

# Educator Family Violence Guide

## What is Family Violence?

Family violence is a pattern of abusive behaviours in a relationship in which tactics are used to gain or maintain power & control, and this creates an environment of fear. There are different types of abuse such as: emotional, coercion, financial, spiritual, cultural, immigration, physical and sexual.

Everyone experiencing abuse has complex and unique needs. It is never the fault of the victim. To learn more about family violence, visit: [www.thetodaycentre.ca](http://www.thetodaycentre.ca)

"It's not your fault."

"If you ever want to talk, I'm here to listen."

"Thank you for telling me."

## Possible Indicators

Indicators are opportunities to connect with families, it does not always mean a family is experiencing abuse.

- Trust your gut if things feel off
- Kids not wanting to go home, afraid of going home
- Feeling nervous around their partner
- Making excuses, not showing up for appointments
- Students talking about harm happening at home
- Classwork referencing violence not related to course work
- Parents cannot be reached or contacted
- Main contact asks not to contact other parent if there is an issue at school

## Who Can I Consult With?

Document what you see / hear / are worried about.

You are not alone, consult with someone who has expertise:

- **The Today Centre:** 780-455-6880
- **Family Violence Prevention Centre:** 780-423-1685

24-hour help lines:

- **Family Violence Info Line:** 310-1818
- **Information & Referral Line:** 211

Connect to school resources, such as: administrators, success coaches, social workers, or community partners/organizations.

## How to Start a Conversation

To ensure the safety for the families, be sure you are in a private space where no one can hear your conversation.

Start the conversation with: "I've noticed \_\_\_\_ and I'm concerned. Would you like to talk?"

If someone says no or does not respond, respect their choice and decision. Don't force them to engage in conversation.

If there is a disclosure, listen and believe them. Say "I believe you."

Be calm. Listen, empathize. Give them a chance to share without interruption.

"What kind of support would be helpful for you?"

## Things to Remember

You are not alone.

There are supports available for you and the families.

Families need support and guidance, not judgment.

People may not be ready to take action, or it may be dangerous to do so.

Your job is to listen and offer community support options, NOT to solve their problem.

Listening and empathy are powerful tools to support someone on their healing journey.

## Duty to Report **Alberta Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-387-5437**

If you know or suspect a child is being maltreated, are in danger, or living in a home with family violence, under the Child Family Enhancement Act, **you are under a legal obligation to report**. Every person who receives the disclosure or suspects harm must legally report. If you are unsure, consult with Children's Services.

