

A Safe Place[✿]

**Recognize, Respond,
Refer-**
How to Support Those
Experiencing Intimate
Partner Violence



A Safe Place[✿]

**Providing Support
and Resources for
Victims of Domestic
Violence since 1982**

www.asafeplace.ca



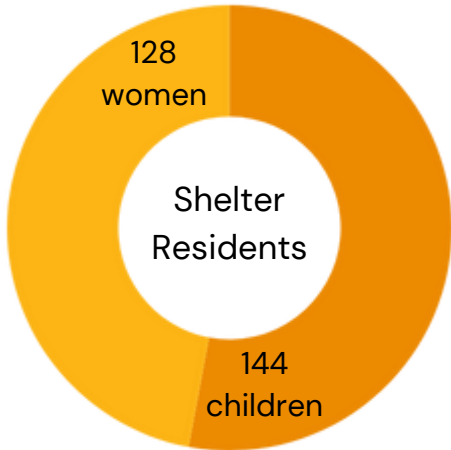
A Safe Place



- 35-bed emergency shelter for families fleeing violence
- Outreach Support for residents of Strathcona County Residents experiencing intimate partner and family violence
- 24/7 helpline (also the Strathcona Elder Abuse Helpline)
- 3 townhouse units (second-stage)

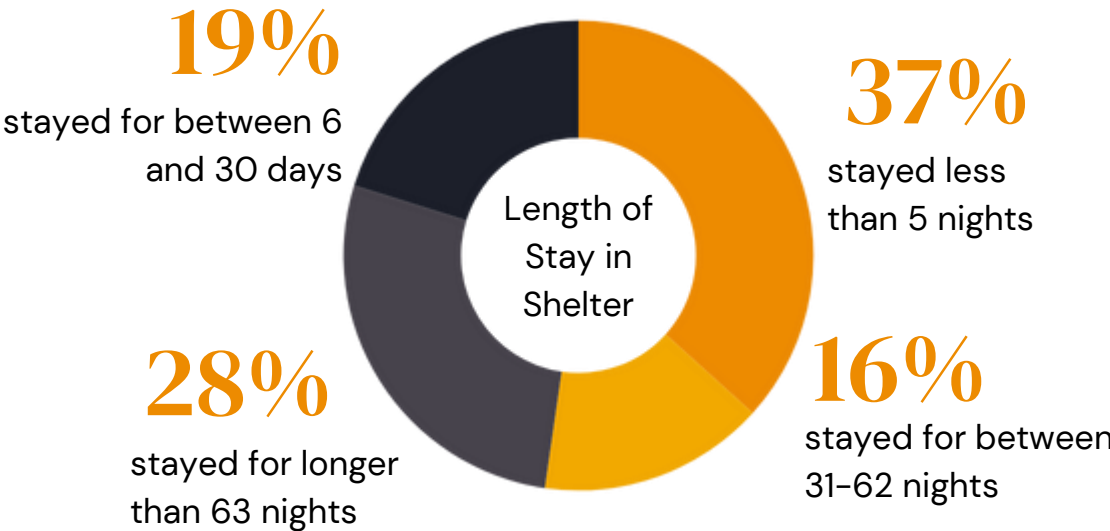
Our Year in Numbers

In 2024, **40%** of families stayed more than 31 days in shelter. Of this group of families, the average length of stay was **99** days



272 women and children were supported with emergency shelter

47% of clients served self-identify as Indigenous



86 families were supported with Outreach services

Our 24/7 Helpline answered
4035
calls that were requests for shelter.

When our shelter is at capacity, our crisis staff work to support families with safety planning, connection to other safe options and referrals to other professional supports.

“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

What is intimate partner violence?

Intimate partner violence refers to **behaviour within an intimate relationship** that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours. This definition covers **violence by both current and former spouses and partners**. (World Health Organization)

What is family violence (domestic violence)?

Family violence is when **someone uses abusive behaviour to control and/or harm a member of their family, or someone with whom they have an intimate relationship**. Family violence includes many different forms of physical and emotional abuse, as well as neglect carried out by family members or intimate partners. It may include a single act of violence, or a number of acts that form a pattern of abuse. (Justice Canada)

What does Domestic Violence Look Like?

Physical- slapping, choking, punching, threats, kicking, spitting

Sexual- threats, forced sex, violence during sex, use of porn/prostitutes without consent

Verbal-making degrading comments, name calling, threats

Economic- controlling money/possessions, stealing, not allowing partner to work

Emotional-gaslighting, confinement, threats to children, pets

Spiritual-using beliefs to manipulate and control

Stalking-persistent, unwanted following and watching

The Gendered Reality of Domestic Violence

All genders experience violence

49% of men and 51% of women in Canada are at risk of violent victimization by an intimate partner

Prevalence rates are not the whole story

Women are most likely to be seriously injured or killed and the cases involving male perpetrators and female victims are the most high risk (connection to gender norms about violence).

Intimate Partner Homicide and Mass Shootings

Every 4.2 days in Canada, a woman is killed by her current or past intimate partner.

The link between domestic violence and mass shooting events continues to emerge. Often, male perpetrators of mass shooting events have a history of perpetrating domestic violence.

Prevalence Rates for Indigenous Women and Girls

Every **4.2 days**, a woman in Canada is killed by her current or former intimate partner (Stats Can).

Indigenous women are killed at **6 times** the rate of non-Indigenous women (Cdn Women's Foundation, 2021).

Indigenous women 15 years and older are **3.5 times** more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women (Ntl Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019).

Indigenous women and girls are **12 times** more likely to be murdered or missing than any other women in Canada and **16 times** more likely than white women (Ntl Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019).

Rates of spousal assault against Indigenous women and girls were almost **7 times** higher than those against non-Indigenous women (Stats Can, Ntl Women's Association of Canada, 2008).

Connecting Prevalence Rates to Colonization

Historically, European society supported the idea of male superiority and gave men the right and obligation to discipline and control their wives.

Prior to European contact, in Indigenous communities, men's and women's traditional roles were based on equity. All the members of the community were given important roles and none were considered to be inferior to others. The community as whole was each other's health and well-being. Ceremony was a way that all genders could express themselves, connect, rest and learn.

This circle was broken during colonization and further with the implementation of the residential school system. European values about gender roles were forced on children while traditional knowledge were eradicated.

The Duluth Model (1980)



Coercive Control Model (Evan Stark, 2019)

Situational Couple Violence

- most common
- perpetrated equally by all genders
- arguments escalate to violence
- can escalate when substances are being used
- lowest risk, but can develop into coercive control

Coercive Control (Intimate Terrorism)

- most risky, can lead to homicide
- perpetrated almost exclusively by men against women
- involves a constant threat of violence and is connected to patterns of control

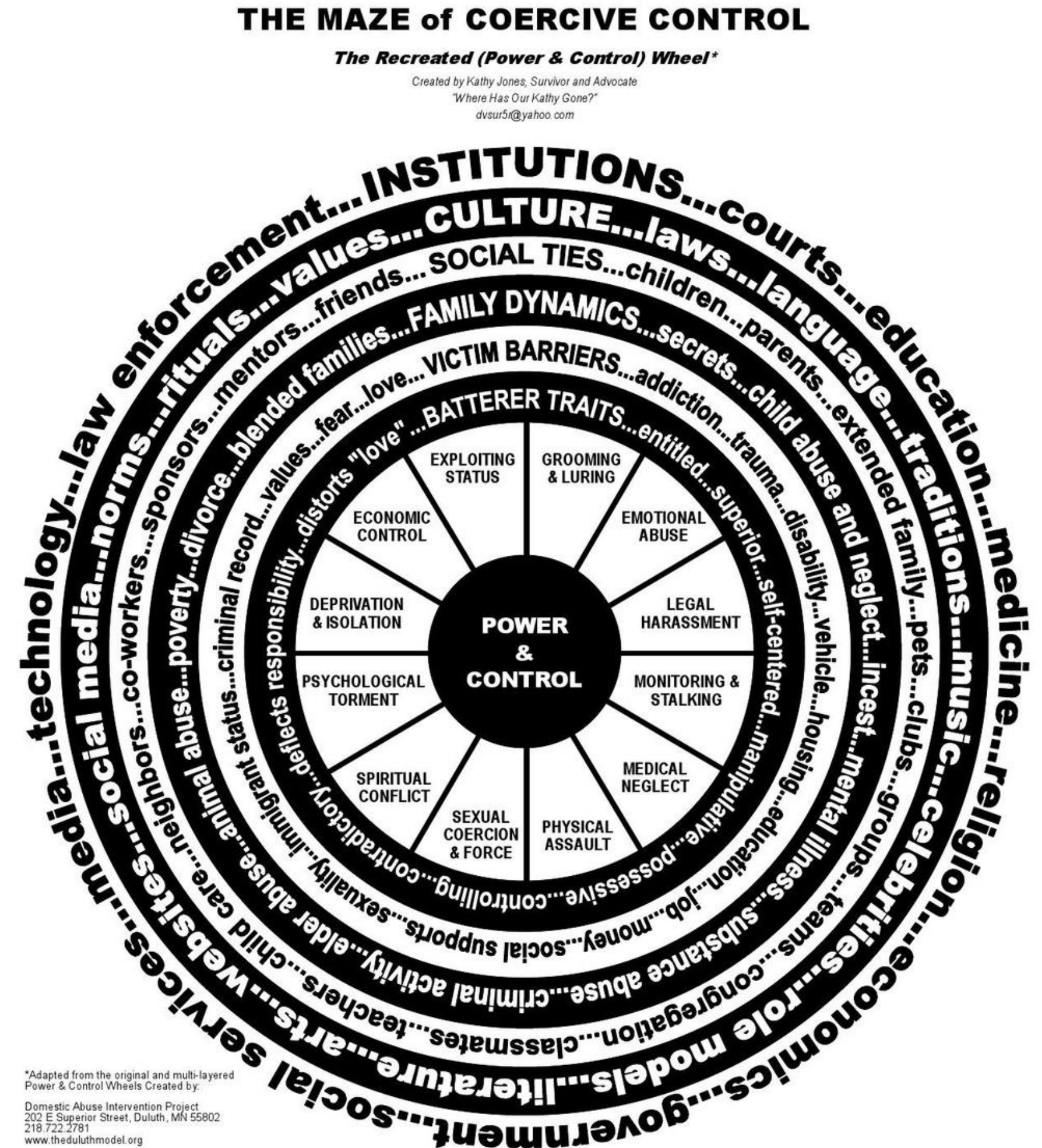
Coercive Control Model (Evan Stark, 2009)

Violent Resistance

- acts of violence perpetrated by the individual that is experiencing the control-is an attempt to increase safety for children or self
- often seen as abuse by service providers (police)

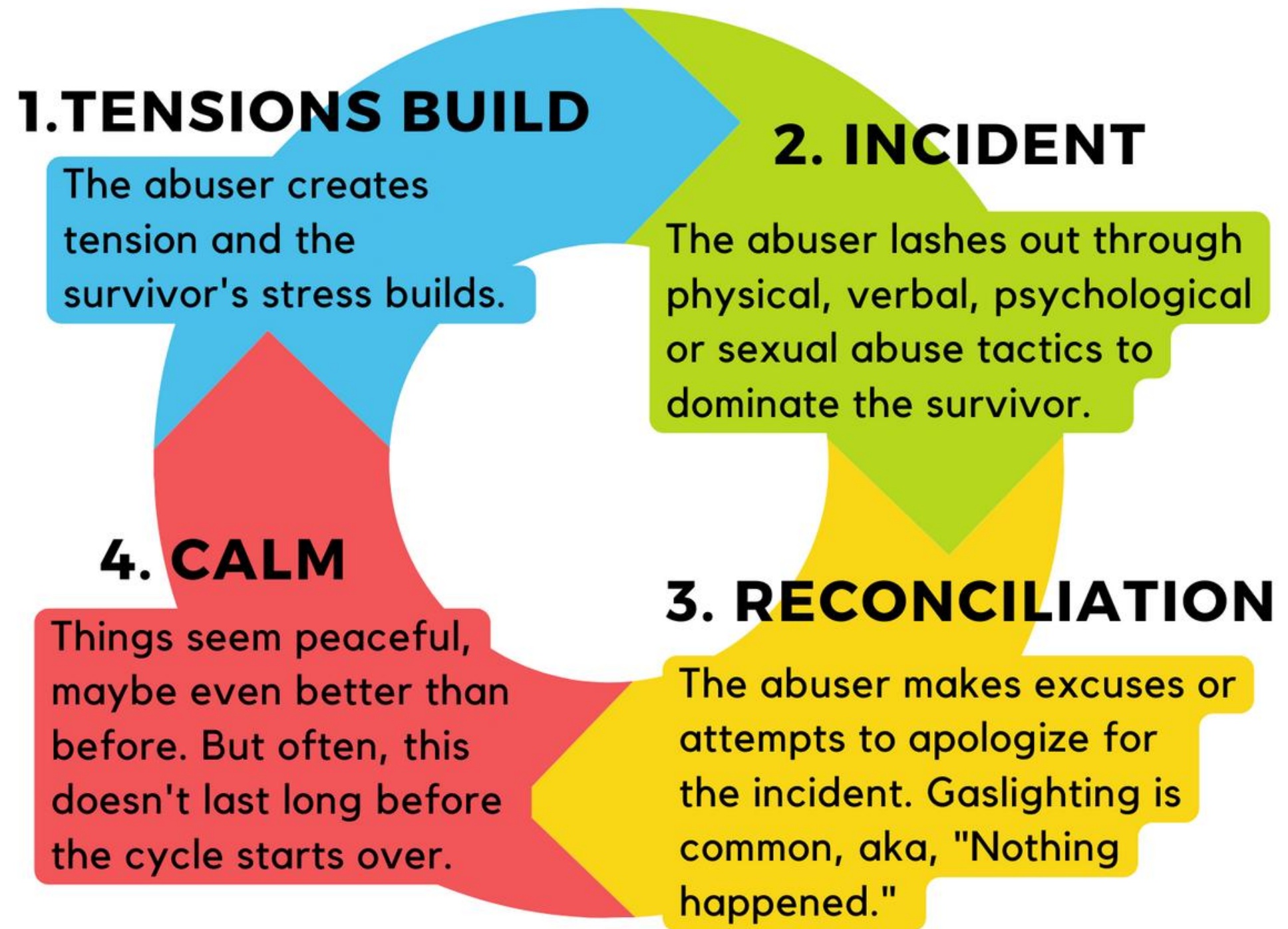
Situational Couple Violence can move into Coercive Control very quickly. When working with families experiencing violence, risk needs to be assessed regularly.

Variation of the Duluth Model to include Coercive Control



Cyclical Nature of Violence

CYCLE OF ABUSE



*Note: The Cycle of Abuse was originally created by psychologist Lenore Walker.
The Cycle does not represent all cases of domestic violence.*

The Power of Shame in the Cycle

Acts of violence escalate due to shame attached from previous incident.

The time between acts of violence gets shorter over time.

The honeymoon/calm phase has less impact and shorter duration over time.



**Less a cycle and more like a
tornado, picking up speed,
risk, intensity over time**



**Isolation increases over time as well,
which always increases RISK**

**reduce
isolation
to
increase
safety**

Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide

**There are 40 identified risk factors for DV fatality.
(Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee)**

1. Person perpetrating violence was abused or witnessed DV as a child
2. Person perpetrating violence exposed to/witnesses suicidal behavior in family of origin
3. Youth of couple (15-24)
4. Age disparity of couple (9 or more years)
5. Victim and perpetrator living common-law
6. Actual or pending separation
7. New partner in person experiencing violence's life
8. Child custody or access disputes
9. Presence of step children in the home
10. Person perpetrating violence unemployed
11. Person perpetrating violence using alcohol/drugs in the past year
12. Person perpetrating violence depression (opinion of family and friends)
13. Person perpetrating violence depression (professional diagnosed)
14. Person perpetrating violence has other mental health or psychiatric concerns
15. Prior threats to commit suicide by person perpetrating violence
16. Prior suicide attempts by person perpetrating violence
17. Obsessive behavior displayed by person perpetrating violence
18. Person perpetrating violence's failure to comply with authority (protection orders, family court orders, bail, probation etc.)
19. Sexual jealousy of person perpetrating violence
20. Misogynistic attitudes of person perpetrating violence

21. Prior destruction or deprivation of victim's property
22. History of violence outside of family by person perpetrating violence
23. History of DV with previous partners of person perpetrating violence
24. History of DV with current partner
25. Prior threats to kill by person perpetrating violence
26. Prior threats with a weapon (explicit or implicit)
27. Prior assault with a weapon
28. Controlled most of all of victim's daily activities
29. Prior hostage taking or forcible confinement
30. Prior forced sexual acts or assaults during sex
31. Strangled in the past
32. Prior violence against pets
33. Prior assault on victim while pregnant
34. Escalation of violence
35. Perpetrator threatened or harmed children
36. Extreme minimization and/or denial of spousal assault history
37. Access to or possession of firearms
38. After risk assessment, perpetrator has access to victim
39. Victim's intuitive sense of fear of perpetrator
40. Victim vulnerability

A Simple Strategy to Support (4 R's)

REDUCE ISOLATION TO INCREASE SAFETY

- Recognize** the warning signs and risk factors
- Respond** (talk to the person you are worried about, share your concern, keep the door open for support at a later time)
- Refer** (know what resources are available to help if the person you are worried about is open to talking further)
- Report** (if necessary)

SNCit! Responding to Someone You Think May Be Experiencing Abuse

See it!

What are the things you see that worry you? Changes in behavior, bruises, controlling behavior, etc. Are there things going on in the person's life that may be connected to risk (eg. recent job loss, pending separation)?

Name it!

Tell the person you are worried. Tell them why you are worried by sharing what you see and what you are worried about in terms of risk.

Check It!

Check in with them. Are you experiencing abuse? Can I help? I am here if you need me. Start with heart and know that even if they aren't ready to share, they will remember your kindness and support.

Safety Planning

Safety Plans are best when they are created by the person that has identified safety concerns, is a plan that the person will actually use and addresses: **behavior of the perpetrator, life-generated risks, and the coping strategies that the person experiencing violence identifies as helpful.**





Safe Place 

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24/7 Crisis Line (780) 464-7233

Direct Shelter Line (780) 780-417-4195