

About ACCD and This Brochure

The Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities (ACCD) is a consumer-driven, provincial organization of persons within the cross-disability community. We actively promote the full participation of persons with disabilities within the social, economic, and political life of our communities.

ACCD believes that all people have the right to be safe and to be protected from abuse. Recent research we've undertaken shows that women with disabilities are extremely vulnerable to violence and abuse.

In some cases, abuse may happen because you are not sure what it is or what you are able to do about it. We want to share some information we've gathered in the hopes that we can answer your questions and end the violence that many women with disabilities face.

What is Abuse?

Abuse occurs when a person in a position of power takes advantage of someone in a less powerful position. There are many types of abuse, including financial, physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional. Neglect and exploitation are also types of abuse.

How Do You Know If You're Being Abused?

Sometimes you might wonder if people you know or don't know are treating you properly. The following sections give examples of actions that are abusive. If someone is treating you in these ways, they shouldn't be! It is not right!

What is physical abuse?

You are being physically abused if someone hurts you with physical contact. This could mean punching, hitting, kicking, biting, pushing, or restraining you. If your caregiver handles you roughly or isolates you from other people, this is also abuse.

What is sexual abuse?

You are being sexually abused if someone kisses you when you don't want to be kissed. Or if someone touches your body in places that you don't want touched. You are also being abused if someone forces you into a sexual activity. If your caregiver helps you with personal care tasks such as bathing and hygiene routines, he or she needs to do so in a way that you are comfortable with. Remember that sexual abuse can come from males or females.



Together, We Hold The Power!

What is emotional abuse?

If you are being treated physically or verbally in a way that makes you embarrassed, humiliated, or upset, you may be experiencing emotional abuse. If someone says mean things to you, doesn't allow you to make decisions, threatens you, or keeps you isolated from others, you are being emotionally abused.

What is neglect?

If your caregiver or other support providers do not provide you with the food, shelter, personal care, or medical attention you need, in a timely fashion, you are being neglected.

What is exploitation?

If a caregiver or anyone else takes advantage of you, you are being exploited. They may use their position to take money they've not earned or ask you for money or belongings. They may also ask you to do things that you know are wrong or that you are uncomfortable with. Because you may depend on them for care or companionship, you feel you have to do what they say. They are exploiting their relationship with you.

If you think you are being mistreated in any of these ways, you are being abused. It is not right! Something needs to be done.

What Should You Do If You Think You're Being Abused?

It is not always easy to tell someone that you think you are being abused. If you do tell someone, they may be able to help put a stop to the abuse.

We encourage you to tell someone you trust—a friend, a doctor, someone from a church or other community group. They can help you escape the abuse you are facing! They can also support you through the process of reporting and ending the abuse.

There is Help Available

There are many service organizations committed to assisting women with disabilities as they address violence or abuse in their lives.

Some of these organizations offer training that will help you be more assertive when you interact with others. Other programs provide counselling to help you address the feelings you are having about the abuse. And there are “shelters” or “safe places” if you feel you must move from where you live.

In an emergency situation, contact the police, RCMP, or a women's shelter. **Numbers are listed in your phone book.**

For More Information

ACCD

707, 10339 – 124 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5N 3W1
Phone: 1-800-387-2514
TTY: (780) 488-9090
Web Site: www.accd.net
e-mail: accd@accd.net

Alberta Council of Women's Shelters

2-12739 Fort Road NW
Edmonton, AB T5A 1A7
Phone: (780) 456-7000
e-mail: voice@acws.ca

Independent Living Resource Centre of Calgary

7 – 11 Street NE
Calgary, AB T2E 4Z2
Phone: (403) 263-6880
TTY: (403) 263-6874

Independent Living Society

205, 10006 – 101 Avenue
Grande Prairie, AB T8V 0X9
Phone: (780) 539-0433

If the organizations listed here are not in your community, they will be able to refer you to a local contact. As well, ACCD can refer you to appropriate organizations. Call us at 1-800-387-2514 or visit our web site at www.accd.net.

This brochure is based on a similar brochure produced by Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Alberta Provincial Board.

ACCD acknowledges the support of Status of Women Canada in the production of this series of brochures.



Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities

Violence Against Women with Disabilities:

Are You Being Abused?

