

Ministry of the Attorney General Programs and Services for Victims of Crime in Ontario

PAR Programs in Ontario

Funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General (<http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english>), Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs aim to enhance the safety of victims of domestic violence and hold offenders accountable for their behaviour. PAR programs offer 16 weeks of group counselling sessions for individuals who have been abusive or violent towards a partner/spouse. There are 68 PAR programs operating in all 54 court jurisdictions in the province of Ontario. For a PAR office in your area, contact the Victim Support Line toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

Five examples of jurisdictions where PAR programs are offered are provided below:

Kenora

Other Ways Now is a PAR program available in the Kenora district. The program provides group education and counselling to perpetrators of domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence are also contacted on a regular basis throughout the partner's involvement with the program. Eligibility for the program involves admitting to spousal abuse (through court findings or self-referral) and willingness to sign a participatory contract. For more information, visit www.lspc.ca and search for "Other Ways Now".

Kingston

Kingston Community Counselling Centres' (K3C) PAR program strives to enhance the safety of victims of domestic violence. This is achieved by providing information and support to victims, and educating and offering counselling to individuals found guilty of or pleading guilty to a charge of partner assault. The program is based on the following principles:

- Abusive behaviour is a choice
- Abusive behaviour is not an anger management problem
- Abuse is the sole responsibility of the abuser
- Abuse is socially constructed, but individually willed

For more information, visit www.k3c.org or call 613-549-7850

Region of Peel

Catholic Family Services of Peel-Dufferin's PAR program serves Brampton, Mississauga and Orangeville. Five groups are offered in English with the assistance of cultural translators, and one group is offered in three languages simultaneously (Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu). For more information call:

Brampton: 905-450-1608

Mississauga: 905-897-1644

Dufferin: 1-888-940-0584

Sault Ste. Marie

Algoma Family Services provides a program called Freedom from Abuse for abusive men who are court-mandated to eliminate their abusive behaviour in their intimate relationships. The program focuses on the dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships, and helps men to take responsibility for and change their beliefs and attitudes that support abusive behaviour. Victims of abuse are engaged by a worker to talk about their experiences of abuse, and to learn about the program and what resources are available to them and their children. The worker remains available to the partner throughout the abuser's involvement with the group.

For more information, visit <http://www.algomafamilyservices.org/UserFiles/File/Services/PAR.pdf>



Toronto

Family Service Toronto offers PAR program sessions in English, Tamil and Farsi. The program is available in closed and open-ended groups, and teaches participants about types of abuse and how to take responsibility for reducing violence. For more information, call 416-595-9618 or visit www.fsatoronto.com

Jewish Family & Child's Woman Abuse Program began in 1986, in response to the need expressed by women in the community. Each year, *Jewish Family & Child's Woman Abuse Program* serves more than 1,000 women, children and men. The spectrum of services includes crisis, individual and group counselling; advocacy; and assistance with access to safe housing, and financial and legal assistance. For more information about the Woman Abuse program, visit www.jfandcs.com or call 416-638-7800.

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto offers a PAR program called *Journey of the Peaceful Warrior*. The program is designed to encourage men to take responsibility and accountability for their use of aggression; increase their respect for their partners and children; challenge their belief systems that are patriarchal, and help them learn and practice respectful behavior and skills. The program is delivered in a way that ensures the safety of the partners and children as much as possible. For more information, visit www.nativechild.org or call 416-969-8510

Child Victim / Witness Program

The *Child Victim / Witness Program* offers support and services to child victims and witnesses during the criminal court process. The community-based program offers a number of services, including:

- Assessing children's needs in court
- Preparing children for court
- Communicating with Crown attorneys, defense lawyers and judges
- Accompanying children to court
- Support for parents and guardians
- Help with victim impact statements and other forms
- Service referrals
- Post-court follow-ups

To find the Child Victim / Witness Program nearest you, call toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

Domestic Violence Court Program

Ontario's *Domestic Violence Court (DVC)* program is the most comprehensive and extensive of its kind in Canada. The DVC program has specialized processes for domestic violence cases during the investigation and prosecution. Teams of specialized professionals work together to help stop the cycle of domestic violence, improve support for victims and investigate and prosecute cases more efficiently. DVC teams include:

- Police
- Crown attorneys
- Victim / Witness Assistance Program staff
- Probation services
- Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs staff
- Other community agencies

The DVC program is available in every court jurisdiction in the province. To find the location nearest you, call 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Counselling Program

The *Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Counselling Program* provides short-term, immediate counselling for child victims of Internet sexual exploitation. A victim's immediate family members may also be eligible. For more information, please call toll-free 1-888-579-2888, or (416) 326-2430 in the Greater Toronto Area, or contact ice@ontario.ca

Sexual Assault / Rape Crisis Centres

Female victims and survivors of sexual assault who are 16 years of age or older are eligible for a variety of counselling, information and referral services from community-based *Sexual Assault / Rape Crisis Centres* (SACs). These services include:

- Accompanying a victim to court, a hospital or police station
- Supportive peer counselling services (both one-to-one and group)
- Sexual violence education and training for professionals and members of the public
- Information and referral services

For more information on the SAC program, contact the Ontario Network of Sexual Assault / Domestic Violence Treatment Centres (www.satcontario.com), the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (www.ocrcc.ca), or call the Victim Support Line toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

SupportLink

Through the *SupportLink* program, victims at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking receive help developing a personal safety plan, information and referral to community services, follow-up contact, and, where appropriate, a cell phone pre-programmed to dial 911. SupportLink is available in 20 jurisdictions across the province. To find the SupportLink program nearest you, please use the online Victim Services Directory at www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca or call the Victim Support Line toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services

The *Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services* (VCARS) program provides immediate, on-site service to victims of crime 24 hours a day, seven days a week. With a victim's consent, police will arrange for VCARS staff and/or specially trained volunteers to provide on-site, short-term assistance to victims, and make referrals to community agencies for long-term assistance.

Victim Support Line

The *Victim Support Line* (VSL) is a province-wide, bilingual, toll-free information line providing a range of services to victims of crime. The VSL offers:

- Personal information and referral to support services in your community
- Pre-recorded information about the criminal justice system
- Access to information about provincially sentenced offenders. You can also register for automated notifications when an offender's status changes
- Referral to the Victim Liaison Unit, to contact the Ontario Victims Services Secretariat if you have concerns with the availability or quality of victim services.

You can call the Victim Support Line toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or in the Greater Toronto Area, 416-314-2447. For information on federally incarcerated offenders (those whose sentence is more than two years), please call the National Parole Board at 1-800-518-8817

Victim Quick Response Program

The *Victim Quick Response Program* (VQRP) provides immediate assistance to victims of violent crime. Through this program, eligible victims who have no other financial means are able to access the following three services:

- Emergency expenses to pay for crime scene clean-up, emergency accommodation and meals, securing premises to ensure safety, and transportation and dependant care costs for a family member who must identify a homicide victim or support a seriously injured victim of violent crime.
- Funeral expenses to assist families of homicide victims.
- Counselling to provide short-term, early intervention counselling to help victims of serious crime.

The VQRP is available in over 50 communities across the province. For more information, visit www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca

Victim / Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)

VWAP is delivered by *Ontario Victims Services Secretariat* (OVSS) employees. It provides information, assistance and support to victims and witnesses of crime to increase their understanding of, and participation in, the criminal court process. Services are provided on a priority basis to the most vulnerable victims and witnesses of violent crime, such as domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, homicide and hate crime. VWAP staff provide:

- Crisis intervention
- Emotional support
- Case specific information (court dates, bail conditions)
- Court preparation and orientation information
- Needs assessment
- Referrals to community agencies

To find the VWAP office nearest you, call the Victim Support Line toll-free at 1-888-579-2888, or 416-314-2447 in the Greater Toronto Area.

