

Brant's Response Against Violence Everywhere (B.R.A.V.E) thanks the many agencies and organizations who provided data for this handbook.

Grateful thanks to the City of Brantford for providing the funding for the 2019 Refrigerator Door.

Every effort has been made to ensure the information enclosed is accurate and up-to-date. Inevitably, however, changes to programming and services will occur. Readers may wish to confirm any details with the agencies/service providers directly.

Inclusion in this book does not constitute endorsement by the B.R.A.V.E committee or the City of Brantford. Conversely, any omissions of programs and services are not intentional.

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It is important to acknowledge that the land we live and work on is First Nations' territory. The City of Brantford and surrounding area lies on the lands of Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee and the Neutral. Respect is also offered to our neighbouring Indigenous nations, including the Metis, Cree and Inuit, among many others throughout Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work in this community, on this territory. In recognizing the impact of colonial and settler violence, it is important to recognize the sexual and gender-based violence that has resulted from colonialism, and disrupted the wisdom and practices of Indigenous communities across Canada. The links between land and body for Indigenous communities create a powerful intersection – one that, when overlooked, or discounted, can threaten the very existence of the communities. In sharing (Degakahsó:gweh) this resource, we hope folks who have been impacted by intergenerational sexual and gender-based violence can find support and comfort in the resources provided. We are all treaty members, and as such it is our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories and present-day implications and to honour, protect and sustain this land. In doing so, we strive to act in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and center their voices.

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

**If you have been abused or are afraid of being hurt...**

**Get to a safe place.** Your first priority is the safety of yourself and your children. Leave the house if necessary; go to a shelter or to a friend or neighbour.

**Go to a hospital,** clinic, or your doctor to get medical attention if you have been injured.

**Call the police.** Tell them you have been assaulted. Provide details and write down the incident number, the officers' names and badge numbers.

**Police  
Ambulance  
Fire** } 911

# Prologue

## Beginning the Transition

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If you are — or were — in an abusive relationship and are trying to make your life better, this handbook is for you.

You are not alone. Domestic violence happens in all types of families all over the world. In Canada, it is estimated that one out of every four women is abused by her partner. That means that in Brantford and Brant County, as many as 14,000 women are victims of domestic violence. However, because of the isolation, embarrassment and fear that usually goes along with abuse, it's normal to believe you are alone and to be overwhelmed by the thought of leaving the relationship: "Where would I go; how would I cope, how could I provide for my children?" They may feel their situation is hopeless.

But it isn't. There is hope and there is help, right here in Brantford and the County of Brant. *The Refrigerator Door* is a start. In the same way that the fridge is often the gathering place for notes, lists, reminders and other important items, this publication provides easy-to-find information that can help you as you work toward establishing a violence free life for yourself and your children.

We recognize that while most survivors of abuse share common feelings and fears, everyone's situation is unique. There is information and advice for those who are contemplating changes, for those in the midst of leaving relationships, and for those coping with the aftermath of their decisions.

This handbook includes the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of various organizations that can assist with many of

your practical and emotional needs. It also includes space for you to record your own notes and to add the names and phone numbers of other people and agencies that will become part of your support network. Just like the unique collage of pictures and papers on your own fridge door, this book is meant to be a personal resource that can help you through this critical stage in your life.

One word of advice: At times, seeking help can seem like a difficult and frustrating process. Staff come and go. Programs and services change. New laws and policies replace old ones. And sometimes you need to call several times to get through to the right person or department. Don't give up. This may be one of the most important things you can do for yourself.

If you have any questions or comments, or you want additional copies of this handbook, please contact Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services, 519-752-1005. Additional copies can be downloaded from our website, [www.novavita.org](http://www.novavita.org).

See the Table of Contents on page 4 for a complete list of resources and services.

## **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE....**

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### **Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**519-752-HELP (4357)**

- 24-hour crisis line
- safe, emergency shelter for women and children
- counselling and safety plan assistance

### **Brantford General Hospital**

**519-751-5544, Willett Site, Paris 519-442-2251**

### **Sexual Assault Centre of Brant**

24-hour crisis line:

**519-751-3471**

### **Victim Services of Brant**

During business hours:

**519-752-3140**

After hours:

**519-756-7050**

### **Indigenous Victim Services:**

**1-866-964-5920;**

**226-227-2192**

### **Brant Family and Children's Services**

**519-753-8681**

### **Ogwadeni:deo – Six Nations Child Welfare:**

**519-445-1864**

### **Ganohkwasra**

**519-445-4324**

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# What is Abuse?

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## If you are being abused...

- **You are not alone.**
- **You are not to blame.**
- **You have the right to be safe.**
- **You can get help.**

*Brantford is #2 in Ontario and #7 in all of Canada for police-reported domestic violence (Statistics Canada, 2014)*

*While B.R.A.V.E does not condone violence against anyone, the committee recognizes that domestic violence and/or sexual violence disproportionately affects women, trans folks, and non-binary folks. Aboriginal women, women of colour, women with disabilities and transgendered individuals face even higher rates.*

*Abuse is an attempt to have power and control over another person by hurting or mistreating them.*

## Types of Abuse

**Physical:** some examples are hitting, punching, beating, slapping, pulling hair, use of weapons, mutilation, burning, biting, murder

**Sexual:** *any* sexual contact that you do not consent to, ranging from unwanted touching to harassment to rape (*see also page 15-18*)

**Verbal:** threats, insults, name-calling, blaming and accusing, swearing, shouting

**Psychological/Emotional:** withholding love, sympathy or understanding, inadequate physical or emotional care, isolation, intimidation, extreme jealousy, destroying property, threatening to commit suicide

**Financial:** taking money or pay cheques without permission, withholding money and/or denying access to employment opportunities, preventing access to household financial information

**Spiritual:** making fun of a person's spiritual beliefs or preventing them from attending the church, synagogue or temple of their choice

**Cultural:** preventing you from participating in cultural activities, traditional teachings and ceremonies, or forcing you to change your culture. Your partner refuses to sign Certificate of Indian Status or Band Registration for the children.

# Signs of an Abusive Relationship

If your partner uses physical force to hurt, scare, or control you, even if just occasionally, the relationship is an abusive one.

Physical and sexual assault are against the law. No one — including your partner — has the right to hurt you or to force you to perform sexual acts against your will.

It is also a crime to make death threats.

There are also many other behaviours that signal an abusive relationship. These behaviours may not be against the law, but they can cause serious emotional/psychological harm and have a devastating effect on a person's self-esteem.

## *Your relationship may be abusive if...*

- You are afraid to express your true feelings or tell your partner about your own needs and ambitions.
- You are kept away from, or are discouraged from seeing, family and friends.
- You are accused of cheating, even when you have done nothing wrong.
- You have to account for your whereabouts at all times.
- You are almost always tense and worried about how your partner will react.
- You feel responsible for making your partner happy and always take the blame when things go wrong.
- You are often making excuses or lying to family, friends, and co-workers to hide the situation at home.
- You are constantly being criticized by your partner and feel you can never do anything right.
- You are told you are “crazy” or “too sensitive” when you try to talk about your concerns.

## What is Abuse?

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**Nova Vita Domestic  
Violence Prevention  
Services**  
**59 North Park Street**  
**Brantford, N3R 4J8**  
**24-hour Crisis Line**  
**519-752-HELP**  
**(519-752-4357)**

- **Call if you are being abused.**
- **Call if you need to talk about abuse in your family.**
- **Support is confidential.**

## What is Abuse?

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### Strangulation assaults

Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of violence. Strangulation is a form of asphyxia (lack of oxygen) to the brain when blood vessels and air passages are closed as a result of pressure being applied to the neck. Strangulation can make you become unconscious within about 10 seconds and death may occur within 4-5 minutes.

The act of strangulation symbolizes an abuser's power and control over the victim. The victim is completely overwhelmed by the abuser: she struggles for air, and is at the mercy of the abuser for her life. A single experience of strangulation or the threat of it may cause so much fear that the victim can get trapped in a pattern of control by the abuser and be made vulnerable to further abuse.

Up to 68% of women victims of domestic violence have

- You feel trapped and are unhappy in your relationship most of the time.

Abusers often use threats to keep their partners in a constant state of anxiety and fear, and to maintain power and control over them.

If your partner is abusive, they may threaten to hurt you, the children, or your pets. They may also threaten to leave you, to take the children away, or to report you to the authorities if you don't do what they say. Some abusers will threaten to commit suicide if their partners leave them.

### ***If you are being abused...***

#### **You are not alone.**

Millions of individuals are abused by their partners each year.

#### **You are not to blame.**

You are not responsible for your partner's actions and you cannot change their behaviour.

#### **You have a right to be safe.**

You deserve to be respected and to live a violence free life.

#### **You can get help.**

There are many good programs and services in the community, starting with Nova Vita's 24-hour Crisis Line, 519-752-HELP.

## Facts about Domestic Violence and Abuse

There are many names for the violence that occurs in intimate relationships: *domestic violence, intimate partner violence, wife beating, partner abuse, battering, wife assault, family violence, and woman abuse*. They are just different phrases to express the same thing — a relationship where one person uses physical violence,



threats, intimidation and fear to have power and control over another person.

Domestic abuse has long been considered a “family secret,” making it difficult to assess the true nature of the problem and provide help to the victims. Today, more people are aware of the issue although there are still many myths and misconceptions.

The following are some facts...

***Violence within families is not a new problem.***

It has been happening throughout the centuries and in countries all over the world — including Canada — where it was accepted that the man was the “head of the household” and therefore could treat his wife and children however he liked, even if it represented a misuse of power. It is only in recent years that attitudes and laws changed and women were no longer considered the “property” of their husbands.

In Canada, laws were passed in the late 1960s making it illegal for a man to assault his wife and stating that physical and mental cruelty were grounds for divorce. Now, the judicial system takes the problem of domestic violence seriously. If there is evidence of assault, the police will lay charges. Sentences for convicted perpetrators can include time in jail.

***Abuse occurs in all types of families and relationships.***

Domestic violence is a widespread problem. Studies indicate as many as 33% of Canadian women experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime and at least one out of four Canadian women have been physically assaulted by a spouse. Current rates estimate approximately 20% of domestic violence victims are men.

Domestic abuse is **not** just a problem common to lower income households or select ethnic groups. Abuse occurs in relationships and homes of **all** socioeconomic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds. It affects women and men of **all ages** and may be present in intimate relationships of all types — from couples who have just started dating to long-time marriages, and everything in between.

## **What is Abuse?**

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experienced at least one strangulation assault by a male partner during their lifetime.

Strangulation can cause major health problems. The higher number of strangulation attempts experienced, the more health problems experienced by victims.

As compared to other forms of physical violence, strangulation often leaves no marks or any other signs on the skin.

In 88% of individuals who were assaulted, strangulation was not the only type of abuse experienced (physical, verbal, sexual) in the same incident.

*The Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Nurses at the Brantford General are trained in documenting and getting appropriate treatment for you, if strangulation/choking has been part of the assault.*

## What is Abuse?

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**Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 45.**

**No one ever deserves to be assaulted or emotionally abused.**

### ***The majority of domestic abuse victims are women.***

Statistics show that the majority of charges involving domestic assault in Ontario are laid against men. Women suffer more frequent and extreme incidents of violence than men and are more likely to sustain serious or life-threatening injuries.

### ***Alcohol and drugs do not cause domestic violence.***

Alcohol and drugs are significant factors in domestic abuse incidents and victims are more likely to be seriously injured or killed when alcohol or drugs are used.

Some people believe men assault because they are under a lot of stress, have volatile personalities, or are mentally ill. Abusers are not generally known to be violent with other people (e.g. their bosses, co-workers, friends and neighbours) and are usually able to control their behaviour and deal with stress appropriately. In their intimate relationships, however, they feel free to behave abusively without worrying about any consequences.

Men who are physically violent often hurt their victims in ways that ensure the bruises and cuts won't be obvious to others. Mentally ill people generally wouldn't be capable of such careful, selective violence.

The underlying cause of domestic violence is the perpetrator's desire for power and control.

### ***Victims do not cause the violence by provoking their abusers.***

Most abusers do not accept responsibility for their actions. Instead, they lay blame on their victims: "They made me do it" or "They pushed my buttons." A wide range of events that trigger assaults have been reported, some of them as trivial as "buttering the bread the wrong way."

If you are being abused, it is not your fault. It is your partner who has the problem and who needs help from professionals.

### ***Domestic violence rarely “goes away” on its own.***

It is unusual for abusers to stop their violent and controlling behaviour on their own, without some type of counselling or intervention. No matter how hard other members of the family try to please and placate the abuser, there is inevitably an “explosion” of some sort. This is when the physical and sexual abuse, or severe instances of verbal and emotional abuse, happens.

The explosion is one of the three main stages in the “cycle” that takes place in most abusive relationships. It is preceded by a “tension-building” stage that can last for days, weeks or even months before the violent episode occurs. After it does, there is usually a “honeymoon” stage, during which the abuser apologizes for his actions and may be very loving and attentive. During this stage it is easy to believe your partner’s promises to change and to hope that everything will be alright.

**However, unless there is some form of intervention, the cycle usually repeats itself with the “explosions” becoming more frequent and increasingly more violent.**

## **Violence in Dating Relationships**

Abuse is not just something that occurs between married couples or people who have been together for a long time. Abusive and controlling behaviour can be detected at the outset of a new relationship, sometimes as early as the first date.

*Are you going out with someone who...*

1. Is jealous and possessive towards you — doesn’t want you to spend time with your friends, checks up on you, won’t accept breaking up or not seeing them all the time.
2. Is bossy — tries to control who you see and what you do, criticizes what you wear, wants to make all the decisions, gives orders, doesn’t take your opinions seriously.
3. Is scary — makes you worry about how they will react to

## **What is Abuse?**

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**If you are involved with someone who makes you feel uneasy — even if you can’t explain why — trust your instincts and put your safety first.**

**The rate of dating violence was over 60% higher than the rate of spousal violence in 2011.**

## What is Abuse?

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**Women are most at risk of stalking and assaultive behaviour during the first several months after leaving an abusive relationship.**

**Don't ignore or deny the danger. Take steps to provide for your safety and the safety of your children.**

what you say and do, threatens you.

4. Is violent — has a history of fighting with parents, siblings, friends, has a bad temper, brags about mistreating others, owns or uses weapons.
5. Pressures you for sex — thinks women are sex objects, tries to manipulate you or make you feel guilty (“if you really loved me you would...”), moves the relationship along too quickly.
6. Blames you when they treat you badly — says you made them do it.
7. Has a history of bad relationships and blames everyone else for their problems.
8. Abuses drugs or alcohol; may pressure you to do the same.
9. Believes men should be in control and powerful and that women should be passive and submissive.
10. Has caused your friends and family to be concerned for your safety and to warn you about them.

These are some early warning signs of abuse and should not be ignored. If you answered “Yes” to one or more of the questions, your relationship may be an unhealthy one with the potential to become violent.

Speak to a counsellor or someone you trust. You can call Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' Crisis Line (519-752-HELP) any time of the day or night to talk to someone who understands and who can help. You don't have to feel embarrassed or ashamed. Asking for help may be the first step in making your life better.

The Sexual Assault/**Domestic Violence Care Team** at the Brantford General (a team of skilled nurses available 24/7 accessed through the emergency department, will respond promptly) can offer you comprehensive, confidential care if you have been abused by your present partner, past partner, present

or past boyfriend/girlfriend. Identify to the triage nurse that you are there because of domestic violence and they can activate the team. Options for care: Emotional support, Forensic documentation and photos of the injuries you are presenting with, safety planning, and discharge to a safe environment. Follow up appointment within 48-72 hours to re-document injuries, further safety planning, support, and referrals to community agencies. Because you are presenting with injuries a physician will assess and medically clear you before discharge. You have the choice of immediate police involvement or have all documentation stored until if or when you are ready to involve police. At times this may take several visits until you are ready to involve police but your history of events has been stored safely. *Involvement of police at any point is your choice to make. Your trust and confidentiality is important to us.*

## Criminal Harassment

Criminal Harassment, also called stalking, involves a range of behaviours that cause the victim to fear for his or her own safety or the safety of loved ones. Criminal Harassment is a type of abuse in which the stalker is trying to control someone by scaring or intimidating them.

Stalking involves a pattern of behaviours that may include...

- following a person, their children, or others they care about
- showing up uninvited at someone's home or workplace
- making repetitive or threatening telephone calls
- sending unwelcome letters, e-mail messages, or gifts
- vandalizing or breaking into someone's home or car
- damaging property
- stealing mail; trying to get personal/confidential information
- threatening someone, or their family, friends or colleagues

Stalkers are usually known to their victims; they are often ex-spouses or partners. Women who leave abusive relationships are particularly at risk for being criminally

## What is Abuse?

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**“Caller ID spoofing” is a common practice used by high-tech cyber stalkers to program the Caller ID to reveal any name and number of their choice. Stalkers often use telephone numbers known by the victim in order to trick and deceive an unsuspecting victim in to answering the phone. Screen your phone calls. By allowing the answering machine to pick up, the stalker may leave a message, which could later be used as evidence.**

harassed. It is important not to ignore or deny the harassment; stalking can and often does get worse.

If you are being stalked...

**Avoid all contact with the stalker.** Once you have made it clear that you do not want to see this person, do not respond to any further calls or messages.

**Tell people** (friends, family, co-workers) what is happening and emphasize the importance of keeping your phone number, address and other personal information confidential.

**Report the harassment to the police.** They will assess the risk to you and give you advice on how to plan for your safety. If they feel it is warranted, they will lay charges against the stalker.

**Record every stalking instance**, including the date, time, details and witnesses, if any. Keep everything the stalker sends; try to record phone messages.

Criminal Harassment is against the law. You have the right to be safe. If charges are laid, the case will be heard in court and the stalker may be found guilty.

## Cyber Stalking

Cyberstalk means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or cause to be communicated, words, images or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose. Like stalking (see above), cyberstalking involves a similar pattern of behaviours. You should also track all incidences of cyberstalking in a journal as well.

If you think you are being cyberstalked or harassed, TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND PLAN FOR SAFETY:

- Take all threats seriously whether they are verbal or text
- Be wary of relying on Caller ID – see sidebar
- Password protect ALL accounts, including utilities. Request to have the utility/store/agency contact you if there are any changes made to your accounts. You will know if you have made them.
- Change your passwords and PIN numbers
- Notify family, friends and co-workers not to divulge personal information about you to any third party.
- Use a safer computer such as a public computer at a library or the computer of a trusted family member to access your email and use the Internet. If you are concerned about spyware on your device, have your computer or device checked for spyware or remote log-in software.

## Social Networking

Stalkers and abusers sometimes use social networking sites to impersonate, stalk, and harass victims. Using safety measures may help reduce risk.

- Adjust privacy and location settings via the website AND your smart phone applications.
- Revisit privacy settings weekly as these features are updated regularly (i.e. Facebook).
- Consider creating a new profile using non-identifying information and an image such as a flower, a sports team logo or other image as your profile picture.

## Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any unwanted act of a sexual nature imposed by one person upon another. Forced or coerced intercourse, grabbing, touching or kissing can be defined as sexual assault. Like other forms of abuse, sexual assault is an act of violence and a vicious attempt to exert power and control over someone.

## What is Abuse?

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### The Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

**24-hour Crisis Line:**

**519-751-3471**

**Crisis Line TTY:**

**519-751-4054**

**Office Tel:**

**519-751-1164**

- **safe, confidential environment**
- **information, advice, support**
- **group counselling**
- **accompaniment to hospital, police and/or court**

**See pages 117-118 for safety planning tips.**

## What is Abuse?

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**Brantford General Hospital  
Emergency Department  
200 Terrace Hill Street,  
Brantford  
Tel: 519-752-7871**

**Sexual Assault/Domestic  
Violence Care Team is a  
team of skilled nurses  
available 24/7, accessed  
through the emergency  
department.  
Tel: 519-751-5544 Ext. 4449**

**Sexual Assault Centre  
Young Women's Highschool  
Program for young women  
14+  
No parental permission  
required.  
Free and confidential.  
Tel: 519-751-1164**

Some facts...

- One in four Canadian women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime.
- Sexual assault can happen to anyone. Women of all ages and representing all backgrounds (economic, social, ethnic, religious, cultural etc.) are assaulted.
- Over 80% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim (e.g. her husband, partner, date, family member, neighbour).
- At least 80% of attacks occur in a private home.

Nothing you do gives anyone the right to assault you. It doesn't matter what you wear, who you are with or where you go. Even if you have consented to sexual activity with someone previously, you have the right to say no to something you don't want to do. If sexual activity took place while you were asleep or unconscious; or if the person you were with was in a position of authority over you - you were sexually assaulted. **Sexual assault is a crime**, even if the perpetrator is your partner. If you are a victim of sexual assault you can get help:

The **Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Team** at the Brantford General Hospital (a team of skilled nurses are available 24/7 accessed through the emergency department, will respond promptly) can offer you many confidential care and treatment options; 1) Emotional Support: you are given the opportunity to discuss what has happened to you with someone who is supportive and understanding and will respect your choices of care. 2) Medical examination: you are given emotional support plus a physical examination to assess for any injuries and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, Hepatitis B and HIV. The Morning After Pill is also available. 3) Collection of forensic evidence can be completed during the course of the physical exam, if you wish. If forensic evidence is collected you have the choice to involve



police immediately or have the evidence stored for up to 6 months in case you decide to report the incident to the police. Follow up counselling and medical treatment is part of all three treatment options.

**Call the police** if you need protection or want to report the assault.

**Get the support and comfort you need** by calling a trusted friend or family member. You can call the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant 24 hours a day at 519-751-3471. The crisis line is available to survivors of sexual violence, and to their friends/family members. The Sexual Assault Centre can help you by: providing individual counselling and support groups, having someone accompany you to the hospital, police station, or court; advocating on your behalf with the police and hospital; and providing information about other local services you may want to access.

***Remember, the assault was not your fault.*** You are not responsible for the actions of your abuser.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any type of unwelcome sexual talk or action that makes you feel uncomfortable, upset, embarrassed, trapped, or confused.

Examples include:

- suggestive or lewd comments
- leering
- insulting remarks, name calling
- spreading rumours
- repeated requests for dates or sexual favours
- grabbing, touching, and other unwanted attention

## What is Abuse?

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**Sexual Harassment violates the Ontario Human Rights Code.**

**Bill 168- requires employers who are aware, or who ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence may occur in the workplace to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker who is at risk of physical harm.**

**You can file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.**

**For more information call  
1-800-387-9080  
TTY: 1-800-308-5561**

## What is Abuse?

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Sexual harassment is hurtful. No one has the right to harass anyone else. You deserve to feel safe and to be treated with respect at home, in public, at work and at school.

If you have been sexually harassed...

**Don't minimize it.** Trust your own feelings. If someone is flirting or engaging in good natured teasing, it is usually enjoyable and makes people feel positive. Sexual harassment, however, makes the victim feel uneasy, degraded, humiliated or helpless.

**Don't ignore it.** If left alone, the harassment can get worse. The harasser may begin to engage in even more abusive behaviour such as stalking, threats or assault.

**Confront the harasser** if it is possible and safe to do so. Be clear and direct and insist that the behaviour stop immediately.

**Decide whether you want to report it.** Workplaces and schools take sexual harassment very seriously and have policies in place to protect people and deal with this behaviour. You should not be ashamed to make a complaint about the harassment; it was not your fault. Speak to someone who can help you such as your employer, supervisor, manager, teacher, principal, or other person in authority.

**Keep track of the harassment.** Make notes on each incident, including the date, time, place, specific behaviour and any witnesses. This will be useful if you make a formal complaint at work or school, or if you need to involve the police.

**Talk to someone you trust.** You may want to speak with an understanding friend or a trained counsellor about your feelings.

# Domestic Violence and Children

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## Protecting Your Children

All parents know that the safety, security and well-being of their children are their main priorities. For women living in fear for their own safety, guarding and protecting their children can be a tremendously difficult task. And yet, it is these children who are most in need of protection. Studies show that children are present in 85% of all domestic violence incidents, and that approximately 43% of the men who regularly assaulted their wives also abused their children.

If your children are being physically abused — or if you know of, or suspect, sexual abuse — it is your responsibility to report the abuse and to do whatever is necessary to provide your children with a safe and healthy environment.

Child abuse is against the law. It is highly destructive - both physically and emotionally, and often affects children for the remainder of their lives.

You can call the Brant Family and Children's Services or Ojwadeni:deo –Six Nations Child Welfare to get help in protecting your children from the abuser. Caseworkers at the FACS or Ojwadeni:deo will work with you to develop a plan that will protect your children. You can also contact other organizations in the community for advice and support such as Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' 24-hour Crisis Line, 519-752-HELP or St. Leonard's 24-hour Crisis Response Service, 519-759-7188 or 1-866-811-7188.

You might be frightened, confused, and unsure of what you are going to do in the days and weeks ahead, but your children

### **Brant Family and Children's Services**

**70 Chatham Street,  
P.O. Box 774  
Brantford N3T 5R7  
Tel. 519-753-8681  
1-888-753-8681**

### **Ojwadeni:deo – Six Nations Child Welfare:**

**2469 Fourth Line,  
Oshweken, ON N0A 1M0;  
Ph.: 519-445-1864**

## **Domestic Violence and Children**

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**Children in abusive households need lots of love, reassurance and positive attention. They need to be told that they are not to blame for what is happening.**

still depend on you and need you to do what is best for them. It is vitally important that you act promptly to stop abuse from occurring or escalating. Don't hesitate to ask for help in keeping your children safe and secure.

### **The Impact on Children from Witnessing Abuse**

Even if children are not being hit or sexually abused themselves, they are deeply affected by abuse in the home. They may feel a range of emotions: fear, anger, confusion. Some children will try their best to be "good", in order to keep peace in the home. Others might act out more, sometimes out of frustration, or as a way to focus the abuser's attention on themselves and away from their mother.

Children are present in about 85% of all domestic violence incidents. They often show symptoms similar to children who are themselves being abused. They may, for example, exhibit some or all of the following:

- stomach-aches, headaches, and other physical problems
- excessive separation anxieties/whining, clinging (younger kids)
- eating disorders (e.g. overeating, undereating, or hoarding food)
- aggressive behaviour, poor social skills
- insecurity and distrust
- poor school attendance and difficulty with school work
- clumsiness, prone to accidents, self-harming
- depression and suicidal feelings
- tendency to get into serious dating relationships or to leave home too early (for adolescents 13 years and over)

Children and teens who see their parents being assaulted may believe they are to blame for the violence. They tend to have significantly more behavioural and emotional problems than children and teens from non-violent homes. Perhaps the most worrisome aspect of domestic abuse is the way it can go on to affect the next generations. Children learn what they see and will usually repeat the behaviours themselves.

***Boys who witness violence against their mothers are much more likely to become abusive as adults, while girls are more likely to become victims of abuse.***

### Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Program

There is help for children who have witnessed abuse in the home. The Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Program is designed to help children aged 6 to 16, and their mothers, deal with the trauma of domestic abuse.

The children meet in small groups where they are encouraged to express their feelings about violence and separation. They are given a chance to understand the abuse of power they have witnessed, and that the violence is not their fault, or the fault of their mother. The children learn positive ways of expressing their feelings and dealing with anger. They also learn how to keep themselves safe at home, in their community, and on the Internet. Concurrently, the mothers meet separately for support and to learn how to help their children heal. A goal of the program is to break the intergenerational cycle of violence.

Participation in the program is free. For more information or to book an intake appointment, call 519-752-1005, ext. 221.

*See page 67 for information about other counselling programs for children.*

**Children Exposed to  
Domestic Violence Program  
Nova Vita Domestic  
Violence Prevention  
Services  
59 North Park Street  
Brantford N3R 4J8  
Tel. 519-752-1005, ext. 221**

# First Steps to a Violence Free Life

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**Women attempt to leave abusive relationships an average of seven times before ending the relationship permanently.**

**You are not alone. Help is available.**

**As a landed immigrant or permanent resident, you cannot be deported from Canada for leaving your partner or for reporting abuse, even if it was your partner who sponsored you.**

**If you were sponsored by your partner, but don't have permanent resident status at the time you leave the relationship, you can still apply for permanent residence status on "humanitarian or compassionate" grounds.**

## Stay or Go? Making the Decision

The decision to leave any relationship — particularly if you have been together for some time or have children — is usually a painful one, even if the relationship has been abusive. Ultimately, the decision to stay or leave is yours, no matter how much others may try to persuade you one way or the other.

Some people may not understand why anyone would stay in — or return to — a violent or abusive relationship, and might conclude that the victims somehow like being hurt. These people don't realize that there are many factors at play: an individual may stay out of fear of what might happen if they try to leave. They might be worried about breaking up the family or concerned about how they can support themselves and their children. They may be pressured by other family members to stay. Finally, they might still be hopeful that the relationship will improve.

If you are considering leaving an abusive relationship, you may be grappling with many worries:

- lack of money and/or job skills
- concern about making ends meet and providing for the kids
- difficulty finding good, affordable accommodation
- intimidated by the responsibility of running a household alone
- feeling guilty about taking the children away from their other parent
- reluctance to leave the home and/or give up your current lifestyle

- embarrassment about what family, friends, neighbours or co-workers will think
- fear of being alone
- fear of what your partner will do

You may have several other concerns, depending on your situation. It is normal to feel uncertain and frightened. Your self-esteem may be at an all-time low, particularly if you have been made to feel incompetent and incapable of handling anything by yourself. At the same time, you may still love your partner, and believe that you can do something to stop the abuse.

Whether you decide to stay in the relationship or to leave, keep in mind...

**You deserve to live a life free from violence and abuse.** You do not have to answer to anyone else and you do not have to defend your actions, particularly, to people who do not understand what you have been living with. You do not have to feel guilty or ashamed about ending the relationship; you are not the one committing the crime.

**You have the capacity to be strong and capable.** Contrary to what you may have been told, you can do things for yourself. You have probably had to develop certain techniques and skills in order to survive in your relationship. You can learn new skills to help you if you plan to live independently.

**Support and help is available.** This handbook lists several organizations in the community that can assist with a wide range of needs including housing, financial, employment, parenting, counselling, and more.

**Your children may be at even greater risk if you stay.** Men who assault their wives often abuse their children as well. Even if they are not being physically hurt, children suffer tremendous emotional trauma by witnessing abuse (*see pages 20-21*).

## First Steps to a Violence Free Life

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Get legal advice from an Immigration lawyer.

**YMCA Employment, Education and Immigrant Services**

**519-752-4568**

**38 Darling Street, Suite 201, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 6A8**  
[www.ymcahbb.ca](http://www.ymcahbb.ca)

**Free services and support including community information, advocacy and referral, settlement information and counselling, assistance with government forms, etc.**

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services - Multicultural Community Engagement Worker: 519-752-1005 ext 254**

**Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre**  
**519-745-2593**

**Free interpretation services available, in over 50 languages, for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, elder abuse, and human trafficking.**

## First Steps to a Violence Free Life

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### Things to take with you when you leave...

- driver's licence and registration
- passports, birth certificates, (yours and your children's)
- Social Insurance card
- Ontario Works identification
- immigration papers, work permits
- Certificate of Indian Status for you and your children
- medications
- school and vaccination records
- marriage certificate, separation agreement, divorce papers
- custody papers
- court orders, peace bonds
- bank books or statements, cheque book
- house deed or lease agreement
- insurance papers

There is also a strong chance they will grow up to repeat the behaviours they have learned.

**You cannot change your partner's behaviour.** You are not responsible for their actions and you cannot control them. Your partner may be sorry for hurting you and promise to change. But eventually the abuse begins again.

People *can* change their violent behaviour, but they usually need professional help. Challenge to Change, for example (see pages 70-71), provides therapeutic counselling for abusive men.

Many abusers, however, won't admit they have a problem and will not seek help. Even if they do, it will involve changing behaviours and beliefs they have had for a long time. That does not happen easily or quickly. You need to decide what is best for you and your children both in the short and long term.

Whether you decide to leave or to stay in the relationship, or if you think you will eventually leave, but are not ready to do so yet, you should create a "safety plan". This will help you prepare for an emergency, and provide an escape plan for you and your children in case you are at risk of serious harm at the hands of your partner. You can use the suggestions on the following pages to create a personalized plan.

## Your Safety Plan

While you are still living with your partner, be ready in case you need to escape in a hurry...

- Collect and hide important documents (or copies) that you will need if you leave home (see the list in the margins).
- Have ready: access to house and car keys, bank and credit cards, health cards, emergency money, and important telephone numbers.
- Pack a small "emergency" suitcase with some clothes and



necessities for yourself and the children. Keep the suitcase hidden, but accessible.

- Consider keeping extra clothing, money, keys, etc. at a friend's or neighbour's home.
- Plan how you would leave the house in an emergency. Practice the steps.
- Know the telephone numbers and addresses of the local shelter and other places you can go (e.g. friends, family members)

Meanwhile, try to make your environment as safe as possible and prepare for any event...

- Don't keep the abuse secret. Tell neighbours, friends, family members and/or co-workers who you can trust.
- Come up with a code word and give it to trusted friends, neighbours etc.; instruct them to call the police if you use that word.
- If they are old enough to understand, tell your children the code word. Teach them who to go to for help and how to call 911.
- If you sense a confrontation, try to move to areas in the home with an easy exit. Avoid being "trapped" in rooms like the kitchen, bathroom, or where there are objects that can be used as weapons.
- Save as much money as you can. Open a bank account in your own name; be sure that account statements are not mailed to your home.
- Prepare for the possibility of being on your own: learn about supports in the community, update your resume, acquire additional job skills.
- Try to stay healthy and strong. Eat properly, exercise, get enough sleep and do things that help you relax. Don't succumb to drugs and alcohol to cope with the stress. They will drain your energy and make it impossible for you to think clearly.

## First Steps to a Violence Free Life

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- recent income tax returns (yours and your partner's)
- health cards (yours and your children's)
- credit and bank cards
- emergency cash
- personal address/telephone book
- extra clothes, personal items
- children's items: diapers, bottles/feeding dishes, clothes, blankets, or favourite toys
- valuable jewellery
- cell phone and charger
- a few items of sentimental value
- It may also be important later to have your partner's SIN number, picture, birth date, work, and financial information.

## **First Steps to a Violence Free Life**

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**You have a right to protect  
yourself and your children.**

**For emergency shelter,  
information about your  
options, or help in  
developing your safety plan,  
call Nova Vita Domestic  
Violence Prevention  
Services at  
519-752-4357.**

If you leave the relationship...

- If needed, obtain a protective court order. Keep it with you at all times and give copies to the police and others, as required.
- Change the locks and/or install new doors, security systems, sensors, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Tell your landlord, neighbours, friends and co-workers that you are no longer living with your partner; ask them to call the police if they see him near your home or place of work.
- Make sure teachers, daycare workers, babysitters, etc. know who may and may not retrieve your children.
- Teach your children what to do and/or who to call if they are approached by your partner.
- Take extra precautions when travelling to and from your home or workplace. Always park in well-lit areas and when in public, try to stay within sight and earshot of people, in case you need to call for help.
- Be aware of any stalking behaviour by your partner and report any incidents to the police. *(See pages 13-15)*

Women are most vulnerable in the weeks and months just after they leave abusive relationships. Don't ignore any threatening actions on the part of your partner and don't underestimate the danger you may be in. Be extra careful and take steps to keep yourself and your children safe.

# Emergency Shelters

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## Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

Nova Vita operates a safe, emergency shelter for women and their children who are victims of abuse. The shelter is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Residential services include...

- safe, supportive haven for abused women and their children
- emergency transportation available
- comfortable, homelike atmosphere
- food, personal care items, clothing provided
- confidential counselling for women who have suffered physical, emotional, verbal, financial or psychological abuse
- counselling and support for children and teens provided by in-house Child and Youth Counsellors and Early Childhood Educators
- parenting support
- assistance in completing applications for custody, subsidized housing, financial assistance, etc.
- advocacy for clients dealing with other social service agencies
- certificate for two free hours of legal advice
- transitional housing and support services
- referrals to other counselling and community services

Nova Vita's shelter provides a secure, protective, and comforting environment for women (aged 16 and over) and their children who have experienced violence and abuse in their homes. The shelter is open to women and children of all religious, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**  
**59 North Park Street**  
**Brantford N3R 4J8**  
**24-hour Crisis Line:**  
**519-752-HELP (4357)**  
**Office: 519-752-1005**  
**Fax: 519-752-7590**  
**E-mail:**  
**info@novavita.org**  
**www.novavita.org**

## Emergency Shelters

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**Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services**  
**1781 Chiefswood Road**  
**P.O. Box 250**  
**Ohswéken NOA 1M0**  
**24-hour Crisis Line:**  
**519-445-4324**  
**Fax: 519-445-4825**  
**E-mail: ganohkwasra@ganohkwasra.ca,**  
**www.ganohkwasra.ca**

**For shelters and emergency services in other communities, consult the local telephone directory.**

**To get the name and telephone number for any women's shelter in Canada (during business hours), you can call:**

**The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence**  
**1-800-267-1291**  
**TTY: 1-800-561-5643**

### *All services are free of charge.*

Nova Vita, comes from the Latin “Nova Vitae”, meaning “new life”. Nova Vita provides a range of services to victims of domestic abuse and helps them make the transition to a new, healthy life, free from violence. The shelter adheres to a strict policy of non-violence. All residents must treat one another with respect and consideration.

If you are a victim of abuse you can call the 24-hour Crisis Line, 519-752-4357, or come to the shelter at 59 North Park Street in Brantford. Even if you do not wish to stay, shelter staff can provide advice and comfort as well as information, referrals and help in creating a personalized safety plan.

*Nova Vita also provides counselling to women and children who are not staying at the shelter. See pages 66-68.*

## Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services

Ganohkwasra, meaning “Love Among Us” in the Cayuga language, provides shelter and counselling support for Native women, children, youth, and men who are affected by family violence and abuse.

Services are free and include...

- 24-hour Crisis Line
- walk-in services
- emergency shelter for Native adults and their children
- group and individual counselling
- children's programming
- advocacy and referrals

# Shelters in Neighbouring Communities

Haldimand and  
Norfolk Counties,  
including Simcoe

## **Haldimand-Norfolk Women's Services**

Crisis Line: 1-800-265-8076  
Office: (519) 428-4295

Woodstock

## **Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO)**

Crisis Line: (519) 539-4811  
Office: (519) 539-7488

Cambridge/  
South Dumfries

## **Haven House**

Crisis Line: (519) 653-2422  
Office: (519) 653-2289

Kitchener/  
Waterloo

## **Anselma House**

Crisis Line: (519) 742-5894  
Office: (519) 741-9184

Hamilton/  
Ancaster/  
Stoney Creek

## **Inasmuch House for Women in Crisis**

Crisis Line: (905) 529-8600  
Office: (905) 529-8149

## **Interval House of Hamilton - Wentworth**

Crisis Line: (905) 387-8881  
Office: (905) 387-9959

## **Martha House**

### **(Good Shepherd Women's Services)**

Crisis Line: (905) 523-6277  
Office: (905) 523-8895

## **Native Women's Centre**

Crisis Line: (905) 664-1114  
1-888-308-6559 Toll Free

Burlington

## **Halton Women's Place**

Crisis Line: (905) 878-8555  
Office: (905) 332-1200

# Emergency Shelters

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## **Assaulted Women's Helpline:**

**24-hour Crisis Line:**

**1-866-863-0511**

**[www.awhl.org](http://www.awhl.org)**

**Crisis counselling and referrals to shelters and services in Ontario**

# Police Involvement

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**In an emergency, call 911.**

**Try to speak as clearly as you can and give your name and address. Tell the dispatcher what is happening (e.g. you are being assaulted or have concerns for your safety), whether there are weapons in the home, and if anyone has been injured.**

## Reporting Domestic Violence

Although more people are speaking up about domestic violence and there are more options for women seeking help, domestic abuse remains an under-reported crime. Only about 25 percent of all physical and sexual assault cases are ever reported to the police.

One reason is a fear of reprisal: many are afraid that they will suffer even more severe abuse and “punishment” for calling the authorities. They may also be intimidated by the police and the court system, or feel the system doesn’t take them seriously or do enough to protect them.

The police and courts can play a critical role in your safety. They exist to protect victims and they have a duty to respond to your needs and to help you.

Why you should report assault to the police...

**That call can save your life.** Or it can prevent you from suffering even more severe abuse. Studies reveal that the average domestic abuse victim is assaulted several times before the police are called. For some, help comes too late. On average, every six days a woman in Canada is killed by her partner.

**The police can help attend to your immediate needs:** ensuring you get to a hospital, making sure you and your children get to a shelter or other place of safety, or connecting you with other supports and services in the community.

**The incidents of physical abuse tend to decrease** once the police have been involved. When the police lay charges or make an arrest, the chance of physical violence occurring again decreases by as much as half.

**The police can enforce any court orders** (for example, restraining orders and peace bonds) and charge your partner with violating those orders.

**Police records are particularly important** if the case goes to court. Police officers can record details about the incident and take pictures of any injuries for evidence in court.

## What Happens When You Call the Police

- You need to let the police into your home. If it is a 911 call, the police will enter to ensure that everyone in the home is safe.
- If they witness an assault, or they have “reasonable grounds” to suspect that an assault has taken place, the police are required to lay a charge. Reasonable grounds would include evidence like bruises, cuts, burns, etc., broken or strewn property and other signs of a struggle, or statements from witnesses.
- The police may need to investigate further by collecting additional evidence and getting statements from both the victim and the abuser. Be sure to describe the assault in detail and show them any visible injuries you have suffered (they may take photographs or arrange to have photos taken). Provide information about other violent episodes and show any court orders you have. ***You will likely be distraught, but try to be as calm and cooperative as possible.*** The police are there to help you.
- If a charge is laid, the police will arrest the offender and take them into custody. In many cases, your partner will remain in custody for a bail hearing. After the bail hearing, they may remain in custody or be released on a Recognizance of Bail (court order). You need to advise the police where you can be contacted so that they can let you know if your partner is being released.
- If you are worried about your safety, tell the police. Conditions can be placed on your partner’s release. For instance, they may be ordered to live somewhere else and not have any contact with you, either in person or by phone, social media, or third party. If

## Police Involvement

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**Although the police and courts will do what they can to protect you, you must still exercise caution and good judgement.**

**If you believe your partner’s arrest will result in even more violence, gather the children and your “emergency” bags and go to a shelter or other safe place before they are released.**

**Let the police know how they can reach you so that you can be informed when your partner is released.**

**Be sure to document all violent episodes and unwanted contact (e.g. text messages, emails, social media, or through third party).**

## **Police Involvement**

**Victim Services of Brant  
344 Elgin Street (Brantford  
Police Station)**

**During business hours**

**Tel: 519-752-3140**

**After hours (see page 111  
for procedure)**

**Tel: 519-756-7050**

- **Volunteers provide emotional support, practical assistance, and empathy to victims of crime**
- **Accompaniment to hospital, residence, shelter or temporary accommodation (i.e. motel)**
- **Bail notification and court support to victims**
- **Services are free and confidential**

**Six Nations Justice -  
Indigenous Victim Services**  
**Phone: 1-866-964-5920;  
226-227-2192**

**Website: <http://snpolice.ca/>  
Service Information:**

- **Counselling**
- **Linkage and Referrals**
- **Accompaniment to police station, hospital, court**
- **Safety Planning**
- **Assist with filling out victim compensation forms**
- **Advocacy**

your partner violates the conditions, you must call the police again right away so that further charges can be laid.

- Charges that have been laid by the police cannot be withdrawn or changed, except by a Crown Attorney.
- If you or your children need medical attention, the police can make sure you get to the hospital and/or contact someone from Victim Services to offer assistance and support.
- If the police do not lay charges, ask them why. It is usually because there were “insufficient grounds.” That does not mean that they do not believe you. You can lay charges yourself, although it is a more involved process (see below).
- If no charges are laid, but you don’t feel safe staying at home, you can ask the police to wait while you gather some belongings and ensure you get to a safe place.
- Write down the officers’ names and badge numbers, as well as the “Incident Report Number” in case you need to follow up (you will likely receive a business card).
- If you are not happy with the way you were treated by the police, you can request to speak to the officers’ supervisor or superior.

## **Other Judicial Action**

### ***Laying Charges Yourself***

If the police do not lay a charge against your abuser, you can lay one yourself. You need to go to court and talk to a Justice of the Peace. Provide all the necessary details and bring along any witnesses (or their written statements). After you “lay the information,” the Justice of the Peace will conduct a hearing under oath and you will be asked to present your evidence. If your partner is ordered to appear in court to answer the charges, you may be called upon to be a witness. There is no fee to speak with a Justice of the Peace.

### ***Peace Bonds***

If you are afraid that your partner will try to hurt you or your children, or destroy your property, you can talk to a Justice of the Peace about getting a peace bond — a written promise that he will “keep the peace and be



of good behaviour.” You may also be asked to make the same promise. There might be other conditions as well. A peace bond may be valid for up to 12 months. Always keep a copy with you; if your partner violates it, it is a criminal offence and you must call the police right away. Once a peace bond is issued, it can only be lifted by the courts and as long as it is in effect, all parties must abide by the conditions. Therefore, if one of the conditions is that your partner stay away from the family home, you cannot decide to let them return or visit.

### ***Court Orders***

Concerns about safety, custody and access, support and division of property can be dealt with through a court order. You can arrange for a court order by speaking with a lawyer (*see page 38*). You can also request an order by visiting the Family Court office and picking up the appropriate forms (including a Notice of Motion and an Affidavit). The types of orders you can request include:

- custody of the children
- access to the children
- support for yourself or your children
- restraining order
- property order
- exclusive possession of the matrimonial home

A **restraining order** may be issued by the court if there is reason to believe that you are at risk of harm at the hands of your spouse/partner. The order may include specific instructions, for example, that your partner must not come to your home, place of work, children’s school, etc. Restraining orders can be permanent, or valid for a certain amount of time (e.g. several months).

The restraining order must be served to your partner, but you do not have to do it yourself. The court, or your lawyer, can assist you with the procedures.

Try to keep a copy of the restraining order with you at all times or at an alternate safe location. Call the police if your spouse or partner breaches the order. They may be arrested and charged.

## Police Involvement

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### **V/WAP staff cannot:**

- Discuss evidence with clients
- Provide childcare services
- Provide or pay for transportation (except where eligible through other programs)
- Provide legal advice to clients

## **Victim Witness Assistance Program**

**519-752-5725 • 80 Wellington Street, Brantford, N3T 2L9**

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (V/WAP) is part of the Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division of the Ministry of the Attorney General. V/WAP provides information, assistance and support to victims after criminal charges are laid, and continue throughout the criminal court process until the case is completed. Referrals can come from a variety of sources and can be made at any time during the criminal court process. There is no cost for services.

### **V/WAP offers the following core client services to victims and witnesses:**

- Initial and ongoing outreach
- Information about the client's case
- Information about the court process
- Obtaining court documents such as Bail Conditions or Probation Conditions
- Emotional support, including crisis intervention and debriefing
- Needs assessment and referrals to community agencies (including discussions of safety issues and referrals to agencies for comprehensive safety planning)
- Liaison with the crown and police, including providing client input
- Court preparation and orientation
- Client advocacy
- Court support and accompaniment for vulnerable clients when possible where no other suitable support person or service is available
- Information about Victim Impact Statements, Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, and other support services available to victims of crime (e.g. Victim Support Line, Parole Board of Canada)
- Coordination of community services

# Legal Issues & Judicial System

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## Know Your Rights!

You have the right to live your life free from violence and abuse.

***Spousal assault – including physical attacks, sexual abuse or threats – is a crime.*** You have the right to call the police and to be protected from your abuser. You have the right, and an obligation, to ensure the safety and well-being of your children.

If you have no means of supporting yourself and your children, you have the right to financial assistance. It is your right to seek help and support from other programs and services in the community.

You and your children also have rights under the Family Law Act which covers custody, support and property.

**Matrimonial Property and the Indian Act** – please see page 95.

## Custody of Children

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, it is vital that you take your children with you when you leave an abusive relationship. If you are forced to leave your children behind, return for them as soon as possible. You can have the police accompany you, if you are worried about your safety.

In cases of emergency, you should apply for **Temporary Custody** of your children as soon as possible. This will be in effect until a **Legal Custody Order** is granted by a judge. To get temporary custody and to file for final legal custody, call 519-758-3460 or visit the Court Office at 44 Queen Street in

Six Nations of the Grand  
River Reserve Family Law  
Information Centre  
G.R.E.A.T Building, 2nd  
Floor  
Ohsweken  
Walk-in Service  
(see page 93)

Family Law Information  
Centre (FLIC)  
Ontario Court of Justice  
44 Queen Street  
Brantford N3T 3B4  
Tel. 519-758-3460

Law Society Referral  
Service  
1-855-947-5255  
Please see the opposite  
page - Using a Lawyer -  
for more information.

## Legal Issues & Judicial System

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**Free legal information is available at The Family Law Information Clinic and the Criminal/Family Law Information Clinic.**

**You may also be referred for help with family court document preparation through FLIC services. All such services are subject to a financial eligibility assessment and a legal eligibility requirement.**

**Contact Nova Vita at 519-752-4357 to inquire about getting a certificate for two hours of free legal services as well as a current list of local lawyers who accept Legal Aid. Please note that this does involve a financial eligibility test.**

Brantford. You will have to fill out the papers, get court dates and have the papers served to your partner. The original papers are then brought back to the courthouse. You can also apply for a **restraining order** (see page 33) at the same time.

**The Family Law Information Clinic (FLIC)** is held at 44 Queen Street, Brantford, every Friday and one other varying day of the week, by appointment only. Contact Court Services at 519-758-3460 to schedule an appointment.

**The Criminal/Family Law Information Clinic (CLIC/FLIC)** is held at 44 Queen Street, Brantford, every Monday afternoon from 1:30-4:00pm. This is a walk in service.

### **Information Referral Coordinator**

The Information Referral Coordinator can provide you with information regarding Family Court procedures, such as access and support. **This is not legal advice.** Contact 226-920-8109 for more information.

### **Office of the Children’s Lawyer**

If there is a dispute between parents about custody and access, a judge may call upon the Office of the Children’s Lawyer. When this happens, both parents have to fill out intake forms and the Office will appoint a social worker and/or a lawyer who will represent the child in court and make recommendations based on the child’s preferences and best interests. There is no cost to either parent.

### **Access Issues**

If you have custody of the children, your partner still has a right to see them, unless the court has made an order for no access. That usually happens only when there is strong evidence that the children are at risk of abuse or neglect by the partner. Supervised access — when the children and parents meet in a neutral location — may be ordered in certain cases.

## Court Proceedings

- After a charge is laid, the offender has a “first appearance” in court. If they plead guilty, there is no trial but they will be sentenced. If they plead not guilty, a trial date is chosen by the judge.
- It can be several months before the trial takes place. During this time, you may feel intimidated or threatened by your partner. Document any incidents. Call the police if you believe you are in danger.
- You may have to appear in court to give evidence. You can call Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services (519-752-HELP) or Victim Services of Brant (519-752-3140) for guidance. You do not have to be represented by a lawyer.
- If your partner is found guilty, they can receive one of several sentences depending on the seriousness of the charge and factors such as a history of violence in the relationship and any previous criminal record.
- Whether or not your partner serves time in jail, their sentence may include a term of probation, which could last from six months to three years. The conditions of probation could include the following: no contact directly or indirectly; that they not come within 100 metres of your home or workplace; they report to a probation officer regularly; attend a specific counselling/treatment program; that they not own or possess a weapon; and that they not use alcohol or drugs.
- You have a chance to tell the judge about the effect the violence has had on you and your family by preparing a “victim impact statement.” You can do this with help from the police or Victim Services.
- To get information about the case, you can call the court, the Crown Attorney’s Office or the police officer(s) involved.

## Legal Issues & Judicial System

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**Dalhousie Place -  
Brant Haldimand Norfolk  
Supervised Access Centre  
82 Charlotte Street  
Brantford N3T 2X1  
Tel. 519-751-0466  
E-mail: [bdsupacc@  
execulink.com](mailto:bdsupacc@execulink.com)**

**A safe, neutral place for supervised visits between a child and a non-custodial parent. Also, supervised exchanges available for cases such as when the safety of a parent is a concern. Fee for service, based on income.**

**Aboriginal Criminal Court  
Work Program (ACCWP)  
Worker, 519-753-5408  
ext. 233  
(see page 94)**

**Aboriginal Combined Court  
Worker,  
519-753-5408  
ext. 227  
(see page 94)**

**Crown Attorney's Office  
44 Queen Street  
Brantford, ON N3T 3B4  
519-758-3480**

## Using a Lawyer

If you are leaving your partner, you should consider speaking to a lawyer to find out your rights and your options. It is especially advisable to seek legal advice if you have minor children or if you are not a Canadian citizen.

A lawyer can help you:

- understand your rights under the Family Law Act
- keep you up-to-date about any new legislation or procedures affecting your situation
- write a separation agreement
- arrange for a court order

A **court order** specifies the terms of agreement between two people who have separated. In putting together your court order a lawyer may ask the judge to grant you:

- custody of your children
- financial support from your partner
- your share of joint property and assets
- exclusive possession of your home

Lawyers are listed in the local telephone book. Ask family and friends to recommend lawyers they have used. Some lawyers offer a free consultation; use this brief meeting to state your expectations and to determine whether you are comfortable with the lawyer's approach. You should also find out about the fees and payment schedule.

You can also get a free 30-minute consultation by calling the **Law Society Referral Service** at **1-855-947-5255**. You will be given the name and telephone number of a lawyer or licensed paralegal in your community. You will also get a referral number which you will have to provide when you call the lawyer or paralegal to make an appointment.

When you meet with your lawyer:

- Be on time; call if you have to cancel or reschedule the appointment.
- Be prepared. Keep a file with all the necessary documents (such as financial information, copies of deeds, proof of income for yourself and your partner, any custody or court orders, etc.). Bring the file each time you meet with your lawyer.
- Bring a list of your questions and write down the answers as you get them. Be sure you understand the information you are given. To keep legal fees to a minimum, you should avoid any unnecessary telephone calls to your lawyer.

*If you can't afford a lawyer...*

## Legal Aid

You may be able to get Legal Aid to pay for a lawyer if you qualify financially and your legal problem is one that Legal Aid covers (family matters, criminal charges, immigration, and refugee matters). People with no income or who are on social assistance almost always qualify financially for Legal Aid, but you may still financially qualify even if you have a job. There is also a legal eligibility requirement that a Duty Counsel can assess.

Call the toll-free Legal Aid number at 1-800-668-8258 as soon as you know you need help. Legal Aid staff will ask questions to help you find the services that best fit your legal issues. Be able to provide relevant financial information including identification (S.I.N. card, driver's license, birth certificate or landed immigrant papers), any documents relating to your case (court orders, separation agreements, etc.), proof of your current income (pay stubs, Ontario Works cheque stubs etc.), and an up-to-date bank book or statements. The staff will help you complete an application and may be able to predict right away whether you are likely to get Legal Aid. They may refer you to a FLIC or a Duty Counsel for further assistance.

Meanwhile, contact Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services at **519-752-4357** to receive a certificate for **two hours of free legal service** as well as a current list of local lawyers who accept Legal Aid.

## Legal Issues & Judicial System

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### Mandatory Information

**Program** - This is a relatively new program to Ontario, designed to inform parties about the separation and/or divorce process and family court. Applicants (the person initiating the case) and Respondents (the other person) both must attend a MIP, however, the sessions are at different times. A Judge is the only person who can exempt you from the MIP, so it is very important that you let your lawyer or the judge know that you are a victim of domestic violence in order to help alleviate any safety concerns you have for yourself and/or your children.

## Legal Issues & Judicial System

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### Legal Aid Ontario Client Service Centre

1-800-668-8258

If you would like to know the status of your application for a Legal Aid Certificate or if you are applying for one, you can follow the phone prompts. Remember, you can also contact a Transitional Support Worker at Nova Vita to apply for Legal Aid.

### Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk

1100 Clarence Street S.  
Suite 203

Brantford ON N3S 7N8

Tel. 519-752-8669

Toll free: 1-888-341-5021

## Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk

The Community Legal Clinic - Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk can provide you with confidential legal information and legal representation for matters dealing with the following:

- tenants' rights / human rights
- welfare rights (OW)
- the Ontario Disability Program (ODSP)
- unemployment insurance (EI)
- workers' compensation (WSIB)
- Canada pension plan (CPP)
- employment/workplace issues

Call to make an appointment. The services are free to those who meet eligibility requirements.

## Family Court Support Worker

Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services' Family Court Support Program supports victims of domestic violence by facilitating their understanding of and passage through the family court system. A Family Court Support Worker provides information about the family court process, helps victims prepare for family court proceedings, refers victims to other specialized services and supports in the community, helps with safety planning, and accompanies the victim to court proceedings, where appropriate. Family court support workers also provide support related to:

- family law
- custody and access
- child and spousal support
- separation and divorce
- child welfare (Family and Children's Services)
- restraining orders

For more information, call 519-752-1005, ext. 248.



# Housing

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For women leaving abusive relationships, one of the most important (and usually most challenging) tasks is finding good, affordable accommodation. Since you have to provide a fixed address in order to get help from Ontario Works, your housing needs will be a high priority. The following information can help get you started...

## Subsidized Housing

### Brantford Housing Department

The Housing Department oversees social housing programs in Brantford and Brant County. The rent in these units is set according to the income of the household (generally 30% of monthly gross income). There are also some market rent units available.

Types of housing available through the Housing Department include detached and semi-detached homes, townhouses and apartment buildings for families, singles and seniors, and some units have been modified for those with physical handicaps. Housing communities are located in Brantford, Paris, St. George, and Burford. There is a long waiting list for housing so it is important to get your completed application in and to make sure your contact information stays up-to-date. You can view the housing projects by looking through the catalogue at the Housing Office or on the website.

To apply for housing, visit or call the **Housing Department at 220 Colborne Street, Brantford, 519-759-3330** or visit the website at [www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca) and click on “housing”. The Brant(ford) Access to Housing (BATH) is a quick and easy way to apply to a large number of housing providers at the same time by completing just one application form. You will be placed on a central waiting list according to the date your completed application was received.

**City of Brantford  
Housing Department  
220 Colborne Street  
Brantford N3T 5R7  
Tel: 519-759-3330  
Fax: 519-759-1750  
Website: [www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca)  
(click on “housing”)**

**Applications are also  
available from...**

**The Housing Resource  
Centre  
519-759-3330  
220 Colborne Street**

**MP Phil McColeman’s Office  
519-754-4300  
108 St. George St, Suite 3**

**MPP Dave Levac’s Office  
519-759-0361  
96 Nelson Street, Suite 101**

**Nova Vita Domestic  
Violence Prevention  
Services  
59 North Park Street**

**Ontario Works  
519-759-3330  
220 Colborne Street**

## Housing

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***Special Priority for housing is allowed for applicants whose personal safety, or whose family's safety is at risk because of abuse by someone with whom they live or have recently lived with, and, from whom they intend to separate permanently.*** This may include a sponsor, if the applicant is a sponsored immigrant.

If you think you may qualify for Special Priority status, contact the Housing Department at 519-759-3330, or go to the website at [www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca) and click on “housing,” or contact Nova Vita for a Special Priority information and verification form.

People who are homeless may receive Urgent Priority (one vacancy in every ten). If you think you may qualify for Urgent Priority status, contact the Housing Department.

### **Brantford Native Housing**

Subsidized housing is provided for low income Native families. Housing is available in homes located in Brantford. Call or visit the office to obtain an application form and get further details.

## **Non-subsidized Housing**

If you are not eligible for subsidized housing, or you do not want to wait until a unit becomes available, you can look for accommodation on your own. Homes, apartments, and flats for rent are listed in the classified section of the local newspaper and online through rental websites such as [viewit.ca](http://viewit.ca) and [kijiji.ca](http://kijiji.ca). The ads will provide some information – such as the number of bedrooms and the rent – but you will have to call to get more details. Specifically, you need to know...

- the location, address, and type of dwelling
- other details about the layout and room sizes
- amenities provided (e.g. laundry facilities, parking, etc.)
- amenities for children (e.g. playground, nearby park)

**Brantford Native Housing was founded in 1986 and is a non-profit charitable organization whose main objective is to provide safe, secure and affordable rental homes and support services for urban Native Peoples living in the city of Brantford and Brant County. Call or visit the office to obtain a rental application form.**

**Phone: (519) 756-2205;  
(519) 756-2209**

**For more information,  
please see page 97-98.**

- what utilities are included
- if there are any special restrictions or rules
- whether there are any additional fees or charges
- when the home will be available
- whether the unit will be painted/decorated prior to moving day
- what is included (e.g. appliances, window coverings, furniture)

If a house or apartment sounds promising, make an appointment to see it. Try to do this during daylight hours. When you approach the home, look around the neighbourhood: does it seem safe? Are the homes/buildings well kept? Is it relatively quiet? Are the schools nearby? Is it on, or close to, a bus route? Take your time when you inspect the home. Is it clean and in good repair? Does it provide adequate space for your family? Are the appliances in good shape?

If you do not have children or need much space, you might consider boarding with someone or renting a basement apartment/granny suite. Alternatively, you might want to share the space and expenses of a larger apartment or house with a roommate.

You may be restricted by money and/or time, but do your best to find a place where you and your children can be secure and comfortable and where you can feel good about re-building your life.

## Signing a Lease

If you are interested in a unit, talk to the landlord about what is required. It is normal to have to pay both the first and last month's rent up front. If you can't afford to do that you may be able to get some assistance from Ontario Works (*see page 48*) or the Housing Resource Centre. The landlord may also ask you for references or want someone else to co-sign the lease with you, if you are

## Housing

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**It is discriminatory — and illegal — to refuse to rent to someone because: they are pregnant or have children, are on government assistance, have a mental or physical handicap, or because of their marital status, age, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality.**

**The Landlord and Tenant Act also states that a tenant may own a pet as long as it isn't a danger, doesn't cause an allergic reaction, and isn't a bother to the other tenants or the landlord.**

## Housing

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unemployed. Once the details have been sorted out, you can arrange to move in.

You may be asked to sign a lease, obligating you to rent the unit for a minimum period (usually a year). If you want to move out before the lease expires, you might have to pay a fee or arrange to sublet the unit to someone else. The lease is a legal contract between you and your landlord. Before signing, make sure it includes...

- the full address of the unit
- a description (number of rooms, size)
- the monthly rent and when it is due
- who collects the rent
- the amount of the deposit
- a breakdown of who pays for which utilities
- items the landlord has agreed to fix

If there is something in the lease you don't understand, get answers before you sign. As a tenant, you have certain **rights**: to possession on the agreed upon date; to privacy; to good repair; to no more than one rent increase per year; to have visitors; and to not have personal property seized. Your **responsibilities** are to pay rent when it's due, to act responsibly, and to give written notice when you are ready to move.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the Brant Community Legal Clinic at 519-752-8669 or the Housing Resource Centre.

## Housing Resource Centre

The Housing Resource Centre is a free community service providing help to both tenants and landlords. Intake at 519-759-7009 between 8:30 am to 4:15 pm - same day appointments are often available.

## Tenants' Services

The Housing Resource Centre helps people (16 and over) find suitable and affordable housing in Brantford and Brant County. You can also contact the centre to get information about the Residential Tenancy Act and other related legislation, or for assistance with a wide range of housing issues such as:

- how to contact landlords
- completing application forms
- advocacy for tenants with housing problems
- how to get utilities hooked up

## Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance (BBHPA)

This program helps tenants who are in imminent danger of being evicted or becoming homeless because they are behind in their rent and/or utilities. This program also provides assistance for rental and utility deposits for people who are homeless and are seeking to secure permanent housing. Call 519-759-7009 for more information and eligibility criteria.

- BBHPA funds are means tested, and are provided as a grant or loan depending on income and household size.

## The Outreach Program

The Outreach Program helps provide individuals and families who are homeless by helping them access emergency shelters and facilities in the community, assisting with other basic needs, and providing referrals for income, food, permanent housing and other services.

## Housing

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**Housing Resource Centre**  
**220 Colborne Street**  
**Brantford, ON N3T 2H1**  
**Open 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**  
**Monday through Friday**  
**Tel: 519-759-3330**

**Problems with your rental home should be reported to your landlord or superintendent and repairs should be made within a few days.**

**If the problems are not fixed, you can call the Community Legal Clinic for advice at 519-752-8669. Problems affecting your health and safety might also be reported to the Building Department at City Hall, 519-759-4150 or Inspection Services at the Brant County Health Unit, 519-753-4937 ext. 470.**

## Housing

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### Redirecting Your Mail...

**You can purchase a “Change of Address” kit at any Canada Post outlet or online ([www.canadapost.ca](http://www.canadapost.ca)). You need to fill out a form indicating your new, as well as old, address. Select “self only” so that only mail addressed to you will be redirected. Mail will be forwarded to your new address for three, six, or twelve months with corresponding fees. You will also get change of address cards to send to anyone you wish to have your new address.**

### Domestic Violence Rent Bank

The Domestic Violence Rent Bank provides loans to women who are leaving an abusive situation to establish a safe and independent residence. To qualify for the bank you must:

- be leaving an abusive situation
- be 16 years or older
- not in receipt of social assistance (if you are, please see your caseworker as you may be eligible for BBHPA)
- be able to repay the loan in 18-24 months
- be able to afford the accommodations

### Utilities

Utilities include electricity (hydro), water, heat (i.e. natural gas if it isn't electric heat), telephone, and cable. If you rent, some of the utilities — for example heat, hydro, and electricity — may be included in the rental amount. If any are not, you will have to set up an account with the appropriate utility companies. There is usually a one-time activation/administration fee for new accounts and in some cases, deposits are required. The following are telephone numbers for some of the local utility firms.

#### **Brantford Power** (electricity and water in Brantford)

P.O. Box 308, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5N8

Tel: 519-751-3522

[www.brantfordpower.com](http://www.brantfordpower.com)

Minimum notice for new hook-up: 48 hours (1 week preferred)

Deposit: For new accounts or history of bad credit - two and a half times the average hydro bill at the new location (may be split up over the first four bills)

Connection Fee: \$30 (added to first bill)

#### **Brant County Power Inc.** (electricity and water in Brant County)

65 Dundas Street E., Paris N3L 3H1, Tel: 519-442-2215

[www.brantcountypower.com](http://www.brantcountypower.com)

Minimum notice: one working day (more preferred)

Deposit: For new accounts or history of bad credit - up to two

and a half times the average hydro bill at the new location  
Connection Fee: \$30 (added to first bill)

**Union Gas** (natural gas)

1-888-774-3111 (*for gas leaks, or other emergencies:*  
*1-877-969-0999*)

www.uniongas.com

Minimum notice: two business days

Deposit: Depends on usage at your unit. For all new customers,  
may be waived if equal billing and pre-authorized payment plan  
options are selected.

Connection Fee: \$35 plus HST (added to first bill)

**Bell Canada** (telephone, internet, cable)

84 Lynden Road, Brantford

Tel: 519-756-6742; www.bell.ca

Minimum notice: two business days (more preferred)

Deposit: Required if there is a history of bad credit, or if this is  
your first telephone line; minimum \$200

Connection Fee: Depends on product selected (e.g. internet or  
cable) The fee will be added to first bill.

It costs \$2 a month for an unlisted number (you can also  
request that your name not appear on telephone display  
screens). Services, such as call display or call screening are  
also available for additional fees.

**Rogers Cable** (telephone, internet, cable)

43 King George Road, Brantford

Tel: 519-805-2928;

www.rogers.com

Minimum notice: 1 week; Deposit: May be required depending  
on credit check.

Connection Fee: Depends on product selected (e.g. internet,  
cable, telephone)

A number of services/packages are available.

# Financial Assistance

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## Ontario Works

To apply call: 519-759-7009

## Brantford Office

220 Colborne Street

Box 845, Brantford

Open 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Monday through Friday

Tel: 519-759-3330

**In order to receive any type of federal or provincial supplement or benefit income, you must have filed an income tax return for the previous year.**

If you are unemployed and have no means of supporting yourself and your children, you are entitled to financial assistance. The following provides instruction on how to access some of the main sources. *Please note that application procedures change periodically; check with the appropriate service or office.*

## Ontario Works

Social assistance is provided through Ontario Works. To apply, call the local intake department at 519-759-7009.

You will need to provide:

- personal information including your full name, date of birth, Social Insurance Number, health card number, etc.
- personal information for each of your children
- the address of where you will be living
- the amount you will be paying in rent
- any income you will be receiving
- Assets such as bank accounts, life insurance, etc.

You will be given the date, time, and location of an appointment with a case manager. (If you are in Brantford or Brant County, you will most likely be asked to report to the Brantford office at 220 Colborne Street.)

Assuming you qualify and depending on your rent, the ages of your children and other personal circumstances, you may qualify for approximately...

Single person	\$706 per month
Couple	\$1065 per month
Couple with 1 child	\$1261 per month



You will also receive a drug card, which will cover the cost of some prescription medicine.

Note: You cannot apply to Ontario Works until you know where you will be living.

### **Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance (BBHPA)**

A program developed to help prevent homelessness. It assists with:

- last month's rent deposit
- rent arrears
- heat, hydro, and water arrears

If you are in need of assistance, please contact your Ontario Works case manager, ODSP case worker, or the Housing Resource Centre.

### **Assistance With Child Care Costs**

Child Care Services' Fee Subsidy Program provides financial assistance towards the cost of child care in licensed programs. You might be eligible if you are working, going to school or attending an approved training program. Both full and partial child care subsidies are issued. Call to find out if you qualify for the subsidy and how to proceed.

## **Ontario Disability Support Program**

If you have a disability preventing you from working, you may qualify for income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program. A referral is available through Ontario Works. Call for more information on the program and how to apply.

## **Spousal and Child Support**

If you separated from your husband/wife or common law spouse, you may be entitled to financial support for yourself (if they supported you in full or in part during the relationship) as well as support for your children. Your lawyer would apply to the court

## **Financial Assistance**

**Child Care Services**  
220 Clarence Street  
Brantford N3R 3T5  
Tel: 519-756-3150

**Ontario Disability Support Program, Brantford and the County of Brant**  
195 Henry Street,  
Building 4, Unit 2, Brantford  
519-756-5790  
Toll Free: 1-866-729-2228

**Family Responsibility Office**  
P.O. Box 220  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3M 3A3  
1-800-267-4330  
Fax: 416-240-2401  
[www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/familyresponsibility](http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/familyresponsibility)

## **Financial Assistance**

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### **Canada Child Tax Benefit 1-800-387-1193**

### **Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families**

Call the Ministry of Finance at  
**1-866-668-8297**

on your behalf and any decisions about support and the amount of the payments would be part of the court order (*see page 33*).

### **Family Responsibility Office**

Once an order for support is issued by the court, it is filed with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO), which processes the payments to help make sure they are paid on a regular basis. The FRO would collect the money from your spouse or partner — or from their employer — and then forward the money to you. The FRO will take various measures to collect any payments that are missed.

In order to provide the information the FRO needs to collect and forward the payments, you must fill out the forms that you receive in the “Filing Package” and send them back. You must also make sure to report any changes to this information (e.g. your partner’s address, employer or banking information; your address or banking information). Contact the FRO for more information.

## **Child and Family Benefits**

The Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) consolidates several provincial child benefits into one benefit that is provided to low and moderate-income families with children under 18 years old. The OCB might include the Child Disability Benefit for those eligible.

If you have been receiving this benefit, make sure you report any address or banking changes to the appropriate administrative offices so that you continue to receive the funds.

If you have not received this benefit previously, but think you may be entitled, call the appropriate office to enquire or visit [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca).

## Tax Credits

Revenue Canada issues a **Goods and Services Tax/ Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) Credit** to individuals and families with incomes below a certain level. If you are eligible, a cheque will be sent to you four times a year. The amount of the credit will depend on your income and the number of people in your household.

You may also be entitled to other tax credits, such as **Ontario Property or Sales Tax Credits**. These would serve to either reduce the amount of taxes you have to pay, or provide you with a refund cheque.

To receive any of the above credits or the child and family benefits, you must file an **income tax return**, even if you were not employed during the year. If you do not receive an income tax package in the mail, you can pick one up at any post office. There are services that will complete your return for you (for a fee) or you can do it yourself; help is available through free tax clinics and telephone support lines (watch the newspaper for details).

## Employment Insurance

If you have been working and have lost your job, or if you had to stop working because you were pregnant or stayed home to care for your new baby, you may be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. Employment Insurance provides you with a temporary income while you are looking for another job or until you can return to work.

For more information contact Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) at 1-800-206-7218.

To receive benefits, file your claim as soon as possible after your last day of work. You can go to the nearest ESDC office to apply. You need to bring your S.I.N. card and your Record of Employment (which you will get from your employer). Your application will be reviewed and you will have a chance to ask

## Financial Assistance

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**GST Credit**  
**1-800-959-1953**

**Employment and Social  
Development Canada  
Brantford Service Canada  
Centre**  
**58 Dalhousie Street  
Brantford N3T 2J2**  
**1-800-206-7218**  
**[www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)**

**Financial Benefits Finder**  
**[www.canadabenefits.gc.ca](http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca)**  
By answering a few questions, you are able to determine which benefits you may be eligible for.

### **Criminal Injuries Compensation Board**

**655 Bay Street, 14th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A3  
Tel: 1-800-372-7463  
www.cicb.gov.on.ca**

**Leaving an abusive relationship can be difficult on many fronts: your standard of living may drop initially. But it will be a worthwhile price to pay for your safety, well-being and self esteem. And, it doesn't have to be permanent.**

questions about your benefits.

## **Criminal Injuries Compensation Board**

If you have suffered injuries and incurred expenses as a result of a crime of violence (including domestic violence), you may be eligible for compensation through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB). You do not have to have laid charges against your partner. You can apply for compensation up to two years after the incident (time extensions are possible, but they are not always granted).

To get an application, call or write to the CICB. After you have applied, proving a claim can be an involved process and will include a hearing. You may want help from a lawyer. The maximum amount of compensation is \$25,000 but most applicants receive much less.

## **Money Matters**

When resources are scarce, it can be stressful and you may be tempted to go back to your partner, even though you know that the abuse will begin again. Don't be tempted to return for the wrong reasons. Your financial situation *can* improve and you can learn how to acquire and manage the money you need for yourself and your children. In the meantime, consider the following tips...

- Avoid incurring any additional debt. It may be tempting to rely on credit cards or financing programs in order to get the things you want, but be careful. High interest rates and financing charges can have you paying a lot more than you thought for those great “sale” items.
- Get some help. There are plenty of books, articles, and workshops on managing your finances. You can also get credit counselling to help you get out from under your debts (*see page 53*).

- Create a household budget. Know how much money you have coming in and what regular expenses you have to cover each month. Decide what you can afford to spend on food, clothing, entertainment and other expenditures. Use the form on page 121 to create a personalized household budget.
- Learn ways to cut back and save on purchases and expenses. *(See the next section for suggestions on where to go to get clothing, household goods and other items for little or no money.)*
- As difficult as it may be, try to save some money (even just a few dollars on a regular basis) that you can use for an unexpected expense or a special treat.

### **Credit Counselling and Consumer Education Services**

Family Counselling of Brant

**519-753-4173**

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

E-mail: [office@fccb.ca](mailto:office@fccb.ca), website: [www.fccb.ca](http://www.fccb.ca)

Counselling and assistance to reduce debt, develop a workable budget and prevent further credit and debt problems. There is no charge for budget counselling or educational workshops; nominal fees are charged for a debt repayment plan.

## **Financial Assistance**

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**You can channel your newfound confidence and energy into activities that make you happy, fulfilled and prosperous. See pages 88-93 for information on education, training and employment opportunities.**

# Food, Clothing and Household Needs

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Community food banks provide free food or food vouchers to families in need.

You do not need to be embarrassed by having to go to a food bank — they are there to help people make ends meet.

**Good Food Box Program**  
Local fruit and vegetables available the third week of every month for only \$12 (feeds 1-2 people) and \$17 (feeds 4-5 people).

For more information contact the Good Food Box Coordinator at:  
519-751-4357 ext. 241  
1100 Clarence Street,  
Suite 202  
Brantford, ON

## Food Banks

### Brantford Food Bank

519-751-4357

Community Resource Service  
1100 Clarence Street South, Suite 202,  
Brantford N3S 7N8 • [www.crs-help.ca](http://www.crs-help.ca)

*Hours:* Mon. to Fri. 1 - 3:45 p.m (excluding statutory holidays).

- emergency food; services may be accessed once a month
- ID required for all members of the household
- bring your own shopping bags/boxes

### Salvation Army - Brantford Family and Community Services

519-752-7814

33 Diana Avenue, Brantford N3T 0C2

*Hours:* Wed. Fri. 1 - 4 p.m (by appointment).

- emergency food/grocery assistance
- services may be accessed once every three months

### Salvation Army - Paris Family and Community Services

519-442-3432

25B Dundas Street West, Unit B, Paris, N3L 1E9

*Hours:* Mon. Thurs 1-3pm (walk in)

- food assistance for low income community members
- services may be accessed once every 30 days

## Emergency Food Programs

Nutritious meals are available free of charge at various locations in Brantford including the following:

**Alexandra Presbyterian Church:** 410 Colborne Street,  
519-753-1602

**Brantford Blessing Centre:** 7 Burnley Avenue, 519-753-8030

**Cedarview Evangelistic Centre:** 20 Cedar Street, Paris,  
519-442-4448

**Friendship House:** 452 Grey Street, 519-753-8511

**Grace Anglican Church:** 4 Pearl Street, 519-752-6814

**Immanuel Baptist Church:** 66 Port Street, 519-752-2287

**Paris Presbyterian Church:**

164 Grand River Street North, Paris, 519-442-2842

**St. Andrew's United Church:** 95 Darling Street, 519-752-5823

**Salvation Army Booth Centre:** 187 Dalhousie Street,  
519-753-4193

**Sydenham United Church:** 120 Sydenham Street,  
519-753-1248

**Why Not City Brantford Youth Centre:** 368 Colborne Street,  
519-759-2221

Monthly food program calendars are available online by visiting the City of Brantford website at [www.city.brantford.on.ca](http://www.city.brantford.on.ca).

## Free Clothing

**Faith Lutheran Church Clothing Depot** 519-753-3833

57 Brant Ave. Brantford N3T 3G9

Clothing sold for \$2-\$5 a bag, some household items.

**Community Closet - Friendship House** 519-753-8511

452 Grey Street, Brantford N3S 4X8

**The Kindness Centre** 519-774-2107

1 Market Square, Brantford, N3T 2H3

Clothing, shoes, and household items. Some items for a fee.

**The Olive Branch Community  
Clothing Centre** 519-753-4549

New Covenant Christian Fellowship

22 Holiday Drive, Brantford, N3R 7J4

## Food, Clothing and Household Needs

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**The Christmas Baskets program helps financially stressed families in Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations. Eligible families/individuals receive a turkey or ham and other food items, and gifts for children up to the age of 14. Registration takes place from the first week of November to the second week of December; call 519-751-0000.**

**My Girlfriend's Closet Complete lending closet for women of all ages to celebrate a special event. Extensive collection of formal wear, purses, shoes and accessories (see p. 56).**

## **Food, Clothing and Household Needs**

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**Second-hand or thrift stores sell clothing, toys, books, furniture, linens and household goods at low prices. Check the local telephone directory under “second-hand stores.”**

**You may also find inexpensive but good quality gently-used items at garage sales or advertised in the newspaper classifieds, Pennysaver, or buy/sell websites (e.g. [www.kijiji.ca](http://www.kijiji.ca)).**

**City of Brantford Food Bank & Food Cupboard Calendar -**  
[www.brantford.ca/residents](http://www.brantford.ca/residents)

**The Wish Closet - Major Ballachey School**  
105 Rawdon Street, Brantford, N3S 6C7

**519-752-1643**

### **My Girlfriend's Closet**

In operation from February to June.  
Contact Nicole Bauer for an appointment  
Email: [nicolebauer@northerndelivery.com](mailto:nicolebauer@northerndelivery.com)

**519-756-2670**

## **Furniture and Household Items**

### **St. Vincent de Paul**

197 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2G8  
Furniture and household items offered to people in need.

**519-751-0143**

### **Salvation Army Family Thrift Store**

67 Charing Cross Street, Brantford, N3R 4K3  
Clothing and household items at low prices (or for vouchers).

**519-751-7692**

### **Value Village Store**

595 West Street, Brantford, N3S 7P2  
Second hand clothing and household items at low prices.

**519-751-4424**



# Health Services

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## Hospitals and Clinics

### **De dwa dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre**

36 King St, Brantford ON, N3T 3C5

519-752-4340

Please see page 101.

### **The Brant Community Healthcare System**

[www.bchsys.org](http://www.bchsys.org)

#### ***Brantford General Hospital***

**Office 519-752-7871**

200 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1G9

*24-hour emergency care*

**After Hours 519-751-5544 (Auto Attendant)**

#### ***Willett Urgent Care Centre***

**519-442-2251**

238 Grand River Street North, Paris, N3L 2N7

*Urgent Care Centre Hours:* Mon. to Fri. 10 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Sat and Sun. 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

#### **Avenue Medical Centre**

**519-753-8666**

221 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3J3

E-mail: [info@avenuemedical.ca](mailto:info@avenuemedical.ca); [www.avenuemedical.ca](http://www.avenuemedical.ca)

*Hours:* Mon. to Thurs. 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Fri. 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sat./Sun./Holidays 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

#### **Brantford Medical Centre Inc. -**

##### **Urgent Care Clinic**

**519-753-9581**

40 Shellington Place, Brantford, N3S 0C5

*Hours:* Mon. to Fri. 9:00 a.m - 8:00 p.m.

After hours Clinic: Mon. to Fri. 5:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m. by appointment

Mental Health Crisis Counselor Mon - Fri. 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Must be a registered patient of the Family Health Organization.

**Your family doctor can give you advice and support and keep track of your medical history — and that of your children. If you cannot get in to see your family doctor (e.g. on weekends), or you do not have a doctor, you can go to a walk-in clinic. You do not need an appointment; patients are treated on a first-come, first served basis.**

**Make sure you bring your health card (or your child's card if that is who needs treatment).**

## Health Services

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### Grand River Community Health Centre

A non-profit, primary health care provider for vulnerable community members.

Service is provided to:

- Those who do not have health care providers
- Those that are homeless or under-housed
- Seniors and youth
- Those with mental health or addiction issues

363 Colborne Street  
Brantford, N3S 3N2  
Tel: 519-754-0777  
email: [info@grchc.ca](mailto:info@grchc.ca)  
Website: [www.grandriverchc.ca](http://www.grandriverchc.ca)

### Brantford West Medical Centre Walk-in Clinic/ Family Practice 519-304-9200

164 Colborne Street West #2A Brantford, ON N3T 2L1

[www.brantfordclinic.com](http://www.brantfordclinic.com)

Hours: Mon. to Fri. 10:00am – 7:00pm  
Sat./Sun. 10:00am – 3:00pm

## Health Information Lines

### Health Information Line 519-753-4937 ext. 259

Public health nurses at the Brant County Health Unit are available during business hours to answer health/medical questions and direct callers to community resources as needed.

### Integrated Mental Health Crisis Service 519-759-7188 1-866-811-7188

24-hour crisis line; operated by St. Leonard's Community Services and works in partnership with Woodview Children's Mental Health and Autism Services, the Brant Community Health Care System, and the Alzheimer Society of Brant.

### Poison Information Centre 1-800-268-9017

### Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000 TTY : 1-866-797-0007

Free, confidential health information available by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A registered nurse will answer your questions, assess your symptoms and advise if you should go to the doctor, clinic, or hospital. You do not need your OHIP number.

## Choosing a Doctor, Dentist or Specialist

A family doctor who you trust and can confide in can play a significant role in helping you — and your children — stay safe and healthy. Ask people whose opinion you trust to recommend a doctor, dentist, or other healthcare professional. You will have to call to find out if the doctor is taking new patients.

## Fee for Service/OHIP Coverage

Although there may be some medical services or procedures that require a separate fee, most doctors' fees are covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). You should have a separate health card for yourself and for each of your children. You will be required to show these cards every time you access any health service (i.e. hospital, clinic, doctor, specialist).

If you are on social assistance through Ontario Works (*see page 48*), you will also receive a drug card which will cover the cost of prescription medicine for yourself and your children. Most dental services, however, are **not** covered by OHIP. If you have a dental plan, or are covered under your spouse's or someone else's plan, some or all of the fees may be covered. Otherwise, you will have to pay for service. Call around to compare fees.

First Nation and Inuit Health Branch, please see page 100.

### Financial Aid for Children's Dental Services

If your child requires dental work and you cannot afford the fees, you may be able to get financial assistance through the Brant County Health Unit's CINOT (Children In Need Of Treatment) program. Call 519 753-4937 ext. 450 for more information.

## Brant County Health Unit

The Brant County Health Unit works to deliver programs and services to help improve the health and well-being of the community.

Programs and services includes:

- Testing for various diseases
- Quit smoking programs
- Working with parents on nutrition, safety, growth and development, and more
- Immunizations and vaccines
- Dental care
- Inspecting local businesses to help reduce and prevent illness
- Encouraging physical activity in schools, workplaces, seniors' groups, and more

## Health Services

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**To get a health card, call Service Ontario at 1-888-376-5197.**

**For information about health insurance, call the Info Line at 1-866-532-3161.**

**TTY: 1-800-387-5559**

**Service Ontario  
325A West Street, Unit 103  
Brantford, Ontario, N3R 3V6  
Mon-Weds. & Fri.  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Thurs. 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Sat 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.**

## Health Services

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**Aboriginal (First Nation, Inuit, & Metis) Pregnancy, Prenatal, and Postnatal Care Services, please see page 100.**

**Brant County Health Unit  
194 Terrace Hill Street  
Brantford, N3R 1G7  
Tel: 519-753-4937  
www.bchu.org**

**For at least 25% of domestic violence victims, the assaults begin during pregnancy.**

**You may feel particularly vulnerable at this stage, and think you cannot leave the relationship while you are pregnant. But physical abuse usually gets worse and you may be putting yourself and your baby at risk.**

**Call Nova Vita's 24-hour Crisis Line at 519-752-4357 for information and confidential support.**

## Pregnancy, Prenatal and Postnatal Care

**Pregnancy Resource Centre** 519-756-3787  
466 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3S 3N7  
Please contact for more information.

**Community Midwives of Brantford** 519-751-6444  
217 Terrace Hill Street, Suite 100, Brantford, N3R 1G8  
Provides personal care during pregnancy, labour, and birth.  
Follow up care of the mother and her baby for the first six weeks of life.

**Brant County Health Unit** 519-753-4937  
**Family Line** ext. 464  
194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford N3R 1G7

**Prenatal Education Classes** ext. 463  
A four session program. Call or visit the website for the course outline and registration information.

**Healthy Babies, Healthy Children** ext. 482  
Healthy Babies, Healthy Children provides information, suggestions and support to expecting parents and parents with children up to school entry. Services include nutrition programs, breastfeeding support, public health nurse, home visits, parenting workshops, children's health and safety, immunization, toilet training and much more.

**Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)** ext. 463  
A prenatal and postnatal program for teens is available involving weekly drop-in sessions.

**Family Drop in Program** ext. 464  
A well baby/well child clinic held at various locations in Brantford. Parents can meet with a public health nurse to discuss questions or concerns they might have about their child's growth and development. Call for dates, times, and locations.

## **Brantford General Hospital —**

### **Pre-Birth Service**

**519-752-7871**

200 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1C8

Pre-birth visit with a registered nurse to help women prepare for a birth and hospital stay and to get information and access to resources that meets the individual needs of the expectant mother.

### **Family Resource Centre**

**519-753-8681 ext. 208**

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

Postnatal groups, including groups for teen parents.

**Six Nations Health Services, please see page 102.**

## **Mental Health, Special Needs, Respite and Homecare**

### **Rosewood House**

**519-750-1547**

[www.rosewoodhouse.on.ca](http://www.rosewoodhouse.on.ca)

42 Nelson Street, Brantford, N3T 2M8

Supportive housing for individuals 16 and over, who are struggling with mental health or addictions. Services offered include: 24-hour staff, medication supervision, case coordination, programming, and counselling. Admission is dependent on the client meeting eligibility for Ontario Works and/or ODSP; this is determined by an intake assessment.

### **Brant County Preschool Speech & Language System**

**519-753-7453**

39 Mount Pleasant Street, Brantford N3T 1S7

[www.talkingtots.org](http://www.talkingtots.org)

“Talking Tots” program provides help for children from birth to junior kindergarten who are having problems with speech and communication. Free services include assessment, therapy, home programming, and school transition support.

## **Health Services**

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### **Call 211**

**211 is the information and referral service that provides the people of Ontario with reliable information on community and social services. When you dial the 211 hotline, you are connected with a Certified Information and Referral Specialist who has been trained to assess your needs, answer your questions accurately, and advise you about the services and programs that are best for you and your loved ones. Calls to 211 are anonymous and confidential. Your personal identifying information will not be shared with any other parties. Many of the calls received deal with sensitive topics. Your right to privacy is taken very seriously.**

**[www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca)**

## Health Services

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### **Brant Mental Health Crisis Response System**

**519-751-5530**

200 Terrace Hill Street, E Wing Main, Brantford, N3R 1G9

[www.bchsys.org](http://www.bchsys.org)

Services for people 16 and over experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis (**24-hour crisis line - 519-759-7188/ 1-866-811-7188**). Free mental health crisis counselling available Monday to Friday. Patients may be self-referred or referred by a physician.

### **Brantwood Residential**

**Development Centre**

**519-753-2658**

25 Bell Lane, Brantford, N3T 1E1

E-mail: [info@brantwood.ca](mailto:info@brantwood.ca); [www.brantwood.ca](http://www.brantwood.ca)

Residential care and support for individuals who are developmentally and physically challenged.

### **Canadian Mental Health Association**

**519-752-2998**

44 King Street, Suite 203, Brantford, N3T 3C7

Email to: [mail@cmhabrant.on.ca](mailto:mail@cmhabrant.on.ca), [www.brant.cmha.ca](http://www.brant.cmha.ca)

Case management, supported housing, court support and diversion, group and individual counselling, social/recreation program, life skills groups, peer support, family education & support, mental health promotion and public education activities targeted at adults with mental illness and their families.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### **Canadian Red Cross Society**

**519-753-4189**

25 William Street, Brantford, N3T 3K3

[www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

Meals On Wheels and other home support programs for the elderly and/or physically challenged. Transportation program available to those needing help getting to in-town, county and out-of-town medical appointments.

### **Community Living Brant**

**519-756-2662**

366 Dalhousie Street, Brantford, N3S 3W2

[www.clbrant.com](http://www.clbrant.com)

Offers support and services to individuals with developmental disabilities and to their families.

### **Contact Brant**

**519-758-8228**

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

[www.contactbrant.net](http://www.contactbrant.net)

Contact Brant is the first place to contact for information on community services. Contact Brant is the Access agency for children and youth services, ages 0 – 18. Families and professionals can call Contact Brant directly for information or to access services.

Contact Brant completes the intake and referral to support families not having to repeat their story to each service provider. Agencies that Contact Brant provides Access services for include: Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services, St. Leonard's Community Services, CPRI, and other regional resources for children's mental health services; and Family and Children's Services, Family Counselling Centre, Lansdowne Children's Centre, CPRI, DSO, and other regional resources for children's developmental and Autism services.

Contact Brant is the Lead Service Coordination Agency for Brant, working collaboratively with community partners involved in serving children, youth and their families to ensure a coordinated service plan.

Contact Brant manages the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Information Database, [www.info-bhn.ca](http://www.info-bhn.ca) which provides an up-to-date on-line resource on social, health and governments services and supports including health services, newcomer/immigrants services, foodbanks and meal programs, housing, seniors services and homecare, government social assistance, parenting and family programs, children and youth services, disability and support programs. 211 Ontario and the Healthline use these records to provide their services: call 2-1-1 24/7, 356 days per year and receive information in over 150 languages, or visit the Healthline website.

Start with Contact Brant.

## **Health Services**

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### **Family Counselling Centre of Brant, Inc.**

**519-753-4173**

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

E-mail: [office@fccb.ca](mailto:office@fccb.ca); [www.fccb.ca](http://www.fccb.ca)

Free services are available to children and adults with a developmental disability and their families or caregivers through the Centre's Case Management Program, Family Relief Program, Passport Respite Program and Behaviour Consultation and Therapy Program (Hamilton Brant Behaviour Services). Counselling and support services are available to any child or adult with a developmental disability who has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused. New referrals are made through Developmental Services Ontario-Hamilton Niagara (1-877-376-4674).

### **Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand Brant**

**519-759-7752**

### **Community Care Access Centre Brant:**

**1-800-810-0000**

195 Henry Street, Unit 4, Building 4, Brantford, N3S 5C9

[www.healthcareathome.ca](http://www.healthcareathome.ca)

Provides assistance in accessing government-funded home care services and long-term care homes. Available health care services include: physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, nursing, personal support, nutritional counselling, respite care, medical supplies and equipment, social work, and child and family services.

### **Lansdowne Children's Centre**

**519-753-3153/3154**

39 Mount Pleasant Street, Brantford, N3T 1S7

E-mail: [info@lansdownecc.com](mailto:info@lansdownecc.com); [www.lansdownecentre.ca](http://www.lansdownecentre.ca).

Lansdowne Children's Centre supports children and youth with physical, developmental or communication needs, and their families. Services offered include occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language therapy, social work, infant and child development, early integration, autism intervention and support services including respite care, special services at home, Kids' Country Inn, Every Kid Counts, recreation/camps and alternate care.



**Brantford Lift****519-752-4444 ext. 1**

[brantfordlift@brantford.ca](mailto:brantfordlift@brantford.ca); [www.brantfordlift.ca](http://www.brantfordlift.ca)

Offers pre-arranged door-to-door service for physically challenged and elderly residents in Brantford and Brant County. Fee for service.

**Participation House****519-756-1430**

10 Bell Lane, P.O.Box 2048, Brantford, N3T 5W5

[www.participationhousebrantford.org](http://www.participationhousebrantford.org)

Residential programs and services for adults with physical disabilities, as well as individuals (including seniors) with chronic health concerns.

**Health Services**

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# Counselling and Support

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## Counselling/Transitional Support for Women

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**Transitional Support**

**519-752-1005 ext. 221**

59 North Park Street, Brantford, N3R 4J8

E-mail: [info@novavita.org](mailto:info@novavita.org); [www.novavita.org](http://www.novavita.org)

Help for women who want to leave an abusive relationship and establish violence free lives in the community. Free services, available to women 16 and over in Brantford and Brant County, include: home visits, court support and information on the legal system, informal support, assistance with obtaining identification (birth certificates, health cards, etc.), referrals to a wide range of community services and resources including transitional housing.

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**Community Counselling Program**

**519-752-1005 ext. 221**

[www.novavita.org](http://www.novavita.org)

Group and individual counselling for women (16 years and over) who are in, or have been in, an abusive relationship. Sessions are conducted in a safe, supportive, confidential environment. Counselling services are free; free transportation and child care may be available. Call for more information and to arrange for an intake appointment.

**Sexual Assault Centre of Brant**

**519-751-1164**

[www.sacbrant.ca](http://www.sacbrant.ca)

Counselling and support services for women 16 and over who are survivors of sexual violence, including survivors of child sexual abuse. Call for more information about services. The 24-hour Crisis and Support Line, 519-751-3471, is available to both female and male survivors of sexual violence as well as to their friends and family members.

**Many counselling agencies offer marriage or couples counselling. This is not recommended for women who are still at risk of physical abuse.**

**You should go for counselling alone. Your counsellor should be supportive and empathetic and have an understanding of domestic violence.**

**There are several counselling, support, and addictions services for First Nations and Aboriginal peoples. Please see Aboriginal Services for Survivors of Domestic and Family Violence pages 93-106.**

## **Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services**

**519-445-4324**

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250,  
Ohsweken, NOA 1M0  
www.ganohkwasra.ca

Free counselling for women, children, and men who have been abused. Counselling and therapy are based on holistic programs and a variety of energy-based techniques are used.

## **Family Counselling Centre of Brant, Inc.**

**519-753-4173**

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8  
E-mail: office@fccb.ca; www.fccb.ca

Free counselling and support services for women 16 years and over who have experienced physical, emotional abuse, or sexual assault, including childhood sexual abuse in order that they may live free of violence. Therapy services include: crisis/support counselling, safety planning, sexual assault, mental health and addictions counselling, referrals to other services, rights information, sexual assault counselling; as well as counselling for a range of issues such as: depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, or anger that may result from the violence. Groups and workshops on learning to trust, relaxation and self-care, and building self-esteem are available.

## **Counselling for Children and Adolescents**

### **Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services Children Exposed to Domestic Violence**

**519-752-1005 ext. 221**

www.novavita.org

Free program for children/adolescents 6 to 16 to help them cope with the violence they have witnessed/experienced. Concurrently, the mothers attend separate sessions to discuss the impact of domestic violence on children and learn parenting/coping strategies. (*See page 21*)

## **Counselling and Support**

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### **St. Leonard's Community Services**

**Healthy Relationships:**  
The activities in the Healthy Relationships program help young women identify and differentiate between healthy, unhealthy, and abusive relationships.

The primary focus of the program is to develop self-respect, responsibility, and appropriate problem solving skills while empowering young women to create, maintain, and improve their relationships in a positive way. The program is 10 sessions in length and is offered one to two times a week based on the age of participants. Each session is 1.5 hours in length. The initial steps are referral, intake, assessment, and a pre-test. Ages 12-18, Court or Probation Referrals only. Please contact Lorna Sowa at 519-756-7665 ext 320

## **Counselling and Support**

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**Counselling services listed in this handbook are free, or have fees that are geared to income. For additional services, check the local telephone directory under “Marriage, Family and Individual Counselling.”**

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**  
**Caring Families** **519-752-1005 ext. 239**  
[www.novavita.org](http://www.novavita.org)

This program helps parents create respectful adult relationships and a cooperative, positive co-parenting approach with their children. This free program is highly recommended for families experiencing conflict where the parents are actively involved in parenting their children and are either living in the same home, are separated, or divorced.

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**  
**Mothers in Mind** **519-752-1005 ext. 253**

Mothers in Mind (MIM) is a mother and child group designed specifically to meet the parenting needs of mothers who have had experiences such as family violence, childhood abuse, or sexual assault, and have children under the age of four.

**Contact Brant for Children’s and Developmental Services** **519-758-8228**

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8  
[www.contactbrant.net](http://www.contactbrant.net)  
See page 63 for a description of services.

**Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services** **519-445-4324**

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0  
[www.ganohkwasra.ca](http://www.ganohkwasra.ca)  
Free counselling for children and youth who have been abused and/or witnessed family violence at home.

**St. Leonard’s Community Services** **519-759-8830**

133 Elgin Street, Brantford, N3T 5P9  
[www.st-leonards.com](http://www.st-leonards.com)  
Offers various support programs for children, adolescents and their parents, including mental health, addictions and justice. See also the Child/Parent Resources section (page 78-80) for program descriptions.

**St. Leonard's Community Services**  
**Mental Health Crisis Support and Walk-In Clinic**

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3

**24-hour Crisis Line: 519-759-7188 or 1-866-811-7188**

Addiction and Mental Health Crisis Services provides crisis support and/or counselling for individuals experiencing mental health or a situational crisis. Addiction and Mental Health Crisis Services works in partnership with the Brant Community Health Care System, Woodview Children's Mental Health and Autism Services, and The Alzheimer Society – Behaviour Supports Ontario - Community Outreach Team. No appointment necessary.

[www.st-leonards.com](http://www.st-leonards.com)

Services Provided Include:

- Immediate Telephone Crisis Counselling (24 hours, 7 days/ week, 365 days/year)
- Mental Health Walk-in Clinic at: 225 Fairview Drive, Unit #1, Brantford. No appointments necessary. (Every Monday and Wednesday from 1:00pm to 7:00pm)
- Referrals to the Crisis Outreach & Support Team (COAST)
- Connection to Addiction Services
- Older Adults Crisis Services available through Behavioral Supports Ontario – Community Outreach Team
- Naloxone Kits and Harm Reduction supplies
- Linkages to ongoing services

**Counselling and  
Support**

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### **Taylor the Turtle: My Body Belongs to Me!!**

Taylor the Turtle is a sexual abuse prevention program that uses human rights based language and concepts of emotional literacy in an interactive, fun, accessible manner. The resources of the program are set up in a way that they can be used by parents, or lead by one of the Sexual Assault Centre workers in individual or group settings. The program and all supporting resources are free.

**Materials available:** Stickers, info sheets, pamphlets, colouring pages, magnets, tattoos, and bookmarks

**Services offered:** Free presentations to any community group. Ages 2 to parents. Presentations can include games, crafts, and stories. Resource packages can be created and mailed/picked up. Taylor the Turtle mascot is available for community events. Please visit the website to download materials, to hear Taylor's song, or watch Taylor's animation.

**Website:** [www.taylorrights.ca](http://www.taylorrights.ca)  
c/o Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

**Office telephone:** 519-751-1164 Fax: 519-751-4187

**24 hr telephone:** 519-751-3471

### **Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services 519-752-5308**

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

[www.woodview.ca](http://www.woodview.ca)

Individual and family counselling, and group counselling for children and youth. Referrals are made through Contact Brant (*see page 63*).

### **Counselling for Abusive Men**

**Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**Challenge to Change**

**519-752-1005 ext. 255**

[www.novavita.org](http://www.novavita.org)

Group counselling for men who want to stop their violent and

abusive behaviour towards their partners. The program challenges participants to take responsibility for their actions, learn how to control and change their abusive behaviour and to respect their families and themselves. Participants are expected to complete at least 12 weeks in the program. Individual counselling may be available.

Fees are charged for services, and are based on the individual's ability to pay. Clients may be self-referred and can call 519-752-1005 ext. 255 to arrange for an intake appointment.

A guiding principal of Challenge to Change is to plan for the safety of the participants' partners. All clients must agree to take part in the **Partner Check** program, which involves counsellors contacting the partner to provide information and to assess their personal safety.

### **Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**SCRIBE**

**519-752-1005 ext. 255**

#### **Self.Character.Relationship.Interaction.Boundaries.Esteem**

This 12 week program is for individuals who are looking for self-improvement and are eager to explore healthy ways to communicate as well as to examine their behaviour in relation to personal values and beliefs, in their intimate relationships.

Program fee is \$120; \$10 can be paid weekly or based on another agreed upon schedule.

### **Ganohkwasra Family Assault**

**Support Services**

**519-445-4324**

1781 Chiefswood Road, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

[www.ganohkwasra.ca](http://www.ganohkwasra.ca)

Free counselling for men who are abusive. Therapy is based on holistic programs, combined with mainstream counselling techniques, to help participants accept responsibility for their total being.

### **Men On The Move**

**519-753-4173**

#### **Family Counselling Centre of Brant, Inc.**

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

E-mail: [office@fccb.ca](mailto:office@fccb.ca); [www.fccb.ca](http://www.fccb.ca)

## **Counselling and Support**

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**The location of churches and other places of worship are listed in the local telephone directory. In addition to their faith services, many churches host social activities and/or support groups.**

## Counselling and Support

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**Support Link provides at-risk women with free airtime and cell phones pre-programmed to dial 911.**

A 12 week group program for men who have been physically or emotionally abusive with their partners. The men focus on how their abusive behaviour affects their partner and children, how their beliefs and attitudes affect their behaviour, and learn constructive ways of managing disagreements. Fee for service based on the client's ability to pay.

## Support Services and Groups

There are many programs and special interest groups for people seeking help, information, and support to deal with specific problems and issues. The following is a cross section of what is available in Brantford and Brant County. To find out about other groups/support services, ask your doctor, check the local telephone directory, go to <http://haldimand.cioc.ca> or [www.211.ca](http://www.211.ca), or consult the *Brantford & Brant County Community Guide*, published annually by the *Brantford Expositor*.

Aboriginal & First Nations Counselling, Support Services and Groups information, please see pages 93-106.

### **St. Leonard's Community Services' Addictions and Mental Health Programs**

**519-754-0253**

**24/7 Crisis Line: 519-759-7188; 1-866-811-7188**

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3

Free, confidential substance abuse, gambling, and concurrent disorders counselling services. Services include: assessment and treatment planning, individual and/or group counselling and family support to youth, adults, aboriginals, expectant mothers and mothers with young children. A smoking cessation program is also available.

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

**519-752-5981**

[www.branterieaa.org](http://www.branterieaa.org)

Support for individuals trying to stay sober. Call for meeting times and locations.



**Al-Anon, Alateen, Adult Children  
of Alcoholics**

**519-752-5981**

Support for relatives and friends of alcoholics.

**Individual, Couple, and Family Counselling  
Family Counselling Centre of Brant Inc.**

**519-753-4173**

54 Brant Avenue, Brantford, N3T 3G8

E-mail: [office@fccb.ca](mailto:office@fccb.ca); [www.fccb.ca](http://www.fccb.ca)

Confidential counselling solutions are offered to individuals, couples, children, families and workplaces. The purpose of talking with a counsellor is to help make sense of what is going on in one's life. We can help with issues such as abuse, anger, depression, anxiety, family violence, grief, parenting, relationship difficulties, separation and divorce, sexual assault (women or men), stress, and trauma. Fee for service based on client's ability to pay.

**St. Joseph's Health Care  
Eating Disorders Program**

**905-522-1155 ext. 33433**

100 West 5th Street, Hamilton, L8P 3R2

Support and information for people suffering from an eating disorder. Call for information.

**YMCA Immigrant Settlement Services**

**519-752-4568**

YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford

38 Darling Street, Suite 201, Brantford, N3T 6A8

[www.ymcahbb.ca](http://www.ymcahbb.ca)

Free settlement services for newcomers to Canada – including community information, assistance with government forms, job search assistance, etc. Translation and interpretation referral services also available (a fee may apply).

**Narcotics Anonymous**

**519-756-9408**

[www.orscna.org](http://www.orscna.org)

A support group for individuals struggling with addictions. Be sure to check with the number listed above to confirm meeting times and dates. Local meetings are held at various locations throughout the city of Brantford and the county of Brant.

**Counselling and  
Support**

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## Counselling and Support

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**Victim Services of Brant operates a program to help women at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.**

**New Directions Group**      **519-445-2947/1-877-650-9700**

Six Nations Health Services

1769 Chiefswood Road, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

[www.snhs.ca](http://www.snhs.ca)

Counselling and information on alcohol and drug abuse is provided. Other programs include community health services and youth programs.

**Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline**      **1-888-230-3505**

<http://www.problemgamblinghelpline.ca>

Anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's gambling can call anytime; helpline available 24 hours a day.

**Smokers' Helpline**      **1-877-513-5333**

[www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

**Victim Services of Brant**      **519-752-3140**

Brantford Police Station

344 Elgin Street, Brantford, N3T 5T3

E-mail: [victimservices@golden.net](mailto:victimservices@golden.net); [victimservicesbrant.on.ca](http://victimservicesbrant.on.ca)

Specially trained volunteer crisis intervenors are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to help people victimized by a criminal act or other traumatic event. These volunteers help lessen the distress of being victimized by providing understanding, support, accompaniment (to hospital, police station, shelter, etc.), practical assistance in providing for the victim's immediate needs and referrals to other resources. *(After business hours, call Victim Services at 519-756-7050, see page 114 for further details.)*

# Child / Parent Resources

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Parenting — a job that can be difficult in the best of times — is especially stressful and exhausting for women who are in, or who are leaving, an abusive relationship. In addition to coping with a range of emotions (fear, anxiety, guilt, shame, etc.), these moms need to protect, nurture, and reassure children who are themselves overwhelmed by anxieties and the changes in their lives. The following organizations can provide help, advice, and/or relief. *(For medical/health and counselling services, see the preceding sections.)*

## Child / Youth Services

**Brant Family and Children's Services**

**519-753-8681**

**1-888-753-8681**

70 Chatham Street, P.O. Box 774, Brantford, N3T 5R7  
[www.brantfacs.ca](http://www.brantfacs.ca)

Native Services Branch

**519-753-8681/1-888-753-8681**

Family Resource Centre

**519-753-8681 ext. 208**

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

The Brant Family and Children's Services (FACS) is devoted to promoting the safety and well-being of children through a range of programs and services including assessments, protection services, child welfare, residential services, foster care, adoption and family support. Case workers at the FACS will work with you to plan for the safety of your children. Depending on your needs, solutions can range from counselling on improving the family environment, to temporary care arrangements for your children.

## Child/Parent Resources

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### **Caring Families**

**519-752-1005 ext. 239**

This program helps parents create respectful adult relationships and a cooperative, positive co-parenting approach with their children. This 16-week program offers separate groups for fathers and mothers with an eight-week children's group. Parents participate in an active learning model that supports reducing parental conflict. The groups are free for all participants. This program is highly recommended for families experiencing conflict where the parents are actively involved in parenting their children and are either in the same home, separated, or divorced. To arrange for an intake appointment, call 519-752-1005, ext 239.

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters**

**519-759-3222**

127 Charing Cross Street, Brantford, N3R 2J2, **1-800-268-8784**  
[www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca](http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca)  
Support, friendship and guidance for boys and girls.

### **Contact Brant**

**519-758-8228**

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8  
[www.contactbrant.net](http://www.contactbrant.net)  
See page 63 for a description of services.

### **Kid's Help Phone**

**1-800-668-6868**

Confidential support and help for children.

### **Kids Can Fly**

**519-448-1713**

Kids Can Fly is a registered charity that supports early learning and parenting. We base what we do on the research of the late Dr. Fraser Mustard who discovered that the first six years of life set the stage for lifelong learning, health and well-being. We also believe that parents are a child's first and most important teachers and therefore we strive to help provide nurturing and learning for parents so they can do the very best job possible.

**Launch Pad:** a free drop-in program for parents with children 0-5 years. Located at Graham Bell-Victoria School (56 Grand Street), it is open Tues. - Thurs. from 9:00 a.m. - noon. Parents

interact with their child with a variety of activities including creative art, music and story time, and dramatic play. Contact Jane, 519-755-9482, or email [info@kidscanfly.ca](mailto:info@kidscanfly.ca) for more information. Closed during holidays, P.D. days, and snow days.

**Parachute Program:** Free drop-in program for moms who are having challenges with transitioning to parenting (for babies under 12 months). This may include postpartum depression, lack of family support, fussy baby, sleep exhaustion, etc. Come for free, confidential support.

- Brantford Public Library, 173 Colborne Street, 3rd floor - Mon. 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
- T B Costain Centre, 16 Morrell Street - Weds. 1:30 -3:00 p.m.

**Roots of Empathy:** program that reduces bullying and aggression in elementary schools.

**Imagination Library:** provides a free book in the mail each month to registered children from birth to age 5 who reside in the Brantford-Brant area. Visit [www.kidscanfly.ca](http://www.kidscanfly.ca) to learn how to register or be placed on the waitlist. Questions: [admin@kidscanfly.ca](mailto:admin@kidscanfly.ca)

### **Taylor the Turtle: My Body Belongs to Me!!**

Taylor the Turtle is a sexual abuse prevention program that uses human rights based language and concepts of emotional literacy in an interactive, fun, accessible manner. The resources of the program are set up in a way that they can be used by parents, or lead by one of the Sexual Assault Centre workers in individual or group settings. The program and all supporting resources are free.

**Materials available:** Stickers, info sheets, pamphlets, colouring pages, magnets, tattoos, and bookmarks

**Services offered:** Free presentations to any community group. Ages 2 to parents. Presentations can include games, crafts and stories. Resource packages can be created and mailed/picked up. Taylor the Turtle mascot is available for community events.

## **Child/Parent Resources**

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### **Launch Pad and Parachute Program**

**Contact: Jane Flinders or Sharon Brooks**  
**519-755-9482**  
**[info@kidscanfly.ca](mailto:info@kidscanfly.ca)**

**Free taxi service available for program participants in need:**

**Brant Taxi**  
**519-752-1010**

**Postpartum Depression Telephone Support Line**  
**1-855-764-8552**

**Mon. to Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

Free and confidential peer to peer support available to answer questions about postpartum depression or anxiety. Women are paired with a peer mentor who has recovered, and are welcome to call while they are pregnant with their concerns.

**Note:** This is a support line, not a crisis line.

## Child/Parent Resources

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Please visit the website to download materials, to hear Taylor's song, or watch Taylor's animation

**Website:** [www.taylorsrights.ca](http://www.taylorsrights.ca)

c/o Sexual Assault Centre of Brant

**Office telephone:** 519-751-1164 Fax: 519-751-4187

**24 hr telephone:** 519-751-3471

### **Why Not Youth Centres**

**519-759-2221**

368 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3S 3N3

[www.whynotyouthcentres.com](http://www.whynotyouthcentres.com)

Programs and initiatives for youth including assistance with housing, food and clothing; rehabilitation; life skills, computer skills, literacy skills and job readiness training; drop-in programs for youth and families; programs to promote creative expression in art, music, drama and photography. Locations in St. George and Paris as well.

### **St. Leonard's Community Services**

**519-759-8830**

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3 or

Contact Brant at 519-758-8228

St. Leonard's Community Services provide a number of programs for children and their parents. Listed below are several of the programs that survivors of domestic and family violence may find beneficial. For more information on all the programs, please contact 519-754-0253 ext 101.

### **Programs Include:**

#### ***Mental Health Crisis Support and Walk-in Clinic***

225 Fairview Drive, Brantford, N3R 7E3

Every Monday and Wednesday from 1:00pm to 7:00pm.

No appointments necessary.

24-hour crisis Line:

**519-759-7188/1-866-811-7188**

The integrated mental health crisis support works in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Brant, Brant Community Health Care System, and Woodview. The Mental Health Crisis Support program provides immediate telephone, and if necessary, on-site counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to children, youth, adults, and families who are experiencing mental health crisis or distress.

For those wishing to meet face-to-face with a crisis counsellor, there is a walk-in component. The walk-in Clinic is open from 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

### ***TripleP – Positive Parenting Program***

Triple P™ is a parenting and family support strategy that aims to prevent severe behavioural, emotional and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents. Triple P is designed and tailored to the needs of parents. Triple P™ 8-week program is offered in partnership with Woodview, St. Leonard's Community Services, Family Counselling Centre and Ontario Early Years Centre. Weeks 1 – 4: Parents only group sessions. Weeks 5 – 7: Individual phone consultations with a practitioner. Week 8: Group session. Registration is limited to 20 parents. Also available are 1.5 hour Triple P™ seminars.

#### Ages 0-12 - Topics

- Positive Parenting
- Raising Competent and Confident Children
- Raising Resilient Children

#### Ages 13-16 - Topics

- Raising Responsible Teenagers
- Raising Competent Teenagers
- Getting Teenagers Connected

To register and/or for additional information, registered Agency clients and non- registered Agency clients are to call Contact Brant.

### ***Youth Anger Control***

The Youth Anger Control Program is 4-11 sessions and each session is 1.5 hours in length. The program assists youth to recognize their anger triggers, learn how to constructively express anger, and help in developing assertiveness skills. The primary focus of the program is to provide youth with the necessary tools/skills to avoid reacting negatively and/or impulsively. The sessions are offered once per week for ages 12-15 years and once or twice per week for ages

## **Child/Parent Resources**

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16-18 years. For non-registered clients or children/youth who are not currently accessing any agency programs or services, an intake is completed by Contact Brant.

### ***Youth Resource Centre***

**519-758-9644**

331 Dalhousie Street, Brantford, N3T 3B2

Provides a safe, caring, youth-focused environment for at-risk youth aged 15 to 19 who are impacted by homelessness, poor health, mental illness, crime, unemployment and addiction. The Youth Resource Centre provides emergency, short and long-term housing connecting youth and their families to wide variety of services. For more information, call the Youth Resource Centre directly.



## Your Children's Education

Despite the changes and emotional turmoil that your family may be experiencing, it is important to try and maintain as normal a schedule for your children as possible. Except in special circumstances, school age children should continue to go to school and participate in regular activities.

If you are a newcomer to Brantford or Brant County, or if you move to a new residence, you can contact the head office of the school boards to find out the closest school and any registration requirements (such as birth certificates and immunization records).

### **Grand Erie District School Board**

**519-756-6301**

349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, N3T 5V3

[www.granderie.ca](http://www.granderie.ca)

For the name and address of the school closest to you ask for extension 281150.

### **Brant Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic District School Board**

**519-756-6369**

322 Fairview Drive, Brantford, N3T 5M8

[www.bhncdsb.ca](http://www.bhncdsb.ca)

For the name and address of the school closest to you, call the board office or the Transportation Department, 519-751-7532. It is up to you to decide if you want to tell your child's teacher or principal about the situation at home. Special school board resources (such as counselling by a Child and Youth Worker or Social Worker) may be recommended. These services are free and would only be provided to your child with your consent.

## Parent Support

### **Best Start Brantford/Brant**

**519-756-3150**

E-mail: [beststart@brantford.ca](mailto:beststart@brantford.ca); [www.ourbeststart4brant.ca](http://www.ourbeststart4brant.ca)

An integrated, community initiative aimed at helping children reach their potential through parent support and early child development programs. The Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centres listed

## Child/Parent Resources

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**The school should have copies of any court orders restricting access to your children by your partner.**

## **Child/Parent Resources**

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**Child care and babysitting fees can take a significant bite out your household budget. You might consider alternatives such as finding another parent with whom you can take turns watching the kids.**

below are operated by one of the following service providers: Brant FACS, Family Counselling Centre, Kids Can Fly, or Ontario Early Years Centre: Brant. Call 519-759-3833 or visit the website for more information about hours and programs.

***Bellview School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

97 Tenth Avenue, Brantford

***Branlyn-Notre Dame School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

238 Brantwood Park Road, Brantford

***Brantford Public Library Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

173 Colborne Street, Brantford

***St. Patrick's School***

St. Patrick's School 320 Fairview Drive, Brantford

***Centennial-Grand Woodlands Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

41 Ellenson Avenue, Brantford

***Graham Bell-Victoria Public School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

56 Grand Street, Brantford

***King George School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

265 Rawdon Street, Brantford

***North Ward School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

107 Silver Street, Paris

***Prince Charles Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

40 Morton Avenue, Brantford

***Ryerson Heights Elementary School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

33 Dowden Avenue, Brantford

***St. Gabriel's School Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

14 Flanders Drive, Brantford

***St. James Anglican Church Best Start Early Learning & Parenting Centre***

8 Burwell Street, Paris

**Brant County Health Unit**

**519-753-4937**

194 Terrace Hill Street, Brantford, N3R 1G7

Parenting workshops, children's health and safety, immunization, nutrition, car seat safety clinics, information, support and referrals.

**Brant Family and Children's Services - Family/Drop-in Centres**

Drop-in play groups, support groups, parent education, crafts and other programs. Call or visit the centres for hours and a schedule of activities.

***New Beginnings Family Resource Centre***

**519-759-8134**

359 Darling Street, Unit 17, Brantford, N3S 3Y6

***Northland Gardens Family Centre***

**519-754-1309**

56 Memorial Drive, Unit 11, Brantford, N3R 5R9

***Stepping Stones Resource Centre***

**519-751-3915**

50 Pontiac Street, Unit 36, Brantford, N3S 2A7

## Child/Parent Resources

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### ***Snugglebugs***

**519-753-8681 ext 310**

14 Henry Street, Brantford, N3R 1Z8

*Hours:* Mon. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

An interactive program for parents and babies up to 18 months.

### **EarlyON Child and Family Centre:**

#### **Brantford Brant**

**519-759-3833**

30 Bell Lane, P.O. Box 25040 Brantford, N3T 6K5

E-mail: [earlyon@eycbrant.ca](mailto:earlyon@eycbrant.ca); <http://earlyonbrantfordbrant.ca/>

Offers a number of free services for parents, caregivers, and educators for young children up to age 6, including: drop-in programs; parent/parent and child workshops; early years literacy workshops and resources; toy lending library; child care information; transportation support; community outreach and events; services and support for professionals, educators and caregivers. Call or visit for more information, or view drop-in hours and workshops at [www.eycbrant.ca/oeyc](http://www.eycbrant.ca/oeyc)

#### **Six Nations Child Care Resource Centre**

**519-445-2565**

18 Stoneridge Circle, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

Family based agency that offers various programs for people of all ages. Drop in programs: Monday and Friday mornings, and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, both in the morning and in the afternoon. Also offered: adult workshops, adult skill based activities for parents, breakfast program, supper program, dad's program, Sister's Circle, preschool program, and a language preschool program. Visit [www.sixnations.ca](http://www.sixnations.ca) or call for more information.

#### **Woodview Mental Health & Autism Services**

**519-752-5308**

643 Park Road North, Brantford, N3T 5L8

[www.woodview.ca](http://www.woodview.ca)

Parenting groups, home-based services.

### Child Care

Options for child care include private home day care, licenced child care, and specialized programs for children with special needs. Check the local telephone book under “Day Care Centres and Nurseries” for licenced centres or contact the Early Years Centre for a copy of their child care directory.

Visit the home or centre to find out how the program runs and whether it will be appropriate for your child. Provide clear instructions about who may retrieve your children. If you have any court orders restricting access by your partner, make sure copies are left with day care providers and babysitters.

#### Child Care Services

**519-756-3150**

220 Clarence Street, Brantford, N3R 3T5

E-mail: [childcareservices@brantford.ca](mailto:childcareservices@brantford.ca);

[www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca)

If you have a limited income and are working, going to school or participating in a program under Ontario Works, you may be eligible for subsidized child care in licensed programs. Call for details. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### EarlyON Child and Family Centre:

##### Brantford Brant

**519-759-3833**

30 Bell Lane, P.O. BOX 25040, Brantford, N3T 6K5

E-mail: [earlyon@eycbrant.ca](mailto:earlyon@eycbrant.ca);

<http://earlyonbrantfordbrant.ca/>

Free package includes tips for finding quality child care.

# LGBTQ Groups/ Support for Youth & Adults

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## **The Bridge**

Contact: [thebridgebrant@gmail.com](mailto:thebridgebrant@gmail.com)

[www.thebridgebrant.com](http://www.thebridgebrant.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheBridgeBrantford](https://www.facebook.com/TheBridgeBrantford)

Twitter: [@TheBridgeBrant1](https://twitter.com/TheBridgeBrant1)

The Bridge is a group that works to identify and address inequalities that are experienced by the diverse sexual and gender identified communities within Brant County. The Bridge promotes the importance of acceptance and inclusion in an effort to eliminate stigma, bullying, and discrimination at all levels of community life.

## **Brantford Pride Committee**

Contact: [brantfordpride@gmail.com](mailto:brantfordpride@gmail.com)

[www.brantfordpride.ca](http://www.brantfordpride.ca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BtfdPride](https://www.facebook.com/BtfdPride)

Twitter: [@BrantfordPride](https://twitter.com/BrantfordPride)

Brantford Pride is an organization consisting of community members committed to promoting peace, diversity, and equality for the LGBTQ population in Brantford and Brant County. For a calendar of events, visit the above website.

## **Brant Youth Pride Committee**

Contact: [brantyouthpride@gmail.com](mailto:brantyouthpride@gmail.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/brantyouthpride](https://www.facebook.com/brantyouthpride)

Twitter: [@BrantYouthPride](https://twitter.com/BrantYouthPride)

## **PFLAG Canada, Brantford Chapter**

Contact: 1-888-530-6777 ext. 540

[www.pflagcanada.ca](http://www.pflagcanada.ca) / [brantford@pflagcanada.ca](mailto:brantford@pflagcanada.ca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/brantfordpflagchapter](https://www.facebook.com/brantfordpflagchapter)

Twitter: @brantfordpflagchapter

Provides community based peer support for individuals, families and friends with questions or concerns about sexual orientation and gender identity issues.

**Grand River Community Health Centre**      **519-754-0777**

Counselling/Medical Services (free)

363 Colborne Street Brantford ON, N3S 3N2

[www.grandriverchc.ca](http://www.grandriverchc.ca)

**Gender Journey Brant**      **519-754-0777 ext. 254**

Email: [genderjourneybrant@gmail.com](mailto:genderjourneybrant@gmail.com)

**Gender Journey Brant Youth**      **519-754-0777 ext. 254**

Email: [transyouthbrant@gmail.com](mailto:transyouthbrant@gmail.com)

**LGBTQ+ Coffee Night + Social**      **519-754-0777 ext. 254**

Email: [cfrancis@grchc.ca](mailto:cfrancis@grchc.ca)

**Brantford Advocacy Transgender Alliance (BATA)**

Contact: [brantfordadvocacytransgenderalliance@outlook.com](mailto:brantfordadvocacytransgenderalliance@outlook.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BATAInitiative](https://www.facebook.com/BATAInitiative)

Twitter: @BATAInitiative

BATA is a grassroots initiative dedicated to supporting our transgender community by providing education and awareness in Brantford and Brant County on gender and trans\* related topics.

**The Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Youth Line**      **1-800-268-9688**

[www.youthline.ca](http://www.youthline.ca)

For ages 26 and under

**Sexual Assault Centre of Brant**      **519-751-3471**

24-hour Crisis and Support Line

Email: [sexualassaultcentre@sacbrant.ca](mailto:sexualassaultcentre@sacbrant.ca)

# Training, Education and Employment

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**Before you embark on a job search or decide to change careers, take some time to think about your interests, strengths, skills, and your short and long term goals.**

**This may a good time to make changes that will ensure a brighter future and security for yourself and your children.**

**Information about courses and programs at colleges, universities and training institutions may be available at the library, through Internet websites, or by calling to request a course catalogue.**

As you begin to put some of the crucial elements in place — housing, financial aid, and other basic needs — you may start thinking about other goals and ambitions: such as a job or career. Being able to earn your own money will not only let you enjoy a better standard of living, it will help boost your self-confidence and enable you to regain control of your own life.

If you have never worked outside the home, or if it has been some time since you did, you might want to improve your job skills or develop new ones. You may be interested in going back to school or enrolling in a training program. You might want to start by talking to someone who can advise you about career/job options.

The following agencies and community supports can help you get started in your search for a fulfilling and rewarding new position.

## Education, Training and Skills Upgrading

**Grand Erie Learning Alternatives (G.E.L.A) 519-753-6079**

365 Rawdon Street, Brantford, N3S 6J3

[www.granderie.ca](http://www.granderie.ca)

Secondary school courses, night school, summer school, independent learning courses (18+), customer service training program for secondary school credit, P.S.W. (personal support worker) courses and adult literacy program. Fees and/or deposits required for some courses. An education assessment is required prior to starting any program. A fee is required prior to receiving an educational assessment. For English-as-a-Second-Language courses, call 519-759-3170.



**LEAP (Learning, Earning And Parenting)****519-759-3330**

An Ontario Works program for people under the age of 21 with children who want to complete their high school education, gain valuable work and enhance parenting skills. Participants in the program may qualify for financial assistance for child care, transportation, tutoring, school supplies, clothing and other expenses. Ask to speak with a LEAP counsellor at Ontario Works.

**Brant Skills Centre****519-758-1664**

225 Fairview Drive, Brantford, N3R 7E3

[www.brantskillscentre.org](http://www.brantskillscentre.org)

Adults and older youth can improve their reading, writing, math, and computer skills through learning opportunities with trained instructors and volunteer tutors.

**Medix College****519-752-4859/1-800-695-2414**

39 King George Road, Brantford, N3R 5K2

[www.medixcollege.ca](http://www.medixcollege.ca)

Private vocational school offering programs in health care administration, social work, and more. OSAP funding for those who qualify.

**Six Nations Polytechnic****519-445-0023/1-877-284-2194**

2160 Fourth Line, P.O. Box 700, Ohsweken, NOA 1M0

411 Elgin St. Brantford, ON N3S 7P5

Degree, diploma and certificate programs delivered from an Aboriginal perspective. Also, high school credit courses, G.E.D. preparation, employment preparation and free computer workshops.

**Laurier University Brantford****519-756-8228**

73 George Street, Brantford, N3T 2Y3

A range of programs and courses are available. Visit the campus office or call for information.

**Conestoga College****519-756-8228 ext. 5491**

St. Andrew's Building

95 Darling Street, Brantford, N3T 2K7

Provides diploma programs in Business and in Health

**Training, Education  
and Employment**

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**To apply for government financial assistance (OSAP) to attend a post-secondary institution, visit the Financial Aid office/ department at the college, university or training school you plan to attend.**

**Job postings are published in the classified section of newspapers and online. Small organizations, retail outlets and restaurants may post job vacancies on-site.**

**Tell as many people as you can — family, friends, former co-workers etc. — that you are looking for work and ask them to let you know if they learn of any openings.**

## Training, Education and Employment

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Have up-to-date, typewritten copies of your resume available so you can leave them with prospective employers.

If you will be working you will need a S.I.N. (Social Insurance Number) card. If you do not have one you can apply in person at the nearest Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) office. For more information call 1-800-622-6232 and follow the prompts.

Public libraries offer information on virtually any topic, including resume writing, career development and job search tips.

Office Administration, a graduate certificate program in Human Resources Management, and certificate programs in Medical Office Practice as well as in General Arts and Science.

## Employment Counselling and Support

**Canadian Mental Health Association** **519-752-2998**  
44 King Street, Suite 203, Brantford, N3T 3C7  
[www.brant.cmha.ca](http://www.brant.cmha.ca)

Vocational Support Services assists persons with a serious mental illness to obtain and maintain employment, education, and volunteer opportunities. Vocational workers in the Works For Me and Sustainable Employment Initiative programs are available to help clients establish their vocational goals, using a psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery approach. Services include: Assessment and individual goal-setting, support, development of return to work action plans, including resume writing and interview skills, education about mental illness and symptom management, linkage to other community resources, and advocacy.

### **H.O.P.E Helping Ourselves Through Peer Support and Employment** **519-751-1694**

116 Dalhousie Street, Suite 201, Brantford, N3T 2J3  
A mental health consumer/survivor initiative providing peer support to adults living with mental illness by trained volunteers and paid peer workers, bags of personal need items to mental health inpatients, and work opportunities in an alternative business, QuicKlean.

### **CareerLink Adult Education Division of GELA** **519-759-1412**

1 Market Street, Upper Level, Brantford, N3T 6C8  
[www.careerlink.ca](http://www.careerlink.ca), [careerlink@granderie.ca](mailto:careerlink@granderie.ca)

- There are three full-time OSSD classes and two part-time
- Night school and summer school are available
- Free literacy and numeracy classes

- Free ability assessment and workshops

**St. Leonard's Community Services, Brant Employment Centre (Employment Ontario) 519-756-7665**

225 Fairview Drive, Unit 1, Brantford, N3R 7E3

Full range of employment services for all ages - from career planning, skills assessments, resume building, interview skills - to assisted job search and job placements. A fully equipped Resource Centre is available for self-directed job search with the help of trained and professional staff.

**Community Resource Service 519-751-4357 ext. 312  
Community Employment Service**

230 Shellard Lane, Suite 3/4, Brantford, N3T 0B9

E-mail: info@crs-help.ca, www.crs-help.ca

Free employment counselling and career preparation. Services include career exploration, assistance with creating or updating a resume, job interview tips, job search strategies, suggestions for upgrading your skills, information on training/education opportunities and how to access funding programs. Resources for job seekers include computers, Internet access, fax machines, photocopiers, newspapers and other job listings.

**Advocacy services** also available at the 1100 Clarence Street South location. Free assistance and representation for people experiencing problems with Employment Insurance, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Ontario Works, Employment Standards, Canada Pension Plan, Ontario Human Rights, and the Ontario Disability Support Program.

**Ontario Works Brant 519-759-3330**

220 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2H1

If you are receiving social assistance through Ontario Works, you can participate in one of the following programs designed to help people become gainfully employed:

**Employment Support** will help you prepare for your next job by assisting you with your resume, getting you some basic

## Training, Education and Employment

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**All of the libraries in Brantford and Brant County (see page 109-110) have Internet-ready computers which you can use free of charge to search for information or visit websites, including the on-line job listings in this book.**

## Training, Education and Employment

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skills training/upgrading, and helping you brush up on your interview skills.

**Community Placement** will give you a chance to gain valuable work experience through short-term volunteer work.

The **Employment Placement** team can help match your skills and interests with potential employers.

You may receive financial assistance for childcare costs as well as expenses related to your job or placement (e.g. special clothing, uniform, transportation, etc.).

## Resources and Job Listings

**Brant-Brantford Employment Services** 519-759-3191

220 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2H1

E-mail: [brantjobs@brantford.ca](mailto:brantjobs@brantford.ca); [www.brantjobs.ca](http://www.brantjobs.ca)

Local job postings are available on the website. The jobs are also posted on bulletin boards at the Colborne Street facility.

**CareerLink** 519-759-1412

1 Market Square, Upper Level, Brantford, N3T 6C8

E-mail: [careerlink@granderie.ca](mailto:careerlink@granderie.ca); [www.careerlink.ca](http://www.careerlink.ca)

The public has free access to the resource room which includes college and university calendars, industrial and community directories and various job search materials. CareerLink conducts aptitude, skill and various other assessments.

# Aboriginal Services for Survivors of Domestic and Family Violence

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## **Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services**

**24 Hour Crisis Line: 519-445-4324**

[www.ganohkwasra.com](http://www.ganohkwasra.com)

1781 Chiefswood Road PO Box 250, Ohsweken, ON, N0A 1M0  
Ganohkwasra, meaning “Love Among Us” in the Cayuga language, provides shelter and support for Native men, women and children who are affected by family violence.

Services are free and include:

- 24-Hour Crisis Line
- walk-in services
- transitional support services
- next step housing
- group and individual counselling
- education
- children’s programming
- volunteer services
- advocacy and referrals
- youth lodge
- emergency shelter for Native adults and their children
- sexual assault support and counselling

Free counselling for women who have been abused.

Counselling and therapy are based on holistic programs and a variety of techniques are used.

Free counselling for children and youth who have been abused and/or witnessed family violence.

Free counselling for men who are abusive. Therapy is based on holistic programs, combined with mainstream counselling techniques, to help participants accept responsibility for their total being.

**Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve Family Law Information Centre. A Family Law and Criminal Law Information Centre on Six Nations of the Grand River reserve. The centre offers information and legal advice, duty counsel services and limited certificates to eligible clients. Centre will operate Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the G.R.E.A.T. building in Ohsweken.**

## **Aboriginal Services**

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**Six Nations Justice -  
Indigenous Victim Services**  
**Phone: 1-866-964-5920;  
226-227-2192**  
**Website: <http://snpolice.ca/>**

**Family Law Information  
Centre**  
**Ontario Court of Justice**  
**44 Queen Street**  
**Brantford N3T 3B4**  
**Tel. 519-758-3460**

**Legal Aid Ontario**  
**Toll-free 1-800-668-8258**  
**For faster service call**  
**before 11:00 AM or after**  
**3:00 PM**  
**Website:**  
**[www.legalaid.on.ca](http://www.legalaid.on.ca)**

## **Six Nations Justice - Indigenous Victim Services**

**Phone: 1-866-964-5920; 226-227-2192**

**Website: <http://snpolice.ca/>**

Service Information:

- Counselling
- Linkage and Referrals
- Accompaniment to police station, hospital, court
- Safety Planning
- Assist with filling out victim compensation forms
- Advocacy

## **Youth Lodge – “My Home on Turtle Island” 519-445-0216** **Crisis Line: 519-445-4324 (intake)**

35 Sunrise Court, P.O. Box 250, Ohsweken, ON, NOA 1M0

The Youth Lodge is an eight bed co-ed residence for youth ages 12-18 experiencing serious difficulties in their lives.

The Youth Lodge provides a therapeutic approach in a culturally sensitive manner that encompasses mental, physical, spiritual and emotional areas. Every aspect of life at the Youth Lodge, including rules and the approach to behaviour management, is considered part of an integrated, holistic program. It is intended to assist the participants in recognizing their less effective behaviours and through the process of self-evaluation, learn to make more effective choices in order to meet their needs.

## **Brantford Native Housing 519-756-2205**

318 Colborne Street East, Brantford, N3S 3M9

[www.brantfordnativehousing.com](http://www.brantfordnativehousing.com)

Brantford Native Housing was founded in 1986 and is a non-profit charitable organization whose main objective is to provide safe, secure, and affordable rental homes and support services for urban Native peoples living in the city of Brantford and Brant County.

## **Legal Issues**

### **Aboriginal Criminal Court Work Program (ACCWP)**

**Contact: Criminal Court Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 228**

The goal of the ACCWP is to assist Aboriginal adults (18 yrs +) accused to better understand their rights, options and responsibilities when appearing before the criminal courts. The main objectives of the program are: to facilitate and enhance access to

justice; to ensure Aboriginal people involved in the criminal justice system understand their rights, responsibilities and options; and to ensure that the individual receives fair and legal representation.

### **Aboriginal Family/Youth Courtwork Program (AFCWP)**

**Contact: Family/Youth Court Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 227**

The goals of the AFCWP are to assist Aboriginal youth and families in contact with family, child protection and youth court to better understand their options, responsibilities and rights when appearing before the courts. This would include the following court proceedings: Families and individuals involved in child protection issues, separating couples, all persons involved in family court matters and Accused Person's 12-17 years of age on the date of the offence, not charged as an Adult under the Criminal Code of Canada.

## **Matrimonial Property & the Indian Act**

### **What is Matrimonial Property?**

Matrimonial property is commonly defined as the family home that a married couple resides in, although legally the term covers all items of material value acquired during the marriage. Matrimonial property includes real property, which is immovable, such as a house or land, and personal property, which describes those items that can easily be moved and are not attached to the land, such as clothing, vehicles, income, and savings. Throughout the literature, *matrimonial real property* refers to the family home and land, and the *matrimonial property regime* refers to the laws or legislation regarding marital property.

### **What happens if a status band member divorces on reserve?**

There is currently no applicable legislation or guidelines for the division of matrimonial property under the Indian Act or by virtue of case law. Each marriage or common-law relationship is treated individually on a case-by-case basis. The presumption that each partner receives 50% of the proceeds from the marriage (or matrimonial property) applies only off reserve to recognized family relationships. Of course, each spouse may negotiate an agreement with his or her former spouse privately. Note that each band or First Nation may

## **Aboriginal Services**

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**Community Legal Clinic -**

**Brant, Haldimand,**

**Norfolk**

**1100 Clarence Street South,**

**Suite 203,**

**Brantford, N3S 7N8**

**Tel. 519-752-8669**

**Toll free: 1-888-341-5021**

**Website: [www.](http://www.bhnlegalclinic.ca)**

**[bhnlegalclinic.ca](http://bhnlegalclinic.ca)**

have created their own matrimonial property guidelines or bylaws, and this must be researched in each unique case.

### **What happens if a status band member divorces off reserve?**

If the spouses are unable to reach an agreement, the province or territory where the relationship ends will govern the distribution of matrimonial property. Generally speaking, the assumption is that each spouse should receive 50% of the proceeds of the relationship. Other factors governing the division of matrimonial property include whether each spouse is working, the duration of the relationship, any previous understandings or agreements, and the total assets and loans or debts. Sometimes custody of any children from the relationship may determine who resides in the family home. This is not an exhaustive list of all the factors that may be relevant for the distribution of matrimonial property. Anyone seeking a divorce should obtain legal advice.

### **What if a traditional marriage or Aboriginal customary marriage ends off reserve?**

If a couple is unable to reach an agreement, they would have to apply to the courts to recognize the traditional marriage as being the equivalent of a legally recognized marriage and request the provincial or territorial legislation to apply to the relationship.

### **Does the Indian Act address divorces on reserve?**

No. Most First Nations are still subject to the Indian Act on reserve land. There are no provisions in the Indian Act to deal with spousal property rights during a marriage or upon separation or divorce. This means that there is uncertainty and often no laws or guidelines for spouses upon separation or divorce while on reserve. The Indian Act falls under federal legislation, s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867* (“the Constitution”), and therefore there are no federal provisions relating to divorce, custody, or matrimonial property because under section 92(13) of the Constitution, family law was deemed the exclusive domain of the provincial and territorial governments. While every province and territory has family legislation that applies off reserve, there are almost no provisions on reserve land in the event of a divorce or separation. This gap in the matrimonial property regime has detrimentally affected Aboriginal communities.



# Housing

**Brantford Native Housing** was founded in 1986 and is a non-profit, charitable organization whose main objective is to provide safe, secure and affordable rental homes and support services for urban Native peoples living in the city of Brantford and Brant County. Call or visit the office to obtain a rental application form.

## **Subsidized and Non-subsidized Rental Units**

**Contact: Tenant Counsellor - 519-756-2205, ext 223**

Brantford Native Housing owns and manages 180 rental units across the City of Brantford. Native ancestry means Status, Non-status, Métis and Inuit. At least 50% of the family must be of Native ancestry. Some of our rental units are subsidized and rents are based on between 25% - 30% of combined family income. We also have affordable rental units with no subsidies and a 17 unit mature Adult apartment complex with 2 modified units for people with disabilities.

## **Women's Transitional Housing (Ojistoh House)**

**Contact: Housing Outreach Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 235**

Brantford Native Housing developed a 14-bed transitional home known as Ojistoh House. Ojistoh House is for Aboriginal women with or without children who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness. Women with Aboriginal children in their custody would benefit from the program as well. Ojistoh House operates using two (2) streams. The Healing Journey stream allows women to stay for up to one (1) year while focusing on their own healing goals. Residential programming is scheduled based on individual plans of care. The Home Search stream allows women to stay for up to six (6) weeks while focusing on find their own home in the community.

## **Men's Transitional Housing (Karahkwa House)**

**Contact: Cultural Development Coordinator,  
519-753-5408, ext 232**

**Website: [www.brantfordnativehousing.com](http://www.brantfordnativehousing.com)**

Brantford Native Housing developed a 4-bed transitional home

# Aboriginal Services

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## **Aboriginal Services**

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known as Karahkwa House. Karahkwa House is for Aboriginal men experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness with a focus on recovery from alcohol or drug use. Individuals can stay for up to one (1) year while learning how to maintain sobriety and find their own home in the community.

## **Financial Assistance**

### **Ontario Works**

Social assistance is provided through Ontario Works. To apply, call the local intake department at 519-759-7009. You will need to provide: personal information including your full name, date of birth, Social Insurance Number, health card number, etc.; personal information for each of your children; the address of where you will be living; the amount you will be paying in rent; any income you will be receiving.

You will be given the date, time and location of an appointment with a case manager. (If you are in Brantford or Brant County, you will most likely be asked to report to the Brantford office at 220 Colborne Street.)

You will also receive a drug card, which will cover the cost of some prescription medicine. Note that you cannot apply to Ontario Works until you know where you will be living.

### **Brant-Brantford Homelessness Prevention Assistance**

BBHPA was developed to help prevent homelessness. It assists with: last month's rent deposit; rent arrears; and heat, hydro, and water arrears. If you are in need of assistance, please contact your Ontario Works case manager, ODSP case worker, or the Housing Resource Centre.

**Ontario Works, to apply call: 519-759-7009**

**Brantford Office 220 Colborne Street Open 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday Tel: 519-759-3330**

### **Assistance With Child Care Costs**

Child Care Services' Fee Subsidy Program provides financial assistance towards the cost of child care in licensed programs. You might be eligible if you are working, going to school or attending an approved training program. Both full and partial child care subsidies are issued. Call to find out if you qualify for the subsidy and how to proceed.

### **Ontario Disability Support Program**

If you have a disability preventing you from working, you may qualify for income support through the Ontario Disability Support Program. A referral is available through Ontario Works. Call for more information on the program and how to apply.

### **Spousal and Child Support**

If you separated from your husband or common law spouse, you may be entitled to financial support for yourself (if he supported you in full or in part during the relationship) as well as support for your children. Your lawyer would apply to the court on your behalf and any decisions about support and the amount of the payments would be part of the court order.

### **Family Responsibility Office**

Once an order for support is issued by the court, it is filed with the Family Responsibility Office (FRO), which processes the payments to help make sure they are paid on a regular basis. The FRO would collect the money from your husband or partner — or from his employer — and then forward the money to you. The FRO will take various measures to collect any payments that are missed. In order to provide the information the FRO needs to collect and forward the payments, you must fill out the forms that you receive in the “Filing Package” and send them back. You must also make sure to report any changes to this information (e.g. your partner's address, employer or banking information; your address or banking information).

## **Aboriginal Services**

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### **Budgeting Program**

**Contact: 519-753-5408 ext. 259**

BNH offers an eight (8) session Budgeting program designed to increase individual skills in personal money management through personal one-on-one sessions with a financial planner.

## **Health Services and Pre/Post Natal Care**

### **First Nations and Inuit Health Branch**

Health Canada provides eligible First Nations people and Inuit with a specified range of medically necessary health-related goods and services

when they are not covered through private insurance plans or provincial/territorial health and social programs.

Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) include: prescription drugs, over-the-counter medication, medical supplies and equipment, short-term crisis counselling, dental care, vision care, and medical transportation.

A benefit will be considered for coverage when:

- The item or service is on a NIHB Program benefit list or NIHB schedule;
- It is intended for use in a home or other ambulatory care settings;
- Prior approval or predetermination is obtained (if required);
- It is not available through any other federal, provincial, territorial, or private health or social program;
- The item is prescribed by a physician, dental care provider, or other health professional licensed to prescribe; and the item is provided by a recognized provider.
- An eligible recipient is someone who is entitled to receive benefits such as vision care, prescription drugs or other benefits or services from the NIHB Program.

An eligible recipient must be identified as a resident of Canada and one of the following:

- A registered Indian according to the Indian Act;

- An Inuk recognized by one of the Inuit Land Claim organizations; or
- An infant less than one year of age, whose parent is an eligible recipient.

When recipients are eligible for benefits under a private health care plan, or public health or social program, claims must be submitted to these plans and programs first before submitting them to the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program.

### **De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre**

36 King Street, Brantford, N3T 3C5

Tel: 519-752-4340 Fax: 519-752-6096

To improve the wellness of Aboriginal individuals and of the Aboriginal community by providing services which respect people as individuals with a distinctive cultural identity and distinctive values and beliefs. De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre assists Aboriginal people in accessing culturally appropriate health care programs and services. The Aboriginal Health Centre focuses on holistic preventive and primary health care that includes: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Traditional Healing and other primary health services; Mental Health Support, Diabetes Management Team as well as community health supports; and Advocacy, Outreach and Health Promotion and Education Services. The Aboriginal Health Centre serves all Aboriginal people, regardless of status and offers assistance to outside service organizations to provide care in a culturally appropriate way.

## **Brantford Native Housing**

### **Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)**

**Contact: CPNP Coordinator, 519-753-5408, ext 230**

Our CPNP program is designed to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women, new mothers, and women with newborn babies up to 6 months old. No Service Fees. Services include: Family/Pregnancy Talking Circles, educational workshops, breastfeeding support, prenatal and postnatal workshops, access

## **Aboriginal Services**

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## **Aboriginal Services**

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to healthy food, prenatal vitamins, make a cast of your pregnancy, home visiting, and a resource lending library. New babies bring love and happiness into a family and our CPNP program wants to help you prepare for your new baby or help you keep your baby and family healthy.

### **Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)**

**Contact: CAPC Coordinator, 519-753-5408, ext 232**

Our new CAPC program is designed to improve the health and well-being of parents and children 6 months to 6 years old. No Service Fees. We work to help parents learn how to access appropriate community services, parenting workshops, native traditional teachings and child rearing, Father specific activities, care seat safety training, toy and play safety training, breastfeeding support, and physical activities for parents and children. We also want to encourage you to join us and grow your own veggies in our community garden at 237 Mohawk St.

### **Aboriginal Best Start Project**

**Contact: Aboriginal Child Development Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 232**

The Aboriginal Best Start project is designed to help parents prepare their child to enter into public school. We promote and provide cultural based learning primarily for native children 6 months to 6 years of age and their families living in Brantford or Brant County.

Come out and learn basic Mohawk language phrases, Story Telling/songs, Aboriginal Crafts, and meet new families and friends with children the same age as your child. We can also help you teach your child their ABC's, count to 10, and other essential teachings to succeed in public school.

### **Six Nations Health Services**

**519-445-2418**

1745 Chiefswood Road, Oshweken, NOA 1M0

[www.snhs.ca](http://www.snhs.ca)

Birthing centre, Health Babies/Healthy Children program and early childhood development programs.

### **Birthing Centre - 519-445-4922 or 1-866-446-4922**

#### **Tsi Non:we Ionnakeratsha Ona:grahsta'**

(Mohawk for 'The Place They Will Be Born')

#### **Ona:grahsta' (Cayuga for 'A Birthing Place')**

Helping Aboriginal families (women and their families) give birth to healthy babies and to promote the seriousness, sacredness, and the continued responsibility of giving birth. The Aboriginal community, family and specifically the expectant woman are offered a choice of services and programs that will compliment and support personal beliefs and customs.

#### **Degowadihsyne' Program**

**519-445-4922**

To coordinate, develop, implement, assess, evaluate, and deliver a culturally based Aboriginal Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects/Child Nutrition program that focuses on education, awareness, and supportive services for families in the Six Nations of the Grand River community and Southwestern Ontario.

#### **Healthy Babies/Healthy Children**

**519-445-4922**

Healthy Babies Healthy Children delivers culturally appropriate, effective, efficient services to Six Nations community members to ensure that all children develop at their highest level in the areas of cognitive development, communication, physical, and psychosocial skills.

#### **Early Childhood Development**

**519-445-0339**

The Early Childhood Development program provides effective and efficient services which assist children to acquire healthy physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Services include crisis intervention, individual counselling, group counselling, social skills training, parent support and training, advocacy, and case management.

#### **Native Women's Centre - Hamilton and area Crisis Line - 1-888-308-6559**

**Ganohkwasra Family  
Assault Support Services  
519-445-4324  
www.ganohkwasra.ca  
Free Counselling for  
women who have been  
abused. Counselling and  
therapy are based on  
holistic programs and a  
variety of techniques are  
used.**

## **Counselling, Support Services and Groups**

**Brantford Native Housing Community Counselling Program  
Contact: Social Worker - 519-753-5408**

The Community Counselling program is designed to provide short-term counselling support for individual identified issues and/or addiction counselling.

Evidence based practice is incorporated into all models of counselling used. Counselling is conducted mainly from a cognitive behavioural approach and includes some dialectical behaviour therapy models.

Cognitive therapy seeks to help the patient overcome difficulties by identifying and changing dysfunctional thinking, behaviour, and emotional responses. This involves helping clients develop skills for modifying beliefs, identifying distorted thinking, relating to others in different ways, and changing behaviours. Treatment is based on collaboration between client and therapist and on testing beliefs. Therapy may consist of testing the assumptions which one makes and identifying how certain of one's usually unquestioned thoughts are distorted, unrealistic and unhelpful. Once those thoughts have been challenged, one's feelings about the subject matter of those thoughts are more easily subject to change.

Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) is a system of therapy that combines standard cognitive-behavioural techniques for emotion regulation and reality-testing with concepts of distress tolerance, acceptance, and mindful awareness largely derived from Buddhist meditative practice. Research indicates that DBT is also effective in treating clients who present varied symptoms and behaviours associated with spectrum mood disorders, including self-injury. Recent work suggests its effectiveness with sexual abuse survivors and chemical dependency.



**Aboriginal Youth Outreach Program (AYOP) Contact:  
Aboriginal Youth Outreach Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 257**

The primary focus of the AYOP is urban Aboriginal youth 12 - 17 years of age who are at-risk and experiencing difficulty with school, family, relationships, court or they just need someone to talk to. AYOP helps youth living in at-risk environments, at-risk of conflict with the law and/or at-risk of re-offending. Services include Anger Management, Peer Counselling Support, Home-work Help and Study Skills, and someone to help when difficulties come up at school or court, Employment Referrals, Violence Prevention Training, access to Traditional Teachings, Sports & Recreational Activities, youth guidance, and youth groups.

**Brantford Native Housing Structured  
Relapse Prevention Program**

**Contact: Housing Outreach Worker, 519-753-5408, ext 235**

The Structured Relapse Prevention program is an open, 11-week co-ed group for up to twelve (12) participants in early recovery from drug or alcohol use. Participants have the option of receiving individual counselling throughout the group, if needed.

**Aboriginal Cultural Development Program Contact:  
Cultural Development Coordinator, 519-753-5408, ext 232**

We offer culturally specific support services for Aboriginal people interested in connecting or reconnecting to their culture, traditions and ceremonies. Services include Aboriginal cultural training for students, community organizations, and individuals interested in learning more about Aboriginal (primarily Ojibwehwe and Anishinaabe) cultural practices.

**Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I am a Kind Man)  
Program Contact: Cultural Development Coordinator,  
519-753-5408, ext 232**

Kizhaay is designed to educate men and boys who are committed to ending violence against Aboriginal Women; to re-establish traditional responsibilities by acknowledging that our teachings have never tolerated violence and abuse towards women; and to inspire men to engage other men to get involved

## **Aboriginal Services**

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**Ganohkwasra Family  
Assault Support Services  
519-445-4324  
[www.ganohkwasra.ca](http://www.ganohkwasra.ca)  
Free Counselling for men  
who are abusive. Therapy  
is based on holistic  
programs, combined with  
mainstream counselling  
techniques, to help  
participants accept  
responsibility for their  
total being.**

## **Aboriginal Services**

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**Ogwadeni:deo**  
**T: (519)-445-1864**  
**F: (519)-445-0117**  
**Weken Building**  
**2469 Fourth Line Road**  
**Ohsweken, ON NOA 1M0**

and stop the abuse and to support Aboriginal men who choose not to use violence.

### **Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Program Contact: Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Coordinator, 519-753-5408, ext 224**

The Aboriginal Healing and Wellness program is designed to provide supports to women and their children who are experiencing domestic violence. It includes preventing family violence through community awareness, education and peer counselling; providing crisis intervention for women and children at risk; and addressing underlying mental/emotional issues that contribute to violence and dysfunction. The Native Women's Sharing Circle promotes healing and wellness among women and provides a safe environment for sharing.

### **New Directions Group – Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve 519-445-2947 or 1-877-650-9700**

Addiction counselling available for individuals, families, group, and couples. Information on alcohol and drug abuse is provided. We also host a youth (12 - 17) drop-in on Tuesday and Saturday nights.

### **Ogwadeni:deo**

Taking Care of Our Own

Six Nations' designated Children's Aid Society.

We are dedicated to assume our responsibilities for taking care of children in partnership with the community:

- By strengthening families through healing at home and in the community,
- By practicing client centered approaches,
- By honouring the family of origin,
- By valuing, upholding and bringing forward Ogwehon:we/Haudenosaunee/Indigenous knowledge as foundational practices of family wellness, and
- By respecting the expertise within the community.

We will demonstrate kindness and understanding to reinforce Ogwehon:we values in the practices of delivering, managing and administering our services. We strengthen the relationships of women and men in a gender balanced development of family systems.

# Recreation and Leisure

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There are plenty of recreational activities and programs for adults and children of all ages in Brantford and Brant County. They can provide opportunities to get exercise, learn new skills, meet people and have a good time. Many are free or involve nominal fees.

## Health/Fitness and Recreation Centres

### Boys and Girls Club

519-752-2964

2 Edge Street, Brantford N3T 6H1

E-mail: [bgced@teksavvy.com](mailto:bgced@teksavvy.com); [www.bgcbrant.ca](http://www.bgcbrant.ca)

The Boys and Girls Club provides licensed child care programs, licensed before/after school care programs, summer day camps, fall/winter/spring evening recreation, education, social and leadership development programs for children and youth, fitness facilities/opportunities for teens/students, adult/senior fitness & wellness programs, and programs for adults with intellectual and physical challenges.

### Brantford Family YMCA

519-512-4891

100 Water Street, Brantford, ON N3T 0P1

Email: [laurierbrantford.membership@ymcahbb.ca](mailto:laurierbrantford.membership@ymcahbb.ca)

[www.ymcahbb.ca](http://www.ymcahbb.ca)

Health, fitness, recreation, sports and general interest programs. General, family, child and student memberships as well as punch cards for adults and students. Assisted or subsidized memberships are available to low income individuals and families. Call or visit the Y for details.

### Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre

519-756-9900

254 North Park Street, Brantford, N3R 4L1

[www.waynegretzkysportscentre.ca](http://www.waynegretzkysportscentre.ca)

Aquatics, skating arenas, health and fitness, and recreational programs for children and adults. Subsidies for

**While you may be under tremendous stress and feel you have too many essential tasks to take care of, it is important that you devote some time to fun and relaxation.**

**Plan activities that you can enjoy with your children, with friends, or by yourself.**

## Recreation and Leisure

---

Summer camp can be a fun and rewarding experience for children. A list of local day camps is published in the Brantford Expositor every spring.

Many organizations, including the Y and the Boys and Girls Club, offer full or partial fee subsidies to low-income families. Call the individual day camp providers for more information.

children's program are available; *see following page.*

**Community Centres** in Brantford and throughout Brant County offer drop-in sports and recreational programming for children and adults. Some programs are free, others require registration or "punch cards." Call for more information. Subsidies are available.

<b>Beckett Adult Leisure Centre</b>	519-756-3261
219 Colborne Street, Brantford	
<b>Branlyn Community Centre</b>	519-758-1444
238 Brantwood Park Road, Brantford	
<b>Brant Sports Complex</b>	519-442-1944
944 Powerline Road, Paris	
<b>Burford Community Centre &amp; Arena</b>	519-449-5611
14 Potter Drive, Burford	
<b>Cainsville Community Centre</b>	519-752-2401
14 Garnet Road, Brantford	
<b>Doug Snooks Eagle Place Community Centre</b>	519-754-0711
333 Erie Avenue, Brantford	
<b>Mount Pleasant Community Centre</b>	226-208-2225
711 Mount Pleasant Road, Mount Pleasant	
<b>Resurrection Community Centre</b>	519-752-0413
17 Ravenwood Road, Brantford	
<b>South Dumfries Community Centre</b>	519-448-1831
7 Gaukiel Drive, St. George	
<b>Syl Apps Community Centre and Arena</b>	519-442-3342
51 William Street, Paris	
<b>T.B. Costain/S.C. Johnson &amp; Sons Community Centre</b>	519-752-5509
16 Morrell Street, Brantford	
<b>Woodman Park Community Centre</b>	519-752-0890
491 Grey Street, Brantford	

## Financial Assistance for Recreation Programs

Through the "Can We Help" program, low-income families can get subsidies to assist with the costs of children and youth programs offered by the City of Brantford and the County of

Brant. The amount of the subsidy is based on your income. Call 519-756-1500 (Brantford) or 519-442-1818 (Brant County) for more information.

## Outdoor Fun

Your nearest park or playground can provide hours of free, healthy and enjoyable activity. Some parks (such as Mohawk Park) offer free arts and crafts and other organized activities for children during the summer. In the winter, many community parks have outdoor skating rinks, maintained by volunteers. The Apps Mill Nature Centre on Robinson Road has hiking trails and an interpretative centre which is open to the public on the weekends.

## Sports, Clubs and Social Groups

Activities and programs in the community for you and your children include:

- Organized sports of all types and for all ages/skill levels
- Recreational skating
- Public swimming
- Fitness/exercise classes and programs
- Music, dance, and other creative arts
- Groups and clubs catering to a wide range of interests

Check the Brantford & Brant County Community Guide, or the local telephone directory for more information.

## Public Libraries

Libraries provide a wealth of information, resources and programs/activities, virtually all free of charge. You and your children can borrow books, magazines, videos, CDs and books on tape. You can browse through local newspapers, look through college and university course catalogues, use resource material for research or job hunting, and log on to computers with Internet access. There are

## Recreation and Leisure

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**Brantford Parks and Recreation Department**  
**Tel.: 519-756-1500**

**County of Brant Parks and Recreation**  
**Tel.: 519-442-1818**

**Sports, leisure and recreation opportunities are published in The Community Guide, available from the Brantford Expositor, and the Leisure Activity Guides for Brantford and Brant County.**

## Recreation and Leisure

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**Check the local newspaper for upcoming community events and other activities for children, adults and families. Many of these events are free to the public.**

**For example, Harmony Square in downtown Brantford is the site for free public skating, concerts, outdoor movies, live theatre and other events.**

also computers for children (preloaded with games and educational activities), story times, crafts, activities and movies. Visit your local library to find out what's available.

<b>Brantford Public Library, Main Branch</b> 173 Colborne Street, Brantford, N3T 2G8	<b>519-756-2220</b>
<b>St. Paul Avenue Branch</b> 441 St. Paul Avenue, Brantford, N3R 4N8	<b>519-753-2179</b>
<b>Burford Branch</b> 24 Park Avenue, Burford, NOE 1A0	<b>519-449-5371</b>
<b>County of Brant Public Library</b> 12 William Street, Paris, N3L 1K7	<b>519-442-2433</b>
<b>Glen Morris Public Branch</b> 474 East River Road, Glen Morris, NOB 1W0	<b>519-740-2122</b>
<b>Scotland-Oakland Branch</b> 281 Oakland Road, Scotland, NOE 1R0	<b>519-446-0181</b>
<b>St. George Branch</b> 78 Main Street North, St. George, NOE 1N0	<b>519-448-1300</b>
<b>Six Nations Public Library</b> 1679 Chiefswood Road, Oshweken, NOE 1M0	<b>519-445-2954</b>
<b>Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation Public Library</b> 2789 Mississauga Road, R.R. #6, Hagersville, NOA 1H0	<b>905-768-5686</b>

# City / County Resources

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## Public Transportation

### Brantford Transit

519-753-3847

Main terminal: 64 Darling Street, Brantford, N3T 6G6

Local bus service is provided in the City of Brantford. Call for information about bus routes, fares, specials and discounts.

For **taxi cab service**, see the listings under “taxis” in the local telephone directory.

For transportation out of town contact the following for schedules and fares:

### VIA Rail

1-888-842-7245

### Inter- city bus service

519-756-5011

(including Greyhound)

1-800-661-8747

## Your Government Representatives

### City of Brantford

519-759-4150

Brantford City Hall

100 Wellington Square, P.O. Box 818, Brantford, N3T 5R7

Mayor: Kevin Davis

Call City Hall for the names and telephone numbers of your Ward Councillors.

### County of Brant

519-449-2451

Brant County Office

1-888-250-2295

26 Park Avenue, Burford, N0E 1A0

Mayor: David Bailey

Call for the names and telephone numbers of your Councillors, or for the locations of the service area offices.

**See the blue pages of the local telephone directory under “Drivers and Vehicles” to find out how to get or renew a driver’s licence or vehicle licence.**

**For more information regarding driver, vehicle, health card, and photo identification, visit Service Ontario.**

### Service Ontario

325A West Street, Unit 103  
Brantford, N3R 3V6

519-753-0352

## City/County Resources

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### **Member of Provincial Parliament - Brant**

**519-759-0361**

Will Bouma, MPP

96 Nelson Street, Suite 101, Brantford, N3T 2N1

### **Member of Parliament - Brant**

**519-754-4300**

Phil McColeman, MP

108 St. George Street, Suite 3, N3R 1V6

## **Other Numbers to Know...**

**Brant County OPP**

**519-442-2242**

**Brantford Police**

**519-756-7050**

**Six Nations Police**

**519-445-2811**

**Crime Stoppers**

**519-750-TIPS (8477)**



# Helplines

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## Telephone Help Lines

### Brant County Health Unit

**Health Information Line** 519-753-4937 ext. 259

Open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Public health nurses answer health/medical questions and direct callers to community resources as needed.

Assaulted Women's Help Line 1-866-863-0511

Assaulted Women's Help Line TTY - 1-866-863-7868

Assaulted Women's Help Line Mobile - #SAFE (#7233)

**Kid's Help Phone** 1-800-668-6868

Confidential support and help for children.

**Ganohkwasra** 519-445-4324

24-Hour Crisis Support Line.

**Lesbian, Gay Bi, Trans, Youth Line** 1-800-268-9688

### **Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services**

**24-hour Crisis Line** 519-752-HELP (4357)

Confidential support to victims of domestic violence; information for people concerned about a friend, family member, co-worker or client.

**Poison Information Centre** 1-800-268-9017

**In an emergency, call 911.**

**For questions about social services available in your area, please call 211**

## Helplines

---

**Sexual Assault Centre of Brant**  
**24-hour Crisis and Support Line** 519-751-3471  
Available to the survivors of sexual assault, and their friends and family members.

**Six Nations Mobile Crisis Service** 1-866-445-2204  
519-445-2204

**St. Leonard's Community Services** 519-759-8830  
**Integrated Mental Health Crisis Service** 519-759-7188  
1-866-811-7188

24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone concerned about safety and mental illness can access the crisis service. In partnership with Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services, the Brant Community Health Care System, and the Alzheimer Society of Brant.

**Telehealth Ontario** 1-866-797-0000  
TTY 1-866-797-0007

Free, confidential health information available by phone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A Registered Nurse will answer your questions, assess your symptoms and advise if you should go to the doctor, clinic or hospital. You do not need your OHIP number.

**Victim Services of Brant** 519-752-3140  
**After Hours:** 519-756-7050

Specially trained volunteer crisis intervenors are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. After hour calls are filtered through Brantford Police Dispatch.

*After Hours:* Mon. to Fri. 4:30 p.m. - 8:30 a.m., and on weekends.

**Indigenous Victim Services** 1-866-964-5920; 226-227-2192

# Epilogue - Living Your Life

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Change can be difficult for people, even if it is necessary and for the best. Once you leave an abusive relationship you might have mixed emotions. You may feel a great sense of relief, empowerment and excitement about beginning a new life.

You may, however, also feel angry, depressed or sad over the loss of your relationship and your former life. This is normal, even if the relationship was a destructive one. It may take you some time to work through these feelings — counselling and the support of trusted friends and family can help.

If you are on your own after being with your partner for some time, you will need to adjust to new responsibilities and routines. It is not unusual to feel overwhelmed. Your children may initially be resentful and rebellious. They might blame you for the changes in their lives. Remember that they have also been through a lot. Be firm, but loving and kind. They need you to show them that there are ways to communicate and discipline without using violence.

Be kind to yourself too. You have accomplished a great deal and have a lot to be proud of. Take time to rest, relax and enjoy your new freedom.

When you need help, ask for it. There are answers to your questions and support to get you through difficult times. You do not have to feel alone.

You have proven that you possess the strength to deal with life's challenges and the wisdom to make decisions that will lead to a safer, happier life for yourself and your children.

We applaud your courage and wish you the very best.

*B.R.A.V.E (Brant's Response Against Violence Everywhere)  
Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Community Coordinating Committee for  
Brantford, Brant County, and Six Nations of the Grand River*

# Appendix

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**Appendix A**..... Safety Planning

**Appendix B**..... Safety Apps

**Appendix C**..... Household Budget

**Appendix D**..... Notes

# Safety Planning

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If you are in or leaving an abusive relationship, your safety is a priority. A safety plan is an individualized plan that focuses on ensuring survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are safe. A safety plan is created based on the individual's needs and should be flexible and dynamic to reflect changing circumstances. Below are some tips on planning for your safety. To create a safety plan, please visit a local service provider for victims of domestic violence, many are listed throughout this handbook.

## Safety at Home

- Have a safe location in the home with a locking door, accessible windows, and away from potential weapons in the event that the violence escalates.
- Practice an exit route to leave the home and have more than one route.
- Change locks to external doors and consider installing a security system.
- Install an outdoor lighting system that is motion sensitive.
- Notify neighbours of vehicle/physical descriptions of your abusive partner.
- Use a code word with family, neighbours, and friends to notify them conspicuously of danger.
- Be aware of joint bank accounts, credit cards, bills, etc. that can be accessed by abuser (consider having statements sent to a new address).
- Keep an emergency bag for yourself and your children at a separate location (see page 25-26 for a list of suggested items).

## Safety at Work

- Notify your employer or a trusted co-worker of your partner's physical/vehicle description so if either are seen on the property, police can be notified.
- Have a co-worker walk with you to your car or bus stop.
- Review workplace violence legislation with your supervisor to keep informed about your rights as well as the responsibilities of the employer (i.e. Bill 168).
- Switch your schedule if possible, so that your arrival/departure will not follow the usual routine.

## Safety in the Community

- Stay on roads that are well lit, have frequent traffic, and are closed to amenities.
- Alter your usual routine of places you would attend on a daily basis (e.g. consider changing grocery stores, banks, etc.).
- Have your cell phone charged and on your person at all times.

- If you feel you are being followed while driving, begin driving towards the police station and call dispatch.
- Keep lots of fuel in your vehicle, and enable a locking gas cap.
- Always meet an abusive partner in a public place, and notify your supports about the meeting.
- Notify your children's school about your situation and provide them copies of custody agreements, restraining orders, and bail conditions.

### **Safety Online/Technology**

- Change passwords to online accounts (e.g. email, banking, social media).
- Consider changing your phone number and email address.
- Enable call blocking and call display on your phone.
- Keep a record of any emails, text messages, and voicemails left by the abuser.
- Have your computer and cell phone checked for GPS tracking apps and spyware.
- Do not post any identifying information on social media platforms.
- Avoid posting anything on social media when you are feeling sad or angry.
- Report any threatening behaviour to the support team of the website, so the individual can be blocked or removed from the site.
- Remember information posted on the internet can still be accessible even after you delete it.

### **Safety and Children**

When safety planning with children, it is important to let them know that they are NOT responsible for the violence, and they can NOT stop it. It is also important to think about what your child is actually able to do. Below are some tips.

- Teach your child(ren) the exit routes you have prepared to leave the home; practice to ensure they know it in case of an emergency.
- Have your child(ren) identify one or more individuals that they trust and are comfortable with asking for help. This could be a neighbour, friends' parents, or other family members. Ensure your child knows their address and/or phone number.
- Teach your child(ren) a code word to signify that they need to go somewhere safe, ask for help, or call 911 (make sure your child knows their address and phone number to provide to the operator).
- Teach your children what they can do to stay safe: go to their room, leave the house and go somewhere safe (such as to the house of someone they trust), stay out of the way, when and how to dial 911, and to not intervene physically to stop the violence.
- Make sure children have access to important phone numbers.

# Safety Apps

---

Personal use of smartphones and tablets is rapidly increasing. For survivors of domestic or sexual violence, or stalking, a mobile phone may be a critical component to their safety and safety planning. Given the prevalence of phones and tablets it is important to educate yourself on apps - software applications - that run on mobile devices. However, with so many apps available, how do we choose the right one for our safety needs? Below is a safety checklist to consider when downloading safety apps.

## Safety Checklist

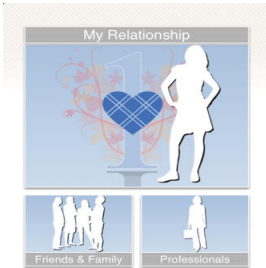
- Does the app allow for password protection so only the user can open the app and not just anyone with access to the phone?
- Does the app describe personal safety in the context of abuse perpetrated by an intimate partner?
- Does it provide warnings to the user about the possibility of the app being found by the abuser? Are these warnings provided before the app is downloaded or after the app is activated on a mobile device?
- Does the app have a privacy policy? This should either be in the app itself or on its website.
- If a privacy policy is unavailable, consider using another app, particularly if the app requests any personal identifying information from the user.
- Does the app require an email address or other contact information in order to use it? Does it ask for other types of personal information (such as the user's or the abuser's physical description)? Is there a disclaimer describing how the data is stored or used?
- Does the app require that the phone or tablet's location services be active in order for the app to work or be useful? Can you refuse the app's access to the device's location services?
- Does the app provide inaccurate information or recommend actions that go against suggested best practices when working with victims (such as suggesting the user inform the abuser that they are being reported)?

Checklist adapted from National Network to End Domestic Violence Incorporated. For more information, please visit [www.nnedv.org/safetynet](http://www.nnedv.org/safetynet)



### Circle of 6

A personal safety app that allows you to connect with six individuals of your choice when you feel you are in an unsafe situation. The six will be notified via text message of your location, or you can choose to alert them by phone. You also have the option of being connected to a helpline.



### One Love Lit - One Love Foundation

Based on the Danger Assessment, this app helps women to assess their level of risk in an intimate relationship.



### YWCA Safety Siren

When the siren button is pressed in the app, or the mobile phone is shaken, the phone will call a pre-set contact and/or send an email indicating your location. The app also provides health and safety information.



# Appendix - Household Budget Worksheet

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The worksheet below will be helpful in creating a personal budget. You can tailor it to suit your own needs — don't forget to add in any of your own unique sources of income and/or expenses. If you are creating a monthly budget (as in the sample below), remember to make any necessary adjustments to the amounts (e.g. multiply a biweekly paycheque by two and divide any annual payments by 12). Knowing what you have to spend and organizing your finances will help you avoid getting into debt and assist you in gaining control of your life.

## MONTHLY INCOME

Take home pay / EI benefits \_\_\_\_\_  
Ontario Works payments \_\_\_\_\_  
Child Tax Benefit / supplement \_\_\_\_\_  
Pension or other government cheques \_\_\_\_\_  
Child support / other support payments \_\_\_\_\_  
Other income \_\_\_\_\_

***Total Monthly Income*** \_\_\_\_\_

## MONTHLY EXPENSES

Housing (rent, mortgage) \_\_\_\_\_  
Water / electricity \_\_\_\_\_  
Gas heat \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Cable/internet \_\_\_\_\_  
Food & groceries \_\_\_\_\_  
Transportation (gas, bus tickets etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
Clothing / personal needs \_\_\_\_\_  
Laundry \_\_\_\_\_  
Home expenses / maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance (home, life, car)	_____
Entertainment/recreation	_____
Childcare	_____
Dental care, prescription drugs	_____
Loan payments	_____
Taxes	_____
Alcohol /Cigarettes	_____
Other expenses	_____
	_____
	_____
<b>Total Monthly Expenses</b>	_____
<b>Monthly Income</b> <i>minus</i>	_____
<b>Monthly Expenses</b>	_____
<b>Total Remaining</b>	= _____

This is what you have left. Consider putting some money into a savings account to cover unexpected expenses or to help meet your long-term goals. If your total expenses are greater than your total income, you will need to adjust your budget by cutting back on certain costs and/or finding a way to increase your income.





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