



Love should never hurt

Valentine's Day only happens once a year. It's a day of love, but also a day Calgarians should take the time to recognize that for many, the other 364 aren't always as sweet. That's why over the last four years, Connect Family and Sexual Abuse Network has chosen Valentine's Day to encourage early intervention and prevention for individuals in relationships that have the potential to go from good to bad.

Our message is simple: Love should never hurt. It's a mantra that can be easily forgotten, especially around Valentine's Day, but it's important to remember. Love should never abuse, isolate or intimidate. It should never bruise, scream, threaten or mock. Abuse of any kind should not be found in a loving relationship.

"It can often be very overwhelming for people dealing with abusive situations to try and find help," said Kevin McNichol, Executive Director of HomeFront and chair of Connect. "We established Connect four years ago to simplify access to essential services for individual and families affected by domestic violence, sexual abuse and sexual assault."

Domestic and sexual violence are two of the most underreported crimes. Last year, the Calgary Police Service received 16,500 calls, but we know that there are far more people who need help. We urge each of these individuals to come forward. For those unsure of who to reach out to, call Connect.

Free and confidential support is one phone call away and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. To access Connect, please phone 403.237.5888 or toll free at 1.877.237.5888.

Connect is a partnership between health, police, justice, child welfare and non-profit agencies. For more information, please visit www.connectnetwork.ca.