



Opinion Editorial  
December 19, 2011

## Domestic violence murder is a wakeup call for us all

**CALGARY** – At what point does someone come forward to report potentially dangerous behaviours that are – or might be – lethal. At what point are the police called to intervene in domestic violence situations. At what point will we wake up and take action when we see abusive behaviours.

The Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) works with community partners to provide a coordinated response to violence prevention in Calgary. CDVC believes that increasing public awareness and education of this issue can assist in prevention. The triple murder-suicide early Thursday morning on Highway 2 north of Claresholm, about 110 km south of Calgary, is a dramatic loss on many fronts. Its core story of violence, jealousy and intimidation is shocking and unfortunately, preventable.

Domestic violence is the attempt, act or intent of someone within a relationship (where the relationship is characterized by intimacy, dependence or trust), to intimidate, exploit, control or have power over another. Violence can take many forms, including: verbal, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, spiritual, economic and the violation of rights. Domestic violence may include a single act, or a number of acts forming a pattern of abuse.

Violence does not 'come out of nowhere'. Its risk factors include:

- Controlling behaviour and ownership – eg: constantly phoning - an entitlement to know where their partner is at all times;
- Violent outbursts and jealousy;
- A refusal to accept the end of the relationship.

All of these risk elements are times where a victim is in jeopardy. Things shouldn't 'feel right' to anyone who has witnessed these behaviours.

Reportedly a 'jilted boyfriend', who was increasingly domineering, Derek Jensen has been described to have controlling behaviours and an abusive disposition. Repeatedly phoning his girlfriend, threats, pushing, shoving and arguments - all are abusive and were indicators of violence. There was a responsibility to intervene. Police should have been alerted.

The best time to intervene is early. Collaborative services are waiting to help people facing abuse and violence – but they need proactivity and responsiveness to initiate their involvement. It is our responsibility when we see risk elements and potentially dangerous behaviours to act. We need to act, not ignore, to ensure domestic violence acts do not occur.

Collaborative work is being done to help prevent domestic violence. CDVC encourages Calgarians who suspect they know someone affected by domestic violence, to reach out and connect with the numerous agencies available for help.

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

### Representatives include:

Alberta Mental Health Board. Alberta Solicitor General (Probation). Calgary Counselling Centre. Calgary Immigrant Women's Association. Calgary Legal Guidance. Calgary Police Service. Calgary and Area Women's Shelter Network. Connect Family and Sexual Abuse Network. Distress Centre. Edan Counselling Associates. HomeFront. Kerby Centre. Peer Support Services for Abused Women.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, please call one of the following 24-hour help lines:

Connect Family & Sexual Abuse Network	403-237-5888
Family Violence Information Line	310-1818 (Toll Free)
Distress Centre	403-266-HELP (4357)