



Centre for Research & Education  
on Violence against Women and Children

# Violence Against Women is Everybody's Business: From Awareness to Action

The Role of the Workplace, Family and Friends in  
Addressing Violence Against Women



The Ontario  
Women's  
Directorate



Schulich  
MEDICINE & DENTISTRY



# For the purpose of Ontario's DVDR Office of the Chief Coroner

***"We speak for the dead to protect the living"***

- **Interdisciplinary review all intimate partner homicides**
- **Identify systemic issues**
- **Identify trends and risk factors**
- **Increase understanding and awareness**
- **Promote harm reduction & prevention**

# Are DV Homicides Predictable & Preventable?

- 85% of the cases had at least 7 risk markers
- Critical information held by family, work colleagues, front-line professionals
- Children are the victims in a number of ways

# Common Risk Markers

- 81%** - Actual or pending separation
- 68%** - Depression (or other mental health problems)
- 77%** - Prior history of domestic violence
- 55%** - Prior threats to commit suicide or attempt
- 55%** - Access to or possession of firearms
- 60%** - Obsessive behavior (including stalking the victim)
- 43%** - Controls most or all of victim's daily activities

# Who Knows What?

- Family 75%
- Friends 53%
- Police 41%
- Medical 28%
- CAS 19%
- Co-workers 19%
- DV agency 15%
- Clergy 4%

# Workplace DV Implications

- **1 in 4 women may face abuse in an intimate relationship – may be lethal - most common form of homicide faced**
- **70 percent of individuals suffering from domestic violence are victimized at work.**
- **Abusive spouses may place harassing phone calls or make unwelcome appearances at work.**

Swanberg & Logan 2005

# What is the Role of the Workplace in Responding to Domestic Violence?

- At what point does domestic violence become the responsibility of co-workers or supervisors?
- What are helpful things that the workplace can provide for victims? For perpetrators?
- What policies and practices make sense?
- What are the barriers to successful implementation?