



**For Immediate Release**  
November 1, 2012

## **Family Violence continues to be on the rise and we all have the power to help victims**

**CALGARY** – A recent homicide case on Thursday and the spikes in distress calls to emergency shelters this weekend indicate the prevalence of domestic violence in Calgary. Those who need help must reach out to the appropriate agencies before it's too late.

Alberta has one of the highest rates of family violence in Canada – 7.6 percent report spousal abuse and 30 percent of families across the province experience abuse but stay silent. There are many community resources available that deal specifically with the issue of domestic violence.

A former survivor of domestic violence and President of Peer Support Services for Abused Women, Melody Bundt-Witwer says “You need to reach out and speak to someone about it. It’s nothing you’ve done wrong; it’s nothing to be ashamed of. So reach out for help and talk to someone.” Family violence can happen to anyone and people need to know there are various resources available.

Melody Bundt-Witwer will be speaking at “Break the Silence” the Launch of Family Violence Prevention Month along with Chief Rick Hanson from Calgary Police and entrepreneur W. Brett Wilson on November 1<sup>st</sup> from 11:15 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

The Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) works with community partners to provide a coordinated response to violence prevention and intervention in Calgary and strongly believes that increasing public awareness, providing education, and working to improve legislation can assist in prevention. This murder-suicide is yet another reminder of the existence of domestic violence within Alberta.

Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) defines domestic violence as the attempt, act or intent of someone within a relationship, where the relationship is characterized by intimacy, dependency or trust, to intimidate either by threat or by the use of physical force on another person or property. The purpose of the abuse is to control and or exploit through neglect, intimidation, inducement of fear or by inflicting pain. Abusive behavior can take many forms including: verbal, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, spiritual, and economic and the violation of rights. All forms of abusive behavior are ways in which one human being is trying to have control and/or exploit or have power over another.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, please call the following 24-hour help phone numbers:

Connect Family & Sexual Abuse Network	(403) 237-5888 (Toll Free:1-877-237-5888)
24-hour Family Violence Helpline	(403) 234-SAFE (7233)
Family Violence Information Line	310-1818 (Toll Free)
Distress Centre	(403) 266-HELP (4357)

### **Media Contacts:**

Kevin McNichol, HomeFront: (403) 206-2100 Ext. 223

Andrea Silverstone, Peer Support Services for Abused Women: (403) 616-7673.

Jean Dunbar, YWCA Calgary: (403) 294-3662

Lisa Falkowsky, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter: (403) 589-4044

### **The CDVC works with community partners to provide a coordinated response to violence prevention in Calgary. Representatives include:**

Peer Support Services for Abused Women, Discovery House, Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary  
United Way of Calgary and Area, CONNECT Family and Sexual Abuse Network, Calgary and Area Child and Family Services, Alberta Child and Youth Services  
HomeFront, Community Action Committee, Alberta Employment and Immigration, Alberta Mental Health, Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, Alberta Council of Women's  
Shelters, YWCA of Calgary, YWCA Banff, Brenda Strafford Society, Youville Recovery Residence for Women, Aventa Addiction Treatment for Women, Servants Anonymous Society  
Sonshine Community Services, Awo Taan Healing Lodge, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, Community Crisis Society of Strathmore: Wheatlands Shelter, Rowan House Emergency  
Shelters, Calgary Communities Against Sexual Violence, Kerby Centre, Chinese Community Response to Family Violence, Calgary Chinese Elderly Citizens' Association, Calgary Immigrant  
Women's Association, Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary, Jewish Family Service Calgary, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Calgary and Area Chapter, Legal Aid Alberta, Calgary Legal Guidance



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Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family, Edan Counseling Associates, Calgary Counseling Centre, Distress Centre, Calgary Police Services, Community Corrections and Release Programs Branch, Alberta Solicitor General, Calgary Sexual Health Centre, Developmental Disabilities Resources Centre of Calgary, AIDS Calgary Awareness Association  
Women's Centre of Calgary