



SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF PARTNER ABUSE

Support and Intervention

- **Check if there is need for medical attention.** While police will already have checked for obvious injuries, less obvious injuries may not be noticed until later. If there are serious symptoms, encourage the victim to visit the doctor. Visiting the doctor is also an opportunity for the victim to tell someone what happened and to document the abuse.
- **Help identify resources**, such as supportive family and friends, as well as the victim's own strength.
- **Support the victim in assessing safety**, and encourage the victim to develop a safety plan* whether or not she plans to leave or stay.
- **Provide information and referrals.** This may include information on support services for children, how violence affects children, the effects of abuse and how it escalates over time, where to go for legal advice, social assistance or welfare, and finding a job or upgrading job skills. Referrals may include hotlines, shelters, counselling services, parenting support, children's aid organizations, police services, local hospitals, and sexual assault centres.
- **Write information down and leave print materials** if it is safe to do so.
- **Acknowledge courage** in seeking and accepting help.
- **Ask if the victim would like a follow-up call from your centre.** If safety is a concern, a specific time and/or location can be arranged for the call. Always remember to notify your team leader of any safety concerns ASAP.

*Please note that safety planning is an important action for victims of partner abuse, and you will be provided with more information in the Safety Planning module.

Additional Practical Support

- Take care of the children's needs
- Help to pack belongings (if the victim has decided to leave the home)
- Get together documents which legally belong to the victim (such as credit cards, bank books, and identification)
- Arrange for transport to a shelter or home of a friend or relative
- Make coffee
- Look after pets