

sh!ft

THE PROJECT TO END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**A CASE FOR LEVERAGING
INFORMAL SUPPORTERS AND
BYSTANDERS FOR PRIMARY
PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC
AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

2022



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

Authors

Anya Litviniuc
Lana Wells

Acknowledgements

Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence gratefully acknowledges the Max Bell Foundation for funding of this project. We would like to thank Kim Nagan for her editorial support. We would also like to thank the IMPACT Foundation Document Review Working Group Members for their feedback on an earlier version of the report. A big thank you to the following individuals for their time:

IMPACT foundation document review working group members:

Amber Niemeier, YW Edmonton
Andrea Silverstone, IMPACT
Carrie McManus, IMPACT
Chris Johnson, Sanare Centre
Deb Tomlinson, Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services
Diana Lowe, Reforming the Family Justice System
Giri Puligandla, Canadian Mental Health Association Edmonton
Jassim Al-Mosawi, CDVC/Mosaic Primary Care Network
Julie Peacock, Ministry of Community and Social Services
Krysta Halfe, Native Counselling Services of Alberta
Lindsay Whittaker, Ministry of Community and Social Services
Lisa Watson, Odyssey House
Lubna Zaeem, Islamic Family and Social Services Association

IMPACT backbone staff:

Andrea Silverstone
Brielle Batty Smith
Carrie McManus
Kelly Louch
Katie Wotherspoon
Marie Beaupre-Olsen
Aiman Salahuddin

Acknowledging Indigenous Territory and Peoples

Shift wants to acknowledge that our team members live across Turtle Island in what is today known as Canada. We acknowledge that the places we call home have deep ties to the Indigenous Peoples that have stewarded this land since time immemorial. We also acknowledge that colonial actors and institutions perpetually deny Indigenous Peoples their rights to self-determination and sovereignty and these institutions must be challenged and changed. Shift is committed to the advancement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Suggested citation

Litviniuc, A., & Wells, L. (2022). *A case for leveraging informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence*. Calgary, AB: The University of Calgary, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence.

Contact

Lana Wells, Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence
Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary
2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, AB, Canada T2N 1N4 | 403-220-6484 | lmwells@ucalgary.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction..... 2

2.0 The purpose of this report 2

3.0 What we have achieved to date..... 2

 3.1. Informal supporter work 2

 3.2 Bystander work..... 3

4.0 Where we need to go next..... 5

 4.1 Why domestic and sexual violence happen and how we can prevent them from
 happening in the first place 5

 4.2 How to leverage informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention 5

**5.0 Recommendations for the Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector to
 empower Albertans to stop violence before it starts 8**

 5.1 Change norms and build Albertans’ capacity to prevent violence 8

 5.2 Build social cohesion and promote Albertans’ help-seeking behaviours 9

 5.3 Implement programs for informal supporters’ and bystanders’ health and wellbeing 9

 5.4 Implement legislation and policy reforms that normalize, educate, empower, and
 protect informal supporters and bystanders 10

**6.0 A logic model: How informal supporters and bystanders can be leveraged for a better
 Alberta 11**

7.0 Conclusion 13

Appendix A..... 14

References..... 15

1.0 Introduction

Although sometimes called a hidden crime due to its severe under-reporting to law enforcement and human service providers, domestic and sexual violence are rarely hidden from survivors' social networks, also known as informal supporters.¹ Unlike formal supporters, such as medical, legal, and mental health professionals, informal supporters include one's family, relatives, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, co-workers, and peers who can provide emotional and practical help to people at risk of or experiencing violence and to prevent violence from happening.^{2,3,4} Another group that witnesses and can influence the outcomes of violence include bystanders; people present during an incident of violence who are not directly involved in it but have the opportunity to discourage, divert, or interrupt it.⁵

Since 2012, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence (hereafter, Shift) has been conducting research and advocating to funders and the anti-violence sector to integrate informal supporters and bystanders into their programs and services so that Albertans have the skills to intervene and disrupt violence in safe and appropriate ways. We now have an opportunity to leverage this momentum and **move towards empowering informal supporters and bystanders to prevent domestic and sexual violence before they start.**

2.0 The purpose of this report*

The purpose of this report is to inform the Government of Alberta (GoA) and the anti-violence sector about actions they can take to empower all Albertans to play a part in stopping domestic and sexual violence before they start. To achieve this, the report:

- Summarizes what we know about informal supporters' and bystanders' roles in interrupting and responding to domestic and sexual violence.
- Explains how informal supporters and bystanders can be empowered to participate in *primary prevention* efforts.
- Outlines legislation, policy, and program recommendations that will empower all Albertans to act as informal supporters and bystanders to stop violence before it starts.

3.0 What we have achieved to date

3.1. Informal supporter work

Over the past decade in Alberta, many organizations have trained people in families, communities, workplaces and institutions to recognize violence, understand its cycles, and to safely support survivors and, to a lesser extent, perpetrators. The initiatives leading the way include FearisNOTLove (formerly the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter) *Take a Stand*,⁶ *Sagesse's Real Talk*,⁷ Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton *Caregiver Sessions* and a self-directed online course for

* Other relevant reports can be found on the [Alberta Primary Prevention Playbook](#) website.

supports,⁸ among many others (See Appendix A for the list). This work is crucial because, in many cases, informal supporters are not only the first⁹ but often the only people to hear about experiences of domestic and sexual violence.¹⁰ Furthermore, informal supporters are well-positioned to respond to violence because they:

- Can help survivors recognize and acknowledge their victimization and contact formal supports.^{11,12}
- Have an established relationship with and strategic access to survivors and/or perpetrators, whom they can support more easily and conveniently as a part of regular communication.¹³
- Know survivors, their circumstances, and often perpetrators, which enables them to offer quick, appropriate, and creative help.¹⁴

Historically, building informal supporters' capacity has focused on helping them positively respond to a survivor they personally know. Research shows that a positive response is:

- Trauma-informed.
- Survivor-centred.
- Empowerment-based (i.e., emphatic about the survivors' agency).
- Focused on helping the survivor reflect on and heal from the socialization of their problematic relationships.^{15,16,17}

Specific positive responses include:

- Providing emotional support or tangible aid to survivors and their families.
- Providing advice and necessary information that survivors have asked for or may need.¹⁸

Positive responses can prevent the escalation of domestic and sexual violence, mitigate their impacts, and improve survivors' coping, healing, and recovery.^{19,20} Among other things, informal supporters' positive responses can:

- Reduce distress, depression, anxiety, PTSD symptoms, and suicidality among survivors.²¹
- Improve survivors' sense of safety and self-worth, mental and physical health, and quality of life.²²
- Protect individuals from future victimization.²³
- Increase survivors' willingness and ability to seek formal help.²⁴

Negative informal supporter responses, on the other hand, include ignoring or minimizing victimization or disclosure, telling survivors to stop thinking and talking about victimization, trying to force survivors to leave the abusive relationship, or blaming survivors for their victimization.^{25,26} Negative responses often have a profound adverse impact on survivors' mental and physical health and wellbeing.^{27,28}

3.2 Bystander work

Another important initiative is work with bystanders; individuals who witness violence or the conditions that perpetuate violence (e.g., sexism) and, although are not directly involved in the

incident, have the opportunity to discourage, divert, prevent, or interrupt it.²⁹ The bystander approach teaches individuals witnessing violence how to interrupt it and develops their skills to be effective and supportive allies to survivors.³⁰ Additionally, the bystander approach empowers individuals to recognize situations that promote violence and to confront discriminatory and abusive norms and behaviours that lead to violence among their peers.^{31,32} This strategy is akin to primary prevention efforts because it contributes to broader group and community norms change around domestic and sexual violence.^{33,34}

Bystander initiatives often include an educational component with elements of practice, for example, role play or intensive capacity building.³⁵ Sometimes, social marketing campaigns involving posters,³⁶ booth campaigns, booklets, and social media posts are used;³⁷ however, initiatives usually include some form of training, increasingly offered not only in person, but also online.³⁸ Most Bystander programs are focused on building respect for women and empathy for violence survivors; challenge participants' attitudes and beliefs that drive violence, such as sexual violence myth acceptance; normalize intervention to prevent or disrupt violence; and build practical skills to identify warning signs of violence and intervene safely.³⁹

Many Bystander programs have been directed at reducing sexual violence, especially on post-secondary campuses.⁴⁰ The best-known international Bystander initiatives include:⁴¹

- *Mentors in Violence Prevention*, which “uses a combination of mixed- and single-gender discussions to help participants develop strategies to challenge men’s violence against women.”
- *Coaching Boys into Men*, which trains and encourages high school coaches to teach their male athletes healthy relationships skills and violence prevention activities.
- *Men’s Program*, which builds men’s “empathy for victims of sexual assault through recognition of their own potential for victimization.”
- *Bringing in the Bystander* and *Green Dot*, which teach male and female participants to practice safe intervention techniques when witnessing warning signs of sexual violence.

In Alberta, the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton offers learning through *Bystander Intervention 101*.⁴²

When designed and delivered properly, Bystander initiatives are likely to result in positive changes.⁴³ For example, theory-informed programs delivered in-person over multiple sessions allow participants to adopt prosocial values because participants realize their peers do not support or engage in anti-social behaviours as much as they believed.⁴⁴ However, research also shows that one-off bystander programs do not translate into deep, sustainable behavioural change. To be successful, Bystander programs must be part of a comprehensive multi-level change initiative. That is, efforts to improve community values and practices, social and cultural norms, and policies that maintain inequalities between social groups.⁴⁵

4.0 Where we need to go next

In Alberta, we have started empowering informal supporters and bystanders to intervene and disrupt violence. The next step is to empower informal supporters and bystanders to **prevent domestic and sexual violence**.

4.1 Why domestic and sexual violence happen and how we can prevent them from happening in the first place

To prevent violence, we must understand why it happens and where we can intervene. Research has shown that domestic and sexual violence are driven by gender and social inequalities and the normalization of inequality and violence, especially against women and equity-deserving groups. Together, inequalities and the normalized use of violence shape our social norms, narratives, systems, institutions, and interactions in a way that make competition, control, and coercion, as well as unequal status, power, decision-making, and access to resources, socially acceptable.⁴⁶ As such, our society produces and reproduces conditions that make domestic and sexual violence thinkable and doable.

In addition to the drivers of violence, which create conditions for it, there are risk factors, which do not cause or *always* lead to domestic and sexual violence but increase its likelihood. Risk factors include:

- Adverse childhood experiences.
- Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and PTSD.
- Heavy substance use.
- Lower education.
- Marital conflict.
- Social isolation from family and friends.
- Unemployment and low income.
- Men's deep involvement into hypermasculine groups or occupations, such as fraternities or the military.⁴⁷

Primary prevention means preventing initial perpetration and victimization of violence by eradicating the drivers of domestic and sexual violence. Primary prevention must also address risk factors for domestic and sexual violence, both on the societal and community levels and at the family and individual levels. For example, primary prevention efforts must focus on policies for families that support children and youth to thrive while also focusing on reducing and stopping adverse childhood experiences.

4.2 How to leverage informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention

Informal supporters and bystanders can prevent domestic and sexual violence in their social networks by going upstream and either addressing the drivers of violence or intervening in the face of accumulating risk factors of violence for their friends, family members, community members, co-

workers, peers, or casual acquaintances. For example:

- Addressing the drivers of violence means challenging the normalization of violence and inequalities or disrupting gender and social discrimination and offering emotional and practical help to survivors and/or perpetrators of discriminatory acts.
- Addressing behavioural, situational, and environmental risk factors means identifying the factors that increase the likelihood that domestic and sexual violence will take place and offering emotional and practical help to those who may experience or perpetrate violence.

Therefore, in the context of primary prevention, **empowering informal supporters and bystanders means building individuals' capacity to challenge the normalization of violence and inequality; to disrupt the norms and practices that promote gender and social inequalities; to address behavioural, situational, or environmental risk factors of violence; and to offer emotional or practical help to those affected by violence, with the ultimate goal of stopping domestic and sexual violence before they start.** In essence, informal supporters and bystanders can send a strong message to perpetrators that domestic and sexual violence is not acceptable and prevent perpetration by normalizing prosocial behaviours in all interactions and settings and working actively to disrupt people's trajectories towards violence.

To our knowledge, there is no research on or initiatives for leveraging informal supporters or bystanders for *primary prevention in Alberta*. Therefore, we encourage Albertan researchers and practitioners to study how to best leverage informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention and urge the Alberta anti-violence sector to integrate informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention into its programming. Empowering informal supporters and bystanders to stop domestic and sexual violence before they start involves:

Educating individuals about the drivers of domestic and sexual violence (the normalization of violence and inequality and gender and social inequalities) and helping them identify the manifestations in families, friends, co-workers, and peers.

- *For example, an employee who witnesses coworkers making disparaging remarks about an equity-deserving group can challenge these behaviours. First, they can offer informal support or recommendations of appropriate formal support to members of equity-deserving groups. In this way, the employee acts as a bystander and an informal supporter for their colleagues dealing with a toxic workplace environment that creates conditions for workplace violence. The employee (informal supporter) can also approach human resources to recommend running trainings for all management and staff on healthy workplaces that focus on equity, inclusion, and belonging, and to learn about micro-aggressions and micro-invalidations and their impact.*

Educating individuals about the risk factors of domestic and sexual violence and helping them identify situations when accumulating risk factors may lead to domestic and sexual violence in families, friends, or peers.

- *For example, a family friend who knows that a father has recently lost his job, started spending more time with friends who disparage women, and is using alcohol to cope, can*

invite the man to discuss his experiences and recommend emotional or practical help (e.g., employment counsellors, networking and volunteering opportunities, or peer support groups) to ensure the increased stressors do not result in violence against the man's family. This support must be delivered in a non-judgemental non-stigmatizing manner while also acknowledging the well-documented association between risk factors such as unemployment and substance use and violence.

Developing Albertans' capacity to approach people who have experienced discrimination or are facing multiple risk factors of violence in a safe and proactive manner.

- *For example, if a member of an adult sports club notices a discriminatory attitude or treatment of 2SLGBTQIA+ participants by the coach, they can challenge the coach, report the coach to the administration, and approach their 2SLGBTQIA+ peers to recommend resources and formal supports available in the club or outside it. The informal supporter can also approach the club's management and request anti-discrimination policies and procedures be strengthened and staff capacity to deliver equitable services be improved.*

Informing individuals about available resources for people who have experienced gender or social discrimination or who are at risk of experiencing or perpetrating domestic and sexual violence.

- *For example, the provincial government can create a comprehensive booklet with a list of local resources that address the impact of discrimination as well as behavioural, situational, and environmental risk factors of violence (e.g., community organizations that educate people on their human rights and support equity-deserving groups, free community-based mental health supports, emergency income supports, or emergency accommodation). Institutions, such as schools, universities, and workplaces, can create a list of internal resources (e.g., counselling, worker support groups, or discrimination complaint mechanisms).*

Teaching informal supporters and bystanders how to ensure their own safety and wellbeing and informing them about available resources for themselves.

- *For example, Alberta Health Services can publish a booklet on health resources for emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing of people acting as bystanders and informal supporters, where service providers can acknowledge their experiences of intervening in situations of discrimination and offer appropriate help.*

When developing or enhancing existing initiatives for informal supporters and bystanders, it is important to adopt a gender transformative and intersectional lens while building their capacity to meet the unique needs of various groups. For example:

- Informal supporters and bystanders must be ready to provide gender-responsive help, which often means providing practical help such as shelter, transportation, money, or childcare to women, and emotional help to men.⁴⁸ Furthermore, informal supporters and bystanders must be ready to provide sensitive support to men facing discrimination or risk factors of violence since men often struggle with recognizing and acknowledging their victimization.^{49,50}

- Informal supporters and bystanders in some equity-deserving communities (e.g., racialized, religious, immigrant, or 2SLGBTQIA+ communities) may require additional capacity building and supports to challenge intra-community discrimination and risk factors of violence. In some cases, community leaders and members may pressure individuals not to intervene in discrimination and violence to protect the community's reputation and to shield perpetrators from the legal system.⁵¹ At the same time, informal supporters of people with privilege may also need additional capacity building because highly educated individuals and individuals of high socio-economic status may struggle to see themselves as potential survivors and acknowledging that they may need help.⁵²

While building individuals' capacity is important, sustainable change will happen only if we continue promoting socio-cultural, systemic, and institutional change that reinforces safety and gender and social equality because informal supporters and bystanders will not be able to eradicate domestic and sexual violence on their own.

5.0 Recommendations for the Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector to empower Albertans to stop violence before it starts

The informal supports and bystander work of the Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector can focus on four objectives:

1. Changing norms around inequality and violence and building Albertans' capacity to act as informal supporters or bystanders when witnessing gender and social inequalities or risk factors of violence.
2. Building social cohesion and promoting Albertans' help-seeking behaviours, particularly relying on informal supporters and trusting bystanders.
3. Implementing programs for informal supporters' and bystanders' health and wellbeing.
4. Implementing legislation and policy reforms that normalize, educate, empower, and protect informal supporters and bystanders.

5.1 Change norms and build Albertans' capacity to prevent violence

The Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector can:

Organize education campaigns to change norms.

- Reinforce the understanding that the normalization of violence and inequality and gender and social inequalities are the drivers of domestic and sexual violence.
- Reinforce the understanding of risk factors for domestic and sexual violence and how to identify them in families, friends, and peers.
- Send the message that non-violence and equality are essential for preventing domestic and sexual violence and that primary prevention is everybody's responsibility.

Organize gender-responsive, age appropriate, culturally relevant, and accessible education campaigns, workshops, and online events to

- Build informal supporters' and bystanders' capacity to offer a positive response when witnessing or hearing about discrimination or risk factors for violence.
- Build their skills to intervene safely.
- Learn about the available formal services to people at risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence.
- Learn how to address cultural factors and the structural and systemic challenges of specific groups.

Create and widely disseminate a list of organizations that can support people facing discrimination or risk factors of domestic and sexual violence.

Develop and implement initiatives that promote solidarity networks in communities, educational institutions, workplaces, and community organizations to increase people's ability to act as informal supporters and bystanders.

Build the capacity and motivation of leaders, managers, and supervisors to act as informal supporters and bystanders, promote nonviolence and equality, and prevent violence, especially in areas where violence and inequality are rife (e.g., sports, fraternities, law enforcement, and trades) and in cultural and religious communities with rigid gender and social roles.

5.2 Build social cohesion and promote Albertans' help-seeking behaviours

The Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector can:

Promote social cohesion and social belonging of all groups, emphasizing our common humanity and mutual responsibility for one another's wellbeing and safety in families, friends, and peers.

De-stigmatize and normalize help-seeking behaviours by taking an intersectional approach and helping men and equity-deserving groups understand how their socialization may prevent them from disclosing discrimination, seeking support when at risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence, and trusting bystanders who try to intervene.

5.3 Implement programs for informal supporters' and bystanders' health and wellbeing

The Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector can:

Organize awareness-raising campaigns on the risks to informal supporters and bystanders and how to assess and mitigate them effectively.

Organize education campaigns, workshops, and online events to **build informal supporters' and**

bystanders' capacity for self-awareness and self-care and inform them of existing services for their wellbeing and safety.

Build human service providers' capacity to support informal supporters and bystanders in a sensitive, trauma-informed, gender-responsive, age appropriate, and culturally responsive manner.

Develop and implement initiatives that **promote solidarity networks with informal supporters and bystanders**, building the public's capacity to identify informal supporters at internal or external risk (e.g., psychological and emotional problems or retaliation by the potential perpetrator) and to offer appropriate help.

5.4 Implement legislation and policy reforms that normalize, educate, empower, and protect informal supporters and bystanders

The Government of Alberta can:

Introduce provincial legislation to offer explicit protections to informal supporters and bystanders (e.g., protecting them from retaliation in institutions or requiring pro-active safety measures for bystanders intervening in hospitality venues and recreation places).

Integrate informal supporters and bystanders into the primary prevention agenda.

Fund research on help-seeking, informal supporters, bystanders, and practices that work to disrupt discrimination and prevent violence in Alberta, considering the province's particular social and cultural characteristics.

Build a cross-sectoral coalition for empowering and protecting informal supporters and bystanders, and work across government, with non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to implement policies that support and protect informal supporters and bystanders in institutions and communities.

Mandate institutions and organizations, especially those prone to discrimination, to implement institutional policies, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation of initiatives for informal supporters and bystanders.

6.0 A logic model: How informal supporters and bystanders can be leveraged for a better Alberta

The Government of Alberta and the anti-violence sector can adopt the following logic model to guide their work.

Impact			
Increased equity and safety of all Albertans, including children, youth, women, and equity-deserving groups.			
Intermediate Outcomes			
1. Albertans act as informal supporters and bystanders to address discrimination and risk factors of domestic and sexual violence in their social networks.	2. Albertans experiencing or perpetrating discrimination or at risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence rely on informal supporters and bystanders to prevent domestic and sexual violence.	3. The anti-violence sector offers services that raise awareness, increase motivation, empower, and protect informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence.	4. The Government of Alberta implements legislation and policy and provides funding to educate, empower, and protect informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence.
Immediate Outcomes			
1.1. Albertans understand the drivers and risk factors of violence.	2.1. Albertans understand the importance and benefits of informal supporters and bystanders.	3.1. The anti-violence sector understands how it can support informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention.	4.1. The Government of Alberta understands the importance of informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention.
1.2. Albertans have the capacity, confidence, and motivation to intervene safely and appropriately when witnessing discrimination or risk factors of violence.	2.2. Albertans are willing to rely on informal supporters and bystanders to prevent violence.	3.2. The anti-violence sector has the capacity to support informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention.	4.2. The Government of Alberta is willing to invest in policies and programs for informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention.

Outputs			
Education campaigns Workshops Champions of change Public service announcements Media campaigns	Education campaigns Public service announcements Media campaigns Workshops for frontline service providers	Issue briefs Workshops Champions of change Training curricula Conferences	Issue briefs Consultation sessions with experts and survivors Policy recommendations
Assumptions		External Factors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Informal supports can be successfully leveraged for primary prevention. ➤ Practical information on effective interventions can be shared in an easy, convincing way. ➤ Knowledge change will lead to behaviour change. ➤ The anti-violence sector has the capacity and motivation to work with informal supporters. ➤ The government is willing to allocate time and resources for informal supporter’s work. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Socio-political climate of fragmentation and backlash against equity and non-violence. ➤ Increased levels of violence, including gun violence, that can overwhelm and provoke fear in witnesses. 	
Risks		Stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Anti-violence sector exhaustion. ➤ Government focus on fiscal responsibility. ➤ Intra-governmental change and instability. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Government of Alberta ➤ The anti-violence sector ➤ Human service providers ➤ Institutions and organizations ➤ Communities 	

7.0 Conclusion

Informal supporters and bystanders can play important roles not only in disrupting but also in preventing domestic and sexual violence from happening in the first place. The government and the anti-violence sector are well positioned to lead the work that will leverage informal supporters and bystanders throughout Alberta for primary prevention. Many recommended activities in this report are similar or parallel to the existing work in the province (e.g., initiatives for key influencers and champions of change, allyship campaigns, and capacity building for violence interrupters). We propose raising the profile of informal supporters and bystanders for primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence by building on the existing momentum, consolidating effective initiatives from across Alberta that pursue similar goals, and capitalizing on Albertans' knowledge and skills to build a movement of informal supporters and bystanders for a violence-free Alberta.

Appendix A

Some Albertan initiatives working with informal supporters include:

- Sagesse Standby works with informal supporters by helping them through their experience, while *Real Talk* builds informal supporters' capacity.
- FearisNOTlove (formerly the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter) *Take a Stand* educates the public and builds people's capacity to act as informal supporters.
- Community Initiatives Against Family Violence *Keep It Real* aims to raise awareness of the importance of informal supporters.
- Almost all AASAS Sexual Assault Centres offer single day or multi-session workshops for community members and support people on how to recognize and respond to sexual violence.
- Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre offers *Ask an Expert* for parents of children displaying problematic sexual behaviours.
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse offers *Who Do You Tell?* and *Birch Grove* programs, with some sessions for building parents' and teachers' capacity to act as informal supporters.
- Dragonfly Centre offers *Digital Parenting* to help parents promote online safety for their children.
- Lloydminster Sexual Assault Centre offers *Teaching Boundaries and Consent* for community members and informal supporters.
- Saffron Centre offers *Foundations of Connection: How to Communicate with Your Youth*.
- Sanare Centre offers *Teachable Moments* to prepare parents for conversations with their children about sexuality, healthy relationships, and preventing child sexual abuse.

References

- ¹ Hyden, M. (2015). What social networks do in the aftermath of domestic violence. *British Journal of Criminology*, 55(6), 1040–1057. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azv099>
- ² Sylaska, K. M., & Edwards, K. M. (2014). Disclosure of intimate partner violence to informal social support network members: A review of the literature. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 15(1), 3-21.
- ³ Goodman, L. A., & Smyth, K. F. (2011). A call for a social network-oriented approach to services for survivors of intimate partner violence. *Psychology of Violence*, 1(2), 79-92.
- ⁴ Demers, J. M., Roberts, A. P., Bennett, S., & Banyard, V. L. (2017). Victim Motivations for Disclosing Unwanted Sexual Experiences and Partner Abuse. *Affilia*, 32(3), 327–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109917704936>
- ⁵ Elias-Lambert, N. (2017). *Implementation and evaluation of a bystander sexual violence prevention program with university men*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ⁶ Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter. (n.d.). *Take a stand*. <https://www.calgarywomensshelter.com/shelter-programs/take-a-stand>.
- ⁷ Sagesse. (n.d.). *Real talk*. <https://realtalk.sagesse.org/>
- ⁸ Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton. (n.d.). *SACE Services*. <https://www.sace.ca/sace-services/>
- ⁹ Aujla, W. (2021). “It was like sugar-coated words”: Revictimization when south Asian immigrant women disclose domestic violence. *Affilia*, 36(2), 182–203. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109920916038>
- ¹⁰ Ogbe, E., Jbour, A., Rahbari, L., Unnithan, M., & Degomme, O. (2021). The potential role of network-oriented interventions for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence among asylum seekers in Belgium. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 25–25. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-10049-0>
- ¹¹ Ogbe, E., Jbour, A., Rahbari, L., Unnithan, M., & Degomme, O. (2021). The potential role of network-oriented interventions for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence among asylum seekers in Belgium. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 25–25. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-10049-0>
- ¹² Gauthier, G. J., Francisco, S. C., Khan, B., & Dombrowski, K. (2021). Social integration and domestic violence support in an indigenous community: Women’s recommendations of formal versus informal sources of support. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(7-8), 3117–3141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518768567>
- ¹³ Gregory, A. & Williamson, E. (2021). “I think it just made everything very much more intense”: A qualitative secondary analysis exploring the role of friends and family providing support to survivors of domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Family Violence*, 37(6), 991–1004. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-021-00292-3>
- ¹⁴ Gregory, A. & Williamson, E. (2021). “I think it just made everything very much more intense”: A qualitative secondary analysis exploring the role of friends and family providing support to survivors of domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Family Violence*, 37(6), 991–1004. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-021-00292-3>
- ¹⁵ Melgar Alcantud, P., Campdepadrós-Cullell, R., Fuentes-Pumarola, C., & Mut-Montalvà, E. (2021). “I think I will need help”: A systematic review of who facilitates the recovery from gender-based violence and how they do so. *Health Expectations: An International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 24(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.13157>
- ¹⁶ Barrett, B. J., Peirone, A., & Cheung, C. H. (2019). Help seeking experiences of survivors of intimate partner violence in Canada: The role of gender, violence severity, and social belonging. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-019-00086-8>
- ¹⁷ Lorenz, K., Ullman, S. E., Kirkner, A., Mandala, R., Vasquez, A. L., & Sigurvinsdottir, R. (2018). Social reactions to sexual assault disclosure: A qualitative study of informal support dyads. *Violence Against Women*, 24(12), 1497–1520. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801217732428>
- ¹⁸ Ahrens, C. E., Dworkin, E. R., & Hart, A. C. (2021). Social reactions received by survivors of intimate partner violence: A qualitative validation of key constructs from the social reactions questionnaire. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 45(1), 37–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684320975663>
- ¹⁹ Ogbe, E., Jbour, A., Rahbari, L., Unnithan, M., & Degomme, O. (2021). The potential role of network-oriented interventions for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence among asylum seekers in Belgium. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 25–25. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-10049-0>
- ²⁰ Lonsway, K.A., & Archambault, J., (2020). *Improving responses to sexual assault disclosures: Both informal and formal support providers*. End Violence Against Women International.

- ²¹ Sylaska, K. M., & Edwards, K. M. (2014). Disclosure of intimate partner violence to informal social support network members: A review of the literature. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 15*(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013496335>
- ²² Sylaska, K. M., & Edwards, K. M. (2014). Disclosure of intimate partner violence to informal social support network members: A review of the literature. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 15*(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013496335>
- ²³ Sylaska, K. M., & Edwards, K. M. (2014). Disclosure of intimate partner violence to informal social support network members: A review of the literature. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 15*(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013496335>
- ²⁴ Gregory, A. & Williamson, E. (2021). “I think it just made everything very much more intense”: A qualitative secondary analysis exploring the role of friends and family providing support to survivors of domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Family Violence, 37*(6), 991–1004. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-021-00292-3>
- ²⁵ Ahrens, C. E., Dworkin, E. R., & Hart, A. C. (2021). Social reactions received by survivors of intimate partner violence: A qualitative validation of key constructs from the social reactions questionnaire. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 45*(1), 37–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684320975663>
- ²⁶ Mwatsiya, I. & Rasool, S. (2021). “We need to understand the whole story”: A discursive analysis of the responses of informal support networks to help seeking by women experiencing abuse from men in a small south African town. *Gender Issues, 38*(3), 284–304. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-021-09286-3>
- ²⁷ Ahrens, C. E., Dworkin, E. R., & Hart, A. C. (2021). Social reactions received by survivors of intimate partner violence: A qualitative validation of key constructs from the social reactions questionnaire. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 45*(1), 37–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684320975663>
- ²⁸ Demers, J. M., Roberts, A. P., Bennett, S., & Banyard, V. L. (2017). Victim motivations for disclosing unwanted sexual experiences and partner abuse. *Affilia, 32*(3), 327–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109917704936>
- ²⁹ Elias-Lambert, N. (2017). *Implementation and evaluation of a bystander sexual violence prevention program with university men*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ³⁰ Elias-Lambert, N. (2017). *Implementation and evaluation of a bystander sexual violence prevention program with university men*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ³¹ Elias-Lambert, N. (2017). *Implementation and evaluation of a bystander sexual violence prevention program with university men*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ³² Coker, A. L., & Clear, E. R. (2014). New approaches to violence prevention through bystander intervention. In Johnson, H., Fisher, B., & Jaquier, V. (Eds.). (2014). *Critical issues on violence against women: International perspectives and promising strategies* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.4324/9780203727805>
- ³³ Elias-Lambert, N. (2017). *Implementation and evaluation of a bystander sexual violence prevention program with university men*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- ³⁴ Coker, A. L., & Clear, E. R. (2014). New approaches to violence prevention through bystander intervention. In Johnson, H., Fisher, B., & Jaquier, V. (Eds.). (2014). *Critical issues on violence against women: International perspectives and promising strategies* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.4324/9780203727805>
- ³⁵ Coker, A. L., & Clear, E. R. (2014). New approaches to violence prevention through bystander intervention. In Johnson, H., Fisher, B., & Jaquier, V. (Eds.). (2014). *critical issues on violence against women: International perspectives and promising strategies* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.4324/9780203727805>
- ³⁶ Potter, S. J., Moynihan, M. M., Stapleton, J. G., & Banyard, V. L. (2009). Empowering bystanders to prevent campus violence against women: A preliminary evaluation of a poster campaign. *Violence Against Women, 15*(1), 106–121. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.1177/1077801208327482>
- ³⁷ Park, S., & Ko, Y. (2021). Social marketing program for dating violence bystander intervention on university campus: analyzing its effectiveness and sociocultural feasibility. *Journal of American College Health, ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2021.1967361>.
- ³⁸ Salazar, L. F., Vivolo-Kantor, A., Hardin, J., & Berkowitz, A. (2014). A web-based sexual violence bystander intervention for male college students: randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research, 16*(9), e203–e203. <https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3426>

- ³⁹ Salazar, L. F., Vivolo-Kantor, A., & Schipani-McLaughlin, A. M. (2019). Theoretical mediators of real consent: A web-based sexual violence prevention and bystander education program. *Health Education & Behavior, 46*(1), 79–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198118779126>
- ⁴⁰ Coker, A. L., & Clear, E. R. (2014). New approaches to violence prevention through bystander intervention. In Johnson, H., Fisher, B., & Jaquier, V. (Eds.). (2014). *Critical Issues on Violence Against Women: International Perspectives and Promising Strategies* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.4324/9780203727805>
- ⁴¹ Hammock, A. C., Majumdar Das, S., Mathew, A., & Johnson, S. (2022). An exploratory qualitative study of undergraduate men’s perspectives on sexual violence bystander education. *Journal of American College Health, 70*(4), 1223–1230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2020.1790572>
- ⁴² SACE. (n.d.). Bystander Intervention 101: <https://www.sace.ca/learn/bystander-intervention/>.
- ⁴³ Evans, J. L., Burroughs, M. E., & Knowlden, A. P. (2019). Examining the efficacy of bystander sexual violence interventions for first- year college students: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 48*, 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2019.08.016>
- ⁴⁴ Jacobsen, J. (2018). The role of active bystander training within a comprehensive prevention framework. In Cimini, M. D., & Rivero, E. M. (Eds.). *Promoting behavioral health and reducing risk among college students: a comprehensive approach* (First edition). Boca Raton, FL: Routledge, an imprint of Taylor and Francis.
- ⁴⁵ Howard, R. M., Potter, S. J., Guedj, C., & Stapleton, J. D. (2018). Sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking on campus. In Cimini, M. D., & Rivero, E. M. (Eds.). *Promoting behavioral health and reducing risk among college students: a comprehensive approach* (First edition). Boca Raton, FL: Routledge, an imprint of Taylor and Francis.
- ⁴⁶ Litviniuc, A., & Wells, L. (2022). *A suite of policy and legislation recommendations for the government of Alberta to advance primary prevention of sexual violence*. Calgary, AB: The University of Calgary, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence.
- ⁴⁷ Sitaker, M. (2007). The ecology of intimate partner violence: Theorized impacts on women’s use of violence. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 15*(3-4), 179–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926770802097335>
- ⁴⁸ Barrett, B. J., Peirone, A., & Cheung, C. H. (2019). Help seeking experiences of survivors of intimate partner violence in Canada: The role of gender, violence severity, and social belonging. *Journal of Family Violence, 35*(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-019-00086-8>
- ⁴⁹ Roebuck, B., McGlinchey, D., Hastie, K., Taylor, M., Roebuck, M., Bhele, S., Hudson, E., & Grace Xavier, R. (2020). *Male survivors of intimate partner violence in Canada*. Victimology Research Centre, ON: Algonquin College.
- ⁵⁰ Gjika, A., & Marganski A. J. (2020). Silent voices, hidden stories: A review of sexual assault (non)disclosure literature, emerging issues, and call to action. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 9*(4): 163-176. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v9i4.1439>
- ⁵¹ Gjika, A., & Marganski A. J. (2020). Silent voices, hidden stories: A review of sexual assault (non)disclosure literature, emerging issues, and call to action. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy, 9*(4): 163-176. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.v9i4.1439>
- ⁵² Dheensa, S., McLindon, E., Spencer, C., Pereira, S., Shrestha, S., Emsley, E., & Gregory, A. (2022). Healthcare professionals’ own experiences of domestic violence and abuse: A meta-analysis of prevalence and systematic review of risk markers and consequences. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 0*(0), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380211061771>