



FALL newsletter

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Verbal attacks eventually turned into action when he destroyed my property and began to stalk me. I had to flee with my young son to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter

Paula's Story (pseudonym used):

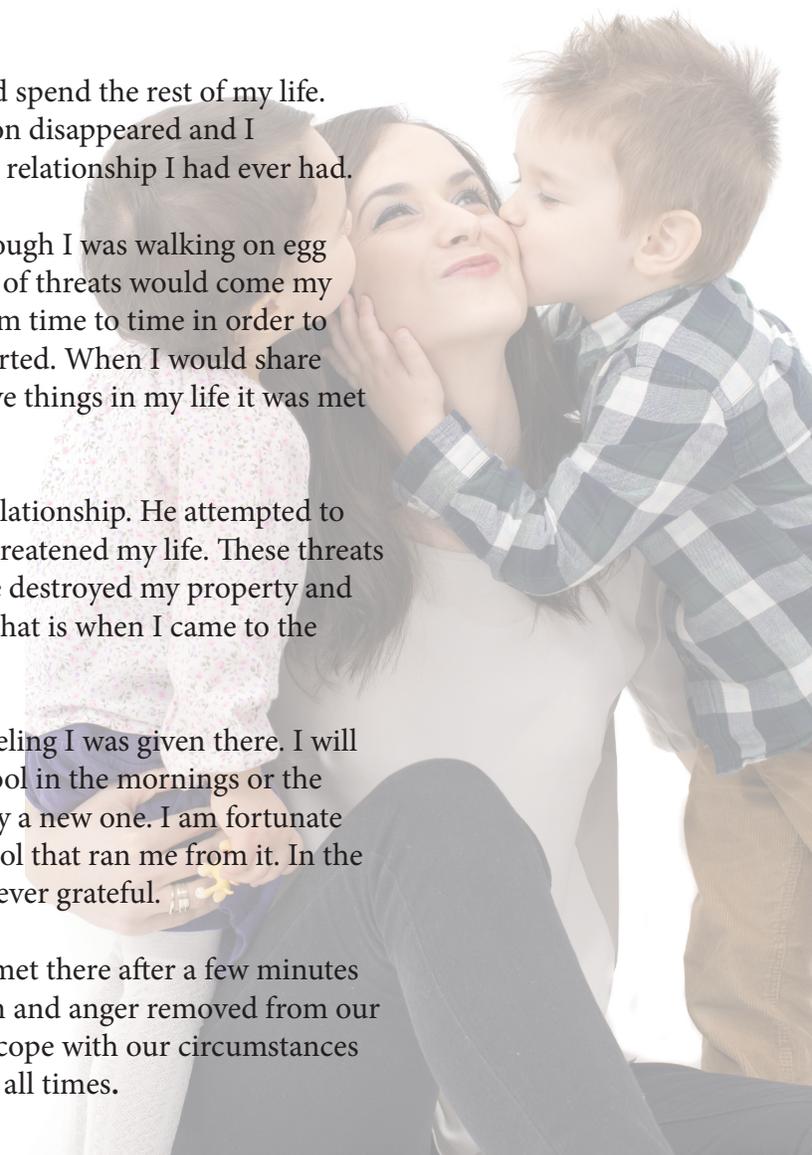
I really thought I had met the person with whom I would spend the rest of my life. However, shortly after giving birth to my child the illusion disappeared and I endured five years of the most toxic and verbally abusive relationship I had ever had.

I had so many family pressures to make it work, even though I was walking on egg shells every day. I didn't know when the next insurgence of threats would come my way or public humiliation. I tried to show happiness from time to time in order to bring back the relationship that we had when we first started. When I would share praise I had received from my colleagues or other positive things in my life it was met with rage, anger, and jealousy.

It became the most terrifying when I finally ended the relationship. He attempted to get me fired from my job, to cancel my insurance, and threatened my life. These threats and verbal attacks eventually turned into action when he destroyed my property and began to stalk me. I had to flee with my young son, and that is when I came to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter.

I will never forget the hospitality, help and welcoming feeling I was given there. I will never forget the little children getting ready to go to school in the mornings or the women heading out to work in hopes of making each day a new one. I am fortunate to have a home and will never forget the anger and control that ran me from it. In the Shelter, we had safety and hope, and for that I will be forever grateful.

The kindness of strangers has opened my eyes. People I met there after a few minutes showed such love and never judged me. With the tension and anger removed from our lives, we are able to embrace the future with the tools to cope with our circumstances in an effective manner while being aware of our safety at all times.





Message from our Executive Director *KIM RUSE*



This summer has been very hot and dry in Calgary. And while, we may have been enjoying great weather in the city, our thoughts go out to those who are currently evacuated or spent much of the summer evacuated due to the forest fires.

While the hot weather was enjoyable for many who took the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, others were still dealing with personal crisis. Sometimes it can be easy to lose sight of the struggles our friends, colleagues and community members face when we are busy with our own lives. This summer in Calgary, the smoke was an ever-present reminder of the challenges people were facing throughout Alberta and BC.

In some ways, family violence is similar in that it is easy to lose sight or not even recognize that those close to us or in our network could be dealing with abuse. It can be difficult to see and difficult to respond to. Often, people are unsure of how to approach it and may be hesitant to interfere or intervene.

This summer in Calgary, there was an incident where bystanders intervened and likely saved a woman's life. While I urge caution when intervening, I also believe that family violence and abuse can only be dealt with through a mobilized and active community.

Family violence and abuse is a complex issue but one that will only be solved by the involvement of bystanders. You can make a difference and change or save someone's life. Learn how to recognize family violence and abuse. Respond positively and listen, and learn where you can get help for those you support or yourself. Family violence and abuse doesn't need to be in the shadows any more. There is help and resources available, and I encourage you to join the movement to make our community free from family violence and abuse.





Unmasking Family Violence & Abuse Turning Points 2017

On Thursday, April 27, 2017, we held our 23rd annual Turning Points Gala at the TELUS Convention Centre. *Unmasking Family Violence and Abuse* celebrated the courageous individuals and families in our community striving to live free from family violence and abuse as well as commemorated the important work of our agency.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi, Calgary Police Chief Roger Chaffin, emcee and performer Dave Kelly, and many others joined us to unmask the myths, stereotypes and stigmas to reveal the true picture of family violence and abuse. The event raised approximately \$628,000 in support of our agency's innovative programs and services to help build safer, healthier and happier lives for women, children, youth and men.

Thank you to our Turning Points Honorary Patron, Avi Amir, Co-Chairs: Sherri Logel and Shelly Norris, the Turning Points Committee and our sponsors, donors and partners.

Save the date for our next Turning Points Gala on Thursday, April 26, 2018.

Below Right: Turning Points Co-Chairs Sherri Logel and Shelly Norris



2017 Turning Points Sponsors and Partners include:

Platinum: Cardel Lifestyles, Homes by Avi, and Norris Family Foundation

Gold: Borger Group of Companies, Newalta, and Qualico

Silver: Brookfield Residential, Calgary Sun, Enerplus, and Imperial

Bronze: ATB Financial, Brydon Construction, Carrington Lighting, Elegant Woodwork and Construction Ltd., Emerson Clarke Printing, GDI Integrated Facility Services, Giusti Group of Companies, Heritage Pointe Properties/Heritage Pointe Golf Club, Hoover Mechanical, Igloo Building Supplies Group Ltd., Investra Ltd., Jayman BUILT, Kelmar Electric, Keyera Corporation, MarlynCrast Inc., McLeod Law LLP, New Interiors, NexusV, Okotoks Home Hardware Building Centre, Pekarsky & Co., Peter The Plantman, Rogers & Company, Royal LePage Solutions, Saunders Landscaping, Spencer Stuart & Associates, TELUS, Toole Peet Insurance, and Werklund Foundation

Event Supporters: Bill Pringle Photography, brooks & dodd consulting inc., Actors: Caitlynn Medrek, Christopher Hunt and Myla Southward, Dave Kelly and Kelly Brothers Productions, Evolution Presentation Technologies, Frank Hall, and Orange Frog Productions

Husky Has Heart

Long Term Donors: Husky Energy



Husky Energy is a Canadian-based integrated energy company that ranks amongst Canada's largest petroleum companies. Husky is committed to engaging communities and supporting local charitable organizations where it operates. Employees are involved with local organizations in various ways to help improve the quality of life for their neighbours. They believe in accountability to not only their shareholders, but to the broader community. For this reason the company truly engages at every level in philanthropic efforts and gives back on many platforms.

For more than 20 years, the employees of Husky Energy have helped those who are impacted by family violence and abuse. They have supported the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter as one of the charities they invest in through the annual employee giving campaign. Their support has not wavered.

"The issue of domestic violence is vitally important to the people of Calgary, including our employees who - by voting for the Husky campaign to support the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter - are voicing their concern and taking a stand against family

violence and abuse," states Michelle Harries, Business Manager of Community Investment.

Husky employees find different ways to get involved throughout the year including fundraising, volunteer efforts, and drives for essential items for the clients we serve in the community.

"We should be setting an example that violence is never a solution. As adults, it is our responsibility to role model peaceful conflict resolution so that we teach the generations that follow us to be compassionate and caring to each other. When we live in safety we make room for the other aspects of our lives to thrive and, full-circle, this momentum in turn builds resilient and vibrant communities and families," states Harries.

To date, Husky Energy has donated \$600,000 to help those experiencing family violence and abuse. Thank you Husky Energy for continuing to be a leader in the Calgary community and taking a stand!



CTV's Toy Mountain



We are excited to partner once again with CTV Calgary, Bell Media radio stations: CJAY92, Virgin Radio and Funny Radio, Brookfield Property Partners, and AMJ Campbell for CTV's Toy Mountain Campaign that takes place from November 20 - December 22.

The CTV Toy Mountain Campaign helps us collect funds, toys and basic essential items needed not only during the holidays, but all year round.

In 2016, more than \$379,000 was collected in cash, toys and other essential items for clients in need at the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. In addition to collecting items and cash donations, the campaign raises awareness around family violence and abuse. Stay tuned for more information about how you can support vulnerable women and families in the community.

Adopt A Family

You can make a difference in the lives of a family fleeing violence and abuse.

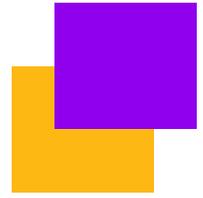
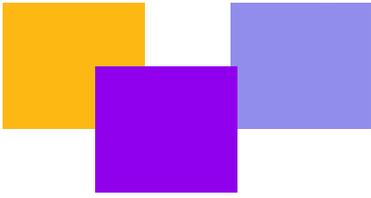
Help us support a family's stay at the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter and their journey to a life free from violence and abuse. The Emergency Shelter provides women and children a safe haven where we provide meals, clothing, referral services, physical and mental health supports, safety planning, and counselling. By donating funds to Adopt a Family at the Shelter, you will reach out to families throughout the year by helping to ensure their needs are met.

For additional information, or to register, please contact: info@cwes.ca or visit www.calgarywomensshelter.com.



Family Violence Prevention Month

NOVEMBER



November is Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta. This is a yearly campaign intended to help raise awareness and educate Albertans on how to identify and prevent family violence, as well as ways to support victims.

We hope to engage Calgarians in a discussion about family violence while highlighting the resources available for people who are experiencing it and ways the community can support, as well as encourage victims to seek out help.

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter will be teaming up with other Calgary Domestic Violence Collective agencies at the launch of Family Violence Prevention Month, taking place during the second annual Bridging Communities Conference on November 1st, 2017 at Hotel Alma at the University of Calgary. For more information visit: www.cdvc.ca/feature-events/.

Together, we can all Take A Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse. Everyone has a responsibility to end violence in their community by focusing efforts to increase awareness and promote prevention and public education.

The purple ribbon is a symbol of support for the victims of family violence and abuse. Wear a purple ribbon during the month of November to show that you take a stand against this issue.





Interview with a Community Services Counsellor



Within our agency, we counsel women, children, and men through many different issues and challenges pertaining to family violence and abuse. Our counsellors work hard to help individuals live free from family violence and abuse. We asked one of our counsellors some questions about their day to day work and the journeys they take with their clients.

1. How would you describe what you do?

I would describe my job as being humbling. I feel honoured that the women I work with feel safe enough to share their stories and life with me.

2. What is a typical day like?

On a typical day I see 2-3 clients. Sessions usually range between 1-2 hours. Often we provide support over the phone to clients who needs extra help in between face to face sessions. Sessions can be held in various locations. Each client has their own unique story and experience in regards to family violence and abuse. Some clients have recently left their partner, some are still residing with their abusive partner and some have been separated from the abuser for a length of time. Regardless of where the client is in their life, there is a commonality amongst the clients that we see and in some way shape or form their own individual healing journey to find peace after experiencing family violence and abuse.

3. Please recall a particular moment that was impactful for you.

I personally believe that with a breakdown comes a breakthrough. It may be a process and it may take time but eventually one will grow and heal and become another version of themselves. I can particularly remember one client who I worked with and who initially was having thoughts of suicide after leaving her abuser. She felt worthless. The abuse had impacted her self-esteem and she no longer felt worthy of love. During our time together she was able to share her experience and unpack the negative feelings she had towards herself. Over time, she was able to identify that the way she was feeling was created from the impact of abuse, and that she was not to blame. She started to re-discover who she was again, what she wanted out of life, how she felt about herself before the abuse. Over the year I spent working with her I could see the transformation, session by session. By the end of the year she was living the life that she wanted and created for herself. Her happiness was contagious.

4. What kinds of things do you do for self-care?

Self-care is extremely important to me. I think when you're working in a field where you are supporting others it is essential to nurture yourself. If we don't take care of ourselves properly it can impact the care and support we give to others. My self-care consists of: guided meditations, walking outside in the fresh air, deep breathing exercises, journalling and physical exercise. I do at least one of my self-care strategies a day.

Safety Over *THE HOLIDAY SEASON*

The fall season is upon us, which means switching sunscreen for scarves, watching the trees change colours, and for many people – preparing for the holidays. Usually synonymous with family time, the holidays are a joy for many. However, for those impacted by family violence and abuse the holidays can be a stressful, lonely, or even dangerous time. Whether a family is still together and dealing with family violence and abuse or if a victim has left the perpetrator, there are a variety of ways the holidays are not joyous for some. People who have an abusive partner and/or an abusive individual in their life are usually very aware of the dangers they face.

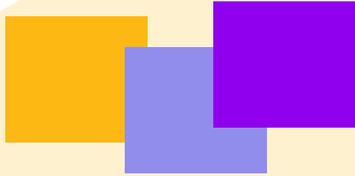
A recent study by the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary found that New Year's Day appears to be associated with a significant spike in domestic violence, going by a four-year count of phone calls reporting domestic violence to the police. This could be for a variety of reasons. If a family unit stays together or even comes back together just for the duration of the holiday season the emotional effect of this may not fully show itself until afterwards. The holidays could also either delay a victim leaving a perpetrator, or bring the victim and perpetrator back together.

The cause of family violence and abuse is always one individual trying to exert power and control over another and it can happen at any time of the year. It is always the perpetrator who is responsible for their own actions. Awareness around the issue and knowledge of the resources available are crucial to ending violence and abuse in our community.

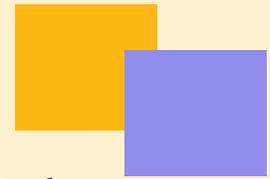
Bystanders, informal supporters and those that could potentially become a confidant for victims have a very important role to play. Informal supporters such as a friend or family member can influence how a victim feels about what has happened to them based on their responses. Positive social responses are the first step of the journey. Listen with a non-judgmental ear, tell them you believe them and that it is not their fault, and refer them to the resources available. Safety planning is important for any situation. Below are a few things to keep in mind during the holiday season if you are experiencing family violence and abuse. These do not in any way suggest that a victim is responsible for the violence and abuse they experience. Violence and abuse is the responsibility of the perpetrator. These are suggested tips which may or may not work for every person.

- Constantly **check in with yourself**. Are you okay? Do you feel too stressed? Do you feel unsafe? It is important to care for yourself and ensure you have the supports you need in place.
- Know that **it is okay to say no**. If you are entering into a situation for the sake of your family but you feel unsafe, know your boundaries.
- Have a **safe person** that you can call if you fear for your safety or for your children's safety. Talk to this person ahead of time to tell them your fears. It may be helpful to have a "safe word" that you can use with this person so that they will know you are in danger. As is the case with safety planning, have a bag packed that is ready to go and have a safe plan to leave.
- Have **resources readily available**. The 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline is (403) 234 SAFE (7233). If you are in danger call 911. Having certain numbers on speed dial and memorizing numbers would be beneficial (i.e. close friend, helpline, local police number, etc.). Ensure your informal supports are aware they are your support person and what you may need from them during this time. It is also important to have a "plan b" in case your original plan is no longer an option. Work out an intervention plan with your safety plan and when you would like your informal supports to notify the police.
- Make sure your **mobile phone is charged at all times** and have some money on you at all times. If you like you can also download a safety app. Many of the safety apps have been designed to automatically alert your support network if you need support and / or are in danger.
- If you are travelling for the holidays, **be aware of the local supports where you are travelling**. When you are staying in a place that is not your own, check out all possible escape routes in the place to familiarize yourself with possible routes to leave in an emergency.

If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence and abuse call the 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline at (403) 234-SAFE (7233). Counsellors can help provide information and support. Or visit www.calgarywomensshelter.com for information.



Upcoming Events



SEPTEMBER

Shoppers Drug Mart - Growing Women's Health
September 9 - October 7, 2017
Thirty four stores throughout Calgary will be raising funds in support of our programs and services.

Witches Night Out YYC
Saturday, September 23, 2017
A witch themed costume party, this annual event raises funds in support of the clients we serve & raises awareness to help other women.
Visit www.witchesnightoutyyc.wordpress.com.

OCTOBER

Calgary Woman's Show
October 21 and 22, 2017
BMO Centre in Stampede Park
Come visit our booth at this two day event, filled with fun, entertainment, education, fashion, celebrity guests and shopping.
www.calgarywomansshow.com.

NOVEMBER

Family Violence Prevention Month Launch
Wednesday, November 1, 2017
Stay tuned for more information. Visit our website:
www.calgarywomensshelter.com.

Family Violence Prevention Month

November 1- 30, 2017
Look out for our banners and signage throughout the month and help Take a Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse.

CTV Toy Mountain

November 20- December 22, 2017
Stay tuned for more information about how you can donate funds, provide toys, and basic necessities for women and families this holiday season.

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, November 28, 2017
Giving Tuesday is a day dedicated to giving back during the holiday season to help those in need in our community. Make a pledge to Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. Your support will help women, children, youth and men live free of family violence and abuse. For more info: www.GivingTuesday.ca.

APRIL

Turning Points 2018
Thursday, April 26, 2018
TELUS Convention Centre
Stay tuned for more information about the 24th annual Turning Points fundraising gala.

Save A Stamp

We have moved to an electronic version of our newsletter. To be added to our distribution list, please send your full name and e-mail address to info@cwes.ca. Please specify E-NEWSLETTER in the subject line.

Share Your Stories

Tell us your story. Inspire others. Change lives. We would like to reach out to past clients, volunteers and staff of Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. We encourage you to share your story and would love to hear from you! For more information: please contact Caitlin at: caitlins@cwes.ca

It's fast, easy and convenient

Donate online:
www.calgarywomensshelter.com

Text to Donate

Text ENDABUSE to 587-800-1588. You'll receive a link to complete your donation of any amount by credit card.

Stay in touch by following us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn!

