crazy people need counselling). If they do express this kind of belief about counselling, you can let them know that this isn't true. People seek counselling from every station in life and for many different reasons. If the learner is not open to the suggestion of seeing a counsellor that is fine, don't push them. Some people may have past trauma from dealing with medical/psychiatric institutions. The prospect of counselling might not be thought well of or may not even be an option. Honour their choice but let them know that you have information about it if they are interested.

If a learner discloses past abuse or violence

- Listen attentively and be supportive. Abuse is **never** o.k. and **never** the fault of the victim. You can let her know this.
- Acknowledge what she is telling you.
- Ask if this is still troubling her today.
- Ask if she wants to talk to someone about it -- a counsellor or a therapist.
- Ask if she wants to write about her experiences or read material that deals with violence and/or healing.

If a learner discloses abuse that is occurring in the present:

- Follow the previous suggestions (exempt bullet 3)
- Do they need medical attention?
- Ask if they've considered leaving and going to a shelter. Most women's shelters allow children.
- Whether or not a shelter is an option for them, you can ask if they want to work on a written safety plan with you.
- Ask if the learner has people to reach out to, friends or family they can call.
- Ask if they want to write about their experiences or read material that deals with violence and/or healing.
- Give the learner information, verbally, written or both about her options.

What if a learner discloses thoughts about committing suicide?

Acknowledge this. Check in with yourself, take a deep breath. If you feel comfortable, you can ask what has been happening in their life that makes them feel this way. How long have they felt this way?

Find out if they have the means to go through with it. This will help assess how critical the situation is. Don't be judgmental but let them know that **you** really want them to be there. If you feel comfortable you can also:

- Ask them if its o.k. for you to call them later, set a date and time and **honour** it.
- See if they can promise to come to their next meeting with you.
- Work on a written contract around coming to their next tutor session. No matter what **talk to your supervisor!** No matter what **honour your own boundaries!**

Don't try to solve a student's problems, just be supportive and provide information if they want it. Don't tell them what they "should" or "need" to do. Sometimes just listening is the best thing you can do. If you don't know the answer to something, tell them the truth and seek advice with your supervisor, letting the learner know that you will find the information out for them.

Crisis

If a learner is in **crisis** and needs immediate assistance, look in the BLUE BOOK under **Crisis Intervention** or **Crisis Lines** or call **211** for the same.

***If a learner discloses that her children are being abused please talk to your supervisor immediately in order to decide the best course of action. ***



Handout:

Resources

Assaulted Women's Helpline / Crisis Intervention: 416-364-4144

Hours: 24 hours

Community Helpline: 416-397-4636

Hours: Monday-Sunday: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Information and referral on a wide range of community, social services, health and government programs.

Women's Counselling, Referral and Education Centre (WCREC): 416-534-7501

All WCREC staff work within an anti-oppression, anti-racist and integrative feminist framework. They provide counselling, referrals to screened therapists, referrals to groups and community resources and client rights education. Counselling services are free, low cost or have a sliding scale. Referral services are offered to both women and men.

Phoneline Hours:

Monday, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m. and 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m. and 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

211 Phoneline: 211

Hours: 24 hrs

Referrals to community, health, social services. Website: www.211toronto.ca

Blue Book: Directory of Community Services in Toronto

Check your program, they most likely have it.

Note: If a learner is in Crisis and needs immediate assistance, other than the Assaulted Women's Helpline, you can look in the **BLUE BOOK** under Crisis Intervention or Crisis Lines. There are culture-specific intervention or hotlines available. You or the learner can make the call.

Background Reading Resources

Too Scared To Learn: *Women, Violence and Education*
by Jenny Horsman.

Tutor Training Manual: *Drawing the Line, Dealing with Affective Issues in Literacy*
by Jenny Horsman



Handout:

Many women involved in a domestic violence situation find it's helpful to make a **Safety Plan**. The following information is from the New York organization Safe Horizon, and is available on their website: www.safehorizon.org/page.php?page=safetyplan

Creating a Safety Plan

You do not have control over your partner's behavior, but you do have a choice about how to respond. It is very difficult to decide to leave a relationship and seek safety either with someone you know or in a domestic violence shelter. It might take several attempts before you can permanently leave. And once you decide that leaving is in your best interest, you still need to cope with the emotional, physical, and financial issues that arise. We strongly recommend that you make a safety plan. Your plan addresses you and your family's individual situation and helps to ensure that if you decide to leave you are as safe as you can be and have everything that you need.

Part of being safe is understanding your situation. It is important that you know that the pattern of abuse often begins with behaviors like name-calling and threats and can escalate to physical violence and sexual assault, or even murder. If you are afraid of your partner, you need to trust your instincts about your safety and your children's safety. You are not alone. We are here to help you.

The following guide can help you make a safety plan. Remember that if you write out your plan, you need to keep it in a place where your partner won't find it. We suggest that you work on a plan with one of our experienced domestic violence counselors. You can do this by calling the hotline or by visiting one of our community offices.

COMMUNICATE WITH SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP AND DECIDE WHERE YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WOULD GO IF YOU NEEDED TO LEAVE:

This may be difficult especially if your partner has isolated you; however, it is important to confide in someone who can help you:

- o A trusted friend or family member who can listen without judging and keep your confidentiality.
- o An advocate or domestic violence hotline counselor can help you figure out which friends and relatives might be able to help you.
- o An advocate or hotline counselor can help you figure out alternatives if you have to leave at a time when no one you know is available to help you.
- o If you don't have a car, think of a safe place close to your home where your friend could pick you up. Also, know the routes to the subway, bus stop, and train station nearest to your home.
- o You may want to plan a code word or phrase to use on the telephone with a friend if you need to access help when your abuser is present. Tell your friend that when you say that code word, it means you're in trouble and you need him/her to call 911 for you.
- o If you feel comfortable, tell your neighbors about the violence and ask if they will call the police if suspicious noises are coming from your home.
- o If you have an Order of Protection, keep it on you at all times and keep a copy of it somewhere safe.
- o You can dial 911 for free from most telephones. If you are in immediate danger, you should always call 911.

DECIDE HOW YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WOULD GET OUT OF YOUR HOME:

- o Decide on a pathway if you have to leave at night. Think of public places you can access 24 hours a day. Know the route to police stations, hospitals, fire stations, and 24 hour convenience stores in your area.
- o If you leave by car, make sure you lock the car doors immediately.
- o Consider making a plan for each room in your home. What can you do to get out of the basement or upper floors of your home?
- o Know which doors lock in your home.
- o If you live in an apartment building, think of all the ways to get out safely. Is there a fire escape that could get you safely to the ground? Is there a stairwell you could use?
- o Keep your essential belongings (credit cards/ID) and keys in a safe place, in case you have to leave quickly.
- o If you are afraid that your partner will harass you at work, make an escape route at work. Also, give a photo of him/her to a supervisor you trust and ask that s/he not be allowed inside. If you have an Order of Protection, give the security guard or receptionist a copy.



Creating a Safety Plan (continued)

Handout:

DECIDE HOW YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WOULD GET OUT OF YOUR HOME:

- o Decide on a pathway if you have to leave at night. Think of public places you can access 24 hours a day. Know the route to police stations, hospitals, fire stations, and 24 hour convenience stores in your area.
- o If you leave by car, make sure you lock the car doors immediately.
- o Consider making a plan for each room in your home. What can you do to get out of the basement or upper floors of your home?
- o Know which doors lock in your home.
- o If you live in an apartment building, think of all the ways to get out safely. Is there a fire escape that could get you safely to the ground? Is there a stairwell you could use?
- o Keep your essential belongings (credit cards/ID) and keys in a safe place, in case you have to leave quickly.
- o If you are afraid that your partner will harass you at work, make an escape route at work. Also, give a photo of him/her to a supervisor you trust and ask that s/he not be allowed inside. If you have an Order of Protection, give the security guard or receptionist a copy. [Click here for more information about staying safe at work.](#)

HOW TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE

- o Make sure your children know how to dial 911 in an emergency situation
- o Instruct your children on where to go in an emergency

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS TO BRING

Keep important documents together in a safe place. A domestic violence hotline counselor or advocate can help you decide where. These documents and other necessities could include:

- | | |
|---|--|
| o Order of Protection | o Medical records |
| o ATM card | o Address book |
| o Money/cab fare | o Insurance policies |
| o Check book | o Important legal documents |
| o Credit card | o Police records |
| o Passport | o Record of violence |
| o Green card | o Baby's things (diapers, formula, medication) |
| o Work permit | o Children's school and immunization records |
| o Public Assistance ID | o Birth certificates |
| o Mobile phone/coins to use in a payphone | o Medications |
| o Driver's license & registration | o Clothing |
| o Social security card | o Eye glasses |
| o Your partner's social security number | o Lease |
| o Non-perishable snacks for children (e.g. juice and crackers) | |
| o Important phone numbers including the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Hotline: 1 (800) 621-HOPE (4673) (If you are not in New York City, call the national hotline at 1 (800) 799-SAFE (7233)) | |

PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

- o Keep a journal of all violent incidents, noting dates, events and threats made if possible.
- o Advance your career and ability to work by completing school, taking courses, or learning a new skill.
- o Try to set money aside or ask friends or family members to hold money for you.

