

THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR

A Practical Handbook



Brant's Response Against Violence Everywhere (B.R.A.V.E) thanks the many agencies and organizations who provided data for this handbook.

Grateful thanks to the City of Brantford and Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) for providing the funding for the Refrigerator Door.

Every effort has been made to ensure the information enclosed is accurate and up-to-date. Inevitably, however, changes to programming and services will occur. Readers may wish to confirm any details with the agencies/service providers directly.

Inclusion in this book does not constitute endorsement by the B.R.A.V.E committee or the City of Brantford. Conversely, any omissions of programs and services are not intentional.

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It is important to acknowledge that the land we live and work on is First Nations' territory. The City of Brantford and surrounding area lies on the lands of Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee and the Neutral. Respect is also offered to our neighbouring Indigenous nations, including the Metis, Cree and Inuit, among many others throughout Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work in this community, on this territory. In recognizing the impact of colonial and settler violence, it is important to recognize the sexual and gender-based violence that has resulted from colonialism, and disrupted the wisdom and practices of Indigenous communities across Canada. The links between land and body for Indigenous communities create a powerful intersection – one that, when overlooked, or discounted, can threaten the very existence of the communities. In sharing (Degakahsó:gweh) this resource, we hope folks who have been impacted by intergenerational sexual and gender-based violence can find support and comfort in the resources provided. We are all treaty members, and as such it is our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories and present-day implications and to honour, protect and sustain this land. In doing so, we strive to act in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and center their voices.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

If you have been abused or are afraid of being hurt...

Get to a safe place. Your first priority is the safety of yourself and your children. Leave the house if necessary; go to a shelter or to a friend or neighbour.

Go to a hospital, clinic, or your doctor to get medical attention if you have been injured.

Call the police. Tell them you have been assaulted. Provide details and write down the incident number, the officers' names and badge numbers.

Police
Ambulance
Fire } 911

Prologue

Beginning the Transition

If you are — or were — in an abusive relationship and are trying to make your life better, this handbook is for you.

You are not alone. Domestic violence happens to in all types of relationships all over the world. In Canada, it is estimated that one out of every four women is abused by her partner. That means that in Brantford and Brant County, as many as 14,000 women are victims of domestic violence. However, because of the isolation, embarrassment and fear that usually goes along with abuse, it's normal to believe you are alone and to be overwhelmed by the thought of leaving the relationship: "Where would I go; how would I cope, how could I provide for my children?" They may feel their situation is hopeless.

But it isn't. There is hope and there is help, right here in Brantford and the County of Brant. *The Refrigerator Door* is a start. In the same way that the fridge is often the gathering place for notes, lists, reminders and other important items, this publication provides easy-to-find information that can help you as you work toward establishing a violence free life for yourself and your children.

We recognize that while most survivors of abuse share common feelings and fears, everyone's situation is unique. There is information and advice for those who are contemplating changes, for those in the midst of leaving relationships, and for those coping with the aftermath of their decisions.

This handbook includes the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of various organizations that can assist with many of your practical and emotional needs. It also includes space for you to record your own notes and to add the names and phone numbers of other people and agencies that will become part of your support network.

Just like the unique collage of pictures and papers on your own fridge door, this book is meant to be a personal resource that can help you through this critical stage in your life.

One word of advice: At times, seeking help can seem like a difficult and frustrating process. Staff come and go. Programs and services change. New laws and policies replace old ones. And sometimes you need to call several times to get through to the right person or department. Don't give up. This may be one of the most important things you can do for yourself.

If you have any questions or comments, or you want additional copies of this handbook, please contact Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services, 519-752-1005. Additional copies can be downloaded from our website, www.novavita.org or www.brant-brave.org

See the Table of Contents on page 4 for a complete list of resources and services.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE....

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services 519-752-HELP (4357)

- 24-hour crisis and support line:
☎ 519-752-4357
- 24-hour text and online chat
☎ 519-752-4357/
www.novavita.org/chat

Brantford General Hospital

- ☎ 519-751-5544
- Willet Site, Paris
☎ 519-442-2251

Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

- 24-hour crisis line:
☎ 519-751-3471

Victim Services of Brant

- During business hours:
☎ 519-752-3140
- After hours:
☎ 519-756-7050

Indigenous Victim Services:

- During business hours
☎ 226-227-2192;
- After business hours:
Six Nations Crisis line
☎ 1-866-445-2204

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie

- ☎ 519-753-8681

Ogwadeni:deo – Six Nations Child Welfare:

- ☎ 519-445-1864

Ganohkwasra

- ☎ 519-445-4324

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What is Abuse?

If you are being abused...

- You are not alone.
- You are not to blame.
- You have the right to be safe.
- You can get help.

Brantford ranked #5 in Ontario and #13 in Canada with a rate of 338.17 per 100,000 for police reported domestic violence (Statistics Canada 2022)

While B.R.A.V.E does not condone violence against anyone, the committee recognizes that domestic violence and/or sexual violence disproportionately affects women, trans folks, and non-binary folks. Indigenous women, women of colour, women with disabilities and transgendered individuals face even higher rates.

Abuse is an attempt to have power and control over another person by hurting or mistreating them.

Types of Abuse

Physical: some examples are hitting, punching, beating, slapping, pulling hair, use of weapons, mutilation, burning, biting, murder

Sexual: any sexual contact that you do not consent to, ranging from unwanted touching to harassment to rape (*see also page 15-18*)

Verbal: threats, insults, name-calling, blaming and accusing, swearing, shouting

Psychological/Emotional: withholding love, sympathy or understanding, inadequate physical or emotional care, isolation, intimidation, extreme jealousy, destroying property, threatening to commit suicide

Criminal Harassment (also referred to as Stalking): repeated conduct that creates fear for one's safety or the safety of a loved one. The repeated conduct can include making threats, obscene phone calls, following, watching, tracking, contacting on the Internet, including through texts or email messages

Financial: taking money or pay cheques without permission, withholding money and/or denying access to employment opportunities, preventing access to household financial information

Spiritual: making fun of a person's spiritual beliefs or preventing them from attending the church, synagogue or temple of their choice

Cultural: preventing you from participating in cultural activities, traditional teachings and ceremonies, or forcing you to change your culture. Your partner refuses to sign Certificate of Indian Status or Band Registration for the children.

Reproductive Coercion: controlling reproductive choices, pregnancy outcomes and/or access to health services.

Coercive Control: patterns of control and abuse that cause fear or terror, including coercion (using force and/or threats to alter behaviour) and control (regulating or dominating a partner's behaviour and choices, isolating a person from family and friends, and restricting access to employment, education or medical care).

Technology-Facilitated Violence (also referred to as Cyberviolence): use of technologies to facilitate virtual or in-person harm including observing and listening to a person, tracking their location, to scare, intimidate or humiliate a person.

Signs of an Abusive Relationship

If your partner uses physical force to hurt, scare, or control you, even if just occasionally, the relationship is an abusive one.

Physical and sexual assault are against the law. No one — including your partner — has the right to hurt you or to force you to perform sexual acts against your will.

It is also a crime to make death threats.

There are also many other behaviours that signal an abusive relationship. These behaviours may not be against the law, but they can cause serious emotional/psychological harm and have a devastating effect on a person's self-esteem.

Your relationship may be abusive if...

- You are afraid to express your true feelings or tell your partner about your own needs and ambitions.

What is Abuse?

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence
Prevention Services**
59 North Park Street
Brantford, N3R 4J8

24-hour crisis and support line

☎ 519-752-4357

24-hour text and online chat:

☎ 519-752-4357 or

www.novavita.org/chat

- Call if you are being abused.
- Call if you need to talk about abuse in your family.
- Support is confidential.

What is Abuse?

Strangulation assaults

Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of violence. Strangulation is a form of asphyxia (lack of oxygen) to the brain when blood vessels and air passages are closed as a result of pressure being applied to the neck. Strangulation can make you become unconscious within about 10 seconds and death may occur within 4-5 minutes.

The act of strangulation symbolizes an abuser's power and control over the victim. The victim is completely overwhelmed by the abuser: she struggles for air, and is at the mercy of the abuser for her life. A single experience of strangulation or the threat of it may cause so much fear that the victim can get trapped in a pattern of control by the abuser and be made vulnerable to further abuse.

Up to 68% of women victims of domestic violence have experienced at least one strangulation assault by a male partner during their lifetime.

- You are kept away from, or are discouraged from seeing, family and friends.
- You are accused of cheating, even when you have done nothing wrong.
- You have to account for your whereabouts at all times.
- You are almost always tense and worried about how your partner will react.
- You feel responsible for making your partner happy and always take the blame when things go wrong.
- You are often making excuses or lying to family, friends, and co-workers to hide the situation at home.
- You are constantly being criticized by your partner and feel you can never do anything right.
- You are told you are “crazy” or “too sensitive” when you try to talk about your concerns.
- You feel trapped and are unhappy in your relationship most of the time.

Abusers often use threats to keep their partners in a constant state of anxiety and fear, and to maintain power and control over them.

If your partner is abusive, they may threaten to hurt you, the children, or your pets. They may also threaten to leave you, to take the children away, or to report you to the authorities if you don't do what they say. Some abusers will threaten to commit suicide if their partners leave them.

If you are being abused...

You are not alone.

Millions of individuals are abused by their partners each year.

You are not to blame.

You are not responsible for your partner's actions and you cannot change their behaviour.

You have a right to be safe.

You deserve to be respected and to live a violence free life.

You can get help.

There are many good programs and services in the community, starting with Nova Vita's 24-hour crisis and support line (519-752-4357) 24-hour text and online chat: 519-752-4357 or www.novavita.org/chat

Facts about Domestic Violence and Abuse

There are many names for the violence that occurs in intimate relationships: *domestic violence, intimate partner violence, wife beating, partner abuse, battering, wife assault, family violence, and woman abuse*. They are just different phrases to express the same thing — a relationship where one person uses physical violence, threats, intimidation and fear to have power and control over another person.

Domestic abuse has long been considered a “family secret,” making it difficult to assess the true nature of the problem and provide help to the victims. Today, more people are aware of the issue although there are still many myths and misconceptions.

The following are some facts...

Violence within families is not a new problem.

It has been happening throughout the centuries and in countries all over the world — including Canada — where it was accepted that the man was the “head of the household” and therefore could treat his wife and children however he liked, even if it represented a misuse of power. It is only in recent years that attitudes and laws changed and women were no longer considered the “property” of their husbands.

In Canada, laws were passed in the late 1960s making it illegal for a man to assault his wife and stating that physical and mental cruelty were grounds for divorce. Now, the judicial system takes the problem of domestic violence seriously. If there is evidence of assault, the police will lay charges. Sentences for convicted perpetrators can include time in jail.

What is Abuse?

Strangulation can cause major health problems. The higher number of strangulation attempts experienced, the more health problems experienced by victims.

As compared to other forms of physical violence, strangulation often leaves no marks or any other signs on the skin.

In 88% of individuals who were assaulted, strangulation was not the only type of abuse experienced (physical, verbal, sexual) in the same incident.

The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care Team at the Brantford General Hospital are trained in documenting and getting appropriate treatment for you, if strangulation/choking has been part of the assault.

What is Abuse?

Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 45.

No one ever deserves to be assaulted or emotionally abused.

Abuse occurs in all types of families and relationships.

Domestic violence is a widespread problem. Studies indicate overall, 44% of women who had ever been in an intimate partner relationship—or about 6.2 million women aged 15 and over—reported experiencing some kind of psychological, physical, or sexual abuse in the context of an intimate relationship in their lifetime (since the age of 15). Current statistics estimate approximately 20% of domestic violence victims are men.

Domestic abuse is **not** just a problem common to lower income households or select ethnic groups. Abuse occurs in relationships and homes of **all** socioeconomic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds. It affects people of all ages and may be present in intimate relationships of all types—from couples who have just started dating to long-time marriages, and everything in between.

The majority of domestic abuse victims are women.

Statistics show that the majority of charges involving domestic assault in Ontario are laid against men. Women suffer more frequent and extreme incidents of violence than men and are more likely to sustain serious or life-threatening injuries.

Alcohol and drugs do not cause domestic violence.

Alcohol and drugs are significant factors in domestic abuse incidents and victims are more likely to be seriously injured or killed when alcohol or drugs are used.

Some people believe that assault occurs because the abuser is under a lot of stress, have volatile personalities, or have mental health concerns. Abusers are not generally known to be violent with other people (e.g. their bosses, co-workers, friends and neighbours) and are usually able to control their behaviour and deal with stress appropriately. In their intimate relationships, however, they feel free to behave abusively without worrying about any consequences.

Abusers who are physically violent often hurt their victims in ways that ensure the bruises and cuts won't be obvious to others. Mentally ill people generally wouldn't be capable of such careful, selective violence. The underlying cause of domestic violence is the perpetra-

tor's desire for power and control.

Victims do not cause the violence by provoking their abusers.

Most abusers do not accept responsibility for their actions. Instead, they lay blame on their victims: “They made me do it” or “They pushed my buttons.” A wide range of events that trigger assaults have been reported, some of them as trivial as “buttering the bread the wrong way.”

If you are being abused, it is not your fault. It is your partner who has the problem and who needs help from professionals.

Domestic violence rarely “goes away” on its own.

It is unusual for abusers to stop their violent and controlling behaviour on their own, without some type of counselling or intervention. No matter how hard other members of the family try to please and placate the abuser, there is inevitably an “explosion” of some sort. This is when the physical and sexual abuse, or severe instances of verbal and emotional abuse, happens.

The explosion is one of the three main stages in the “cycle” that takes place in most abusive relationships. It is preceded by a “tension-building” stage that can last for days, weeks or even months before the violent episode occurs. After it does, there is usually a “honeymoon” stage, during which the abuser apologizes for his actions and may be very loving and attentive. During this stage it is easy to believe your partner's promises to change and to hope that everything will be alright.

However, unless there is some form of intervention, the cycle usually repeats itself with the “explosions” becoming more frequent and increasingly more violent.

Violence in Dating Relationships

Abuse is not just something that occurs between married couples or people who have been together for a long time. Abusive and controlling behaviour can be detected at the outset of a new relationship, sometimes as early as the first date.

Are you going out with someone who...

What is Abuse?

If you are involved with someone who makes you feel uneasy — even if you can't explain why — trust your instincts and put your safety first.

The rate of dating violence was over 60% higher than the rate of spousal violence in 2011.

What is Abuse?

People who leave abusive relationships are particularly at risk of stalking and assaultive behaviour during the first several months after leaving an abusive relationship.

Don't ignore or deny the danger. Take steps to provide for your safety and the safety of your children.

The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (SADV) Care Team at the Brantford General Hospital is a team of skilled nurses available 24 / 7 and can be accessed through the Emergency Department by telling the Triage Nurse that you are there because of domestic (intimate partner) violence. They will contact the SADV Team who will respond promptly to see you for an assault that occurred in the last 12 days. They can offer individualized, confidential care if you have been abused by your past or present partner (like a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, etc.)



1. Is jealous and possessive towards you — doesn't want you to spend time with your friends, checks up on you, won't accept breaking up or not seeing them all the time.
2. Is bossy — tries to control who you see and what you do, criticizes what you wear, wants to make all the decisions, gives orders, doesn't take your opinions seriously.
3. Is scary — makes you worry about how they will react to what you say and do, threatens you.
4. Is violent — has a history of fighting with parents, siblings, friends, has a bad temper, brags about mistreating others, owns or uses weapons.
5. Pressures you for sex — treats you as a sex object, tries to manipulate you or make you feel guilty ("if you really loved me you would..."), moves the relationship along too quickly.
6. Blames you when they treat you badly — says you made them do it.
7. Has a history of bad relationships and blames everyone else for their problems.
8. Abuses drugs or alcohol; may pressure you to do the same.
9. Believes men should be in control and powerful and that women should be passive and submissive.
10. Has caused your friends and family to be concerned for your safety and to warn you about them.

These are some early warning signs of abuse and should not be ignored. If you answered "Yes" to one or more of the questions, your relationship may be an unhealthy one with the potential to become violent.

Speak to a counsellor or someone you trust. You can call Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' Crisis Line 24-hour crisis and support line 519-752-4357 24-hour text and online chat 519-752-4357 or www.novavita.org/chat any time of the day or night to talk to someone who understands and who can help. You don't have to feel embarrassed or ashamed. Asking for help may be the first step in making your life better.

The Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Team at the Brantford General (a team of skilled nurses available 24/7 accessed through the emergency department, will respond promptly) can offer you comprehensive, confidential care if you have been abused by your present partner, past partner, present or past boyfriend/girlfriend. Identify to the triage nurse that you are there because of domestic violence and they can activate the team. Options for care: Emotional support, Forensic documentation and photos of the injuries you are presenting with, safety planning, and discharge to a safe environment. Follow up appointment within 48-72 hours to re-document injuries, further safety planning, support, and referrals to community agencies. Because you are presenting with injuries a physician will assess and medically clear you before discharge. You have the choice of immediate police involvement or have all documentation stored until if or when you are ready to involve police. At times this may take several visits until you are ready to involve police but your history of events has been stored safely. ***Involvement of police at any point is your choice to make. Your trust and confidentiality is important to us.***

Criminal Harassment

Criminal Harassment, also called stalking, involves a range of behaviours that cause the victim to fear for his or her own safety or the safety of loved ones. Criminal Harassment is a type of abuse in which the stalker is trying to control someone by scaring or intimidating them.

Stalking involves a pattern of behaviours that may include...

- following a person, their children, or others they care about
- showing up uninvited at someone's home or workplace
- making repetitive or threatening telephone calls
- sending unwelcome letters, e-mail messages, or gifts
- vandalizing or breaking into someone's home or car
- damaging property

What is Abuse?

Options of care include emotional support, physical examination, documentation and photos of any injuries, safety planning and connection with community supports.

If you have injuries, the Emergency Department can assess and treat you before you leave the hospital.

You can have a follow up appointment, usually in 48 -72 hours, to re-document your injuries, continue safety planning and connect you with other supports you might need. Short term counselling with our team is also available.

If your assault was more than 12 days ago, you can book an appointment to see the SADV Care Team and talk about what options are available for you. You can call 519-751-5544 ex. 4449 to talk to one of our nurses during office hours or leave a message.

You have the choice of involving the police or have the documentation and photographs stored until, if and when, you are ready to involve police.

Involvement of police is always your choice – but you do not have to report to police to receive care from the SADV Care Team. Your trust and confidentiality is important to us.

What is Abuse?

“Caller ID spoofing” is a common practice used by high-tech cyber stalkers to program the Caller ID to reveal any name and number of their choice. Stalkers often use telephone numbers known by the victim in order to trick and deceive an unsuspecting victim in to answering the phone. Screen your phone calls. By allowing the answering machine to pick up, the stalker may leave a message, which could later be used as evidence.

- stealing mail; trying to get personal/confidential information
- threatening someone, or their family, friends or colleagues

Stalkers are usually known to their victims; they are often ex-spouses or partners. Women who leave abusive relationships are particularly at risk for being criminally harassed. It is important not to ignore or deny the harassment; stalking can and often does get worse.

If you are being stalked...

Avoid all contact with the stalker. Once you have made it clear that you do not want to see this person, do not respond to any further calls or messages.

Tell people (friends, family, co-workers) what is happening and emphasize the importance of keeping your phone number, address and other personal information confidential.

Report the harassment to the police. They will assess the risk to you and give you advice on how to plan for your safety. If they feel it is warranted, they will lay charges against the stalker.

Record every stalking instance, including the date, time, details and witnesses, if any. Keep everything the stalker sends; try to record phone messages.

Criminal Harassment is against the law. You have the right to be safe. If charges are laid, the case will be heard in court and the stalker may be found guilty.

Cyber Stalking

Cyberstalk means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or cause to be communicated, words, images or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose. Like stalking (see above), cyberstalking involves a similar pattern of

behaviours. You should also track all incidences of cyberstalking in a journal as well.

If you think you are being cyberstalked or harassed, **TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND PLAN FOR SAFETY:**

- Take all threats seriously whether they are verbal or text
- Be wary of relying on Caller ID – see sidebar
- Password protect ALL accounts, including utilities. Request to have the utility/store/agency contact you if there are any changes made to your accounts. You will know if you have made them.
- Change your passwords and PIN numbers
- Notify family, friends and co-workers not to divulge personal information about you to any third party.
- Use a safer computer such as a public computer at a library or the computer of a trusted family member to access your email and use the Internet. If you are concerned about spyware on your device, have your computer or device checked for spyware or remote log-in software.

Social Networking

Stalkers and abusers sometimes use social networking sites to impersonate, stalk, and harass victims. Using safety measures may help reduce risk.

- Adjust privacy and location settings via the website AND your smart phone applications.
- Revisit privacy settings weekly as these features are updated regularly (i.e. Facebook).
- Consider creating a new profile using non-identifying information and an image such as a flower, a sports team logo or other image as your profile picture.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any unwanted act of a sexual nature imposed by

What is Abuse?

The Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

24-hour Crisis Line:

☎ 519-751-3471

Crisis Line TTY:

☎ 519-751-4054

Office Tel:

☎ 519-751-1164

- safe, confidential environment
- information, advice, support
- group counselling
- accompaniment to hospital, police and/or court

See pages 125-126 for safety planning tips.

What is Abuse?

**Brantford General Hospital
Emergency Department
200 Terrace Hill Street,
Brantford
☎ 519-752-7871**

**Sexual Assault and Domestic
Violence Care Team is a team
of skilled nurses available
24/7, accessed through the
emergency department.
☎ 519-751-5544 Ext. 4449**

**Sexual Assault Centre
Young Women's Highschool
Program for young women 14+
No parental permission
required.
Free and confidential.
☎ 519-751-1164**

one person upon another. Forced or coerced intercourse, grabbing, touching or kissing can be defined as sexual assault. Like other forms of abuse, sexual assault is an act of violence and a vicious attempt to exert power and control over someone.

Some facts...

- One in four Canadian women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime.
- Sexual assault can happen to anyone. People of all ages and representing all backgrounds (economic, social, ethnic, religious, cultural etc.) are assaulted.
- Over 80% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim (e.g. spouse, partner, date, family member, neighbour).
- At least 80% of attacks occur in a private home.

Nothing you do gives anyone the right to assault you. It doesn't matter what you wear, who you are with or where you go. Even if you have consented to sexual activity with someone previously, you have the right to say no to something you don't want to do. If sexual activity took place while you were asleep or unconscious; or if the person you were with was in a position of authority over you - you were sexually assaulted. **Sexual assault is a crime**, even if the perpetrator is your partner. If you are a victim of sexual assault you can get help:

The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (SADV) Care Team at the Brantford General Hospital is a team of skilled nurses available 24 / 7 and can be accessed through the Emergency Department by telling the Triage Nurse that you are there because of sexual assault. They will contact the SADV Care Team who will respond promptly to see you for an assault that occurred in the last 12 days. They can offer individualized, confidential care if you have been assaulted by a stranger, acquaintance or your past or present partner (like a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, etc.).

Options of care include emotional support, physical examination, collection of forensic evidence, documentation and photos of any

injuries, safety planning and connection with community supports. We can also offer Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing, HIV and pregnancy testing and medications to treat STIs. The “ Morning After Pill” is also available.

If you have injuries, the Emergency Department can assess and treat you before you leave the hospital. You can have a follow up appointment, usually in 48 -72 hours, to re-document your injuries, continue safety planning and connect you with other supports you might need. Short term counselling with our team is also available.

If your assault was more than 12 days ago, you can book an appointment to see the SADV Care Team and talk about what options are available for you. You can call 519-751-5544 ex. 4449 to talk to one of our nurses during office hours or leave a message.

You have the choice of involving the police or have the documentation and photographs stored until, if and when, you are ready to involve police. If you have forensic evidence collected, we can store it for up to 12 months, to allow you to decide if you want to report the assault to the police. Involvement of police is always your choice – but you do not have to report to police to receive care from the SADV Care Team. Your trust and confidentiality is important to us.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any type of unwelcome sexual talk or action that makes you feel uncomfortable, upset, embarrassed, trapped, or confused.

Examples include:

- suggestive or lewd comments
- leering
- insulting remarks, name calling
- spreading rumours
- repeated requests for dates or sexual favours
- grabbing, touching, and other unwanted attention

What is Abuse?

Sexual Harassment violates the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Bill 168- requires employers who are aware, or who ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence may occur in the workplace to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker who is at risk of physical harm.

You can file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

**For more information call
☎ 1-800-387-9080
☎ TTY: 1-800-308-5561**

For free legal advice on Workplace Sexual Harassment, call the Community Legal Clinic – Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk at ☎ 519-752-8669 or Toll Free at 1-888-341-5021.

What is Abuse?

Sexual harassment is hurtful. No one has the right to harass anyone else. You deserve to feel safe and to be treated with respect at home, in public, at work and at school.

If you have been sexually harassed...

Don't minimize it. Trust your own feelings. If someone is flirting or engaging in good natured teasing, it is usually enjoyable and makes people feel positive. Sexual harassment, however, makes the victim feel uneasy, degraded, humiliated or helpless.

Don't ignore it. If left alone, the harassment can get worse. The harasser may begin to engage in even more abusive behaviour such as stalking, threats or assault.

Confront the harasser if it is possible and safe to do so. Be clear and direct and insist that the behaviour stop immediately.

Decide whether you want to report it. Workplaces and schools take sexual harassment very seriously and have policies in place to protect people and deal with this behaviour. You should not be ashamed to make a complaint about the harassment; it was not your fault. Speak to someone who can help you such as your employer, supervisor, manager, teacher, principal, or other person in authority.

Keep track of the harassment. Make notes on each incident, including the date, time, place, specific behaviour and any witnesses. This will be useful if you make a formal complaint at work or school, or if you need to involve the police.

Talk to someone you trust. You may want to speak with an understanding friend or a trained counsellor about your feelings.

Domestic Violence and Children

Protecting Your Children

All parents know that the safety, security and well-being of their children are their main priorities. For people living in fear for their own safety, guarding and protecting their children can be a tremendously difficult task. And yet, it is these children who are most in need of protection. Studies show that children are present in 85% of all domestic violence incidents, and that approximately 43% of the men who regularly assaulted their wives also abused their children.

If your children are being physically abused — or if you know of, or suspect, sexual abuse — it is your responsibility to report the abuse and to do whatever is necessary to provide your children with a safe and healthy environment. The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (SADV) Care Team at the Brantford General Hospital can help you with your options for medical care, documentation and photos of any injuries and collecting forensic evidence for your children. The team of skilled nurses is available 24 / 7 and can be accessed through the Emergency Department or you can call 519-751-5544 ex. 4449 to book an appointment.

Child abuse is against the law. It is highly destructive - both physically and emotionally, and often affects children for the remainder of their lives.

You can call the Child and Family Services of Grand Erie or Ojwadeni:deo –Six Nations Child Welfare to get help in protecting your children from the abuser. Caseworkers at the CFSGE or Ojwadeni:deo will work with you to develop a plan that will protect your children. You can also contact other organizations in the community for advice and support such as Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' 24-hour crisis and support line (519-752-4357) 24-hour text and online chat: 519-752-

**Child and Family Services of
Grand Erie**

**70 Chatham Street,
P.O. Box 774**

Brantford N3T 5R7

☎ 519-753-8681

1-888-753-8681

www.cfsge.ca

**Ojwadeni:deo – Six Nations
Child Welfare:**

2469 Fourth Line, Oshweken,

ON NOA 1M0;

☎ 519-445-1864

Domestic Violence and Children

Children in abusive households need lots of love, reassurance and positive attention. They need to be told that they are not to blame for what is happening.

4357 or www.novavita.org/chat or SOAR's 24-hour Crisis Response Service, 519-759-7188 or 1-866-811-7188.

You might be frightened, confused, and unsure of what you are going to do in the days and weeks ahead, but your children still depend on you and need you to do what is best for them. It is vitally important that you act promptly to stop abuse from occurring or escalating. Don't hesitate to ask for help in keeping your children safe and secure.

The Impact on Children from Witnessing Abuse

Even if children are not being hit or sexually abused themselves, they are deeply affected by abuse in the home. They may feel a range of emotions: fear, anger, confusion. Some children will try their best to be "good", in order to keep peace in the home. Others might act out more, sometimes out of frustration, or as a way to focus the abuser's attention on themselves and away from their mother.

Children are present in about 85% of all domestic violence incidents. They often show symptoms similar to children who are themselves being abused. They may, for example, exhibit some or all of the following:

- stomach-aches, headaches, and other physical problems
- excessive separation anxieties/whining, clinging (younger kids)
- eating disorders (e.g. overeating, undereating, or hoarding food)
- aggressive behaviour, poor social skills
- insecurity and distrust
- poor school attendance and difficulty with school work
- clumsiness, prone to accidents, self-harming
- depression and suicidal feelings
- tendency to get into serious dating relationships or to leave home too early (for adolescents 13 years and over)

Children and teens who see their parents being assaulted may believe they are to blame for the violence. They tend to have significantly more behavioural and emotional problems than children and teens from non-violent homes. Perhaps the most worrisome aspect of domestic abuse is the way it can go on to affect the next generations. Children learn what they see and will usually repeat the behaviours themselves.

Boys who witness violence against their mothers are much more likely to become abusive as adults, while girls are more likely to become victims of abuse.

Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Program

There is help for children who have witnessed abuse in the home. The Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Program is designed to help children aged 6 to 16, and their mothers, deal with the trauma of domestic abuse.

The children meet in small groups where they are encouraged to express their feelings about violence and separation. They are given a chance to understand the abuse of power they have witnessed, and that the violence is not their fault, or the fault of their mother. The children learn positive ways of expressing their feelings and dealing with anger. They also learn how to keep themselves safe at home, in their community, and on the Internet. Concurrently, the mothers meet separately for support and to learn how to help their children heal. A goal of the program is to break the intergenerational cycle of violence.

Participation in the program is free. For more information or to book an intake appointment, call 519-752-1005, ext. 221.

See page 72-74 for information about other counselling programs for children.

Domestic Violence and Children

Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Program
Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services
59 North Park Street
Brantford N3R 4J8
☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 221

First Steps to a Violence Free Life

Women attempt to leave abusive relationships an average of seven times before ending the relationship permanently.

**You are not alone.
Help is available.**

As a landed immigrant or permanent resident, you cannot be deported from Canada for leaving your partner or for reporting abuse, even if it was your partner who sponsored you.

If you were sponsored by your partner, but don't have permanent resident status at the time you leave the relationship, you can still apply for permanent residence status on "humanitarian or compassionate" grounds.

Stay or Go? Making the Decision

The decision to leave any relationship — particularly if you have been together for some time or have children — is usually a painful one, even if the relationship has been abusive. Ultimately, the decision to stay or leave is yours, no matter how much others may try to persuade you one way or the other.

Some people may not understand why anyone would stay in — or return to — a violent or abusive relationship, and might conclude that the victims somehow like being hurt. These people don't realize that there are many factors at play: an individual may stay out of fear of what might happen if they try to leave. They might be worried about breaking up the family or concerned about how they can support themselves and their children. They may be pressured by other family members to stay. Finally, they might still be hopeful that the relationship will improve.

If you are considering leaving an abusive relationship, you may be grappling with many worries:

- lack of money and/or job skills
- concern about making ends meet and providing for the kids
- difficulty finding good, affordable accommodation
- intimidated by the responsibility of running a household alone
- feeling guilty about taking the children away from their other parent
- reluctance to leave the home and/or give up your current lifestyle
- embarrassment about what family, friends, neighbours or co-workers will think

- fear of being alone
- fear of what your partner will do

You may have several other concerns, depending on your situation. It is normal to feel uncertain and frightened. Your self-esteem may be at an all-time low, particularly if you have been made to feel incompetent and incapable of handling anything by yourself. At the same time, you may still love your partner, and believe that you can do something to stop the abuse.

Whether you decide to stay in the relationship or to leave, keep in mind...

You deserve to live a life free from violence and abuse. You do not have to answer to anyone else and you do not have to defend your actions, particularly, to people who do not understand what you have been living with. You do not have to feel guilty or ashamed about ending the relationship; you are not the one committing the crime.

You have the capacity to be strong and capable. Contrary to what you may have been told, you can do things for yourself. You have probably had to develop certain techniques and skills in order to survive in your relationship. You can learn new skills to help you if you plan to live independently.

Support and help is available. This handbook lists several organizations in the community that can assist with a wide range of needs including housing, financial, employment, parenting, counselling, and more.

Your children may be at even greater risk if you stay. Men who assault their wives often abuse their children as well. Even if they are not being physically hurt, children suffer tremendous emotional trauma by witnessing abuse (*see pages 20-21*). There is also a strong chance they will grow up to repeat the behaviours they have learned.

First Steps to a Violence Free Life

Get legal advice from an
Immigration lawyer.

YMCA Employment, Education
and Immigrant Services

☎ 519-752-4568

100 Water St, Brantford, ON
N3T 0P1

www.ymcahbb.ca

Free services and support
including community
information, advocacy and
referral, settlement information
and counselling, assistance with
government forms, etc.

Nova Vita Domestic Violence
Prevention Services

- Multicultural Community
Outreach Coordinator:

☎ 519-752-1005 ext 254

Kitchener-Waterloo
Multicultural Centre

☎ 519-745-2531

✉ home@kwmulticultural.ca
[https://kwmulticultural.ca/
interpreters](https://kwmulticultural.ca/interpreters)

Free interpretation services
available, in over 50 languages,
for victims of domestic violence,
sexual violence, elder abuse,
and human trafficking.

First Steps to a Violence Free Life

Things to take with you when you leave...

- driver's licence and registration
- passports, birth certificates, (yours and your children's)
- Social Insurance card
- Ontario Works identification
- immigration papers, work permits
- Certificate of Indian Status for you and your children
- medications
- school and vaccination records
- marriage certificate, separation agreement, divorce papers
- decision-making responsibilities papers
- court orders, peace bonds
- bank books or statements, cheque book
- house deed or lease agreement
- insurance papers

You cannot change your partner's behaviour. You are not responsible for their actions and you cannot control them. Your partner may be sorry for hurting you and promise to change. But eventually the abuse begins again.

People *can* change their violent behaviour, but they usually need professional help. Challenge to Change, for example (see pages 75-76), provides therapeutic counselling for abusive men.

Many abusers, however, won't admit they have a problem and will not seek help. Even if they do, it will involve changing behaviours and beliefs they have had for a long time. That does not happen easily or quickly. You need to decide what is best for you and your children both in the short and long term.

Whether you decide to leave or to stay in the relationship, or if you think you will eventually leave, but are not ready to do so yet, you should create a "safety plan". This will help you prepare for an emergency, and provide an escape plan for you and your children in case you are at risk of serious harm at the hands of your partner. You can use the suggestions on the following pages to create a personalized plan.

Your Safety Plan

While you are still living with your partner, be ready in case you need to escape in a hurry...

- Collect and hide important documents (or copies) that you will need if you leave home (see the list in the margins).
- Have ready: access to house and car keys, bank and credit cards, health cards, emergency money, and important telephone numbers.
- Pack a small "emergency" suitcase with some clothes and necessities for yourself and the children. Keep the suitcase hidden, but accessible.
- Consider keeping extra clothing, money, keys, etc. at a friend's or neighbour's home.
- Plan how you would leave the house in an emergency. Practice

the steps.

- Know the telephone numbers and addresses of the local shelter and other places you can go (e.g. friends, family members)

Meanwhile, try to make your environment as safe as possible and prepare for any event...

- Don't keep the abuse secret. Tell neighbours, friends, family members and/or co-workers who you can trust.
- Come up with a code word and give it to trusted friends, neighbours etc.; instruct them to call the police if you use that word.
- If they are old enough to understand, tell your children the code word. Teach them who to go to for help and how to call 911.
- If you sense a confrontation, try to move to areas in the home with an easy exit. Avoid being "trapped" in rooms like the kitchen, bathroom, or where there are objects that can be used as weapons.
- Save as much money as you can. Open a bank account in your own name; be sure that account statements are not mailed to your home.
- Prepare for the possibility of being on your own: learn about supports in the community, update your resume, acquire additional job skills.
- Try to stay healthy and strong. Eat properly, exercise, get enough sleep and do things that help you relax. Don't succumb to drugs and alcohol to cope with the stress. They will drain your energy and make it impossible for you to think clearly.

If you leave the relationship...

- If needed, obtain a protective court order. Keep it with you at all times and gives copies to the police and others, as required.
- Change the locks and/or install new doors, security systems, sensors, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Tell your landlord, neighbours, friends and co-workers that you are no longer living with your partner; ask them to call the police if they see him near your home or place of work.

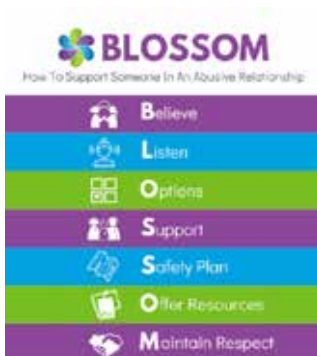
First Steps to a Violence Free Life

- recent income tax returns (yours and your partner's)
- health cards (yours and your children's)
- credit and bank cards
- emergency cash
- personal address/telephone book
- extra clothes, personal items
- children's items: diapers, bottles/feeding dishes, clothes, blankets, or favourite toys
- valuable jewellery
- cell phone and charger
- a few items of sentimental value
- It may also be important later to have your partner's SIN number, picture, birth date, work, and financial information.

First Steps to a Violence Free Life

You have a right to protect yourself and your children.

For emergency shelter, information about your options, or help in developing your safety plan, call Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services at 24-hour crisis and support line ☎ 519-752-4357 24-hour text and online chat: 519-752-4357 or www.novavita.org/chat



- Make sure teachers, daycare workers, babysitters, etc. know who may and may not retrieve your children.
- Teach your children what to do and/or who to call if they are approached by your partner.
- Take extra precautions when travelling to and from your home or workplace. Always park in well-lit areas and when in public, try to stay within sight and earshot of people, in case you need to call for help.
- Be aware of any stalking behaviour by your partner and report any incidents to the police. (See pages 13-16)

Women are most vulnerable in the weeks and months just after they leave abusive relationships. Don't ignore any threatening actions on the part of your partner and don't underestimate the danger you may be in. Be extra careful and take steps to keep yourself and your children safe.

How To Support Someone

When someone you care about is in an abusive relationship, it can be very difficult and confusing to know what you can do to support them. This **B.L.O.S.S.O.M.** acronym can help you to support a victim/survivor of abuse, especially if they're not quite ready to leave the relationship. If you need more ideas or support for yourself, you can call Nova Vita and speak with a shelter worker.


- **Believe** – Believe the victim/survivor and their experience. Believe that they might be afraid. Believe that barriers to leaving exist. Don't blame the victim/survivor for the abuse.
- **Listen** – Listen to the victim/survivor's story. You may be the first person they've told or the only one. Validate their feelings and listen without judgement.
- **Options** – Provide the person with options. Don't tell them what to do. Let them decide what's best. The victim/survivor is the expert of their own life.
- **Support** – Support the person in whatever way you can, even if it's just listening. Support the decisions they make. Focus on

their strengths.

- **Safety Plan** – Help the victim/survivor think of a safety plan “just in case”. Offer to keep info or belongings at your place, if you can. Develop a code word for help so you know to call police if they use that word.
- **Offer Resources**– Know the resources and services in your community that can help and share them with the victim/survivor when they’re ready.
- **Maintain Respect** – Be non-judgmental and respect their choices. Appreciate that this is a difficult process for the victim/survivor. Let them set the pace. Don’t expect them to leave a relationship when they’re not ready.

Nova Vita also provides support to family and friends, however our services are confidential and voluntary so we will not be able to discuss specific client information. We can however provide you with helpful tips and resources on how to be a good support system for your family or friend. Our Crisis and Support Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more information or to connect to this program:

 24-hour crisis and support line 519-752-4357
24-hour text and online chat 519-752-4357 • www.novavita.org/chat

First Steps to a Violence Free Life

Emergency Shelters

Nova Vita Domestic Violence

Prevention Services

Nova Vita operates a safe, emergency shelter for women and their children who are victims of abuse. The shelter is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Residential services include...

- safe, supportive haven for abused women and their children
- emergency transportation available
- comfortable, homelike atmosphere
- food, personal care items, clothing provided
- confidential counselling for women who have suffered physical, emotional, verbal, financial or psychological abuse
- counselling and support for children and teens provided by in-house Child and Youth Counsellors and Early Childhood Educators
- parenting support
- assistance in completing applications for decision-making responsibility, subsidized housing, financial assistance, etc.
- advocacy for clients dealing with other social service agencies
- certificate for two free hours of legal advice
- transitional housing and support services
- referrals to other counselling and community services

Nova Vita's shelter provides a secure, protective, and comforting environment for women (aged 16 and over) and their children who have experienced violence and abuse in their homes. The shelter is open to women and children of all religious, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.

All services are free of charge.

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence
Prevention Services
59 North Park Street
Brantford N3R 4J8**

**24-hour crisis and support line
☎ 519-752-4357
24-hour text and online chat:
519-752-4357 or
www.novavita.org/chat**

**☎ 519-752-1005
Fax: 519-752-7590
✉ info@novavita.org
www.novavita.org**

Nova Vita, comes from the Latin “Nova Vitae”, meaning “new life”. Nova Vita provides a range of services to victims of domestic abuse and helps them make the transition to a new, healthy life, free from violence. The shelter adheres to a strict policy of non-violence. All residents must treat one another with respect and consideration.

If you are a victim of abuse you can call the 24-hour Crisis Line, 519-752-4357, or come to the shelter at 59 North Park Street in Brantford. Even if you do not wish to stay, shelter staff can provide advice and comfort as well as information, referrals and help in creating a personalized safety plan.

Nova Vita also provides counselling to women and children who are not staying at the shelter. See pages 71-75.

SOAR Community Services, Cornerstone House

☎ 519-758-9644 • ✉ housing@soarcs.ca

Cornerstone House offers two separate programs, a 13-bed shelter and a 12-bed Transitional Housing Program.

The Shelter Program

The shelter program provides temporary housing for people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. We offer a safe and supportive co-ed environment for people between 18 and 29 years of age.

Cornerstone House shelter provides:

- Single room with a warm bed, nutritious food and supports
- Shelter for up to 90 days
- Referrals to our Transitional and Supportive Housing programs, Employment and Addictions and Mental Health services as well as community supports and services.

Station House

Station House provides a safe place to stay for young people who are

Emergency Shelters

**Ganohkwasra Family
Assault Support Services**
1781 Chiefswood Road
P.O. Box 250
Ohsweken NOA 1M0
24-hour Crisis Line:
☎ 519-445-4324
Fax: 519-445-4825
✉ [ganohkwasra@
ganohkwasra.ca](mailto:ganohkwasra@ganohkwasra.ca),
www.ganohkwasra.ca

For shelters and emergency services in other communities, consult the local telephone directory.

To get the name and telephone number for any women's shelter in Canada (during business hours), you can call:

**The National Clearinghouse on
Family Violence**
☎ 1-800-267-1291
TTY: 1-800-561-5643

Emergency Shelters

Assaulted Women's Helpline:
24-hour Crisis Line:
☎ 1-866-863-0511
www.awhl.org
Crisis counselling and referrals to shelters and services in Ontario

experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness. Station House offers a safe and a structured environment for young people between 15-17 years of age. The program will work with youth, their families and community supports to develop an individualized plan for success.

Station House offers:

- Support Planning and case management
- Support with getting back into school, social assistance applications, reconnecting with family and more
- Program leisure activities and Life skills coaching in group and individual settings
- Referrals to our Transitional and Supportive Housing programs, Employment and Addictions and Mental Health services as well as community supports and services.

We offer a full range of housing services. Please contact us for more information about our shelters and housing options to find the help that is right for you.

Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

Ganohkwasra, meaning “Love Among Us” in the Cayuga language, provides shelter and counselling support for Indigenous women, children, youth, and men who are affected by family violence and abuse.

Services are free and include...

- 24-hour Crisis Line
- walk-in services
- emergency shelter for Indigenous adults and their children
- group and individual counselling
- children's programming
- advocacy and referrals

See pages 97-98.

Shelters in Neighbouring Communities

Haldimand and
Norfolk Counties,
including Simcoe

Haldimand-Norfolk Women's Services

☎ Crisis Line: 1-800-265-8076
☎ Office: 519-805-8188

Woodstock

Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO)

☎ Crisis line also: 1-800-265-1938
Text: 519-788-9993

Cambridge/
South Dumfries

Haven House

☎ Crisis Line: (519) 653-2422
☎ Office: (519) 653-2289

Kitchener/
Waterloo

Anselma House

☎ Crisis Line: (519) 742-5894
☎ Office: (519) 741-9184

Hamilton/
Ancaster/
Stoney Creek

Inasmuch House for Women in Crisis

Text: 289-212-6399
☎ Crisis line TOLL FREE: 1-833-654-4217

Interval House of Hamilton - Wentworth

☎ Crisis Line: (905) 387-8881
☎ Office: (905) 387-9959

Martha House (Good Shepherd Women's Services)

☎ Crisis Line: (905) 523-6277
☎ Office: (905) 523-8895

Native Women's Centre

☎ Crisis Line: (905) 664-1114
☎ 1-888-308-6559 Toll Free

Burlington

Halton Women's Place

☎ Crisis Line: 905-332-7892
☎ Office: (905) 332-1200

Emergency Shelters

Police Involvement

In an emergency, call 911.

Try to speak as clearly as you can and give your name and address. Tell the dispatcher what is happening (e.g. you are being assaulted or have concerns for your safety), whether there are weapons in the home, and if anyone has been injured.

Reporting Domestic Violence

Although more people are speaking up about domestic violence and there are more options for people seeking help, domestic abuse remains an under-reported crime. Only about 25 percent of all physical and sexual assault cases are ever reported to the police.

One reason is a fear of reprisal: many are afraid that they will suffer even more severe abuse and “punishment” for calling the authorities. They may also be intimidated by the police and the court system, or feel the system doesn’t take them seriously or do enough to protect them.

The police and courts can play a critical role in your safety. They exist to protect victims and they have a duty to respond to your needs and to help you.

Why you should report assault to the police...

That call can save your life. Or it can prevent you from suffering even more severe abuse. Studies reveal that the average domestic abuse victim is assaulted several times before the police are called. For some, help comes too late. On average, every six days a woman in Canada is killed by her partner.

The police can help attend to your immediate needs: ensuring you get to a hospital, making sure you and your children get to a shelter or other place of safety, or connecting you with other supports and services in the community.

The incidents of physical abuse tend to decrease once the police have been involved. When the police lay charges or make an arrest, the chance of physical violence occurring again decreases by as much as half.

The police can enforce any court orders (for example, restraining orders and peace bonds) and charge your partner with violating those orders.

Police records are particularly important if the case goes to court. Police officers can record details about the incident and take pictures of any injuries for evidence in court.

What Happens When You Call the Police

- You need to let the police into your home. If it is a 911 call, the police will enter to ensure that everyone in the home is safe.
- If they witness an assault, or they have “reasonable grounds” to suspect that an assault has taken place, the police are required to lay a charge. Reasonable grounds would include evidence like bruises, cuts, burns, etc., broken or strewn property and other signs of a struggle, or statements from witnesses.
- The police may need to investigate further by collecting additional evidence and getting statements from both the victim and the abuser. Be sure to describe the assault in detail and show them any visible injuries you have suffered (they may take photographs or arrange to have photos taken). Provide information about other violent episodes and show any court orders you have. ***You will likely be distraught, but try to be as calm and cooperative as possible.*** The police are there to help you.
- If a charge is laid, the police will arrest the offender and take them into custody. In many cases, your partner will remain in custody for a bail hearing. After the bail hearing, they may remain in custody or be released on a Recognizance of Bail (court order). You need to advise the police where you can be contacted so that they can let you know if your partner is being released.
- If you are worried about your safety, tell the police. Conditions can be placed on your partner’s release. For instance, they may be ordered to live somewhere else and not have any contact with you, either in person or by phone, social media, or third party. If your partner violates

Police Involvement

Although the police and courts will do what they can to protect you, you must still exercise caution and good judgement.

If you believe your partner’s arrest will result in even more violence, gather the children and your “emergency” bags and go to a shelter or other safe place before they are released.

Let the police know how they can reach you so that you can be informed when your partner is released.

Be sure to document all violent episodes and unwanted contact (e.g. text messages, emails, social media, or through third party).

Police Involvement

Victim Services of Brant
344 Elgin Street (Brantford
Police Station)

During business hours

☎ 519-752-3140

After hours (see page 120 for
procedure)

☎ 519-756-7050

- Provides emotional support, practical assistance, safety planning and safety supports to individuals impacted by crime or traumatic events.
- Accompaniment to the hospital, residence, shelter or temporary accommodation (i.e. motel)
- Bail notification and court support
- System Navigation is provided for longer term support
- Services are free and confidential

Six Nations Justice - Indigenous
Victim Services

☎ 1-866-964-5920;

☎ 226-227-2192

<http://snpolice.ca/>

Service Information:

- Counselling
- Linkage and Referrals
- Accompaniment to police station, hospital, court
- Safety Planning
- Assist with filling out victim compensation forms
- Advocacy

the conditions, you must call the police again right away so that further charges can be laid.

- Charges that have been laid by the police cannot be withdrawn or changed, except by a Crown Attorney.
- If you or your children need medical attention, the police can make sure you get to the hospital and/or contact someone from Victim Services to offer assistance and support.
- If the police do not lay charges, ask them why. It is usually because there were “insufficient grounds.” That does not mean that they do not believe you. You can lay charges yourself, although it is a more involved process (see below).
- If no charges are laid, but you don’t feel safe staying at home, you can ask the police to wait while you gather some belongings and ensure you get to a safe place.
- Write down the officers’ names and badge numbers, as well as the “Incident Report Number” in case you need to follow up (you will likely receive a business card).
- If you are not happy with the way you were treated by the police, you can request to speak to the officers’ supervisor or superior.

Other Judicial Action

Laying Charges Yourself

If the police do not lay a charge against your abuser, you can lay one yourself. You need to go to court and talk to a Justice of the Peace. Provide all the necessary details and bring along any witnesses (or their written statements). After you “lay the information,” the Justice of the Peace will conduct a hearing under oath and you will be asked to present your evidence. If your partner is ordered to appear in court to answer the charges, you may be called upon to be a witness. There is no fee to speak with a Justice of the Peace.

Peace Bonds

If you are afraid that your partner will try to hurt you or your children, or destroy your property, you can talk to a Justice of the Peace about getting a peace bond — a written promise that he will “keep the peace and be of good behaviour.” You may also be asked to make the same promise. There might be other conditions

as well. A peace bond may be valid for up to 12 months. Always keep a copy with you; if your partner violates it, it is a criminal offence and you must call the police right away. Once a peace bond is issued, it can only be lifted by the courts and as long as it is in effect, all parties must abide by the conditions. Therefore, if one of the conditions is that your partner stay away from the family home, you cannot decide to let them return or visit.

Court Orders

Concerns about safety, decision-making and parenting time support and division of property can be dealt with through a court order. You can arrange for a court order by speaking with a lawyer (*see page 40-41*). You can also request an order by visiting the Family Court office and picking up the appropriate forms (including a Notice of Motion and an Affidavit). The types of orders you can request include:

- Decision-Making Responsibilities of the children
- Parenting Time to the children
- support for yourself or your children
- restraining order
- property order
- exclusive possession of the matrimonial home
- Supervised Parenting Time Orders

A **restraining order** may be issued by the court if there is reason to believe that you are at risk of harm at the hands of your spouse/partner. The order may include specific instructions, for example, that your partner must not come to your home, place of work, children's school, etc. Restraining orders can be permanent, or valid for a certain amount of time (e.g. several months).

The restraining order must be served to your partner, but you do not have to do it yourself. The court, or your lawyer, can assist you with the procedures.

Try to keep a copy of the restraining order with you at all times or at an alternate safe location. Call the police if your spouse or partner breaches the order. They may be arrested and charged.

Victim Witness Assistance Program

519-752-5725 • 80 Wellington Street, Brantford, N3T 2L9

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (V/WAP) is part of the Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division of the Ministry of the Attorney General. V/WAP provides information, assistance and support to victims after criminal charges are laid, and continue throughout the criminal court process until the case is completed. Referrals can come from a variety of sources and can be made at any time during the criminal court process. There is no cost for services.

V/WAP offers the following core client services to victims and witnesses:

- Initial and ongoing outreach
- Information about the client's case
- Information about the court process
- Obtaining court documents such as Bail Conditions or Probation Conditions
- Emotional support, including crisis intervention and debriefing
- Needs assessment and referrals to community agencies (including discussions of safety issues and referrals to agencies for comprehensive safety planning)
- Liaison with the crown and police, including providing client input
- Court preparation and orientation
- Client advocacy
- Court support and accompaniment for vulnerable clients when possible where no other suitable support person or service is available
- Information about Victim Impact Statements, and other support services available to victims of crime (e.g. Victim Support Line, Parole Board of Canada)
- Coordination of community services

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Know Your Rights!

You have the right to live your life free from violence and abuse.

Spousal assault – including physical attacks, sexual abuse or threats – is a crime. You have the right to call the police and to be protected from your abuser. You have the right, and an obligation, to ensure the safety and well-being of your children.

If you have no means of supporting yourself and your children, you have the right to financial assistance. It is your right to seek help and support from other programs and services in the community.

You and your children also have rights under the Family Law Act which covers decision-making, support and property.

If you are worried about vexatious litigations, be sure to talk to your legal counsel about this. “Vexatious litigants are generally individuals who harass others by filing frivolous lawsuits. Vexatious litigants usually advance claims or lawsuits that do not have merit, ignore previous rulings or costs orders made against them, or make multiple claims against the same parties.”

Matrimonial Property and the Indian Act – please see page 103-104.

On March 1, 2021, significant changes to the custody and access provisions of the federal Divorce Act and Ontario’s Children’s Law Reform Act came into effect. The new Act removes the terms “Custody” and “Access” and replaces them with “Parenting Order,” “Parenting Time” and “Decision-Making Responsibilities” aimed at reinforcing both parents’ responsibilities for their children and ensuring that the

Six Nations of the Grand River
Reserve Family Law Information
Centre
G.R.E.A.T Building, 2nd Floor
Ohsweken
Walk-in Service
(see page 98)

Family Law Information Centre
(FLIC)
Ontario Court of Justice
44 Queen Street
Brantford N3T 3B4
☎ 519-758-3460

Law Society Referral Service
☎ 1-855-947-5255
Please see the opposite page
- Using a Lawyer - for more
information.

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Free legal information is available at The Family Law Information Clinic and the Criminal/Family Law Information Clinic.

You may also be referred for help with family court document preparation through FLIC services. All such services are subject to a financial eligibility assessment and a legal eligibility requirement.

Contact Nova Vita at 24-hour crisis and support line ☎ 519-752-4357
24-hour text and online chat: 519-752-4357 or www.novavita.org/chat
to inquire about getting a certificate for two hours of free legal services as well as a current list of local lawyers who accept Legal Aid. Please note that this does involve a financial eligibility test.

focus is on the child. Similarly “Supervised Access” is now called “Supervised Parenting Time”.

Decision-making Responsibility of Children

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, it is vital that you take your children with you when you leave an abusive relationship. If you are forced to leave your children behind, return for them as soon as possible. You can have the police accompany you, if you are worried about your safety.

In cases of emergency, you should apply for **Temporary Decision Making and Parenting Order** for your children as soon as possible. This will be in effect until a **final Decision Making and Parenting Order** is granted by a judge. To get temporary order and to file for final legal decision-making responsibility, call 519-758-3460 or visit the Court Office at 44 Queen Street in Brantford. You will have to fill out the papers, get court dates and have the papers served to your partner. The original papers are then brought back to the courthouse. You can also apply for a **restraining order** (see page 35) at the same time.

The Family Law Information Clinic (FLIC) is held at 44 Queen Street, Brantford, every Friday and one other varying day of the week, by appointment only. Contact Court Services at 519-758-3460 to schedule an appointment.

The Criminal/Family Law Information Clinic (CLIC/FLIC) is held at 44 Queen Street, Brantford, every Monday afternoon from 1:30-4:00pm. This is a walk in service.

Information Referral Coordinator

The Information Referral Coordinator can provide you with information regarding Family Court procedures, such as access and support. **This is not legal advice.** Contact 226-920-8109 for more information.

Office of the Children’s Lawyer

If there is a dispute between parents about Decision-Making Respon-

sibilities and parenting time, a judge may call upon the Office of the Children’s Lawyer. When this happens, both parents have to fill out intake forms and the Office will appoint a social worker and/or a lawyer who will represent the child in court and make recommendations based on the child’s preferences and best interests. There is no cost to either parent.

Parenting Time Issues

If you have the decision-making responsibilities of the children, your partner still has a right to see them, unless the court has made an order for no parenting time. That usually happens only when there is strong evidence that the children are at risk of abuse or neglect by the partner. Supervised Parenting Time — where children and parents have supervised parenting time at a Ministry funded Centre (Dalhousie Place) or neutral location - may be ordered in certain cases.

Court Proceedings

- After a charge is laid, the offender has a “first appearance” in court. If they plead guilty, there is no trial but they will be sentenced. If they plead not guilty, a trial date is chosen by the judge.
- It can be several months before the trial takes place. During this time, you may feel intimidated or threatened by your partner. Document any incidents. Call the police if you believe you are in danger.
- You may have to appear in court to give evidence. You can call Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services (519-752-HELP) or Victim Services of Brant (519-752-3140) for guidance. You do not have to be represented by a lawyer.
- If your partner is found guilty, they can receive one of several sentences depending on the seriousness of the charge and factors such as a history of violence in the relationship and any previous criminal record.
- Whether or not your partner serves time in jail, their sentence may include a term of probation, which could last from six months to three years. The conditions of probation could include the following: no contact directly or indirectly; that they not come within 100

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Dalhousie Place -
Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Supervised Access Centre,
82 Charlotte Street
Brantford N3T 2X1
☎ 519-751-0466
✉ access@dalhousieplace.com

A safe, neutral place for Supervised Parenting Time between a child and a non-custodial parent. Also, supervised exchanges available for cases such as when the safety of a parent is a concern. Fee for service, based on income (See page 81).

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Aboriginal Criminal Court Work Program (ACCWP) Worker,
☎ 519-753-5408 ext. 233
(see page 100-101)

Aboriginal Combined Court Worker,
☎ 519-753-5408 ext. 227
(see page 100-101)

Crown Attorney's Office
44 Queen Street
Brantford, ON N3T 3B4
☎ 519-758-3480

metres of your home or workplace; they report to a probation officer regularly; attend a specific counselling/treatment program; that they not own or possess a weapon; and that they not use alcohol or drugs.

- You have a chance to tell the judge about the effect the violence has had on you and your family by preparing a “victim impact statement.” You can do this with help from the police or Victim Services.
- To get information about the case, you can call the court, the Crown Attorney’s Office or the police officer(s) involved.
- No contact orders, peace bonds, no access orders or requesting an ankle bracelet for the offender if released are options to discuss with legal counsel.

Using a Lawyer

If you are leaving your partner, you should consider speaking to a lawyer to find out your rights and your options. It is especially advisable to seek legal advice if you have minor children or if you are not a Canadian citizen.

A lawyer can help you:

- understand your rights under the Family Law Act
- keep you up-to-date about any new legislation or procedures affecting your situation
- write a separation agreement
- arrange for a court order

A **court order** specifies the terms of agreement between two people who have separated. In putting together your court order a lawyer may ask the judge to grant you:

- decision-making responsibilities of your children
- financial support from your partner
- your share of joint property and assets
- exclusive possession of your home

Lawyers are listed in the local telephone book. Ask family and friends to recommend lawyers they have used. Some lawyers offer a free consultation; use this brief meeting to state your expectations and to determine whether you are comfortable with the lawyer's approach. You should also find out about the fees and payment schedule.

You can also get a free 30-minute consultation by calling the **Law Society Referral Service** at **1-855-947-5255**. You will be given the name and telephone number of a lawyer or licensed paralegal in your community. You will also get a referral number which you will have to provide when you call the lawyer or paralegal to make an appointment.

When you meet with your lawyer:

- Be on time; call if you have to cancel or reschedule the appointment.
- Be prepared. Keep a file with all the necessary documents (such as financial information, copies of deeds, proof of income for yourself and your partner, any decision-making responsibility or court orders, etc.). Bring the file each time you meet with your lawyer.
- Bring a list of your questions and write down the answers as you get them. Be sure you understand the information you are given. To keep legal fees to a minimum, you should avoid any unnecessary telephone calls to your lawyer.

If you can't afford a lawyer...

Legal Aid

You may be able to get Legal Aid to pay for a lawyer if you qualify financially and your legal problem is one that Legal Aid covers (family matters, criminal charges, immigration, and refugee matters). People with no income or who are on social assistance almost always qualify financially for Legal Aid, but you may still financially qualify even if you have a job. There is also a legal eligibility requirement that a Duty Counsel can assess.

Call the toll-free Legal Aid number at 1-800-668-8258 as soon as you know you need help. Legal Aid staff will ask questions to help you find

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Mandatory Information Program

- This is a relatively new program to Ontario, designed to inform parties about the separation and/or divorce process and family court. Applicants (the person initiating the case) and Respondents (the other person) both must attend a MIP, however, the sessions are at different times. A Judge is the only person who can exempt you from the MIP, so it is very important that you let your lawyer or the judge know that you are a victim of domestic violence in order to help alleviate any safety concerns you have for yourself and/or your children.

Legal Issues & Judicial System

Legal Aid Ontario Client Service Centre

☎ 1-800-668-8258

If you would like to know the status of your application for a Legal Aid Certificate or if you are applying for one, you can follow the phone prompts. Remember, you can also contact a Transitional Support Worker at Nova Vita to apply for Legal Aid.

Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk

1100 Clarence Street S.
Suite 203

Brantford ON N3S 7N8

☎ 519-752-8669

Toll free: 1-888-341-5021

the services that best fit your legal issues. Be able to provide relevant financial information including identification (S.I.N. card, driver's license, birth certificate or landed immigrant papers), any documents relating to your case (court orders, separation agreements, etc.), proof of your current income (pay stubs, Ontario Works statement of assistance etc.), and an up-to-date bank book or statements. The staff will help you complete an application and may be able to predict right away whether you are likely to get Legal Aid. They may refer you to a FLIC or a Duty Counsel for further assistance.

Meanwhile, contact Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services at **24-hour crisis and support line (519-752-4357)** **24-hour text and online chat: 519-752-4357** or www.novavita.org/chat to receive a certificate for **two hours of free legal service** as well as a current list of local lawyers who accept Legal Aid.

Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk

The Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk can provide you with confidential legal information and legal representation for matters dealing with the following:

- tenants' rights / human rights
- welfare rights (OW)
- the Ontario Disability Program (ODSP)
- unemployment insurance (EI)
- workers' compensation (WSIB)
- Canada pension plan (CPP)
- employment/workplace issues
- legal advice on Workplace Sexual Harassment

Call to make an appointment. The services are free to those who meet eligibility requirements.

Family Court Support Worker

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' Family Court Support Program supports victims of domestic violence by facilitating their understanding of and passage through the family court system. A Family Court Support Worker provides information about the family court process, helps victims prepare for family court proceedings, refers victims to other specialized services and supports in the community, helps with safety planning, and accompanies the victim to court proceedings, where appropriate. Family court support workers also provide support related to:

- family law
- decision-making responsibility and parenting time
- child and spousal support
- separation and divorce
- child welfare (Family and Children's Services)
- restraining orders

For more information, call 519-752-1005, ext. 248.

**Brisco - Criminal Court Worker -
Combined Court Worker for Family and Youth**
☎ 519-304-7400

Housing

City of Brantford Housing and Homelessness Department
58 Dalhousie st
PO box 818
Brantford N3T 5R7
☎ 519-759-3330 ext 6331
✉ housingapplications@brantford.ca

Applications are also available from...

MP Larry Brock Office
☎ 519-754-4300
108 St. George St, Suite 3

For people leaving abusive relationships, one of the most important (and usually most challenging) tasks is finding good, affordable accommodation. Since you have to provide a fixed address in order to get help from Ontario Works, your housing needs will be a high priority. The following information can help get you started...

Subsidized Housing

Brantford Housing and Homelessness Department

The Housing and Homelessness Department oversees community-housing programs in Brantford and Brant County. There are a few different rental assistance programs available. You can apply for Rent Geared to Income Housing (RGI) where the rent in these units is set according to the income of the household (generally 30% of monthly gross income). There are also some affordable market rent units available, along with other rental supplement programs you may be able to access.

Types of housing available through the Housing and Homelessness Department include: detached and semi-detached homes, town-houses and apartment buildings for families, singles and seniors, and some units have been modified for those with physical disabilities.

Housing sites are located in Brantford, Paris, St. George, and Burford. There is a long waiting list for housing, so it is important to get your completed application submitted as soon as possible, and once you are on the waitlist it is important to make sure your contact information stays up-to-date.

You can view the housing projects the website: <https://www.brantford.ca/en/living-here/affordable-housing-options.aspx?mid=151501>

To apply for housing, email or call the Housing and Homelessness

Department at 519-759-3330 extension 6331, or email housingapplications@brantford.ca.

You can also visit the website at www.brantford.ca and click on “housing services.” The Brant(ford) Access to Housing application is a quick and easy way to apply to a large number of housing providers at the same time by completing just one application form. You will be placed on a centralized waiting list for the housing sites you select on your application, according to the date your completed application was received. Once you are on the waitlist you will be required to provide annual updates along with ensuring your contact information is correct.

Special Priority for housing is available for applicants whose personal safety, or whose family’s safety is at risk because of abuse by someone with whom they live or have recently lived with, and, from whom they intend to separate permanently, along with for Victims of Human Trafficking. This may include a sponsor, if the applicant is a sponsored immigrant.

If you think you may qualify for Special Priority status, contact the Housing Department at 519-759-3330, extension 6331, or go to the website at www.brantford.ca and click on “housing services,” or contact Nova Vita for a Special Priority information and verification form. You will need verification from a professional to complete the Special Priority Application form.

People who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, may receive Urgent Priority (one vacancy in every ten). If you think you may qualify for Urgent Priority status, contact the Housing Resource center at 1-888-621-0034.

Brantford Native Housing

BNH prides itself on providing trauma informed housing approach from a For Indigenous, By Indigenous (FIBI) framework and holds true to our mission to support the urban & rural Indigenous community with housing and programming supports. BNH offers various subsidized housing programs and supportive client services. BNH’s

Housing

MPP Will Bouma Office

☎ 519-759-0361

96 Nelson Street, Suite 101

Nova Vita Domestic Violence

Prevention Services

59 North Park Street

Ontario Works

☎ 519-759-3330

225 Colborne Street, Unit 101

Brantford ON N3T 2H2

Brantford Native Housing

(BNH) is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1986 and has been working for over 38 years to support the urban and rural homeless Indigenous populations in Brantford-Brant County. BNH has been dedicated to its mission of offering safe, dignified, and wrap around housing program options for urban and rural Indigenous peoples in our community. Please visit us online to apply to our housing or call our main office to learn more about our services.

☎ 519-756-2205;

☎ 519-756-2209

brantfordnativehousing.com

For more information, please see page 104-107.

Housing

It is discriminatory — and illegal — to refuse to rent to someone because: they are pregnant or have children, are on government assistance, have a mental or physical handicap, or because of their marital status, age, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality.

The Landlord and Tenant Act also states that a tenant may own a pet as long as it isn't a danger, doesn't cause an allergic reaction, and isn't a bother to the other tenants or the landlord.

top social services to our housed and homeless clients include but are not limited to; advocacy, CAS case involvement, ID Clinics, Tax clinics, vocational support, educational support, cultural healing and teaching, elder support, cultural activities, case management and referrals, food provisions, healthcare attending support, life skills training, mental health services, outreach and transportation.

For more information, please go to page 104-107 for more information.

Non-subsidized Housing

If you are not eligible for subsidized housing, or you do not want to wait until a unit becomes available, you can look for accommodation on your own. Homes, apartments, and flats for rent are listed in the classified section of the local newspaper and online through rental websites such as viewit.ca and kijiji.ca. The ads will provide some information – such as the number of bedrooms and the rent – but you will have to call to get more details. Specifically, you need to know...

- the location, address, and type of dwelling
- other details about the layout and room sizes
- amenities provided (e.g. laundry facilities, parking, etc.)
- amenities for children (e.g. playground, nearby park)
- what utilities are included
- if there are any special restrictions or rules
- whether there are any additional fees or charges
- when the home will be available
- whether the unit will be painted/decorated prior to moving day
- what is included (e.g. appliances, window coverings, furniture)

If a house or apartment sounds promising, make an appointment to see it. Try to do this during daylight hours. When you approach the home, look around the neighbourhood: does it seem safe? Are the homes/buildings well kept? Is it relatively quiet? Are the schools nearby? Is it on, or close

to, a bus route? Take your time when you inspect the home. Is it clean and in good repair? Does it provide adequate space for your family? Are the appliances in good shape?

If you do not have children or need much space, you might consider boarding with someone or renting a basement apartment/granny suite. Alternatively, you might want to share the space and expenses of a larger apartment or house with a roommate.

You may be restricted by money and/or time, but do your best to find a place where you and your children can be secure and comfortable and where you can feel good about re-building your life.

Signing a Lease

If you are interested in a unit, talk to the landlord about what is required. It is normal to have to pay both the first and last month's rent up front. If you can't afford to do that you may be able to get some assistance from Ontario Works (*see page 53*) or the Housing Resource Centre. The landlord may also ask you for references or want someone else to co-sign the lease with you, if you are unemployed. Once the details have been sorted out, you can arrange to move in.

You may be asked to sign a lease, obligating you to rent the unit for a minimum period (usually a year). If you want to move out before the lease expires, you might have to pay a fee or arrange to sublet the unit to someone else. The lease is a legal contract between you and your landlord. Before signing, make sure it includes...

- the full address of the unit
- a description (number of rooms, size)
- the monthly rent and when it is due
- who collects the rent
- the amount of the deposit
- a breakdown of who pays for which utilities

Housing

**SOAR Community Services -
Housing Resource Centre**
Monday- Friday,
8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Emergency Shelter Intake
Services and supports available
24/7 and 365 days a year for
individuals and/or families of
all ages.

☎ 1-888-621-0034

✉ housing@soarcs.ca

Problems with your rental home should be reported to your landlord or superintendent and repairs should be made within a few days.

If the problems are not fixed, you can call the Community Legal Clinic for advice at ☎ 519-752-8669. Problems affecting your health and safety might also be reported to the Building Department at City Hall, ☎ 519-759-4150 or Inspection Services at the Brant County Health Unit, ☎ 519-753-4937 ext. 470.

- items the landlord has agreed to fix

If there is something in the lease you don't understand, get answers before you sign. As a tenant, you have certain **rights**: to possession on the agreed upon date; to privacy; to good repair; to no more than one rent increase per year; to have visitors; and to not have personal property seized. Your **responsibilities** are to pay rent when it's due, to act responsibly, and to give written notice when you are ready to move.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the Brant Community Legal Clinic at 519-752-8669 or the Housing Resource Centre.

SOAR Community Services - Housing Resource Centre

☎ 1-888-621-0034 • ✉ housing@soarcs.ca

SOAR Community Services provides Emergency Shelter Intake Services, supporting individuals and/or families in seeking emergency housing options within the City of Brantford. Staff available 24/7 and 365 days a year, individuals and/or families of all ages will receive the following services:

- Shelter Diversion
- Support with accessing emergency housing options
- Transportation arrangements

SOAR Community Services, Housing Resource Centre supports individuals and/or families in securing permanent housing within the City of Brantford and Brant area. Staff available Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm for individuals and/or families of all ages will receive the following services:

- Support with referrals to internal and external resources including addictions and mental health services, employment services, legal clinics, identification and tax clinics, income support services, and food bank services
- Completing applications including Brant Access to Housing (BATH, Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), and the Hous-

ing Stability Fund (HSF)

- Housing Searches
- Landlord Liaison
- Education on rights and responsibilities as a tenant

SOAR Community Services, Cornerstone House

Cornerstone House offers two separate programs, a 13-bed shelter and a 12-bed Transitional Housing Program.

The Transitional Housing Program

The Transitional Housing Program provides support to people exiting the shelter system or people at risk of homelessness. Transitional Housing is a 12-bed co-ed, all-inclusive* semi-independent program for people between 18 and 29 years of age who are ready to learn the skills they need to live independently. Cornerstone Transitional Housing Program provides:

- Client driven self-identified goals, case management and life skills coaching.
- Support with getting back into school, social assistance applications, reconnecting with family and more
- Referrals to our Supportive Housing programs, Employment and Addictions and Mental Health services as well as community supports and services
- Transition planning and follow-up support when graduating from the program

**User fees may apply for certain programs and services. Please contact the Housing team for details.*

Supportive housing helps people who are at risk of homelessness, promoting self-sufficiency while preventing housing loss. People are connected to landlords and are set up in a private self-contained apartment where they are the lease holders of their unit under the residential tenancy act. The program is offered for one year with an opportunity

Housing

Redirecting Your Mail...

You can purchase a “Change of Address” kit at any Canada Post outlet or online

(www.canadapost.ca). You need to fill out a form indicating your new, as well as old, address. Select “self only” so that only mail addressed to you will be redirected. Mail will be forwarded to your new address for three, six, or twelve months with corresponding fees. You will also get change of address cards to send to anyone you wish to have your new address.

Housing

BRISC- Reaching Homes Program

food support, financial support,
homelessness outreach

☎ 519-304-7400

for extension, supporting independent sustainability of the unit. Our Youth Supportive Housing Program, Live Well Brantford Brant, is funded by the City of Brantford and supports individuals that are between the ages of 16 and 29. Our Addictions Supportive Housing Program supports individuals that are 18+ years of age and is funded through the Ministry of Health.

Supportive Housing

The Supportive Housing Program provides:

- Housing subsidies and support with first and last month's rent (if criteria is met)
- Support Planning, case management, life skills programming and Transition planning
- Rent Smart certification; providing tenants with the knowledge, skills and confidence to find and maintain good housing via a 6-week certificate program offered by our housing counsellors
- Referrals to our Employment and Addictions and Mental Health services as well as community supports and services

We offer a full range of housing services. Please contact us for more information about our shelters and housing options to find the help that is right for you.

Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance (BBHPA)

This program helps tenants who are in imminent danger of being evicted or becoming homeless because they are behind in their rent and/or utilities. This program also provides assistance for rental and utility deposits for people who are homeless and are seeking to secure permanent housing. Call 519-759-7009 for more information and eligibility criteria.

- BBHPA funds are means tested, and are provided as a grant or loan depending on income and household size.

The Outreach Program

The Outreach Program helps provide individuals and families who are homeless by helping them access emergency shelters and facilities in

the community, assisting with other basic needs, and providing referrals for income, food, permanent housing and other services.

Domestic Violence Rent Bank

The Domestic Violence Rent Bank provides loans to people who are leaving an abusive situation to establish a safe and independent residence. To qualify for the bank you must:

- be leaving an abusive situation
- be 16 years or older
- not in receipt of social assistance (if you are, please see your caseworker as you may be eligible for BBHPA)
- be able to repay the loan in 18-24 months
- be able to afford the accommodations

Utilities

Utilities include electricity (hydro), water, heat (i.e. natural gas if it isn't electric heat), telephone, and cable. If you rent, some of the utilities — for example heat, hydro, and electricity — may be included in the rental amount. If any are not, you will have to set up an account with the appropriate utility companies. There is usually a one-time activation/administration fee for new accounts and in some cases, deposits are required. The following are telephone numbers for some of the local utility firms.

Brantford Power (electricity and water in Brantford)

P.O. Box 308, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5N8

☎ 519-751-3522

www.brantfordpower.com

Minimum notice for new hook-up: 48 hours (1 week preferred)

Deposit: For new accounts or history of bad credit - two and a half times the average hydro bill at the new location (may be split up over the first four bills)

Connection Fee: \$30 (added to first bill)

Brant County Power Inc. (electricity and water in Brant County)

65 Dundas Street E., Paris N3L 3H1, ☎ 519-442-2215

www.brantcountypower.com

Housing

Minimum notice: one working day (more preferred)
Deposit: For new accounts or history of bad credit - up to two and a half times the average hydro bill at the new location
Connection Fee: \$30 (added to first bill)

Union Gas (natural gas)

☎ 1-888-774-3111 (*for gas leaks, or other emergencies:*)

☎ 1-877-969-0999)

www.uniongas.com

Minimum notice: two business days

Deposit: Depends on usage at your unit. For all new customers, may be waived if equal billing and pre-authorized payment plan options are selected.

Connection Fee: \$35 plus HST (added to first bill)

Bell Canada (telephone, internet, cable)

84 Lynden Road, Brantford

☎ 519-756-6742; www.bell.ca

Minimum notice: two business days (more preferred)

Deposit: Required if there is a history of bad credit, or if this is your first telephone line; minimum \$200

Connection Fee: Depends on product selected (e.g. internet or cable) The fee will be added to first bill. It costs \$2 a month for an unlisted number (you can also request that your name not appear on telephone display screens). Services, such as call display or call screening are also available for additional fees.

Rogers Cable (telephone, internet, cable)

290 King George Rd J1, Brantford

☎ 519-805-2928; www.rogers.com

Minimum notice: 1 week; Deposit: May be required depending on credit check.

Connection Fee: Depends on product selected (e.g. internet, cable, telephone)

A number of services/packages are available.

Financial Assistance

If you are unemployed and have no means of supporting yourself and your children, you are entitled to financial assistance. The following provides instruction on how to access some of the main sources.

Please note that application procedures change periodically; check with the appropriate service or office.

Ontario Works

Social assistance is provided through Ontario Works. To apply call

☎ 519-759-7009 or go online to www.sada.mcass.gov.on.ca

You will need to provide:

- personal information including your full name, date of birth, Social Insurance Number, health card number, etc.
- personal information for each of your children
- the address of where you will be living
- the amount you will be paying in rent
- any income you will be receiving
- Assets such as bank accounts, life insurance, etc.

You will be given the date, time, and location of an appointment with a case manager. (If you are in Brantford or Brant County, you will most likely be asked to report to the Brantford office at 225 Colborne Street Unit 101)

Assuming you qualify and depending on your rent, the ages of your children and other personal circumstances, you may qualify for approximately...

Single person	\$733 per month
Couple	\$1136 per month
Couple with 1 child	\$1191 per month

You will also receive access to drug benefits through your health card, which will cover the cost of some prescription medicine.

Ontario Works

To apply call

☎ 519-759-7009 or go online
www.sada.mcass.gov.on.ca

Brantford Office

225 Colborne Street, Unit 101

Brantford ON N3T 2H2

Open 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Monday through Friday

☎ 519-759-3330

In order to receive any type of federal or provincial supplement or benefit income, you must have filed an income tax return for the previous year.

Financial Assistance

Children's Services and Early Years

To apply for a licensed child care space:

BrantfordBrantoneList.ca

To apply for Child Care fee subsidy

missioninc.com/cso/Brantford

OR

☎ 519-759-7009 Ext. 6334

Ontario Disability Support Program, Brantford and the County of Brant

195 Henry Street,
Building 4, Unit 2, Brantford

☎ 519-756-5790

Toll Free: 1-866-729-2228

Family Responsibility Office

P.O. Box 220

Toronto, Ontario

M3M 3A3

☎ 1-800-267-4330

Fax: 416-240-2401

www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/familyresponsibility

Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance (BBHPA)

A program developed to help prevent homelessness. It assists with:

- last month's rent deposit
- rent arrears
- heat, hydro, and water arrears

If you are in need of assistance, please contact your Ontario Works case manager, ODSP case worker, or the Housing Resource Centre.

Child Care Financial Assistance

Child Care fee subsidy is financial assistance that covers all or part of the costs of child care for children up to 12 years of age in licensed programs. This includes licensed child care, licensed before and after school programs and eligible summer camps. Child Care fee subsidy may be available if you are working, going to school or have a child with special needs and if your income meets the requirements.

Families requesting Child Care fee subsidy will need to have child care or find child care through Onelist, an online centralized child care waitlist registry and information service at BrantfordBrantoneList.ca.

Ontario Disability Support Program

If you have a disability preventing you from working, you may qualify for income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program. A referral is available through Ontario Works. Call for more information on the program and how to apply.

Spousal and Child Support

If you separated from your husband/wife or common law spouse, you may be entitled to financial support for yourself (if they supported you in full or in part during the relationship) as well as support for your children. Your lawyer would apply to the court on your behalf and any decisions about support and the amount of the payments would be part of the court order (*see page 33-35, 40-41*).

Family Responsibility Office

Once an order for support is issued by the court, it is filed with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO), which processes the payments to help make sure they are paid on a regular basis. The FRO would collect the money from your spouse or partner — or from their employer — and then forward the money to you. The FRO will take various measures to collect any payments that are missed.

In order to provide the information the FRO needs to collect and forward the payments, you must fill out the forms that you receive in the “Filing Package” and send them back. You must also make sure to report any changes to this information (e.g. your partner’s address, employer or banking information; your address or banking information). Contact the FRO for more information.

Child and Family Benefits

The Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) consolidates several provincial child benefits into one benefit that is provided to low and moderate-income families with children under 18 years old. The OCB might include the Child Disability Benefit for those eligible.

If you have been receiving this benefit, make sure you report any address or banking changes to the appropriate administrative offices so that you continue to receive the funds.

If you have not received this benefit previously, but think you may be entitled, call the appropriate office to enquire or visit

www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Tax Credits

Revenue Canada issues a **Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) Credit** to individuals and families with incomes below a certain level. If you are eligible, a cheque will be sent to you four times a year. The amount of the credit will depend on your income and the number of people in your household.

Financial Assistance

Canada Child Tax Benefit
☎ 1-800-387-1193

Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families

Call the Ministry of Finance at
☎ 1-866-668-8297

Financial Assistance

GST Credit

☎ 1-800-959-1953

Employment and Social
Development Canada
Brantford Service Canada
Centre

195 Henry St, Unit 6b,
Brantford, N3S 5C9

☎ 1-800-622-6232

Financial Benefits Finder

www.canadabenefits.gc.ca

By answering a few questions, you are able to determine which benefits you may be eligible for.

You may also be entitled to other tax credits, such as Child Disability Benefit, Ontario Property or Sales Tax Credits.

To receive any of the above credits or the child and family benefits, you must file an **income tax return**, even if you were not employed during the year. If you do not receive an income tax package in the mail, you can pick one up at any post office. There are services that will complete your return for you (for a fee) or you can do it yourself; help is available through free tax clinics and telephone support lines (watch the newspaper for details).

Employment Insurance

If you have been working and have lost your job, or if you had to stop working because you were pregnant or stayed home to care for your new baby, you may be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. Employment Insurance provides you with a temporary income while you are looking for another job or until you can return to work.

For more information contact Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) at 1-800-206-7218.

To receive benefits, file your claim as soon as possible after your last day of work. You can go to the nearest ESDC office to apply. You need to bring your S.I.N. card and your Record of Employment (which you will get from your employer). Your application will be reviewed and you will have a chance to ask questions about your benefits.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board

If you have suffered injuries and incurred expenses as a result of a crime of violence (including domestic violence), you may be eligible for compensation through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB). You do not have to have laid charges against your partner. You can apply for compensation up to two years after the incident (time extensions are possible, but they are not always granted).

To get an application, call or write to the CICB. After you have applied, proving a claim can be an involved process and will include a hearing. You may want help from a lawyer. The maximum amount of compensation is \$25,000 but most applicants receive much less.

Money Matters

When resources are scarce, it can be stressful and you may be tempted to go back to your partner, even though you know that the abuse will begin again. Don't be tempted to return for the wrong reasons. Your financial situation *can* improve and you can learn how to acquire and manage the money you need for yourself and your children. In the meantime, consider the following tips...

- Avoid incurring any additional debt. It may be tempting to rely on credit cards or financing programs in order to get the things you want, but be careful. High interest rates and financing charges can have you paying a lot more than you thought for those great “sale” items.
- Get some help. There are plenty of books, articles, and workshops on managing your finances. You can also get credit counselling to help you get out from under your debts.
- Create a household budget. Know how much money you have coming in and what regular expenses you have to cover each month. Decide what you can afford to spend on food, clothing, entertainment and other expenditures. Use the form on page 129-130 to create a personalized household budget.
- Learn ways to cut back and save on purchases and expenses. *(See the next section for suggestions on where to go to get clothing, household goods and other items for little or no money.)*
- As difficult as it may be, try to save some money (even just a few dollars on a regular basis) that you can use for an unexpected expense or a special treat.

Financial Assistance

**Criminal Injuries
Compensation Board**
655 Bay Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A3
☎ 1-800-372-7463
www.cicb.gov.on.ca

Leaving an abusive relationship can be difficult on many fronts: your standard of living may drop initially. But it will be a worthwhile price to pay for your safety, well-being and self esteem. And, it doesn't have to be permanent.

You can channel your newfound confidence and energy into activities that make you happy, fulfilled and prosperous. See pages 93-97 for information on education, training and employment opportunities.

Food, Clothing and Household Needs

Community food banks provide free food or food vouchers to families in need.

You do not need to be embarrassed by having to go to a food bank — they are there to help people make ends meet.

Good Food Box Program

Local fruit and vegetables available the third week of every month for only \$12 (feeds 1-2 people) and \$17 (feeds 4-5 people).

For more information contact the Good Food Box Coordinator at:

☎ 519-751-4357 ext. 241
1100 Clarence Street,
Suite 202
Brantford, ON

Food Banks

Brantford Food Bank

☎ 519-751-4357

Community Resource Service
1100 Clarence Street South, Suite 202,
Brantford N3S 7N8 • www.crs-help.ca

Hours: Tues-Fri by appointment only

Appointment Desk: ☎ 519-751-4357 ext. 1 • Mon-Fri 9am to 4pm

- emergency food; services may be accessed once a month
- ID required for all members of the household
- bring your own shopping bags/boxes

Salvation Army - Brantford Family and Community Services

☎ 519-752-7814

33 Diana Avenue, Brantford N3T 0C2

Hours: Wed-Fri 1-3:30pm (by appointment)

- emergency food/grocery assistance
- services may be accessed once every three months

Salvation Army - Paris Family and Community Services

☎ 519-442-3432

25B Dundas Street West, Unit B, Paris, N3L 1E9

Hours: Mon. Thurs 1-3pm (walk in)

- food assistance for low income community members
- services may be accessed once every 30 days

Emergency Food Programs

Nutritious meals are available free of charge at various locations in Brantford including the following:

Alexandra Presbyterian Church: 410 Colborne Street,
☎ 519-753-1602

Brantford Blessing Centre: 7 Burnley Avenue ☎ 519-750-2073

Cedarview Evangelistic Centre: 20 Cedar Street, Paris,
☎ 519-442-4448

Friendship House: 452 Grey Street ☎ 519-753-8511

Grace Anglican Church: 4 Pearl Street ☎ 519-752-6814

Paris Presbyterian Church:
164 Grand River Street North, Paris ☎ 519-442-2842

St. Andrew's United Church: 95 Darling Street ☎ 519-752-5823

Salvation Army Booth Centre: 187 Dalhousie Street,
☎ 519-753-4193

Sydenham United Church: 120 Sydenham Street,
☎ 519-753-1248

Why Not City Brantford Youth Centre: 368 Colborne Street,
☎ 519-759-2221

Monthly food program calendars are available online by visiting the City of Brantford website at www.city.brantford.on.ca

Free Clothing

Faith Lutheran Church Clothing Depot ☎ 519-753-3833
57 Brant Ave. Brantford N3T 3G9
Clothing sold for \$2-\$5 a bag, some household items.

Community Closet - Friendship House ☎ 519-753-8511
452 Grey Street, Brantford N3S 4X8

Food, Clothing and Household Needs

The Brantford Food Bank's Christmas Baskets program helps financially stressed families in our community. Families and individuals receive grocery and toy gift cards for their household. Registration starts in November and is completed online at www.crs-help.ca. Gift cards are picked up in December. ☎ 519-751-4357 for more information.

My Girlfriend's Closet
Complete lending closet for women of all ages to celebrate a special event. Extensive collection of formal wear, purses, shoes and accessories (see p. 60).

BRISC- Reaching Homes Program: food support, financial support, homelessness outreach
☎ 519-304-7400

Food, Clothing and Household Needs

Second-hand or thrift stores sell clothing, toys, books, furniture, linens and household goods at low prices. Check the local telephone directory under “second-hand stores.”

You may also find inexpensive but good quality gently-used items at garage sales or advertised in the newspaper classifieds, Pennysaver, or buy/sell websites (e.g. www.kijiji.ca).

City of Brantford Food Bank & Food Cupboard Calendar - www.brantford.ca/residents

The Wish Closet - Major Ballachey School
105 Rawdon Street, Brantford, N3S 6C7

☎ 519-752-1643

My Girlfriend's Closet

In operation from February to June.

Contact Nicole Bauer for an appointment

✉ nicolebauer@northerndelivery.com

☎ 519-756-2670

Furniture and Household Items

St. Vincent de Paul

197 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2G8

Furniture and household items offered to people in need.

☎ 519-751-0143

Salvation Army Family Thrift Store

67 Charing Cross Street, Brantford, N3R 4K3

Clothing and household items at low prices (or for vouchers).

☎ 519-751-7692

Value Village Store

595 West Street, Brantford, N3S 7P2

Second hand clothing and household items at low prices.

☎ 519-751-4424

Health Services

Hospitals and Clinics

De dwa dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre

36 King St, Brantford ON, N3T 3C5

Please see page 107.

☎ 519-752-4340

The Brant Community Healthcare System

www.bchsys.org

Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care Team

Brantford General Hospital 519-751-5544

Willet Site, Paris 519-442-2251

Brantford General Hospital

200 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1G9

24-hour emergency care

After Hours 519-751-5544 (Auto Attendant)

☎ 519-752-7871

Willet Urgent Care Centre

238 Grand River Street North, Paris, N3L 2N7

Urgent Care Centre Hours: Mon. to Fri. 10 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Sat and Sun. 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

☎ 519-442-2251

Avenue Medical Centre

221 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3J3

☎ info@avenuemedical.ca; www.avenuemedical.ca

Hours: Mon. to Thurs. 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Fri. 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sat./Sun./Holidays 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

☎ 519-753-8666

Brantford Medical Centre Inc. -

Urgent Care Clinic

40 Shellington Place, Brantford, N3S 0C5

Hours: Mon. to Fri. 9:00 a.m - 8:00 p.m.

After hours Clinic: Mon. to Fri. 5:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m. by appointment

☎ 519-753-9581

Your family doctor can give you advice and support and keep track of your medical history—and that of your children. If you cannot get in to see your family doctor (e.g. on weekends), or you do not have a doctor, you can go to a walk-in clinic. You do not need an appointment; patients are treated on a first-come, first served basis.

Make sure you bring your health card (or your child's card if that is who needs treatment).

Health Services

Grand River Community Health Centre

A non-profit, primary health care provider for vulnerable community members. Service is provided to:

- Those who do not have health care providers
- Those that are homeless or under-housed
- Seniors and youth
- Those with mental health or addiction issues

363 Colborne Street
Brantford, N3S 3N2
☎ 519-754-0777
✉ info@grchc.ca
www.grandriverchc.ca

Mental Health Crisis Counselor Mon - Fri. 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Must be a registered patient of the Family Health Organization.

Brantford West Medical Centre Walk-in Clinic/ Family Practice

☎ 519-304-9200

164 Colborne Street West #2A Brantford, ON N3T 2L1

www.brantfordclinic.com

Hours: Mon. to Fri. 10:00am – 7:00pm
Sat./Sun. 10:00am – 3:00pm

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk RAAM Clinic

☎ 519-758-0008 or 1-866-987-7226 (RAAM)

✉ support@raamclinics.com

What is RAAM?

A multi-disciplinary team of Doctors, Psychiatrists, Nurse Practitioners, Mental Health Counsellor, Concurrent Disorders clinicians, and Indigenous Counsellor Case Managers work together to (RAAM) clinics provide holistic, medication-assisted treatment for individuals with substance use disorders.

Services at the RAAM Clinic

- Treatment for drug and alcohol cravings.
- Treatment for managing withdrawal symptoms
- Concurrent Disorders Counselling
- Referrals to Community Programs
- Mental Health and Addiction System Navigation
- Case Management
- Peer Support
- Culturally Sensitive Counselling
- Addiction Specialist Psychiatric Consultation
- Suboxone and Methadone Prescribing
- Mental Health Medications
- Education on Overdose Prevention

Brantford

- 320 Colborne Street E., Brantford ON N3S 3N1
- Tuesdays: 9:00am to 6:00pm, Wednesdays: 9:00am to 1:00pm, Fridays: 9:00am to 3:00pm

Dunnville

- 140 Broad Street E., Dunnville, ON N1A 2H2 (above Hauser's Pharmacy)
- Mondays: 9:00am - 3:00pm

Simcoe

- 32 Robinson Street, Simcoe, ON N3Y 1W4
- Thursdays: 9:00am -3:00pm

Virtual Clinic

- www.raamclinics.com
- Monday 9:00 AM-5:00PM, Tuesdays 9:00AM-3:00PM, Wednesdays 11:00AM-3:00PM, Thursday 9:00AM-3:00PM, Friday 9:00AM-3:00PM.

Health Information Lines

Health Information Line

☎ 519-753-4937 ext. 259

Public health nurses at the Brant County Health Unit are available during business hours to answer health/medical questions and direct callers to community resources as needed.

Integrated Mental Health Crisis Service

☎ 519-759-7188

☎ 1-866-811-7188

24-hour crisis line; operated by SOAR Community Services and works in partnership with Woodview Children's Mental Health and Autism Services, the Brant Community Health Care System, and the Alzheimer Society of Brant.

Poison Information Centre

☎ 1-800-268-9017

Telehealth Ontario

☎ 1-866-797-0000

TTY: 1-866-797-0007

Free, confidential health information available by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A registered nurse will answer your questions, as-

Health Services

To get a health card, call
Service Ontario at
☎ 1-888-376-5197

For information about health
insurance, call the Info Line at
☎ 1-866-532-3161.
TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Service Ontario

325A West Street, Unit 103
Brantford, Ontario, N3R 3V6

Mon-Weds. & Fri.

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Thurs. 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Sat 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

Health Services

Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit, & Metis) Pregnancy, Prenatal, and Postnatal Care Services, please see page 109-110.

Brant County Health Unit
194 Terrace Hill Street
Brantford, N3R 1G7
☎ 519-753-4937
www.bchu.org

For at least 25% of domestic violence victims, the assaults begin during pregnancy.

You may feel particularly vulnerable at this stage, and think you cannot leave the relationship while you are pregnant. But physical abuse usually gets worse and you may be putting yourself and your baby at risk.

Call Nova Vita's
24-hour crisis and support line
☎ 519-752-4357
24-hour text and online
chat: 519-752-4357 or
www.novavita.org/chat for
information and confidential
support.

Discuss your symptoms and advise if you should go to the doctor, clinic, or hospital. You do not need your OHIP number.

Choosing a Doctor, Dentist or Specialist

A family doctor who you trust and can confide in can play a significant role in helping you — and your children — stay safe and healthy. Ask people whose opinion you trust to recommend a doctor, dentist, or other healthcare professional. You will have to call to find out if the doctor is taking new patients.

You can search online for family physicians: www.cpsso.on.ca

Fee for Service/OHIP Coverage

Although there may be some medical services or procedures that require a separate fee, most doctors' fees are covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). You should have a separate health card for yourself and for each of your children. You will be required to show these cards every time you access any health service (i.e. hospital, clinic, doctor, specialist).

If you are on social assistance through Ontario Works (*see page 53*), you will also receive access to drug benefits through your health card which will cover the cost of prescription medicine for yourself and your children. Most dental services, however, are **not** covered by OHIP. If you have a dental plan, or are covered under your spouse's or someone else's plan, some or all of the fees may be covered. Otherwise, you will have to pay for service. Call around to compare fees.

First Nation and Inuit Health Branch, please see page 109-110.

Financial Aid for Children's Dental Services

If your child requires dental work and you cannot afford the fees, you may be able to get financial assistance through the Brant County Health Unit's CINOT (Children In Need Of Treatment) program. Call 519 753-4937 ext. 450 for more information.

Brant County Health Unit

The Brant County Health Unit works to deliver programs and services to help improve the health and well-being of the community.

Programs and services includes:

- Testing for various diseases
- Quit smoking programs
- Working with parents on nutrition, safety, growth and development, and more
- Immunizations and vaccines
- Dental care
- Inspecting local businesses to help reduce and prevent illness
- Encouraging physical activity in schools, workplaces, seniors' groups, and more

Pregnancy, Prenatal and Postnatal Care

Pregnancy Resource Centre

466 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3S 3N7

Please contact for more information.

☎ 519-756-3787

Community Midwives of Brantford

217 Terrace Hill Street, Suite 100, Brantford, N3R 1G8

Provides personal care during pregnancy, labour, and birth.

Follow up care of the mother and her baby for the first six weeks of life.

☎ 519-751-6444

Brant County Health Unit

Family Line

194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford N3R 1G7

☎ 519-753-4937

ext. 464

Prenatal Education Classes

ext. 463

A four session program. Call or visit the website for the course outline and registration information.

Healthy Babies, Healthy Children

ext. 482

Healthy Babies, Healthy Children provides information, suggestions and

Health Services

Call 211

211 is the information and referral service that provides the people of Ontario with reliable information on community and social services.

When you dial the 211 hotline, you are connected with a Certified Information and Referral Specialist who has been trained to assess your needs, answer your questions accurately, and advise you about the services and programs that are best for you and your loved ones. Calls to 211 are anonymous and confidential. Your personal identifying information will not be shared with any other parties. Many of the calls received deal with sensitive topics. Your right to privacy is taken very seriously.
www.211ontario.ca

support to expecting parents and parents with children up to school entry. Services include nutrition programs, breastfeeding support, public health nurse, home visits, parenting workshops, children's health and safety, immunization, toilet training and much more.

Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) **ext. 463**

A prenatal and postnatal program for teens is available involving weekly drop-in sessions.

Family Drop in Program **ext. 464**

A well baby/well child clinic held at various locations in Brantford. Parents can meet with a public health nurse to discuss questions or concerns they might have about their child's growth and development. Call for dates, times, and locations.

Brantford General Hospital —

Pre-Birth Service

☎ 519-752-7871

200 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1C8

Pre-birth visit with a registered nurse to help women prepare for a birth and hospital stay and to get information and access to resources that meets the individual needs of the expectant mother.

Family Resource Centre

☎ 519-753-8681 ext. 208

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

Postnatal groups, including groups for teen parents.

Six Nations Health Services, please see page 109-110.

Mental Health, Special Needs, Respite and Homecare

Rosewood House

☎ 519-750-1547 • Fax: 519-750-1753

www.rosewoodhouse.on.ca

42 Nelson Street, Brantford, Ontario N3T 2M8

Rosewood House is a 40-bed co-ed emergency shelter which runs 24/7. Services can be offered to anyone who is 18 and over and is experiencing homelessness. Some supports and services that can be offered on site such as meals, showers, laundry facilities and 24hr on-site staff support.

Brant County Preschool Speech & Language System

☎ 519-753-3153

39 Mount Pleasant Street, Brantford N3T 1S7

<https://www.lansdownecentre.ca/services>

Speech and Language therapy focuses on helping infants and children develop their communication skills. Communication includes speech sound production, understanding and producing language and using language to interact with others.

Brant Mental Health Crisis Response System

☎ 519-751-5530

200 Terrace Hill Street, E Wing Main, Brantford, N3R 1G9

www.bchsys.org

Services for people 16 and over experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis
☎ 24-hour crisis line 519-759-7188/
1-866-811-7188.

Free mental health crisis counselling available Monday to Friday.
Patients may be self-referred or referred by a physician.

Brantwood Residential Development Centre

☎ 519-753-2658

25 Bell Lane, Brantford, N3T 1E1

✉ info@brantwood.ca; www.brantwood.ca

Residential care and support for individuals who are developmentally and physically challenged.

Canadian Mental Health Association

☎ 519-752-2998

44 King Street, Suite 203, Brantford, N3T 3C7

✉ mail@cmhabhn.ca, <https://bhn.cmha.ca>

Case management, supported housing, court support and diversion, Crisis and Safe beds, groups, social/recreation program, life skills groups, peer support, family education & support, mental health promotion and public education activities targeted at adults with mental illness and their families.

Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Health Services

Canadian Red Cross Society

☎ 519-753-4189

25 William Street, Brantford, N3T 3K3

www.redcross.ca

Meals On Wheels and other home support programs for the elderly and/or physically challenged. Transportation program available to those needing help getting to in-town, county and out-of-town medical appointments.

Community Living Brant

☎ 519-756-2662

366 Dalhousie Street, Brantford, N3S 3W2

www.clbrant.com

Offers support and services to individuals with developmental disabilities and to their families.

Contact Brant

☎ 519-758-8228

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

www.contactbrant.net

Contact Brant is the first place to contact for information on community services. Contact Brant is the Access agency for children and youth services, ages 0 – 18. Families and professionals can call Contact Brant directly for information or to access services.

Contact Brant completes the intake and referral to support families not having to repeat their story to each service provider. Agencies that Contact Brant provides Access services for include: Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services, SOAR Community Services, CPRI, and other regional resources for children's mental health services; and Family and Children's Services, Willowbridge Community Services, Lansdowne Children's Centre, CPRI, DSO, and other regional resources for children's developmental and Autism services.

Contact Brant is the Lead Service Coordination Agency for Brant, working collaboratively with community partners involved in serving children, youth and their families to ensure a coordinated service plan.

Contact Brant manages the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Information Database, www.info-bhn.ca which provides an up-to-date on-line resource on social, health and governments services and supports including health

services, newcomer/immigrants services, foodbanks and meal programs, housing, seniors services and homecare, government social assistance, parenting and family programs, children and youth services, disability and support programs. 211 Ontario and the Healthline use these records to provide their services: call 2-1-1 24/7, 356 days per year and receive information in over 150 languages, or visit the Healthline website.

Start with Contact Brant.

Willowbridge Community Services

📞 **519-753-4173**

Fax: 519-753-9287

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

✉️ office@willowbridge.ca; www.willowbridge.ca

To live a good life, every individual should be able to count on having friendships, community, and support. Here at Willowbridge Community Services, we offer a range of programs to individuals seeking counselling and services for individuals living with a developmental disability. Whether your goal is to make new friends, improve old relationships, connect to services, or build new skills, our professional staff can help you reach your goals. New referrals for developmental services are made through Developmental Services Ontario (1-877-376-4674). To book a counselling appointment, please go to: <https://launch.caredove.com/service/eventspage/24773> or call our Warm Welcome Team at: 519-753-4173

Please be advised the Family Counselling Centre of Brant has changed its name to Willowbridge Community Services.

Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand Brant Community Care Access Centre Brant:

📞 **310-2222 (no area code required)**

Toll-free: 📞 **1-800-810-0000**

TTY: 711

✉️ access@hccontario.ca (**IMPORTANT: DO NOT send any personal health information**).

195 Henry Street, Unit 4, Building 4, Brantford, N3S 5C9

www.healthcareathome.ca

Health Services

Provides assistance in accessing government-funded home care services and long-term care homes. Available health care services include: physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, nursing, personal support, nutritional counselling, respite care, medical supplies and equipment, social work, and child and family services.

Lansdowne Children's Centre

☎ 519-753-3153/3154

39 Mount Pleasant Street, Brantford, N3T 1S7

✉ info@lansdownecc.com; www.lansdownecentre.ca

Lansdowne Children's Centre supports children and youth with physical, developmental or communication needs, and their families. Services offered include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language therapy, social work, infant and child development, early integration, autism intervention and support services including respite care, special services at home, Kids' Country Inn, Every Kid Counts, recreation/camps and alternate care.

Brantford Lift

☎ 519-752-4444 ext. 1

✉ brantfordlift@brantford.ca; www.brantfordlift.ca

Offers pre-arranged door-to-door service for physically challenged and elderly residents in Brantford and Brant County. Fee for service.

Participation House

☎ 519-756-1430

10 Bell Lane, Brantford, ON N3T 5W5

www.pssbrantford.org/

Residential programs and services for adults with physical disabilities, as well as individuals (including seniors) with chronic health concerns.

Counselling and Support

Counselling/Transitional Support for Women

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Transitional Support

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 221

59 North Park Street, Brantford, N3R 4J8

✉ info@novavita.org; www.novavita.org

Help for women who want to leave an abusive relationship and establish violence free lives in the community. Free services, available to women 16 and over in Brantford and Brant County, include: home visits, court support and information on the legal system, informal support, assistance with obtaining identification (birth certificates, health cards, etc.), referrals to a wide range of community services and resources including transitional housing.

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Community Counselling Program

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 221

www.novavita.org

Group and individual counselling for women (16 years and over) who are in, or have been in, an abusive relationship. Sessions are conducted in a safe, supportive, confidential environment. Counselling services are free; free transportation and child care may be available. Call for more information and to arrange for an intake appointment.

Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

☎ 519-751-1164

www.sacbrant.ca

Counselling and support services for people 16 and over who are survivors of sexual violence, including survivors of child sexual abuse. Call for more information about services. The 24-hour Crisis and Support Line, 519-751-3471, is available to survivors of sexual violence as well as to their friends and family members.

Many counselling agencies offer marriage or couples counselling. This is not recommended for people who are still at risk of physical abuse.

You should go for counselling alone. Your counsellor should be supportive and empathetic and have an understanding of domestic violence.

There are several counselling, support, and addictions services for First Nations and Indigenous peoples. Please see Indigenous Services for Survivors of Domestic and Family Violence pages 97-114.

Counselling and Support

SOAR Community Services Healthy Relationships: The activities in the Healthy Relationships program help young women identify and differentiate between healthy, unhealthy, and abusive relationships. The primary focus of the program is to develop self-respect, responsibility, and appropriate problem solving skills while empowering young women to create, maintain, and improve their relationships in a positive way. The program is 10 sessions in length and is offered one to two times a week based on the age of participants. Each session is 1.5 hours in length. The initial steps are referral, intake, assessment, and a pre-test. Ages 12-18, Court or Probation Referrals only. Please contact Lorna Sowa at ☎ 519-756-7665 ext 320

Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

☎ 519-445-4324

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free counselling for women, children, and men who have been abused. Counselling and therapy are based on holistic programs and a variety of energy-based techniques are used.

Willowbridge Community Services

☎ 519-753-4173

Fax: 519-753-9287

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

✉ office@willowbridge.ca; www.willowbridge.ca

Willowbridge offers free and confidential counselling support for adults and children (7+) who have experienced physical, emotional abuse or sexual assault, including childhood sexual abuse. We believe everyone deserves a life free of violence. Counselling services include: stabilization support, safety planning, trauma processing, mental health and addictions counselling; as well as counselling for a range of additional issues such as: depression, low self-esteem, anxiety or anger that may result from the violence. Groups and workshops are also available. Please be advised the Family Counselling Centre of Brant has changed its name to Willowbridge Community Services.

Counselling for Children & Adolescents

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 221

www.novavita.org

Free program for children/adolescents 6 to 16 to help them cope with the violence they have witnessed/experienced. Concurrently, the mothers attend separate sessions to discuss the impact of domestic violence on children and learn parenting/coping strategies. (See page 21)

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Youth Services

☎ 519-752-1005 ext 221

www.novavita.org

Youth Services offers counselling support services to *males between the ages of 13 to 18. These services provide mentorship and positive *male role modeling to youth who have experienced or witnessed violence.

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Family Programs

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 239

www.novavita.org

Programs to support parents and children experiencing conflict where the parents are actively involved in parenting their children and are either living in the same home, are separated, or divorced. Programs may run concurrently or at different times throughout the year. Parents are also supported in creating respectful adult relationships with a cooperative, positive co-parenting approach with their children.

Contact Brant for Children's and

Developmental Services

☎ 519-758-8228

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

www.contactbrant.net

See page 68 for a description of services.

Ganohkwasra Family Assault

Support Services

☎ 519-445-4324

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, N0A 1M0

www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free counselling for children and youth who have been abused and/or witnessed family violence at home.

SOAR Community Services

☎ 519-759-8830

133 Elgin Street, Brantford, N3T 5P9

www.soarcs.ca

Offers various support programs for children, adolescents and their parents, including mental health, addictions and justice. See also the Child/Parent Resources section (page 76-77) for program descriptions.

Counselling and Support

Counselling services listed in this handbook are free, or have fees that are geared to income. For additional services, check the local telephone directory under "Marriage, Family and Individual Counselling."

SOAR Community Services

Mental Health Crisis Support and Walk-In Clinic

Our Crisis Counsellors can support you 24 hours a day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year. Call the Crisis Phone Line at

☎ 519-759-7188 or 1-866-811-7188

We also offer Mental Health Walk-In Clinic:

225 Fairview Dr., from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday.

Taylor the Turtle: My Body Belongs to Me!!

Taylor the Turtle is a sexual abuse prevention program that uses human rights based language and concepts of emotional literacy in an interactive, fun, accessible manner. The resources of the program are set up in a way that they can be used by parents, or lead by one of the Sexual Assault Centre workers in individual or group settings. The program and all supporting resources are free.

Materials available: Stickers, info sheets, pamphlets, colouring pages, magnets, tattoos, and bookmarks

Services offered: Free presentations to any community group. Ages 2 to parents. Presentations can include games, crafts, and stories. Resource packages can be created and mailed/picked up. Taylor the Turtle mascot is available for community events.

Please visit the website to download materials, to hear Taylor's song, or watch Taylor's animation.

www.taylorsrights.ca

c/o Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

Office ☎ : 519-751-1164 Fax: 519-751-4187

24 hr ☎ : 519-751-3471

Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services ☎ 519-752-5308

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

www.woodview.ca

Individual and family counselling, and group counselling for children and youth. Referrals are made through Contact Brant (see page 81 & 87).

Counselling for Men

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Individual Counselling for Men

☎ 519-752-1005 ext 242

www.novavita.org

With this program we are able to provide supportive counselling, resources, referrals, and safety planning to men who have experienced violence. *includes: individuals that identify as transgendered, non-binary and gender non-conforming.

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Challenge to Change

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 255

www.novavita.org

Group counselling for men who want to stop their violent and abusive behaviour towards their partners. The program challenges participants to take responsibility for their actions, learn how to control and change their abusive behaviour and to respect their families and themselves. Participants are expected to complete at least 12 weeks in the program. Individual counselling may be available.

Fees are charged for services, and are based on a sliding scale.

Clients may be self-referred and can call 519-752-1005 ext. 255 to arrange for an intake appointment.

A guiding principal of Challenge to Change is to plan for the safety of the participants' partners. All clients must agree to take part in the **Partner Check** program, which involves counsellors contacting the partner to provide information and to assess their personal safety.

Men's Support Services

☎ 519-752-1005 ext 242 www.novavita.org

This service provides support, counselling, resources, and referrals to men who have experienced domestic violence and are needing support, have used abusive behaviours towards their partner, feel they are at risk of using abusive behaviours towards their partner, or those looking for support to help develop and maintain healthy relationships through self-improvement. These services include our S.C.R.I.B.E group program, youth services, and counselling for men who are victims of domestic violence.

Counselling and
Support

Counselling and Support

The location of churches and other places of worship are listed in the local telephone directory. In addition to their faith services, many churches host social activities and/or support groups.

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

SCRIBE

☎ 519-752-1005 ext. 255

Self.Character.Relationship.Interaction.Boundaries.Esteem

This 12 week program is for individuals who are looking for self-improvement and are eager to explore healthy ways to communicate as well as to examine their behaviour in relation to personal values and beliefs, in their intimate relationships.

There is a fee for this programs, based on a sliding scale. Please call intake for more information.

Ganohkwasra Family Assault

Support Services

☎ 519-445-4324

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free counselling for men who are abusive. Therapy is based on holistic programs, combined with mainstream counselling techniques, to help participants accept responsibility for their total being.

Support Services and Groups

There are many programs and special interest groups for people seeking help, information, and support to deal with specific problems and issues. The following is a cross section of what is available in Brantford and Brant County. To find out about other groups/support services, ask your doctor, check the local telephone directory, go to <http://haldimand.cioc.ca> or www.211.ca, or consult the *Brantford & Brant County Community Guide*, published annually by the *Brantford Expositor*.

Indigenous & First Nations Counselling, Support Services and Groups information, please see pages 97-114.

SOAR Community Services' Addictions and

Mental Health Programs

☎ 519-754-0253

24/7 Crisis Line: 519-759-7188; 1-866-811-7188

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3

Free, confidential substance abuse, gambling, and concurrent disorders counselling services. Services include: assessment and treatment plan-

ning, individual and/or group counselling and family support to youth, adults, Indigenous, expectant mothers and mothers with young children. A smoking cessation program is also available.

Alcoholics Anonymous

☎ 519-752-5981

www.branterieaa.org

Support for individuals trying to stay sober. Call for meeting times and locations.

Al-Anon, Alateen, Adult Children of Alcoholics

☎ 519-752-5981

Support for relatives and friends of alcoholics.

Individual, Couple, and Family Counselling Willowbridge Community Services

☎ 519-753-4173

Fax: 519-753-9287

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

✉ office@willowbridge.ca; www.willowbridge.ca

Confidential counselling solutions are offered to individuals, couples, children, families and workplaces. The purpose of talking with a counsellor is to help make sense of what is going on in one's life. We can help with issues such as abuse, anger, depression, anxiety, family violence, grief, parenting, relationship difficulties, separation and divorce, sexual assault (women or men), stress, and trauma. Fee for service based on client's ability to pay. *Please be advised the Family Counselling Centre of Brant has changed its name to Willowbridge Community Services.*

St. Joseph's Health Care Eating Disorders Program

☎ 905-522-1155 ext. 33433

100 West 5th Street, Hamilton, L8P 3R2

Support and information for people suffering from an eating disorder. Call for information.

Counselling and Support

Support Link provides at-risk women with free airtime and cell phones pre-programmed to dial 911.

YMCA Immigrant Settlement Services

☎ 519-752-4568

www.ymcahbb.ca

YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford

100 Water St, Brantford, ON N3T 0P1

Free settlement services for newcomers to Canada – including community information, assistance with government forms, job search assistance, etc. Translation and interpretation referral services also available (a fee may apply).

Narcotics Anonymous

☎ 519-756-9408

www.orscna.org

A support group for individuals struggling with addictions. Be sure to check with the number listed above to confirm meeting times and dates. Local meetings are held at various locations throughout the city of Brantford and the county of Brant.

New Directions Group

☎ 519-445-2947/1-877-650-9700

Six Nations Health Services

1769 Chiefswood Road, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

www.snhs.ca

Counselling and information on alcohol and drug abuse is provided. Other programs include community health services and youth programs.

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline

☎ 1-888-230-3505

www.problemgamblinghelpline.ca

Anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's gambling can call anytime; helpline available 24 hours a day.

Smokers' Helpline

☎ 1-877-513-5333

www.smokershelpline.ca

Victim Services of Brant

☎ 519-752-3140

Brantford Police Station, 344 Elgin Street, Brantford, N3T 5T3

 vsb@victimservicesbrant.on.ca

Victim Services of Brant is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to help anyone impacted by a criminal act or traumatic event. Services are available to help lessen the impact of the crime or traumatic

event by providing understanding, support and practical assistance to address the individuals immediate needs. Clients will be provided system navigation and referrals for longer term support. (After business hours, call Victim Services at 519-756-7050, see page 122 for further details.)

Counselling and Support

Victim Services of Brant operates a program to help women at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Child / Parent Resources

Parenting—a job that can be difficult in the best of times—is especially stressful and exhausting for people who are in, or who are leaving, an abusive relationship. In addition to coping with a range of emotions (fear, anxiety, guilt, shame, etc.), these parents need to protect, nurture, and reassure children who are themselves overwhelmed by anxieties and the changes in their lives. The following organizations can provide help, advice, and/or relief. *(For medical/health and counselling services, see the preceding sections.)*

Child / Youth Services

Child and Family Services of Grand Erie

☎ 519-753-8681

☎ 1-888-753-8681

70 Chatham Street, P.O. Box 774, Brantford, N3T 5R7

www.cfsge.ca

Indigenous Services

☎ 519-753-8681/1-888-753-8681

Family Resource Centre

☎ 519-753-8681 ext. 208

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

The Child and Family Services of Grand Erie (CFSGE) is devoted to promoting the safety and well-being of children through a range of programs and services including assessments, protection services, child welfare, residential services, foster care, adoption and family support. Case workers at the CFSGE will work with you to plan for the safety of your children. Depending on your needs, solutions can range from counselling on improving the family environment, to temporary care arrangements for your children.

Big Brothers Big Sisters

☎ 519-759-3222

127 Charing Cross Street, Brantford, N3R 2J2, ☎ 1-800-268-8784

www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

Support, friendship and guidance for boys and girls.

Contact Brant

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

www.contactbrant.net

See page 68 for a description of services.

☎ 519-758-8228

Dalhousie Place

Supervised Parenting Time

When parents separate, access visits with children may be a problem. For various reasons the Decision- Making Parent may have concerns regarding the Access Parent having unsupervised visits with their children. As well, difficulties sometimes arise between the parents at the time of exchange of the children.

☎ 519-751-0466

The Supervised Access Centre offers separated families a way to deal with some of these problems. The Centre also provides a large, child friendly play centre where visits and exchanges can take place under the supervision of trained staff and volunteers.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL

- There is a history of/or allegations of partner abuse and/or where there is an ongoing threat of abuse.
- There is a history of/or allegations of physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse of the child where there is fear of such abuse occurring.
- There are concerns regarding parenting ability which pose a threat to the safety of the child if contact were not supervised.
- The non-residential parent has been absent from the child for a lengthy period of time and the opportunity to re-establish a relationship in a safe, supportive setting is required.
- The non-residential party has a history of a drug or an alcohol problem or is a person with a mental health disability.
- There are concerns regarding abduction or a threat of abduction.
- There is unresolved conflict between both parties.
- Continuity of access has been problematic or denied.

More information www.dalhousieplace.com

Child/Parent Resources

Child/Parent Resources

Launch Pad and Parachute Program

Contact: Jane Flinders or Sharon Brooks

☎ 519-755-9482

✉ info@kidscanfly.ca

Free taxi service available for program participants in need:

Brant Taxi

☎ 519-752-1010

Postpartum Depression Telephone Support Line

☎ 1-855-764-8552

Mon. to Fri. 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Free and confidential peer to peer support available to answer questions about postpartum depression or anxiety. Women are paired with a peer mentor who has recovered, and are welcome to call while they are pregnant with their concerns.

Note: This is a support line, not a crisis line.

K.A.T.C.H. “Kids and the changing home”

☎ 519-751-0466 ext. 114

A FREE SIX WEEK PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

(Ages 6-12) LIVING WITH SEPARATION & DIVORCE

To provide a safe, and child-focused setting for children utilizing a Recreational Therapy approach to learn coping skills while dealing with conflict in separation and divorce. In separated families, the children often experience emotions such as fear, sadness, guilt and anxiety. This group will provide coping skills and information around families and feelings. To help children better understand various family dynamics and their own situation. To provide a take home tool kit with coping skills around stress and conflict. More information on the website www.dalhousieplace.com or call 519-751-0466 or email access@dalhousieplace.com

PARENTING THROUGH SEPARATION

Information sessions provided for parents, focusing on how children are impacted following parental separation and during the decision-making and parenting time. Strategies are discussed to help keep children out of parental conflict and to minimize the stress that separation issues may have on children. Each parent attends a separate once only, 2 hour information session. Facilitators share information, lead a discussion and present the “kids the experts on divorce” DVD. A comprehensive resource package is provided, as well as a certificate of completion for parents attending. Call to pre-register and for next session start date

Kid’s Help Phone

☎ 1-800-668-6868

Confidential support and help for children.

Kids Can Fly

☎ 519-448-1713

Kids Can Fly is a registered charity that supports early learning and parenting. We base what we do on the research of the late Dr. Fraser Mustard who discovered that the first six years of life set the stage for lifelong learning, health and well-being. We also believe that parents are a child’s first and most important teachers and therefore we strive to help provide nurturing and learning for parents so they can do the very best job possible.

Child/Parent Resources

Launch Pad: a free drop-in program for parents with children 0-5 years. Located at Graham Bell-Victoria School (56 Grand Street), it is open Tues. - Thurs. from 9:00 a.m. - noon. Parents interact with their child with a variety of activities including creative art, music and story time, and dramatic play. Contact Jane, 519-755-9482, or email info@kidscafly.ca for more information. Closed during holidays, P.D. days, and snow days.

Parachute Program: Free drop-in program for moms who are having challenges with transitioning to parenting (for babies under 12 months). This may include postpartum depression, lack of family support, fussy baby, sleep exhaustion, etc. Come for free, confidential support.

- Brantford Public Library, 173 Colborne Street, 3rd floor - Mon. 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
- T B Costain Centre, 16 Morrell Street - Weds. 1:30 -3:00 p.m.

Roots of Empathy: program that reduces bullying and aggression in elementary schools.

Imagination Library: provides a free book in the mail each month to registered children from birth to age 5 who reside in the Brantford-Brant area. Visit www.kidscafly.ca to learn how to register or be placed on the waitlist.
Questions: admin@kidscafly.ca

Taylor the Turtle: My Body Belongs to Me!!

Taylor the Turtle is a sexual abuse prevention program that uses human rights based language and concepts of emotional literacy in an interactive, fun, accessible manner. The resources of the program are set up in a way that they can be used by parents, or lead by one of the Sexual Assault Centre workers in individual or group settings. The program and all supporting resources are free.

Materials available: Stickers, info sheets, pamphlets, colouring pages, magnets, tattoos, and bookmarks

Services offered: Free presentations to any community group.

BRISC

- **Wasa-Nabin Youth Program**
☎ 519-304-7400
- **Denide'osra (building healthy relationships)**
☎ 519-304-7400

Child/Parent Resources

Ages 2 to parents. Presentations can include games, crafts and stories. Resource packages can be created and mailed/picked up. Taylor the Turtle mascot is available for community events.

Please visit the website to download materials, to hear Taylor's song, or watch Taylor's animation

www.taylorsrights.ca

c/o Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

Office ☎ : 519-751-1164 Fax: 519-751-4187

24 hr ☎ : 519-751-3471

Why Not Youth Centres

☎ 519-759-2221

368 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3S 3N3

www.whynotyouthcentres.com

Programs and initiatives for youth including assistance with housing, food and clothing; rehabilitation; life skills, computer skills, literacy skills and job readiness training; drop-in programs for youth and families; programs to promote creative expression in art, music, drama and photography. Locations in St. George and Paris as well.

SOAR Community Services

☎ 519-759-8830

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3 or

Contact Brant at 519-758-8228

Our Crisis Counsellors can support you 24 hours a day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year. Call the Crisis Phone Line at:

☎ 519-759-7188 or 1 (866) 811-7188

We also offer Mental Health Walk-In Clinic: 225 Fairview Dr., from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday.

Crisis Counsellors use Brief Solution Focused Therapy and Crisis Intervention to support people who call or walk-in to access service.

Crisis Counsellors offer:

- Safety planning
- Coping skills / self-soothing management
- Connection to our Addiction Services
- Referrals to our COAST program
- Connections to other community services as required
- Naloxone Kits and Harm Reduction Supplies

Your Children's Education

Despite the changes and emotional turmoil that your family may be experiencing, it is important to try and maintain as normal a schedule for your children as possible. Except in special circumstances, school age children should continue to go to school and participate in regular activities. If you are a newcomer to Brantford or Brant County, or if you move to a new residence, you can contact the head office of the school boards to find out the closest school and any registration requirements (such as birth certificates and immunization records).

Grand Erie District School Board

☎ 519-756-6301

349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, N3T 5V3

www.granderie.ca

For the name and address of the school closest to you ask for extension 281150.

Brant Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board

☎ 519-756-6369

322 Fairview Drive, Brantford, N3T 5M8

www.bhncdsb.ca

For the name and address of the school closest to you, call the board office or the Transportation Department, 519-751-7532.

It is up to you to decide if you want to tell your child's teacher or principal about the situation at home. Special school board resources (such as counselling by a Child and Youth Worker or Social Worker) may be recommended. These services are free and would only be provided to your child with your consent.

Parent Support

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

☎ 519-759-3330

Child Care and Early Learning, City of Brantford

30 Bell Lane, P.O. Box 25040 Brantford, N3T 6K5

📧 earlyon@eycbrant.ca; <http://earlyonbrantfordbrant.ca/>

EarlyON centres offer free programs in Brantford and Brant County for caregivers and children from birth to 6 years old. You can learn and play with your child, meet people and get advice.

Child/Parent Resources

Child/Parent Resources

Visit calendar.brantford.ca/earlyoncentre to view the EarlyON calendar.

Family Gatherings

Gahwajiya:de' Detenatgwa'ta' - Family Gatherings are EarlyON Child and Family programs based on cultural needs providing parents/ caregivers and children with programming that reflect the Haudenosaunee culture and incorporate Mohawk and Cayuga languages. Family Gatherings are respectful and nurturing environments for children, families and caregivers to interact with opportunities to build positive relationships through belonging, well-being, and engagement and incorporating Haudenosaunee culture, languages and awareness. Family Gatherings are located beside Harmony Square and rotate through other EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

The school should have copies of any court orders restricting access to your children by your partner.

EarlyON Community Living Brant ☎ 519-759-3833

EarlyON CFSGE ☎ 519-753-8681 ext. 2218

Family Gatherings, Indigenous Led EarlyON Centres and programs, ☎ 519-720-0488

All EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and program details can be found at: <https://calendar.brantford.ca/earlyoncentre>

Brant County Health Unit

☎ 519-753-4937

194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1G7

Parenting workshops, children's health and safety, immunization, nutrition, car seat safety clinics, information, support and referrals.

Snugglebugs

☎ 519-753-8681 ext 310

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

Hours: Mon. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

An interactive program for parents and babies up to 18 months. This is an interactive program for families with babies up to 12 months, and are currently receiving services from CFSGE. Please call 519-753-8681 ext. 2218 for more information

Six Nations Child Care Resource Centre

☎ 519-445-2565

18 Stoneridge Circle, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

Family based agency that offers various programs for people of all ages. Drop in programs: Monday and Friday mornings, and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, both in the morning and in the afternoon. Also offered: adult workshops, adult skill based activities for parents, breakfast program, supper program, dad's program, Sister's Circle, preschool program, and a language preschool program. Visit www.sixnations.ca or call for more information.

Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services ☎ 519-752-5308

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

www.woodview.ca

Parenting groups, home-based services.

Children's Services and Early Years

The Children's Services and Early Years department provides support to families in the City of Brantford and the County of Brant by offering a series of services including help finding quality child care, applying for child care subsidy to reduce costs, connecting families to free, quality drop-in programs and supporting children with special needs in licensed child care.

Child Care Fee Subsidy

To apply for a licensed child care space:

BrantfordBrantoneList.ca

To apply for Child Care fee subsidy

missioninc.com/cso/Brantford

OR

☎ 519-759-7009 Ext. 6334

EarlyON Child and Family Centres ☎ 519-759-3833

30 Bell Lane, P.O. BOX 25040, Brantford, N3T 6K5

📧 earlyon@eycbrant.ca; <http://earlyonbrantfordbrant.ca/>

EarlyON centres offer free programs in Brantford and Brant County for caregivers and children from birth to 6 years old. You can learn and play with your child, meet people and get advice.

EarlyON Child and Family Centre programs are operated by one of the following service providers:

Child/Parent Resources

Child care and babysitting fees can take a significant bite out your household budget. You might consider alternatives such as finding another parent with whom you can take turns watching the kids.

Child/Parent Resources

EarlyON Community Living Brant 📞 519-759-3833

EarlyON CFSGE 📞 519-753-8681 ext. 2218

Family Gatherings, Indigenous Led EarlyON Centres and programs,
📞 519-720-0488

All EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and program details can be found at: <https://calendar.brantford.ca/earlyoncentreFamilyGatherings>

Gahwajiya:de' Detenatgwa'ta' - Family Gatherings are EarlyON Child and Family programs based on cultural needs providing parents/ caregivers and children with programming that reflect the Haudenosaunee culture and incorporate Mohawk and Cayuga languages.

Family Gatherings are respectful and nurturing environments for children, families and caregivers to interact with opportunities to build positive relationships through belonging, well-being, and engagement and incorporating Haudenosaunee culture, languages and awareness.

Family Gatherings are located beside Harmony Square and rotate through other EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

2SLGBTQIA+ Groups/Support for Youth & Adults

The Bridge

✉ thebridgebrant@gmail.com

www.thebridgebrant.com

Facebook: @TheBridgeBrantford

Twitter: @TheBridgeBrant1

The Bridge is a group that works to identify and address inequalities that are experienced by the diverse sexual and gender identified communities within Brant County. The Bridge promotes the importance of acceptance and inclusion in an effort to eliminate stigma, bullying, and discrimination at all levels of community life.

WorQshop: Building Safer Spaces

✉ info@worqshop.ca

www.worqshop.ca

Instagram: @worqshopbuildingsaferspaces

Facebook: worqshopbuildingsaferspaces

WorQshop offers training and consultations services with the goal of creating safer and inclusive health care services, social services and workplaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Brantford Pride Committee

✉ brantfordpride@gmail.com

www.brantfordpride.ca


Facebook: @BtfdPride

Twitter: @BrantfordPride

Brantford Pride is an organization consisting of community members committed to promoting peace, diversity, and equality for the 2SLGBTQIA+ population in Brantford and Brant County. For a calendar of events, visit the above website.

2SLGBTQIA+ Groups/ Support for Youth & Adults

County of Brant Pride

 brantpride@gmail.com
Facebook: countyofbrantpride
Instagram: @brantpride

County of Brant Pride is a group of community members promoting 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion and events within the County of Brant. Visit their pages for more information.

Queer Joy

Contact: @queerjoybrantford
Instagram: @queerjoybrantford


Queer Joy hosts local Brantford and County of Brant events designed to bring together and celebrate 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

2SLGBTQIA+ Parents & Allies Group

 thebridgebrant@gmail.com
www.thebridgebrant.com
Facebook: @TheBridgeBrantford
Twitter: @TheBridgeBrant1


This group meets monthly to support parents and allies of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. The group provides information about 2SLGBTQIA+ people, their needs and experiences, as well as a space for parents and allies to talk.

Grand River Community Health Centre Counselling/Medical Services (free)

 519-754-0777


363 Colborne Street Brantford ON, N3S 3N2
www.grandriverchc.ca

Gender Journey Brant

 519-754-0777 ext. 254


 genderjourneybrant@gmail.com

LGBTQ+ Coffee Night + Social

 519-754-0777 ext. 254

 cfrancis@grchc.ca

ROCQY Rural Ontario Community of Queer Youth


 rocyteam@gmail.com

Facebook: /ROCQY.rural.ontario.community.of.queer.youth

Instagram: @rocqy.rural.ont.queer.youth

Rural Ontario Community of Queer Youth a grassroots organization uniting 2SLGBTQ+ youth from across Ontario.


The Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Youth Line

 1-800-268-9688

www.youthline.ca

For ages 26 and under

Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

 519-751-3471

24-hour Crisis and Support Line

 sexualassaultcentre@sacbrant.ca

2SLGBTQIA+ Groups/ Support for Youth & Adults

Training, Education and Employment

Before you embark on a job search or decide to change careers, take some time to think about your interests, strengths, skills, and your short and long term goals.

This may a good time to make changes that will ensure a brighter future and security for yourself and your children.

Information about courses and programs at colleges, universities and training institutions may be available at the library, through Internet websites, or by calling to request a course catalogue.

As you begin to put some of the crucial elements in place — housing, financial aid, and other basic needs — you may start thinking about other goals and ambitions: such as a job or career. Being able to earn your own money will not only let you enjoy a better standard of living, it will help boost your self- confidence and enable you to regain control of your own life.

If you have never worked outside the home, or if it has been some time since you did, you might want to improve your job skills or develop new ones. You may be interested in going back to school or enrolling in a training program. You might want to start by talking to someone who can advise you about career/job options.

The following agencies and community supports can help you get started in your search for a fulfilling and rewarding new position.

Education, Training and Skills Upgrading

Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (G.E.L.A)

📞 519-753-6079

365 Rawdon Street, Brantford, N3S 6J3

www.granderie.ca

Secondary school courses, night school, summer school, independent learning courses (18+), customer service training program for secondary school credit, P.S.W. (personal support worker) courses and adult literacy program. Fees and/or deposits required for some courses. An education assessment is required prior to starting any program. A fee is required prior to receiving an educational assessment. For English-as-a-Second-Language courses, call 519-759-3170.

LEAP (Learning, Earning And Parenting)

📞 519-759-3330

An Ontario Works program for people between the ages of 16 to

25 with children who want to complete their high school education, gain valuable work and enhance parenting skills. Participants in the program may qualify for financial assistance for child care, transportation, tutoring, school supplies, clothing and other expenses. Ask to speak with a LEAP counsellor at Ontario Works.

Brant Skills Centre

225 Fairview Drive, Brantford, N3R 7E3


www.brantskillscentre.org

 info@brantskillscentre.org


Adults and older youth can improve their reading, writing, math, and computer skills through learning opportunities with trained instructors and volunteer tutors.

Anderson College of Health, Business and Technology

39 King George Road, Brantford, ON N3R 5K2

 1.833.787.1885

Six Nations Polytechnic


 519-445-0023/1-877-284-2194

2160 Fourth Line, P.O. Box 700, Ohsweken, N0A 1M0

411 Elgin St. Brantford, ON N3S 7P5

Degree, diploma and certificate programs delivered from an Indigenous perspective. Also, high school credit courses, G.E.D. preparation, employment preparation and free computer workshops.

BRISC – Apatisiwin Emplment and Training


 519-304-7400

Wilfred Laurier University, Brantford

73 George Street, Brantford, N3T 2Y3

A range of programs and courses are available. Visit the campus office or call for information.

Conestoga College

 519-756-8228 ext. 5491

St. Andrew's Building

95 Darling Street, Brantford, N3T 2K7

Provides diploma programs in Business and in Health Office Administration, a graduate certificate program in Human Resources Management, and certifiicate programs in Medical Office Practice as well as in General Arts and Science.

Training, Education and Employment

To apply for government financial assistance (OSAP) to attend a post- secondary institution, visit the Financial Aid office/department at the college, university or training school you plan to attend.

Job postings are published in the classified section of newspapers and online. Small organizations, retail outlets and restaurants may post job vacancies on-site.

Tell as many people as you can — family, friends, former co-workers etc. — that you are looking for work and ask them to let you know if they learn of any openings.

Training, Education and Employment

Have up-to-date, typewritten copies of your resume available so you can leave them with prospective employers.

If you will be working you will need a S.I.N. (Social Insurance Number) card. If you do not have one you can apply in person at the nearest Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) office. For more information call ☎ 1-800-622-6232 and follow the prompts.

Public libraries offer information on virtually any topic, including resume writing, career development and job search tips.

Employment Counselling and Support

Canadian Mental Health Association ☎ 519-752-2998

44 King Street, Suite 203, Brantford, N3T 3C7

✉ mail@cmhabhn.ca; <https://bhn.cmha.ca>

Vocational Support Services assists persons with a serious mental illness to obtain and maintain employment, education, and volunteer opportunities. Vocational workers in the Works For Me and Sustainable Employment Initiative programs are available to help clients establish their vocational goals, using a psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery approach. Services include: Assessment and individual goal-setting, support, development of return to work action plans, including resume writing and interview skills, education about mental illness and symptom management, linkage to other community resources, and advocacy.

H.O.P.E Helping Ourselves Through Peer Support and Employment

☎ 519-751-1694

116 Dalhousie Street, Suite 201, Brantford, N3T 2J3

A mental health consumer/survivor initiative providing peer support to adults living with mental illness by trained volunteers and paid peer workers, bags of personal need items to mental health inpatients, and work opportunities in an alternative business, QuickKlean.

CareerLink Adult Education Division of GELA

☎ 519-759-1412

1 Market Street, Upper Level, Brantford, N3T 6C8

www.careerlink.ca; ✉ careerlink@granderie.ca

- There are three full-time OSSD classes and two part-time
- Night school and summer school are available
- Free literacy and numeracy classes
- Free ability assessment and workshops

SOAR Community Services, Brant Employment Centre (Employment Ontario)

☎ 519-756-7665

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3

Full range of employment services for all ages - from career planning, skills assessments, resume building, interview skills - to assisted job search and job placements. A fully equipped Resource Centre is available for self-directed job search with the help of trained and professional staff.

Community Resource Service

☎ 519-751-4357 ext. 312

Community Employment Service

1100 Clarence Street S. Suite 102. Open Monday-Friday 8:30-12pm; 1pm-4:30pm excluding holidays.

✉ info@crs-help.ca, www.crs-help.ca

Free employment counselling and career preparation. Services include career exploration, assistance with creating or updating a resume, job interview tips, job search strategies, suggestions for upgrading your skills, information on training/education opportunities and how to access funding programs. Resources for job seekers include computers, Internet access, fax machines, photocopiers, newspapers and other job listings.

Advocacy services also available at the 1100 Clarence Street South location. Free assistance and representation for people experiencing problems with Employment Insurance, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Ontario Works, Employment Standards, Canada Pension Plan, Ontario Human Rights, and the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Ontario Works Brant

☎ 519-759-3330

225 Colborne Street Unit 101, Brantford, N3T 2H2

If you are receiving social assistance through Ontario Works, your case worker can help you access employment supports such as education and skills training programs, and employment related expenses.

Training, Education and Employment

All of the libraries in Brantford and Brant County (see page 115-116) have Internet-ready computers which you can use free of charge to search for information or visit websites, including the on-line job listings in this book.

Resources and Job Listings

CareerLink

☎ 519-759-1412

1 Market Square, Upper Level, Brantford, N3T 6C8

✉ careerlink@granderie.ca; www.careerlink.ca

The public has free access to the resource room which includes college and university calendars, industrial and community directories and various job search materials. CareerLink conducts aptitude, skill and various other assessments.

Indigenous Services for Survivors of Domestic and Family Violence

Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

24 Hour Crisis Line: 519-445-4324

www.ganohkwasra.com

1781 Chiefswood Road PO Box 250, Ohsweken, ON, NOA 1M0

Ganohkwasra, meaning “Love Among Us” in the Cayuga language, provides shelter, counselling and support for women, men, youth and children who are seeking safety from violence.

Services are free and include:

- 24-Hour Support Line
- Walk-in services
- 24/7 shelter support
- Emergency shelter for women or men and their children
- Transitional support services
- Next Step Housing
- Youth Lodge
- Group and individual counselling
- Community education
- Children and Youth programming
- Anti-Human Trafficking program providing safe and supportive environment for youth ages 12-25 who are at risk, are victims or have been victims of human trafficking/sexual exploitation
- Advocacy and referrals
- Sexual assault support and counselling

Free counselling for women and men who have been impacted family or intimate partner violence, intergenerational trauma and/or childhood traumas as part of the healing process.

Counselling and therapy use a variety of therapeutic modalities, integrating traditional teachings.

Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve Family Law Information Centre. A Family Law and Criminal Law Information Centre on Six Nations of the Grand River reserve. The centre offers information and legal advice, duty counsel services and limited certificates to eligible clients. Centre will operate Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the G.R.E.A.T. building in Ohsweken.

Indigenous Services

Six Nations Justice - Indigenous Victim Services

During business hours:

☎ 226-227-2192;

After business hours.: Six

Nations Crisis line at

☎ 1-866-445-2204

<http://snpolice.ca/>

Family Law Information Centre (FLIC)

Ontario Court of Justice

44 Queen Street

Brantford N3T 3B4

☎ 519-758-3460

Legal Aid Ontario

Toll-free ☎ 1-800-668-8258

For faster service call before

11:00 AM or after 3:00 PM

www.legalaid.on.ca

Free counselling for children and youth who have been impacted by family violence and/or traumatic events.

Free counselling for women and men who are abusive. Therapy is based on holistic programs, combined with mainstream counselling techniques help participants accept responsibility for their total being.

BRISC - (Brant Region Indigenous Service Center)

148 Colborne Street (Unit 3 & 4)

Brantford, ON N3T 2G6

☎ 519-304-7400

www.brisfc.org

BRISC Apatisiwin.

Apatisiwin is swampy Cree word for “Employment, training and jobs” The vision of the Apatisiwin Program is the Urban Indigenous people gain education, experience, and skills to achieve and maintain meaningful employment.

BRISC Adenide’osra (the act of kindness) (Children who witness violence).

The program is to promote positive development and life choices in Urban Indigenous children who have experienced violence. To teach children and adults ages 7 plus to recognize violence and to understand their behavior and behaviors of other. Also to understand the impact of violence on mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Enhance and encourage healthy relationships.

BRISC Indigenous Court Program

The program is to assist Urban Indigenous adults and youth who have been charged with criminal offense under the Criminal Code of Canada. The program supports separating couples, and parents involved with child welfare matters. Advocates, creates awareness and appreciation of values, customs, language, and socio-economic conditions.

BRISC Cultural Resource Program

The program facilitates increased access to culture for the Urban Indigenous children, youth, and families. Promotes positive Indig-

enous identity, healthy relationships, while fostering connections and cultural understanding between the Friendship center and the broader community.

BRISC Senior's Program

New program call 519-304-7400

BRISC Niminwendan

This program provides wholistic and culturally based supports to be responsive to the needs of mental health and addictions for Urban Indigenous individuals and families. The program promotes healthy lifestyles, promotes, achieves, and maintain healthy relationships. Provides cultural knowledge to foster self-respect and identity.

BRISC Intergenerational Strength and Resiliency Program

The program will work to ensure that intergenerational traumas caused by Indian Residential Schools are addressed through strength-based approaches, promoting healthy lifestyles, improving individual and family emotional well-being, and providing access to cultural knowledge fostering self-respect and identity.

BRISC Reaching Home Program

The program supports Urban Indigenous children, youth, adults, and families with: Food support, financial assistance, homelessness outreach.

BRISC Wasa-Nabin Youth Program

The program is grounded in cultural traditions providing a sense of belonging for each child and youth, while supporting individual goals to enhance the child or youth in the areas they request support, supports social skills, educational interventions, individuals with disabilities, violence prevention, justice supports, children in care of CAS, 2SLGBTQ+ supports, and positive nutrition and physical activity promotion.

BRISC Outreach Worker

Part time outreach worker assisting all programs. Outreach to the community providing food every Monday 6-8 downtown.

Indigenous Services

Community Legal Clinic -

Brant, Haldimand,

Norfolk

**1100 Clarence Street South,
Suite 203,**

Brantford, N3S 7N8

☎ 519-752-8669

Toll free: 1-888-341-5021

www.bhnlegalclinic.ca

Indigenous Services

BRISC Combined Court Worker

The Combined Court Worker Program is to reduce the over representation of Indigenous peoples in the justice system by assisting accused offenders, as well as family court and child services involved families. To better understand their rights, options, and responsibility's. The program is designed to help to navigate Indigenous youth, adults, and families through the court process with the guidance of a Court Worker.

BRISC Indigenous Healing and Wellness Program

The Healing and Wellness program focus is on improving Indigenous health and the reduction of family violence which is achieved through the provision of services for those most at risk, notably women and children. To ensure delivery of programs and services are culturally appropriate and address prevention, aftercare, and concurrent impacts of family violence on health.

Six Nations Justice - Indigenous Victim Services

☎ **1-866-964-5920; 226-227-2192**

During business hours: 226-227-2192; After business hours.: Six Nations Crisis line at 1 866-445-2204

<http://snpolice.ca/>

Call to make a referral at 226-227-2192.

Indigenous Victim Services (IVS) include assistance with:

- Sudden death in the family
- Car accidents
- Suicides
- Family violence
- Assaults
- House fires
- Homicides
- Human Trafficking
- Breaking and Enter
- Robberies etc.

IVS can assist with:

- Referrals to other services

- Alert buttons/phones
- Advocacy
- Court support and linkage
- Damage to property, within a limit
- On scene support

Youth Lodge – “My Home on Turtle Island” ☎ 519-445-0216

Call directly for intake.

35 Sunrise Court, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, ON, NOA 1M0

The Youth Lodge is an eight bed co-ed mental health treatment residence for youth ages 12-18. It provides a safe place for youth to live and work on healing and life skills while receiving counselling and support

Hotinohsioni Inc. | Brantford Native Housing

318 Colborne Street East, Brantford, N3S 3M9

www.brantfordnativehousing.com

☎ 519-756-2205

Since its inception in 1986, Hotinohsioni Inc., also known as Brantford Native Housing (BNH), has been committed to providing safe, respectful, and comprehensive housing solutions for all Indigenous peoples in both urban and rural Brantford-Brant County. Presently, BNH offers transitional and affordable supportive housing options for women-led households, with or without children. With a focus on cultural and gender sensitivity appropriateness, BNH aims to ensure that these households receive tailored programming that supports their stabilization, healing, and development within the community, empowering them to achieve their personal growth goals.

Six Nations Restorative Justice Program

The restorative Justice program provides victims with opportunities to have a voice and active role in deciding how the harm caused by crime can be addressed. They can meet with supportive, trained facilitators to talk about what happened and to explore reparation options.

Indigenous Services

Indigenous Services

Population we serve:

Indigenous individuals (12 years and up).

Pre-charge and post charge matters.

Status and non – status

We serve individuals residing on and off reserve, Brantford, Hamilton and Cayuga

Office ☎ : 226-227-2192 ext 3287 or 4462

✉ snrjw1@sixnations.ca, snrjw2@sixnations.ca

<https://sixnationsjustice.com>



Six Nations Indigenous Victim Services

✉ ivsvqrp@sixnations.ca

Office ☎ : 226-227-2192

Direct Line ☎ : 1-866-964-5920

Crisis Line - After hours (after 4:30 pm): 1-866-445-2204

<https://sixnationsjustice.com>

Indigenous Victims Services (IVS) assist individuals who have been hurt by crime or other social tragedy. IVS also provides victim-witness assistance programming, counselling, Linkage to referrals, accompaniment to police station, hospital, court, safety planning, assist with filling out victim compensation forms, advocacy and Victim Quick response applications (VQRP +) for short term financial support for damages.

Legal Issues

Indigenous Criminal Court Work Program (ACCWP)

Contact: Criminal Court Worker ☎ 519-753-5408 ext 228

The goal of the ACCWP is to assist Indigenous adults (18 yrs +) accused to better understand their rights, options and responsibilities when appearing before the criminal courts. The main objectives of the program are: to facilitate and enhance access to justice; to ensure Indigenous people involved in the criminal justice system understand their rights, responsibilities and options; and to ensure that the individual receives fair and legal representation.

Aboriginal Family/Youth Courtwork Program (AFCWP)

Contact: Family/Youth Court Worker ☎ 519-753-5408 ext 227

The goals of the AFCWP are to assist Indigenous youth and families in contact with family, child protection and youth court to better understand their options, responsibilities and rights when appearing before the courts. This would include the following court proceedings: Families and individuals involved in child protection issues, separating couples, all persons involved in family court matters and Accused Person's 12-17 years of age on the date of the offence, not charged as an Adult under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Matrimonial Property & the Indian Act

What is Matrimonial Property?

Matrimonial property is commonly defined as the family home that a married couple resides in, although legally the term covers all items of material value acquired during the marriage. Matrimonial property includes real property, which is immovable, such as a house or land, and personal property, which describes those items that can easily be moved and are not attached to the land, such as clothing, vehicles, income, and savings. Throughout the literature, *matrimonial real property* refers to the family home and land, and the *matrimonial property regime* refers to the laws or legislation regarding marital property.

What happens if a status band member divorces on reserve?

There is currently no applicable legislation or guidelines for the division of matrimonial property under the Indian Act or by virtue of case law. Each marriage or common-law relationship is treated individually on a case-by-case basis. The presumption that each partner receives 50% of the proceeds from the marriage (or matrimonial property) applies only off reserve to recognized family relationships. Of course, each spouse may negotiate an agreement with his or her former spouse privately. Note that each band or First Nation may have created their own matrimonial property guidelines or bylaws, and this must be researched in each unique case.

What happens if a status band member divorces off reserve?

If the spouses are unable to reach an agreement, the province or

territory where the relationship ends will govern the distribution of matrimonial property. Generally speaking, the assumption is that each spouse should receive 50% of the proceeds of the relationship. Other factors governing the division of matrimonial property include whether each spouse is working, the duration of the relationship, any previous understandings or agreements, and the total assets and loans or debts. Sometimes custody of any children from the relationship may determine who resides in the family home. This is not an exhaustive list of all the factors that may be relevant for the distribution of matrimonial property. Anyone seeking a divorce should obtain legal advice.

What if a traditional marriage or Indigenous customary marriage ends off reserve?

If a couple is unable to reach an agreement, they would have to apply to the courts to recognize the traditional marriage as being the equivalent of a legally recognized marriage and request the provincial or territorial legislation to apply to the relationship.

Does the Indian Act address divorces on reserve?

No. Most First Nations are still subject to the Indian Act on reserve land. There are no provisions in the Indian Act to deal with spousal property rights during a marriage or upon separation or divorce. This means that there is uncertainty and often no laws or guidelines for spouses upon separation or divorce while on reserve. The Indian Act falls under federal legislation, s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867* (“the Constitution”), and therefore there are no federal provisions relating to divorce, custody, or matrimonial property because under section 92(13) of the Constitution, family law was deemed the exclusive domain of the provincial and territorial governments. While every province and territory has family legislation that applies off reserve, there are almost no provisions on reserve land in the event of a divorce or separation. This gap in the matrimonial property regime has detrimentally affected Indigenous communities.

Housing

Brantford Native Housing

Since its establishment in 1986, Hotinohsioni Inc. also known as Brantford Native Housing (BNH) has been dedicated to its mission of offering

safe, dignified, and wrap around housing program options for urban and rural Indigenous peoples. BNH, prides itself on providing trauma informed housing approach from a For Indigenous, By Indigenous (FIBI) framework and holds true to our mission to support the urban & rural Indigenous community in Brantford and Brant County, ON.

Brantford Native Housing directly services our urban and rural homeless/houseless community members and urban and rural Indigenous households that are at risk of experiencing homelessness. At BNH we work to get individuals off the streets and directly into transitional supportive housing. Once placed in one of our transitional units, our Housing Outreach Workers work with clients to set their own goals based on the journey that they would like to navigate. BNH believes that our housing is not linear and our community needs cultural healing and programming that enables them to feel a sense of belonging in the community. Brantford Native Housing walks with tenants on their journey. We support and guide households and individuals through the housing continuum, facilitate one's transition from homelessness into housing stability and help individuals and households retain their acquired living conditions.

BNH currently has over 120 properties with over 180 scattered housing units and roughly over 269 beds currently in service through our agency. Our various housing facilities range from some small-scale housing (1-2 units) to medium scale (17-unit) housing facilities. BNH works to service and meet the needs of our community as we offer second stage housing opportunities for men, women, youth, seniors, and families. BNH offers a variety of housing options including transitional, supportive, affordable and market level housing units through its portfolio. It is our goal to continue providing housing opportunities to our community from a culturally sensitive lens and a non-linear housing continuum for our community.

BNH services individuals and households with supportive and culturally appropriate programming supports, and diverse of trauma informed healing supports and housing. Urban and rural Indigenous households currently serviced through our agency range from small families (1-2 members), families (2-7 members), single individuals,

Indigenous Services

seniors and older adults, people with disabilities, non-gender conforming individuals and/or members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. At this time, BNH has the following models of housing in operation to support our various housing needs:

Transitional Housing – Brantford Native Housing offers transitional housing, up to 1 year, to Indigenous families, men, women, and youth. Currently BNH operates 4 transitional homes which are specific to age, gender, and family dynamic. The transitional house program was designed to support Indigenous individuals experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. BNH supports the residents in specific areas of need while residing at the house through structured programming, plans of care, and cultural initiatives.

Affordable Housing – Following transitional housing, Brantford Native Housing works to move individuals and households into our agency offered affordable housing units. BNH provides long-term and deeply affordable rental housing to our housed and programming serviced clients. Currently, BNH provides affordable housing units to seniors, households with disabilities, single parent families, single individuals and large families.

Market Level Housing – BNH has market level housing units in our housing portfolio that are in service and offered to clients who are looking for rental units alongside our agency's programming supports. These units are made available to clients who are stable to transition from our affordable housing units. Additionally, where individuals do not wish to transition into one of BNH's market level units, BNH supports clients in sourcing and finding other market rental housing opportunities in our urban and rural Brantford-Brant County community.

If you are interested in any of our affordable or transitional housing programs above, please contact our main office or visit us online:

Hotinohsioni Inc. | Brantford Native Housing
318 Colborne Street East, Brantford, N3S 3M9
www.brantfordnativehousing.com
☎ 519-756-2205

Indigenous Services

Financial Assistance

Ontario Works

225 Colborne Street, Unit 101
Brantford ON N3T 2H2

Social assistance is provided through Ontario Works. To apply call ☎ 519-759-7009 or go online to www.sada.mcsc.gov.on.ca. You will need to provide: personal information including your full name, date of birth, Social Insurance Number, health card number, etc.; personal information for each of your children; the address of where you will be living; the amount you will be paying in rent; any income you will be receiving.

You will be given the date, time and location of an appointment with a case manager. (If you are in Brantford or Brant County, you will most likely be asked to report to the Brantford office at 225 Colborne Street Unit 101)

You will also have access to drug benefits through your health card, which will cover the cost of some prescription medicine.

Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance

BBHPA was developed to help prevent homelessness. It assists with: last month's rent deposit; rent arrears; and heat, hydro, and water arrears. If you are in need of assistance, please contact your Ontario Works case manager, ODSP case worker, or the Housing Resource Centre.

Indigenous Services

Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

☎ 519-445-4324

www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free Counselling for women who have been abused.

Counselling and therapy are based on holistic programs and a variety of techniques are used.

Ontario Works, to apply call 519-759-7009 or go online to www.sada.mcscs.gov.on.ca

Brantford Office 225 Colborne St Unit 101 Open 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

☎ 519-759-3330

Assistance With Child Care Costs

Child Care fee subsidy is financial assistance that covers all or part of the costs of child care for children up to 12 years of age in licensed programs. This includes licensed child care, licensed before and after school programs and eligible summer camps. Child Care fee subsidy may be available if you are working, going to school or have a child with special needs and if your income meets the requirements.

Families requesting Child Care fee subsidy will need to have child care or find child care through Onelist, an online centralized child care waitlist registry and information service at BrantfordBrantonelist.ca.

Ontario Disability Support Program

If you have a disability preventing you from working, you may qualify for income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program. A referral is available through Ontario Works. Call for more information on the program and how to apply.

Spousal and Child Support

If you separated from your husband or common law spouse, you may be entitled to financial support for yourself (if he supported you in full or in part during the relationship) as well as support for your children. Your lawyer would apply to the court on your behalf and any decisions about support and the amount of the payments would be part of the court order.

Family Responsibility Office

Once an order for support is issued by the court, it is filed with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO), which processes the payments to help make sure they are paid on a regular basis. The FRO would collect the money from your husband or partner — or from his employer — and then forward the money to you. The FRO will take various measures to collect any payments that are missed. In order to provide

the information the FRO needs to collect and forward the payments, you must fill out the forms that you receive in the “Filing Package” and send them back. You must also make sure to report any changes to this information (e.g. your partner’s address, employer or banking information; your address or banking information).

Budgeting Program

☎ 519-753-5408 ext. 259

BNH offers an eight (8) session Budgeting program designed to increase individual skills in personal money management through personal one-on-one sessions with a financial planner.

Health Services and Pre/Post Natal Care

First Nations and Inuit Health Branch

Health Canada provides eligible First Nations people and Inuit with a specified range of medically necessary health-related goods and services when they are not covered through private insurance plans or provincial/territorial health and social programs.

Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) include: prescription drugs, over-the-counter medication, medical supplies and equipment, short-term crisis counselling, dental care, vision care, and medical transportation.

A benefit will be considered for coverage when:

- The item or service is on a NIHB Program benefit list or NIHB schedule;
- It is intended for use in a home or other ambulatory care settings;
- Prior approval or predetermination is obtained (if required);
- It is not available through any other federal, provincial, territorial, or private health or social program;
- The item is prescribed by a physician, dental care provider, or other health professional licensed to prescribe; and the item is provided by a recognized provider.
- An eligible recipient is someone who is entitled to receive

Indigenous Services

Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

☎ 519-445-4324

www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free Counselling for men who are abusive. Therapy is based on holistic programs, combined with mainstream counselling techniques, to help participants accept responsibility for their total being.

Indigenous Services

Ogwadenedeo
☎ 519-445-1864
Fax: 519-445-0117
Weken Building
2469 Fourth Line Road
Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0

benefits such as vision care, prescription drugs or other benefits or services from the NIHB Program.

An eligible recipient must be identified as a resident of Canada and one of the following:

- A registered Indian according to the Indian Act;
- An Inuk recognized by one of the Inuit Land Claim organizations; or
- An infant less than one year of age, whose parent is an eligible recipient.

When recipients are eligible for benefits under a private health care plan, or public health or social program, claims must be submitted to these plans and programs first before submitting them to the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program.

De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre

36 King Street, Brantford, N3T 3C5

☎ 519-752-4340 Fax: 519-752-6096

To improve the wellness of Indigenous individuals and of the Indigenous community by providing services which respect people as individuals with a distinctive cultural identity and distinctive values and beliefs. De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre assists Indigenous people in accessing culturally appropriate health care programs and services. The Aboriginal Health Centre focuses on holistic preventive and primary health care that includes: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Traditional Healing and other primary health services; Mental Health Support, Diabetes Management Team as well as community health supports; and Advocacy, Outreach and Health Promotion and Education Services. The Aboriginal Health Centre serves all Indigenous people, regardless of status and offers assistance to outside service organizations to provide care in a culturally appropriate way.

Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)

Contact: CAPC Coordinator ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 232

Our new CAPC program is designed to improve the health and well-being of parents and children 6 months to 6 years old. No Service Fees. We work to help parents learn how to access appropriate community services, parenting workshops, native traditional teachings and child rearing, Father specific activities, car seat safety training, toy and play safety training, breastfeeding support, and physical activities for parents and children. We also want to encourage you to join us and grow your own veggies in our community garden at 237 Mohawk St.

Aboriginal Best Start Project

Contact: Aboriginal Child

Development Worker ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 232

The Aboriginal Best Start project is designed to help parents prepare their child to enter into public school. We promote and provide cultural based learning primarily for native children 6 months to 6 years of age and their families living in Brantford or Brant County.

Come out and learn basic Mohawk language phrases, Story Telling/songs, Indigenous Crafts, and meet new families and friends with children the same age as your child. We can also help you teach your child their ABC's, count to 10, and other essential teachings to succeed in public school.

Six Nations Health Services

☎ 519-445-2418

1745 Chiefswood Road, Oshweken, NOA 1M0

www.snhs.ca

Birthing centre, Health Babies/Healthy Children program and early childhood development programs.

Indigenous Services

Birthing Centre

☎ 519-445-4922 or 1-866-446-4922

Tsi Non:we Ionnakeratstha Ona:grahsta'

(Mohawk for 'The Place They Will Be Born')

Ona:grahsta' (Cayuga for 'A Birthing Place')

Helping Indigenous families (women and their families) give birth to healthy babies and to promote the seriousness, sacredness, and the continued responsibility of giving birth. The Indigenous community, family and specifically the expectant woman are offered a choice of services and programs that will compliment and support personal beliefs and customs.

Degowadihsyne' Program

☎ 519-445-4922

To coordinate, develop, implement, assess, evaluate, and deliver a culturally based Indigenous Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects/Child Nutrition program that focuses on education, awareness, and supportive services for families in the Six Nations of the Grand River community and Southwestern Ontario.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children

☎ 519-445-4922

Healthy Babies Healthy Children delivers culturally appropriate, effective, efficient services to Six Nations community members to ensure that all children develop at their highest level in the areas of cognitive development, communication, physical, and psychosocial skills.

Early Childhood Development

☎ 519-445-0339

The Early Childhood Development program provides effective and efficient services which assist children to acquire healthy physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Services include crisis intervention, individual counselling, group counselling, social skills training, parent support and training, advocacy, and case management.

Counselling, Support Services and Groups

Aboriginal Youth Outreach Program (AYOP) Contact:

Aboriginal Youth Outreach Worker ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 257

The primary focus of the AYOP is urban Indigenous youth 12 - 17 years of age who are at-risk and experiencing difficulty with school, family, relationships, court or they just need someone to talk to. AYOP helps youth living in at-risk environments, at-risk of conflict with the law and/or at-risk of re-offending. Services include Anger Management, Peer Counselling Support, Homework Help and Study Skills, and someone to help when difficulties come up at school or court, Employment Referrals, Violence Prevention Training, access to Traditional Teachings, Sports & Recreational Activities, youth guidance, and youth groups.

Aboriginal Cultural Development Program Contact:

Cultural Development Coordinator ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 232

We offer culturally specific support services for Indigenous people interested in connecting or reconnecting to their culture, traditions and ceremonies. Services include Indigenous cultural training for students, community organizations, and individuals interested in learning more about Indigenous (primarily Ojibwe and Anishinaabe) cultural practices.

Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I am a Kind Man)

Program Contact:

Cultural Development Coordinator ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 232

Kizhaay is designed to educate men and boys who are committed to ending violence against Indigenous Women; to re-establish traditional responsibilities by acknowledging that our teachings have never tolerated violence and abuse towards women; and to inspire men to engage

other men to get involved and stop the abuse and to support Indigenous men who choose not to use violence.

Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Program Contact: Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Coordinator ☎ 519-753-5408, ext 224

The Aboriginal Healing and Wellness program is designed to provide supports to women and their children who are experiencing domestic violence. It includes preventing family violence through community awareness, education and peer counselling; providing crisis intervention for women and children at risk; and addressing underlying mental/emotional issues that contribute to violence and dysfunction. The Native Women's Sharing Circle promotes healing and wellness among women and provides a safe environment for sharing.

New Directions Group – Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve ☎ 519-445-2947 or 1-877-650-9700

Addiction counselling available for individuals, families, group, and couples. Information on alcohol and drug abuse is provided. We also host a youth (12 - 17) drop-in on Tuesday and Saturday nights.

Ogwadeni:deo

Taking Care of Our Own

Six Nations' designated Children's Aid Society.

We are dedicated to assume our responsibilities for taking care of children in partnership with the community:

- By strengthening families through healing at home and in the community,
- By practicing client centered approaches,
- By honouring the family of origin,
- By valuing, upholding and bringing forward Ogwehon:we/Haudenosaunee/Indigenous knowledge as foundational practices of family wellness, and
- By respecting the expertise within the community.

We will demonstrate kindness and understanding to reinforce Ogwehon:we values in the practices of delivering, managing and administering our services. We strengthen the relationships of women and men in a gender balanced development of family systems.

Recreation and Leisure

There are plenty of recreational activities and programs for adults and children of all ages in Brantford and Brant County. They can provide opportunities to get exercise, learn new skills, meet people and have a good time. Many are free or involve nominal fees.

Health/Fitness and Recreation Centres

Boys and Girls Club

☎ 519-752-2964

2 Edge Street, Brantford N3T 6H1

✉ bgced@teksavvy.com; www.bgcbrant.ca

The Boys and Girls Club provides licensed child care programs, licensed before/after school care programs, summer day camps, fall/winter/spring evening recreation, education, social and leadership development programs for children and youth, fitness facilities/opportunities for teens/students, adult/senior fitness & wellness programs, and programs for adults with intellectual and physical challenges.

Brantford Family YMCA

☎ 519-512-4891

100 Water Street, Brantford, ON N3T 0P1

✉ laurierbrantford.membership@ymcahbb.ca

www.ymcahbb.ca

Health, fitness, recreation, sports and general interest programs. General, family, child and student memberships as well as punch cards for adults and students. Assisted or subsidized memberships are available to low income individuals and families. Call or visit the Y for details.

Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre

☎ 519-756-9900

254 North Park Street, Brantford, N3R 4L1

www.waynegretzkysportscentre.ca

Aquatics, skating arenas, health and fitness, and recreational programs for children and adults. Subsidies for children's program are available; *see following page*.

Community Centres in Brantford and throughout Brant County offer drop-in sports and recreational programming for children and adults.

While you may be under tremendous stress and feel you have too many essential tasks to take care of, it is important that you devote some time to fun and relaxation.

Plan activities that you can enjoy with your children, with friends, or by yourself.

Recreation and Leisure

Summer camp can be a fun and rewarding experience for children. A list of local day camps is published in the Brantford Expositor every spring.

Many organizations, including the Y and the Boys and Girls Club, offer full or partial fee subsidies to low-income families. Call the individual day camp providers for more information.

Some programs are free, others require registration or “punch cards.” Call for more information. Subsidies are available.

Beckett Adult Leisure Centre 219 Colborne Street, Brantford	☎ 519-756-3261
Branlyn Community Centre 238 Brantwood Park Road, Brantford	☎ 519-758-1444
Brant Sports Complex 944 Powerline Road, Paris	☎ 519-442-1944
Burford Community Centre & Arena 14 Potter Drive, Burford	☎ 519-449-5611
Cainsville Community Centre 14 Garnet Road, Brantford	☎ 519-752-2401
Doug Snooks Eagle Place Community Centre 333 Erie Avenue, Brantford	☎ 519-754-0711
Mount Pleasant Community Centre 711 Mount Pleasant Road, Mount Pleasant	☎ 226-208-2225
Resurrection Community Centre 17 Ravenwood Road, Brantford	☎ 519-752-0413
South Dumfries Community Centre 7 Gaukiel Drive, St. George	☎ 519-448-1831
Syl Apps Community Centre and Arena 51 William Street, Paris	☎ 519-442-3342
T.B. Costain/S.C. Johnson & Sons Community Centre 16 Morrell Street, Brantford	☎ 519-752-5509
Woodman Park Community Centre 491 Grey Street, Brantford	☎ 519-752-0890

Financial Assistance for Recreation Programs

Through the “Can We Help” program, low-income families can get subsidies to assist with the costs of children and youth programs offered by the City of Brantford and the County of Brant. The amount of the subsidy is based on your income. Call 519-756-1500 (Brantford) or 519-442-1818 (Brant County) for more information.

Outdoor Fun

Your nearest park or playground can provide hours of free, healthy and enjoyable activity. Some parks (such as Mohawk Park) offer free arts and crafts and other organized activities for children during the summer. In the winter, many community parks have outdoor skating rinks, maintained by volunteers. The Apps Mill Nature Centre on Robinson Road has hiking trails and an interpretative centre which is open to the public on the weekends.

Sports, Clubs and Social Groups

Activities and programs in the community for you and your children include:

- Organized sports of all types and for all ages/skill levels
- Recreational skating
- Public swimming
- Fitness/exercise classes and programs
- Music, dance, and other creative arts
- Groups and clubs catering to a wide range of interests

Check the Brantford & Brant County Community Guide, or the local telephone directory for more information.

Public Libraries

Libraries provide a wealth of information, resources and programs/activities, virtually all free of charge. You and your children can borrow books, magazines, videos, CDs and books on tape. You can browse through local newspapers, look through college and university course catalogues, use resource material for research or job hunting, and log on to computers with Internet access. There are also computers for children (preloaded with games and educational activities), story times, crafts, activities and movies. Visit your local library to find out what's available.

Recreation and Leisure

Brantford Parks and Recreation Department

☎ 519-756-1500

County of Brant Parks and Recreation

☎ 519-442-1818

Sports, leisure and recreation opportunities are published in **The Community Guide**, available from the Brantford Expositor, and the **Leisure Activity Guides for Brantford and Brant County**.

Recreation and Leisure

Check the local newspaper for upcoming community events and other activities for children, adults and families. Many of these events are free to the public.

For example, Harmony Square in downtown Brantford is the site for free public skating, concerts, outdoor movies, live theatre and other events.

Brantford Public Library, Main Branch ☎ 519-756-2220
173 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2G8

St. Paul Avenue Branch ☎ 519-753-2179
441 St. Paul Avenue, Brantford, N3R 4N8

Burford Branch ☎ 519-449-5371
24 Park Avenue, Burford, NOE 1A0

County of Brant Public Library ☎ 519-442-2433
12 William Street, Paris, N3L 1K7

Glen Morris Public Branch ☎ 519-740-2122
474 East River Road, Glen Morris, NOB 1W0

Scotland-Oakland Branch ☎ 519-446-0181
281 Oakland Road, Scotland, NOE 1R0

St. George Branch ☎ 519-448-1300
78 Main Street North, St. George, NOE 1N0

Six Nations Public Library ☎ 519-445-2954
1679 Chiefswood Road, Oshweken, NOE 1M0

**Mississaugas of the New Credit
First Nation Public Library** ☎ 905-768-5686
2789 Mississauga Road, R.R. #6, Hagersville, NOA 1H0

City / County Resources

Public Transportation

Brantford Transit

☎ 519-753-3847

Main terminal: 64 Darling Street, Brantford, N3T 6G6

Local bus service is provided in the City of Brantford. Call for information about bus routes, fares, specials and discounts.

For **taxi cab service**, see the listings under “taxis” in the local telephone directory.

For transportation out of town contact the following for schedules and fares:

VIA Rail

☎ 1-888-842-7245

Inter-city bus service

☎ 519-756-5011

(including Greyhound)

☎ 1-800-661-8747

Your Government Representatives

City of Brantford

☎ 519-759-4150

Brantford City Hall

58 Dalhousie Street, PO Box 818, Brantford ON N3T 2J2

Mayor: Kevin Davis

Call City Hall for the names and telephone numbers of your Ward Councillors.

County of Brant

☎ 519-449-2451

Brant County Office

☎ 1-888-250-2295

26 Park Avenue, Burford, NOE 1A0

Mayor: David Bailey

Call for the names and telephone numbers of your Councillors, or for the locations of the service area offices.

See the blue pages of the local telephone directory under “Drivers and Vehicles” to find out how to get or renew a driver’s licence or vehicle licence.

For more information regarding driver, vehicle, health card, and photo identification, visit Service Ontario.

Service Ontario

325A West Street, Unit 103

Brantford, N3R 3V6

☎ 519-753-0352

City/County Resources

Member of Provincial Parliament - Brant

☎ 519-759-0361

Will Bouma, MPP

96 Nelson Street, Suite 101, Brantford, N3T 2N1

Member of Parliament - Brant

☎ 519-754-4300

Larry Brock, MP

108 St. George Street, Suite 3, N3R 1V6

Other Numbers to Know...

Brant County OPP ☎ 24/7 dispatch number: 1-888-310-1122

Brantford Police ☎ 519-756-7050

Six Nations Police ☎ 519-445-2811

Crime Stoppers ☎ 519-750-TIPS (8477)

24/7 dispatch number: ☎ 1-888-310-1122

Helplines

Telephone Help Lines

Brant County Health Unit

Health Information Line

☎ 519-753-4937 ext. 259

Open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and

1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Public health nurses answer health/medical questions and direct callers to community resources as needed.

Assaulted Women's Help Line

☎ 1-866-863-0511

Assaulted Women's Help Line

☎ TTY - 1-866-863-7868

Assaulted Women's Help Line

☎ Mobile - #SAFE (#7233)

Kid's Help Phone

☎ 1-800-668-6868

Confidential support and help for children.

Ganohkwasra

☎ 519-445-4324

24-Hour Crisis Support Line.

Lesbian, Gay Bi, Trans, Youth Line

☎ 1-800-268-9688

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

24-hour crisis and support line

☎ 519-752-4357

24-hour text and online chat:

519-752-4357 or

www.novavita.org/chat

Confidential support to victims of domestic violence; information for people concerned about a friend, family member, co-worker or client.

Poison Information Centre

☎ 1-800-268-9017

In an emergency, call 911.

For questions about social services available in your area, please call 211

Helplines

Sexual Assault Centre of Brant 24-hour Crisis and Support Line

☎ 519-751-3471

Available to the survivors of sexual assault, and their friends and family members.

Six Nations Mobile Crisis Service

☎ 1-866-445-2204

☎ 519-445-2204

SOAR Community Services

Our Crisis Counsellors can support you 24 hours a day, 7 days/week, 365 days/year. Call the Crisis Phone Line at: (519) 759-7188 or 1 (866) 811-7188

We also offer Mental Health Walk-In Clinic: 225 Fairview Dr., from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday.

SOAR Community Services is a proud partner in 9-8-8, Canada's new helpline for anyone who is thinking about suicide or who is worried about someone they know. As a 9-8-8 partner, we are part of a network of local, provincial and territorial, and national crisis lines across the country whose responders take 9-8-8 calls and texts. There is no wrong way to ask for help – whether someone reaches out to 9-8-8 or our existing crisis line, someone will be there to give them the support they need. Reach out for help whenever you need it.

Telehealth Ontario

☎ 1-866-797-0000

TTY 1-866-797-0007

Free, confidential health information available by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A Registered Nurse will answer your questions, assess your symptoms and advise if you should go to the doctor, clinic or hospital. You do not need your OHIP number.

Victim Services of Brant

☎ 519-752-3140

(Mon-Fri 8:30 am -4:30 pm)

After Hours:

☎ 519-756-7050 (calls go through Brantford Police dispatch Mon to Fri 4:30pm-8:30 am and on weekends)

Victim Services of Brant provides confidential, individualized support for anyone who is directly or indirectly affected by crime, tragic circumstances, or disaster.

Indigenous Victim Services

☎ 1-866-964-5920; 226-227-2192

Epilogue - Living Your Life

Change can be difficult for people, even if it is necessary and for the best. Once you leave an abusive relationship you might have mixed emotions. You may feel a great sense of relief, empowerment and excitement about beginning a new life.

You may, however, also feel angry, depressed or sad over the loss of your relationship and your former life. This is normal, even if the relationship was a destructive one. It may take you some time to work through these feelings — counselling and the support of trusted friends and family can help.

If you are on your own after being with your partner for some time, you will need to adjust to new responsibilities and routines. It is not unusual to feel overwhelmed. Your children may initially be resentful and rebellious. They might blame you for the changes in their lives. Remember that they have also been through a lot. Be firm, but loving and kind. They need you to show them that there are ways to communicate and discipline without using violence.

Be kind to yourself too. You have accomplished a great deal and have a lot to be proud of. Take time to rest, relax and enjoy your new freedom.

When you need help, ask for it. There are answers to your questions and support to get you through difficult times. You do not have to feel alone.

You have proven that you possess the strength to deal with life's challenges and the wisdom to make decisions that will lead to a safer, happier life for yourself and your children.

We applaud your courage and wish you the very best.

*B.R.A.V.E (Brant's Response Against Violence Everywhere)
Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Community Coordinating Committee for
Brantford, Brant County, and Six Nations of the Grand River*

Appendix

Appendix A..... Safety Planning

Appendix B..... Safety Apps

Appendix C..... Household Budget

Appendix D..... Notes

Safety Planning

If you are in or leaving an abusive relationship, your safety is a priority. A safety plan is an individualized plan that focuses on ensuring survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are safe. A safety plan is created based on the individual's needs and should be flexible and dynamic to reflect changing circumstances. Below are some tips on planning for your safety. To create a safety plan, please visit a local service provider for victims of domestic violence, many are listed throughout this handbook.

Safety at Home

- Have a safe location in the home with a locking door, accessible windows, and away from potential weapons in the event that the violence escalates.
- Practice an exit route to leave the home and have more than one route.
- Change locks to external doors and consider installing a security system.
- Install an outdoor lighting system that is motion sensitive.
- Notify neighbours of vehicle/physical descriptions of your abusive partner.
- Use a code word with family, neighbours, and friends to notify them conspicuously of danger.
- Be aware of joint bank accounts, credit cards, bills, etc. that can be accessed by abuser (consider having statements sent to a new address).
- Keep an emergency bag for yourself and your children at a separate location (see page 24-26 for a list of suggested items).

Safety at Work

- Notify your employer or a trusted co-worker of your partner's physical/vehicle description so if either are seen on the property, police can be notified.
- Have a co-worker walk with you to your car or bus stop.
- Review workplace violence legislation with your supervisor to keep informed about your rights as well as the responsibilities of the employer (i.e. Bill 168).
- Switch your schedule if possible, so that your arrival/departure will not follow the usual routine.

Safety in the Community

- Stay on roads that are well lit, have frequent traffic, and are closed to amenities.
- Alter your usual routine of places you would attend on a daily basis (e.g. consider changing grocery stores, banks, etc.).
- Have your cell phone charged and on your person at all times.
- If you feel you are being followed while driving, begin driving towards the police station and call

dispatch.

- Keep lots of fuel in your vehicle, and enable a locking gas cap.
- Always meet an abusive partner in a public place, and notify your supports about the meeting.
- Notify your children's school about your situation and provide them copies of decision-making agreements, restraining orders, and bail conditions.

Safety Online/Technology

- Change passwords to online accounts (e.g. email, banking, social media).
- Consider changing your phone number and email address.
- Enable call blocking and call display on your phone.
- Keep a record of any emails, text messages, and voicemails left by the abuser.
- Have your computer and cell phone checked for GPS tracking apps and spyware.
- Do not post any identifying information on social media platforms.
- Avoid posting anything on social media when you are feeling sad or angry.
- Report any threatening behaviour to the support team of the website, so the individual can be blocked or removed from the site.
- Remember information posted on the internet can still be accessible even after you delete it.

Safety and Children

When safety planning with children, it is important to let them know that they are NOT responsible for the violence, and they can NOT stop it. It is also important to think about what your child is actually able to do. Below are some tips.

- Teach your child(ren) the exit routes you have prepared to leave the home; practice to ensure they know it in case of an emergency.
- Have your child(ren) identify one or more individuals that they trust and are comfortable with asking for help. This could be a neighbour, friends' parents, or other family members. Ensure your child knows their address and/or phone number.
- Teach your child(ren) a code word to signify that they need to go somewhere safe, ask for help, or call 911 (make sure your child knows their address and phone number to provide to the operator).
- Teach your children what they can do to stay safe: go to their room, leave the house and go somewhere safe (such as to the house of someone they trust), stay out of the way, when and how to dial 911, and to not intervene physically to stop the violence.
- Make sure children have access to important phone numbers.

Safety Apps

Personal use of smartphones and tablets is rapidly increasing. For survivors of domestic or sexual violence, or stalking, a mobile phone may be a critical component to their safety and safety planning. Given the prevalence of phones and tablets it is important to educate yourself on apps - software applications - that run on mobile devices. However, with so many apps available, how do we choose the right one for our safety needs? Below is a safety checklist to consider when downloading safety apps.

Safety Checklist

- Does the app allow for password protection so only the user can open the app and not just anyone with access to the phone?
- Does the app describe personal safety in the context of abuse perpetrated by an intimate partner?
- Does it provide warnings to the user about the possibility of the app being found by the abuser? Are these warnings provided before the app is downloaded or after the app is activated on a mobile device?
- Does the app have a privacy policy? This should either be in the app itself or on its website.
- If a privacy policy is unavailable, consider using another app, particularly if the app requests any personal identifying information from the user.
- Does the app require an email address or other contact information in order to use it? Does it ask for other types of personal information (such as the user's or the abuser's physical description)? Is there a disclaimer describing how the data is stored or used?
- Does the app require that the phone or tablet's location services be active in order for the app to work or be useful? Can you refuse the app's access to the device's location services?
- Does the app provide inaccurate information or recommend actions that go against suggested best practices when working with victims (such as suggesting the user inform the abuser that they are being reported)?

Checklist adapted from National Network to End Domestic Violence Incorporated. For more information, please visit www.nnedv.org/safetynet



Circle of 6

A personal safety app that allows you to connect with six individuals of your choice when you feel you are in an unsafe situation. The six will be notified via text message of your location, or you can choose to alert them by phone. You also have the option of being connected to a helpline.



One Love Lit - One Love Foundation

Based on the Danger Assessment, this app helps women to assess their level of risk in an intimate relationship.



YWCA Safety Siren

When the siren button is pressed in the app, or the mobile phone is shaken, the phone will call a pre-set contact and/or send an email indicating your location. The app also provides health and safety information.

Appendix - Household Budget Worksheet

The worksheet below will be helpful in creating a personal budget. You can tailor it to suit your own needs — don't forget to add in any of your own unique sources of income and/or expenses. If you are creating a monthly budget (as in the sample below), remember to make any necessary adjustments to the amounts (e.g. multiply a biweekly paycheque by two and divide any annual payments by 12). Knowing what you have to spend and organizing your finances will help you avoid getting into debt and assist you in gaining control of your life.

MONTHLY INCOME

Take home pay / EI benefits _____

Ontario Works payments _____

Child Tax Benefit / supplement _____

Pension or other government cheques _____

Child support / other support payments _____

Other income _____

Total Monthly Income _____

MONTHLY EXPENSES

Housing (rent, mortgage) _____

Water / electricity _____

Gas heat _____

Telephone _____

Cable/internet _____

Food & groceries _____

Transportation (gas, bus tickets etc.) _____

Clothing / personal needs _____

Laundry _____

Home expenses / maintenance _____

Insurance (home, life, car)	_____
Entertainment/recreation	_____
Childcare	_____
Dental care, prescription drugs	_____
Loan payments	_____
Taxes	_____
Alcohol /Cigarettes	_____
Other expenses	_____

<i>Total Monthly Expenses</i>	_____
Monthly Income <i>minus</i>	_____
Monthly Expenses	_____
Total Remaining	= _____

This is what you have left. Consider putting some money into a savings account to cover unexpected expenses or to help meet your long-term goals. If your total expenses are greater than your total income, you will need to adjust your budget by cutting back on certain costs and/or finding a way to increase your income.

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The Refrigerator Door was originally created and published by Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services in 2002 with the aim of providing a practical handbook for individuals experiencing violence and abuse in their relationships.

Since 2009, this community resource tool has been revised and maintained by the **BRAVE Committee (Brant's Response Against Violence Everywhere)** with funding from both the City of Brantford and the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services.

The Refrigerator Door represents the collaborative efforts of several different social service organizations in Brantford, Brant County, and Six Nations of the Grand River. As members of the BRAVE Committee, these agencies are dedicated to coordinating the community's response to gendered violence, domestic violence, and sexual violence.

An online version of this handbook is available at brant-brave.org or novavita.org. Copies may be downloaded, printed, and circulated free of charge. If material is reprinted, please credit the source. To obtain hard copies please contact BRAVE@novavita.org.



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