

# A Workplace Toolkit

## User's Guide



## Disclaimer

**F**amily Violence: It's Everybody's Business (A *Workplace Toolkit*) is intended to provide employers, unions and employees with information and resources for recognizing and responding to family violence situations that enter the workplace. The information in this guide is not intended to replace the advice and services of professionals such as counsellors, lawyers or healthcare providers. The kit has been developed based on current research and information about family violence and other leading experts. Any reference to legislation should be considered general in nature and scope. Laws change from time to time.

This guide is offered to employers and others with the understanding that the volunteers who prepared the materials, and the authors, editors and contributors are **not** providing legal or professional advice. **Employers using this kit should seek legal advice with respect to specific legal matters.**

We hope the information and resources contained in this Toolkit are useful to you. The enclosed "Family Violence Services" fact sheet will help you to locate and consult with professionals providing specific services within the Niagara Region.

*Everybody's Business Task Force wishes to thank the New Brunswick Family Violence and the Workplace Committee.*

## Acknowledgements

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## Purpose of the Toolkit

The purpose of this Toolkit is to help Niagara Region's businesses take action to address family violence and its impact on the workplace. This Toolkit is appropriate for unionized and non-unionized workplaces, business owners, managers, and employees. It can be used in large and small business, rural or urban work places, and across all sectors.

Specifically, the objectives of the Toolkit are:

- to educate and raise awareness of the need for early intervention in situations where family violence may have an impact on the workplace;
- to develop practical, flexible training tools that will help employers deal with the impact of family violence on the workplace;
- to strengthen the relationship between business and community;
- to promote practices, policies, and procedures that support victims of family violence in the workplace;
- to help create safer and healthier work environments;
- to support businesses large and small in meeting their social responsibility to prevent family violence from spilling over into the workplace.

## Contents of the Toolkit

- **User's Guide**
- **It's Your Business - Fact Sheets**
  1. What is Family Violence?
  2. Why Employers Should Care About Family Violence
  3. Some Impacts on the Workplace
  4. Family Violence and the Law
  5. Developing Supportive Workplace Policies, Practices and Programs
  6. Creating a Positive Workplace
- **Family Violence Services and Resources**
- **Model Family Violence Policy, Safety Plans and Messages**

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## How to Use the Toolkit

**W**hen family violence enters the work place, everyone feels the negative consequences. By taking action through policies, practices, public education and good corporate citizenship, your business will be modelling values that show concern and respect for the individual. By supporting employees dealing with the impacts of family violence in the work place, you will be creating a safe, respectful workplace. This will help promote a healthy work environment for everyone. Healthy work environments foster high employee morale and contribute to staff efficiency and productivity.

The Toolkit was created in a modular fashion. Depending on your workplace, you can use the Toolkit in various ways by incorporating appropriate elements into your own business or work environment as required. Some workplaces, such as those that have Employee Assistance Programs, may simply adapt existing policies or practices to include family violence sensitive provisions. Some may wish to focus on public education and staff training. Still others may choose to use all of the materials.

No matter how you use this Toolkit, we hope that it will contribute to a healthier, safer and more productive workplace.

### **You can use the Toolkit to help:**

**(1) Develop or adapt supportive policies, practices and programs that deal with family violence when it enters the work place.** The Toolkit offers model family violence policies, and suggests programs and protocols for employee safety that can be used to support employees when family violence spills into the workplace.

**(2) Deliver public education about family violence and create a positive work place.** The Toolkit includes Fact Sheets with background information and key messages about family violence that you can share with your employees.

The Toolkit provides many practical and concrete suggestions for the development of short and long-term actions and responses to family violence when it enters the workplace. You can use the information (fact sheets and messages) in the toolkit; or, you can make use of the information directly from our Internet site at [www.everybodysbusiness.ca](http://www.everybodysbusiness.ca). In either case, please contact us to share your success stories. We will post them on the web.