

The Region of Peel Woman Abuse Protocol: Best Practice Guidelines

*A Guide for
Service Providers*



1515 Matheson Blvd. East, Suite 103
Mississauga, ON L4W 2P5
Phone: 905-282-9792
Fax: 905-282-9669
Email: pcawa@pcawa.org
New Website: www.pcawa.org

The PCAWA would like to acknowledge the contribution of Jamie Taciuk and Jessica Serpa, nursing students from York University, Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies, School of Nursing for assisting in the development and design of this brochure.

Funding for this project is provided by the Government of Ontario, Ministry of the Attorney General, Domestic Community Co-ordination Grant Program. Printing costs of this brochure are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services



**Peel Committee Against
Woman Abuse
(PCAWA)**

***Working Together To End
Violence Against
Women And Children***

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History of PCAWA & the Woman Abuse Protocol

The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA) was founded in 1984. Over the years, it has grown and developed through community consultations, conferences, workshops and planning.

Today, the PCAWA consists of more than 30 member agencies in Peel that are directly involved, or concerned with, woman abuse. Member agencies are working together to promote a more effective and coordinated response to woman abuse in the Region of Peel.

The Woman Abuse Protocol consists of guidelines for a coordinated response system for agencies dealing with women who have experienced abuse in the Region of Peel. In 1995, the Woman Abuse Protocol was initiated by the PCAWA and funded by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. In 1996, the PCAWA decided to develop an accessible, collaborative, case-management model of service delivery, which has evolved to become:

*The Region of Peel
Woman Abuse Protocol:
Best Practice Guidelines*

When woman who have experienced abuse seek social services from member agencies in Peel, the **Best Practice Guidelines** are intended to ensure they obtain the help that they need.

Highlights of the Protocol

Overview: Issue of Woman Abuse

- ⇒ Dynamics of Woman Abuse
- ⇒ Health Effects of Woman Abuse
- ⇒ Barriers to Leaving an Abusive Relationship
- ⇒ Impacts on Children who Witness Abuse

Collaboration Between the CAS & Violence Against Women (VAW) Services

- ⇒ Principles of intervention for CAS and VAW services in Peel

Children Exposed to Woman Abuse and the Duty to Report

- ⇒ Overview of the grounds for which service providers have a duty to report

A Conceptual Model

- ⇒ Provides a holistic, coordinated community response to woman abuse
- ⇒ Captures the range of services available to women who have experienced abuse in Peel

General Intervention Principles

- ⇒ Principles for service provision designed to empower women who are experiencing abuse

Risk Assessment Tool

- ⇒ A tool to identify high risk indicators that will help service providers to develop customized safety plans

Community Referrals Guidelines

- ⇒ To assist agencies in making systematic, consistent and appropriate referrals to women requesting VAW services

Agency Profiles

- ⇒ 30+ agencies in the Region of Peel that provide VAW Services

Defining Woman Abuse

Woman Abuse is defined as the actual or threatened physical, psychological, sexual, financial, verbal, or spiritual abuse of a woman by someone with whom she has, or has had an intimate, familial or romantic relationship. It may include:

Physical Abuse: hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, pushing, burning, biting, torture, restraining, assault with a weapon, withholding of food and/or medical care, and/or murder.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse: criticism, degradation, humiliation, excessive possessiveness, threats (suicidal, homicidal, deportation, kidnapping children, harming family, friends and/or pets), controlling a person's daily activities, social isolation, and/or purposeful destruction of property and/or pets.

Sexual Abuse: an act of forced sexual activity, sexual harassment, unwanted sexual touching, and forced exposure to, or participation in pornography or prostitution.

Verbal Abuse: comments that are known or perceived as being unwelcome, threatening, degrading, offensive, and/or embarrassing.

Economic/Financial Abuse: withholding and/or restricting of money needed for food and/or clothing, denying the right to seek and/or maintain employment, taking personal money, denying independent access to money, and/or, excluding the victim from financial decision-making.

Spiritual Abuse: degrading one's beliefs, withholding means to practice, and forcing adherence.

Definitions adopted from the World Health Organization (1995/98), Health Canada (1993/94), and the Woman Abuse Council of Toronto (1996)

Woman Abuse Statistics

Consider these statistics on Canadian women who reported on violence in a spousal relationship in the past five years.¹

- 81% were pushed, shoved or grabbed
- 61% were threatened to be hit
- 44% had something thrown at them
- 38% were beaten or choked
- 36% were slapped
- 27% were kicked, hit or bit, and
- 16% were sexually assaulted
- 37% of women in a spousal relationship reporting on physical violence in the past five years also experienced emotional abuse
- Women under 25 are more likely than those who are older to be victimized by their intimate partner
- Aboriginal people are three times more likely to be victims of spousal violence than those who are non-Aboriginal (21% vs. 7%)
- Women with disabilities are estimated to be 1.5 to 10 times more likely to be abused than are non-disabled women
- 1 in 6 pregnant women are abused during pregnancy
- Spousal violence among homosexuals has been twice the rate of reported violence experienced by heterosexuals (15% vs. 7%)
- In 2004, 33% of all victims of spousal violence reported that children saw or heard the violence in the home
- Children who witness family violence often display depression, aggression, delinquency and other emotional problems
- In 2004, 47% of female victims indicated that they had turned to a formal help agency because of the violence and abuse they experienced

¹Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics: Family Violence in Canada, A Statistical Profile 2005, 2004 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, Health Canada, 2005 and other recent sources

Please contact PCAWA for a more extensive compilation of statistics highlighting the incidence, prevalence, and severity of woman abuse, or visit www.pcawa.org.

PCAWA Resources

Many of these resources are available in multiple languages and can be downloaded free of charge from the newly designed PCAWA website at www.pcawa.org.

- **The Region of Peel Woman Abuse Protocol: Best Practice Guidelines**
A training tool for agencies
 - **Creating a Safety Plan**
 - **Breaking the Cycle of Violence: Children Exposed to Woman Abuse**
 - **Quick Reference Guide to Woman Abuse Community Services in Peel**
- *****
- Resources developed jointly by the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse (PCAWA) and the Peel Committee on Sexual Assault (PCSA):**
- **Sexual Assault & Woman Abuse Fact Sheets**
Available in various languages
 - **Building Blocks Resource Kit for Violence-Free Play and Learning**
A fun, interactive tool including rolodex and set of toy blocks to promote violence-free play and learning. Available free of charge to Peel parents and caregivers with children aged 0–6 years (while quantities last)
 - **Silent Voices Exhibit**
A unique, anti-violence public education display of ten life-sized wooden silhouette figures

To order copies by mail, please contact PCAWA:

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Protocol Signatory Agencies

Health Services

Trillium Health Centre
Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Services
 Counselling Services.....905-848-7580
 Medical Services (24 hrs).....905-848-7191
Credit Valley Hospital.....905-813-2200
Peel Health Department.....905-791-7800
Punjabi Community Health Centre of Peel905-301-2978

Legal/Court Services

Peel Crown Attorney's Office.....905-456-4777
Peel Regional Police.....911 or 905-453-3311
Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Probation and Parole.....905-279-7600
Victim Services of Peel.....905-568-1068
Victim/Witness Assistance Program.....905-456-4797

Shelter/Crisis Services

Armagh.....905-855-0299
Family Transition Place.....519-941-4357 or 1-800-265-9178
Interim (Mississauga North).....905-676-8515
Interim (Mississauga South).....905-403-0864
Interim Place Transitional Housing & Support905-676-0257
Salvation Army Family Life Resource Centre.....905-451-4115
Vita Centre of Peel905-858-0329

Community, Counselling, & Support Services

African Community Services of Peel905-460-9514
Brampton Multicultural Community Centre.....905-790-1910
Brampton Neighbourhood Resource Centre.....905-452-1262
Catholic Cross Cultural Services:
 Brampton.....905-457-7740
 Mississauga.....905-273-4140
Catholic Family Services of Peel/Dufferin:
 Brampton.....905-450-1608
 Mississauga.....905-897-1644
Family Services of Peel (Mississauga & Brampton).....905-453-5775
HEAL Network.....905-450-1608
India Rainbow Community Services of Peel:
 Brampton.....905-454-9070
 Mississauga.....905-275-2369
Malton Neighbourhood Services.....905-677-6270
Muslim Community Services:
 Brampton & Mississauga.....905-790-1910
Ontario Works (Region of Peel, Social Services).....905-793-9200
Peel Committee on Sexual Assault905-273-4100
Salvation Army Women's Counselling905-820-8984
United Achievers' Community Services.....905-455-6789

Programmes for Abusive Men

Catholic Family Services of Peel/Dufferin
Man-To-Man Program.....905-450-1608
Family Services of Peel
Legacy - Responsible Choices Group.....905-453-5775
Merge Counselling and Educational Services
Domestic Violence Prevention Program905-855-8028

Services for Children

Children's Aid Society Peel905-363-6131

Language Services

Multicultural Inter-Agency Group of Peel905-270-6252

Crisis Line Services

Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centre of Peel.....905-273-9442
Victim Services of Peel.....905-568-1068