

Western Education Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children



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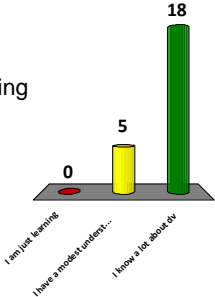
Domestic Violence in the Workplace

CDHPC conference
October 18, 2017

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Knowledge: Domestic Violence

- A. I am just learning
- B. I have a modest understanding
- C. I know a lot about dv



Knowledge Level	Count
I am just learning	0
I have a modest understanding...	5
I know a lot about dv	18

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Domestic Violence in the Workplace

An introduction: what everyone needs to know...

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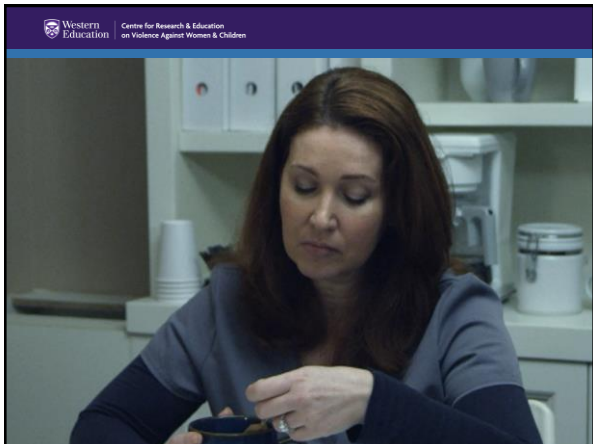
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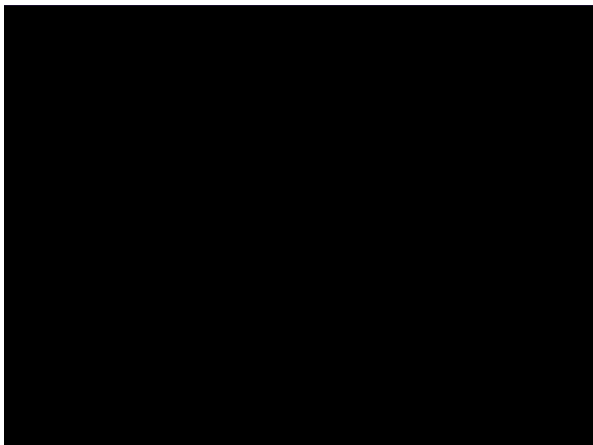
The foundation

In almost every case of domestic homicide, we found that the people around the victim knew what was going on – but didn't know what to do about it...

Al O'Marra
(Former) Chief Counsel Coroner's Office of Ontario







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Risk Factors

Your husband...

- Haranguing the front desk staff
- Showing up here at all hours
- Calling you

...he's been out of work

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Recognizing Risk Factors

- A history of domestic violence
- Actual or pending separation
- Obsessive behaviour
- Depression of the perpetrator
- The level of violence is increasing
- Prior threats / attempts of suicide
- Threat to kill
- Prior attempts to isolate victim
- Victim had intuitive sense of fear
- Perpetrator unemployed

Number of Risk Factors	Percentage
7+ factors	76%
4-6 factors	13%
1-3 factors	10%
no factors	1%

*39 risk factors identified that indicate potential for lethality

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Recognizing Risk Factors

- A history of domestic violence
- Actual or pending separation
- **Obsessive behaviour**
- Depression of the perpetrator
- **The level of violence is increasing**
- Prior threats / attempts of
- Threat to kill
- Prior atte
- Vi
- **of fear**
- **employed**

Missed Opportunity

*39 risk factors identified that indicate potential for lethality

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When domestic violence comes to work

Warning signs & Risk factors

- Supervisors & coworkers witness critical events
- Should raise possibility of danger

Opportunities to intervene

- Can be missed because of uncertainty or missing information
- Organizations and individuals are unprepared

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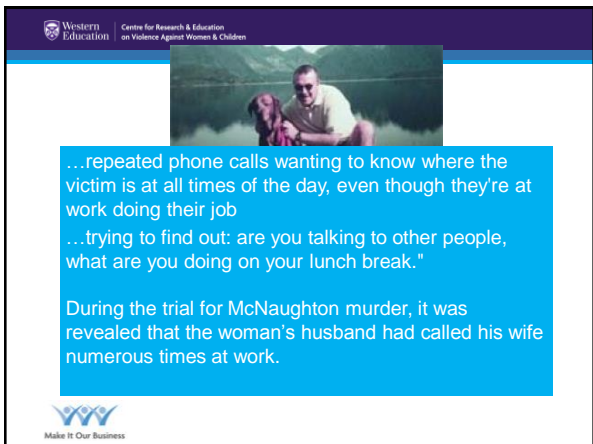
Not uncaring - unprepared

Co-workers
Supervisors
Doctors
Union
Security
Human Resources
CEO
Board of Directors

Many people tried to help Lori....








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Aysegul Candir

December 10, 2004
 Separated from her husband. He shot her in the parking lot of the high school where she worked as a grade 10 teacher.



She later died in hospital.

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Workplace homicides

The foundation

In almost every case of domestic homicide, we found that the people around the victim knew what was going on – but didn't know what to do about it...

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A human being approach

Domestic violence is an equalizer

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Two Frameworks

Employers, Supervisors & Workers

- Recognize
- Respond
- Refer

When organizations are pro-active

Resource: MIOB

Human Beings

Conversation framework

- See it
- Name it
- Check it

When they hold SNCit conversations with another

Resource: NFF

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Recognize

Warning signs
Risk factors

Recognize

Respond
Refer

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There were warning signs too



... this is the third time this week you've been late
You have used up all your sick time
You aren't doing your job





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Workplace Warning Signs



- Disruptive phone calls or visits from the partner
- Obvious injuries
 - bruises, black eyes, broken bones, hearing loss
 - often attributed to falls, being clumsy or accidents
- Hiding injuries
 - Clothing inappropriate for the season (long sleeves & turtlenecks, sunglasses indoors)
 - Changes in makeup or concealer
- Absenteeism or lateness
- Being the victim of vandalism or threats

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Workplace Warning Signs

- Job performance problems
 - poor concentration, errors, slowness, difficulty making decisions, inconsistent work quality
- Requests for special accommodations
 - leave early, change schedule
- Behaviour
 - anxiety, emotional outbursts, tears, apprehension, withdrawal or social avoidance, excessive tiredness or depression
- Lack of access to money





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Respond

SNCit conversations
Safety Planning
Risk Assessment
Threat Assessment
Reporting
Monitoring

Recognize
Respond
Refer



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ISOLATION

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The Power of Isolation




- Abusive person will discourage or forbid their partner from having relationships with other people
- Children in abusive households don't bring their friends home
- The family isn't invited to social gatherings because people are uncomfortable with unpredictable or abusive behaviour

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The Power of Isolation

- Bystanders and professionals may also remain isolated
- No one has the whole picture
- Impedes coordinated action



Isolation



Isolation is a risk factor for abuse and is also a result of abuse that becomes deeper and more profound as the abuse escalates

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A Simple Strategy



To Increase Safety

Reduce Isolation

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Reduce isolation to increase safety




ACTION: conversation

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GOAL for conversation




Open the door for support



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SNCit Conversation



See it...
Name it...
Check it...



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See it

"what makes you feel uncomfortable ...?"

- Learn the warning signs
- Pay attention to the people around you
- Treat your suspicions and concerns seriously





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Name it
"I saw bruises, I heard yelling..."

- Name the warning signs as a concern:
 - to yourself
 - to another
- Just the FACTS




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Check it
"Are you okay? How can I help?"

- Ask questions
- Check your assumptions – is it abuse?
- Check with a professional
- Do safety planning
- Call 911 / police in an emergency



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Respect **Safety**

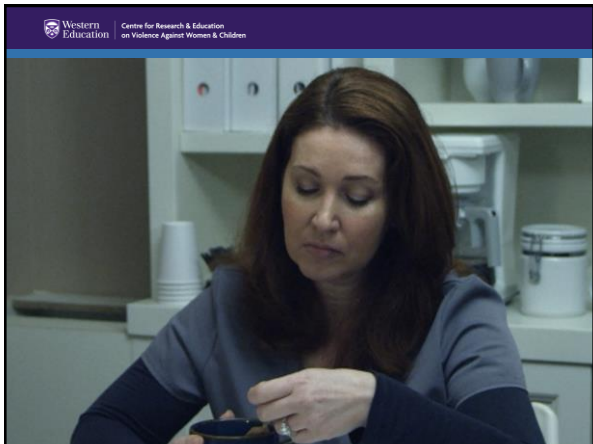


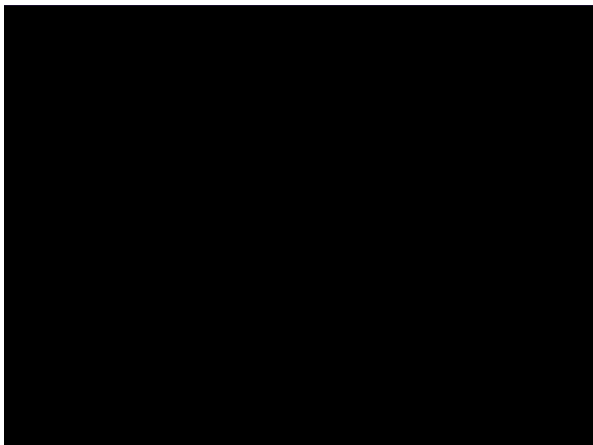
'Handle' any intervention with safety and respect

Am I being respectful? Is it safe?



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What was the impact?




Do you think the door for support is open for Gail?



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What did the supervisor 'do'?



- Sat down
- Expressed concern
- Named several risk factors
- Didn't judge
- Talked about safety
- Made a plan for next steps
- Checked it out with Gail

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Why is support important?



Gail is trying to manage the escalation on her own

She is more likely to be honest about what is happening to her in a supportive environment.


As the situation changes, open communication will increase safety

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Set Expectations

- Pay attention to warning signs
- Non-judgment
- Encourage open communication / care not to gossip
- Understanding workplace resources

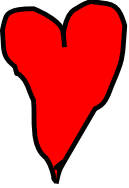


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How do we prepare ourselves to SNCit?



Start with GENUINE concern
Your concern will help open the door for support

You don't have to 'solve' someone's problems

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The Human Being at Work

- A strategic approach
- To ensure a “human being” focus as the organizational response to a worker who is being abused and is at risk
 - Because it is the ‘right’ thing to do
 - AND because it will increase safety and reduce risk

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Internal Responsibility System

RECOGNIZE:
What are the warning signs and risk factors?

RESPOND:
Every precaution reasonable in the circumstance

REFER:
Who else needs to be involved?

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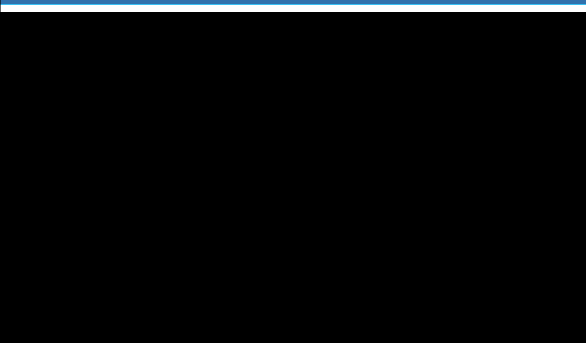
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SNCit to reduce isolation and increase safety



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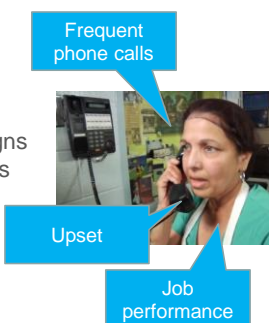
REFER:
Who else needs to be involved?



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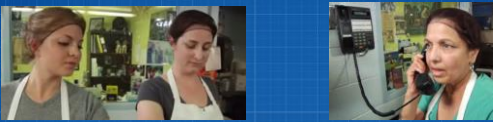
Is it abuse?

- Warning signs
- Risk Factors



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Policy and Procedures



Blueprint

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Policy and Procedures



The diagram shows two women on the left and one woman on the right talking on a phone. A double-headed arrow labeled 'SNCit' connects the two groups.

SNCit Conversation
See it: upsetting phone calls repeated
Name it: "He is calling you a lot."
Check it: "Are you ok?"

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Policy and Procedures



The diagram shows two women on the left and one woman on the right talking on a phone. A double-headed arrow labeled 'SNCit' connects the two groups.

Warning signs
Risk factors

NO ←

External Experts

→ YES →

- Safety Coordinator
- Risk Management
 - Safety Planning
 - Risk Assessment
 - Monitoring

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Two men in business attire are walking down a hallway. One is wearing a white shirt and tie, the other a grey jacket.

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Risk Factors?

- ✓ Separated
- ✓ Custody battle
- ✓ Stalking
- ✓ Showing up at her work
- ✓ Obsession
- ✓ New boyfriend



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DV Policies and Procedures




- Expectation – no abusive behaviour
- Definition of behaviour
- Progressive discipline
- Treatment
- Monitoring
- Reporting

Blueprint

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Offenders' Impact on Workplace Safety

- Based on responses from 501 PAR program participants
- 88.4% were heterosexual men
- 5.8% were women offenders and/or did not report being in a heterosexual relationship
- most respondents held permanent, full-time, non-unionized positions in small workplaces & were not responsible for supervising or managing others
- 8.6% of respondents reported working at the same place as their partner at the time of their DV incident




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Offenders in the Workplace

70.9% reported being in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours
– ongoing conflict, emotional abuse, and monitoring

One-third (33.9%) reported emotionally abusing and/or monitoring their (ex)partners during work hours




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Offenders in the Workplace

One-fifth of respondents (21.3%) indicated that someone at work knew about these behaviours

- Mostly co-workers (82.1%)

In 19.4% of these cases, someone at work “covered” for them while they engaged in these behaviours




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Offenders in the Workplace

45.5% reported that DV issues sometimes, often, or very often negatively affected their job performance

38% reported that DV issues had a medium, large, or very large impact on their job performance



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Negative Impact at Work

“All I could think about was what was going on at home and if my wife was even going to be there.”

“I am a cook at a busy restaurant and dealing with an argument before work would cause me to get annoyed when a lot of orders would come at once, when normally, I enjoy cooking many orders.”


“Anxiety/depression resulted from conflicts and I was unable to focus/concentrate on my work. When I did work, much of my work was substandard.”

“Missed days when big clients were scheduled, ... loss of sales, missed information, [and] big contracts lost.”

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Offenders' Impact on Workplace Safety

8.8% of respondents reported causing or almost causing a work accident because they were distracted or preoccupied with DV issues



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Offenders' Impact on Workplace Safety

"I was working on a roof of a house [...] and I was missing a co-worker saying something and almost fell off [the] roof."

"I spent a night in jail, and got out in the morning, went to work, and due to lack of sleep and stress, I got into a car accident with a work vehicle."

"Because of my preoccupation [with] my thoughts, I damaged two expensive units at work."

"Dropping a load of bricks on somebody."

"I forgot that I was assigned six patients on day shift, so I missed one of them when it came to administering medication. The incident caused me to be reprimanded and questioned by my manager."

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Due Diligence: ERP-Ready

Critical Event – warning signs recognized


↓

SNCit Conversation - risk factors present

↓

Goes to those responsible for safety who will:
 – Safety Planning / Assessment / Risk Management / Response

Experts consulted



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Due diligence is possible



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CAN WORK BE SAFE WHEN HOME ISN'T?

Canada's First National Survey on the Impact of Domestic Violence in the Workplace

Click here for the results of the survey

<http://www.makeitourbusiness.com/>

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DV prevalence

- One third (33.6%) had experienced DV in their lifetime
- Female, transgender, and Aboriginal respondents, those with disabilities, or a sexual orientation other than heterosexual had higher rates
- Rates consistent with other large Canadian surveys

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Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

38%
reported that DV affected their ability to get work

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Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

53.5%
experienced DV at or near the workplace

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DV at the Workplace

53.5%
DV continued at work

46.5%
DV did not continue at work (or no response)

ABUSIVE ACTS AT OR NEAR WORKPLACE

- 40.6%** abusive phone calls/text messages
- 20.5%** stalking/harassment near workplace
- 18.2%** abuser physically came to workplace
- 15.6%** abusive email messages
- 14.5%** abuser contacted co-workers/employer
- 2.2%** other

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Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

81.9%
found that DV negatively affected their work performance

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Impact on Co-workers

Among those who experienced DV...

37.1%
reported co-workers affected by their DV too

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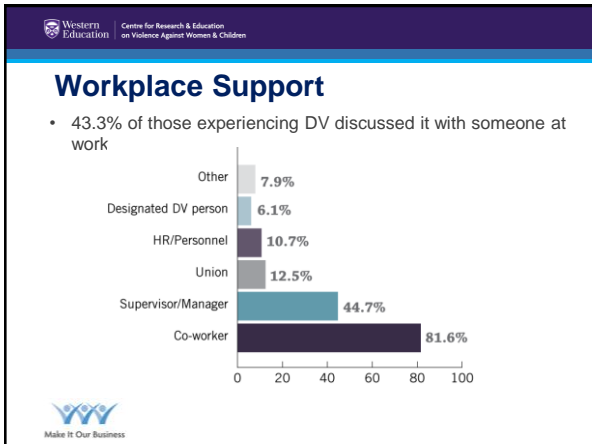
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Co-workers Notice Warning Signs

35.4% reported having at least one co-worker they believe is experiencing, or has previously experienced, DV

11.8% reported having at least one co-worker who they believe is being abusive, or has previously been abusive toward a partner

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Conference Board Survey

- 71 per cent of Canadian employers reported a situation where it was necessary to protect a victim of domestic abuse
 - The prevalence is similar across industries
- Domestic violence impacts the workplace through productivity losses, higher absenteeism and, in some cases, can affect the safety of co-workers
- Domestic violence can also increase risk for physical and psychological violence in the workplace
- More training and education is required

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Problems with zero tolerance



- Firing makes him someone else's problem
- Does not allow for the possibility of change
- May send the message – do not report
- Increases his isolation

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Societal Community Relationship Individual

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Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee – workplace recommendations

2005: To MOL all workplaces design and implement a policy to address domestic violence as it relates to the workplace. The policy should include:

- Educating employees
- Training employers and managers
- Providing a resource list of appropriate referral agencies.
- Providing an organized response to direct threats of domestic violence that occur in the workplace.
- Developing and implementing a safety plan for the victim to ensure that a number of security measures are in place for her protection.

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Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee – workplace recommendations


2005: It is recommended that all training material for professionals and public education programs emphasize the harmful nature of emotional and psychological abuse.

2013: MOL and OWD is encouraged to work with domestic violence experts, Health and Safety Ontario and the Ontario Federation of Labour to establish a non-profit initiative to engage employers in the work of preventing and responding to domestic violence. The new non-profit initiative should provide workplace specific information, resources and advice for employers.

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Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee – workplace recommendations


2014: . Review compliance in Ontario workplaces with the provisions in the Occupational Health & Safety Act that require employers to have a program for preventing and responding to domestic violence that could cause harm to an employee at work, and that require instruction on that program.



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BC Domestic Violence Death Review Committee – workplace recommendations

2010: The development of a model, in collaboration with WorkSafeBC, for use by employers to provide protection to employees from domestic violence in the workplace. The model will enhance safety and ensure compliance with occupational health and safety regulations.



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