

Awareness Videos Companion Kit

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DOES NOT STOP AT RETIREMENT :
understand, act and prepare !**

Maiden's Tears

The symbol of our movement



It grows in many places: Maiden's Tears grows abundantly in the fields of Quebec, but one must be perceptive to discover it. Domestic Violence among Seniors (DVS) is also present in all strata of society. We must be attentive to find it in the people around us.

It grows in poor soil: This plant can grow in sandy, chalky, or rocky soil. Likewise, people who commit or experience DVS can flourish after a hostile relationship.

It blooms abundantly: This plant can thrive despite the lack of minerals in the soil, just like people who commit or suffer from DVS. They can use their experience to evolve and flourish.

It resists cold and drought: Just like the plant, people who experience DVS can survive and stay standing after conflicts and an unkind relationship. They are survivors, and they are strong.

It has deep roots: It is difficult for people who commit or experience DVS to get out of the abusive relationship, as their attachment to each other can be strong.

The seeds fall when the calyx bursts: When the calyx bursts, the flower sows its seeds, which are then nourished by the sun and the earth. Likewise, when a person experiencing DVS decides that the situation must end, they can start afresh with help and support.

It does not tolerate excess water: When DVS becomes too severe, the person who suffers it can die, just like the plant which can drown in a surplus of water.



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**Dramatization. Although the situations depicted in the videos are fictitious, they are based on testimonies collected by domestic violence workers.*

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Welcome to the Awareness Videos Companion Kit

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DOES NOT STOP AT RETIREMENT AGE: **understand, act and prepare!**

Congratulations! Your interest in these videos shows your willingness to raise awareness of an important subject among seniors and members of your organization: **domestic violence among seniors (DVS)** living at home during confinement and post-confinement periods.

DVS can be exacerbated ^[1, 2] during confinement periods. This may be due to several conditions, including the pre-existence of a history of domestic violence (DV), social isolation, alcohol or drug use, mental health problem, loss of functional autonomy, neurocognitive disorders, and inability to leave the residence ^[3]. Here is an example of a DVS situation:

«The spouse had more time to watch pornographic films and asked [his wife] to repeat the same gestures, to do things that she did not want to do.»

SPOUSAL VIOLENCE WORKER

[link to videos](#)



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1 - UNDERSTAND

**Become familiar with the notions of DVS:
Its forms, types and manifestations**

- **Psychological violence**
- **Verbal violence**
- **Physical violence**
- **Sexual violence**
- **Economic, material or financial violence**
- **Coercive violence**

UNDERSTAND

Become familiar with the notions of DVS:
its forms, types and manifestations

Psychological VIOLENCE

Psychological violence refers to the devaluing of another person. It undermines self-esteem and self-confidence, and convinces the abused person that the person committing violence is not responsible for the situation ^[4]. **Psychological violence is an exercise of power and control over someone, and it manifests in different ways.**

Note : The more socially isolated a person is, the more vulnerable they are to other forms, types or manifestations of violence. In some cases, the person with violent behaviour may use their spiritual beliefs to justify their dominance and power ^[4].



Psychological VIOLENCE



ACTION
VIOLENCE
ACTS OF VIOLENCE
GESTURES

IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Threatening to abandon the other ^[5]
- Threatening to harm one's children or grandchildren
- Threatening the other with physical harm either to them or to their pet
- Making suicidal threats
- Threatening to place the other in a residential and long-term care center (CHSLD) ^[6]
- Threatening to cut the other off
- Intimidating
- Blaming
- Manipulating ^[7]
- Scorning
- Humiliating
- Blackmailing
- Forbidding the other from associating with people, particularly out of jealousy ^[8, 9, 10]
- Restricting the movements of the other outside the home ^[4]
- Isolating the other from friends and family ^[11]
- Preventing the other from going out or seeing their friends
- Keeping the other under surveillance ^[12]
- Spying on the other's conversations
- Denigrating the other or the role of the grandmother
- Denigrating or criticizing the other's peers
- Making degrading remarks
- Insulting
- Complaining
- Shunning
- Sulking and imposing it on the other
- Using the other's past to undermine their credibility
- Being mentally burdened or obligated to take care of everything
- Invalidating or discrediting the other by using age-related stereotypes
- Being resentful
- Making the other believe that they are crazy
- Demanding that the other be psychiatrically evaluated
- Lying about the cognitive state of the other
- Giving more consideration to pets than to the other (for example, letting the dog sit in the truck and the person in the trunk)

INACTION
NEGLECT
OMISSION OF ACTS
ABSENCE OF
GESTURES

IN INACTIVE FORM:

- Neglecting the other ^[13]
- Denying help; ignoring ^[14]
- Giving silent treatment ^[15]
- Suffering the silence of the other for years
- Feeling like the other demonstrates interest only when they are sexually active ^[15]
- Being indifferent to the other's grief

UNDERSTAND

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verbal VIOLENCE

Verbal violence mostly stems from emotional violence. **It is a means of undermining the psychological integrity of the abused person.** Verbal violence (or intimidation) leads to physical violence, creates insecurity or fear, and prevents the person from withdrawing from the situation ^[4,13].





IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Telling the other that they are weak and worthless ^[15]
- Mocking
- Being sarcastic towards the other
- Insulting
- Making degrading and humiliating remarks, especially about the other's age and appearance ^[16]
- Blackmailing
- Giving intimate orders brutally ^[4]
- Not preparing the other person's meals according to their health problems (e.g.: not reducing the quantities of sugar or salt in the event of diabetes or high blood pressure)
- Being verbally abused ^[15]
- Ridiculing the cultural or religious values of the other ^[16]
- Ridiculing
- Denigrating the other because of their physical appearance ^[15]
- Shouting
- Screaming ^[14, 16]

Note : Verbal violence can be a part of psychological violence. Signs of verbal aggression (e.g.: threats, humiliations) are similar to those of psychological violence. Words are a way to exercise power and control and undermine one's psychological integrity.



Physical VIOLENCE

Physical violence involves **asserting one's dominance through violent behaviour**. Its effects are often disguised as accidents ^[4,13].



UNDERSTAND

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Physical VIOLENCE



ACTION
VIOLENCE
ACTS OF VIOLENCE
GESTURES

IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Hitting
- Hitting the body
- Injuring
- Shoving
- Biting
- Causing fractures
- Committing homicide^[4]
- Committing femicide^[17, 18, 19]
- Beating
- Hitting the other out of anger over changes in the household^[15]
- Pushing
- Choking
- Shaking^[8, 10]
- Waking the other up to give them medication and receiving a beating^[15]
- Spitting in the ears of the other (asthmatic spouse)^[14]
- Twisting one's arm
- Pinching or pulling one's arms
- Jerking
- Throwing objects

INACTION
NEGLECT
OMISSION OF ACTS
ABSENCE OF
GESTURES

IN INACTIVE FORM:

- Neglecting to administer medication to the other^[10]
- Denying access to medical care and devices, such as a wheelchair, glasses, medication^[16]
- Not providing food to the other^[14]
- Not caring for someone who is sick^[14]
- Leaving a person for a long time in an uncomfortable situation, such as in the toilet^[6]

UNDERSTAND

ACT

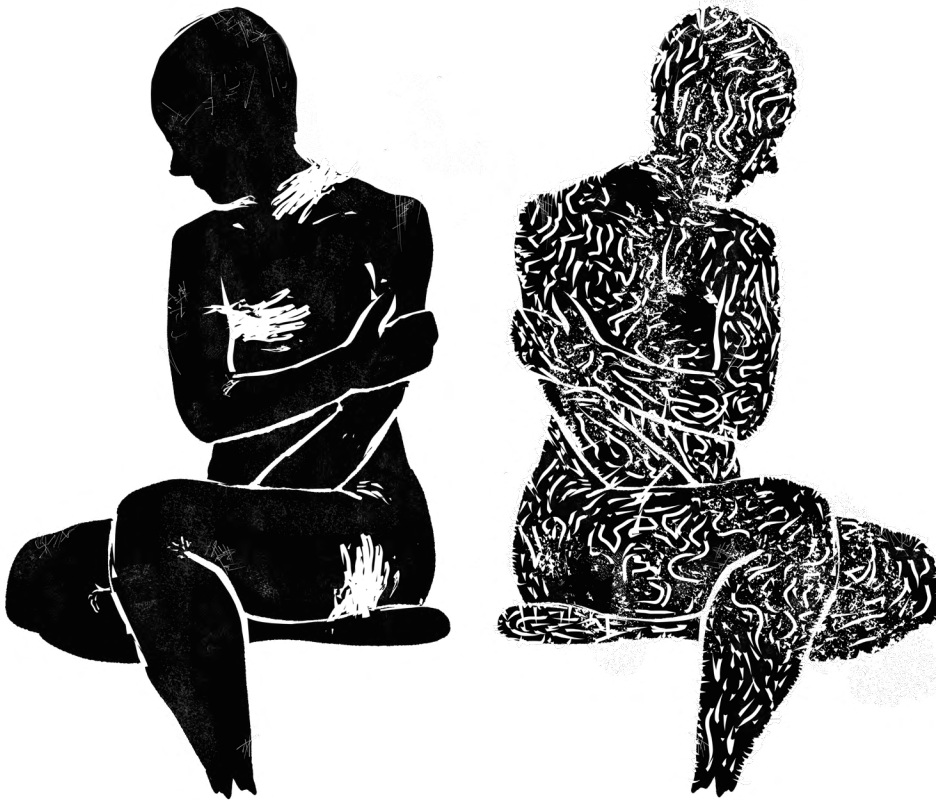
PREPARE



Sexual VIOLENCE

Sexual violence affects the sexual integrity of a person. It goes beyond sexuality itself in the sense that, through this violence, **the person with violent behaviour aims to dominate the other in the most intimate ways** [4]. It involves the use of physical force to coerce another into having sex or other unwanted physical contact [8, 10].

Note : Some people consent to sexual activities in the hope of maintaining peace and avoiding violence [4, 13].



Sexual VIOLENCE



ACTION
VIOLENCE
ACTS OF VIOLENCE
GESTURES

IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Committing sexual assault
- Sexually assaulting someone suffering from a neurocognitive disorder^[20]
- Harassing, intimidating, manipulating, or bullying a person for non-consensual sex^[4]
- Forcing or pressuring the other to have sexual contact^[8]
- Forcing the other to watch and reproduce scenes from pornographic films^[15, 21]
- Insulting the other with sexual connotations (e.g., calling them a whore or slut)^[15]
- Ordering the other to masturbate them all night^[15]
- Controlling the sexual health of the other (e.g., refusing to put on a condom), including senior women or women with disabilities^[22]
- Forcing unwanted sexual relations or intimate acts^[6]
- Agreeing to have sex to avoid problems, to avoid being beaten^[21]
- Raping
- Performing sadistic acts
- Exhibitionism
- Making jokes or sexual comments^[21]
- Imposing daily sexual needs on the other
- Sexual ageism (i.e., assuming an absence of sexuality in older people)
- Being forced to masturbate or watch the other masturbate almost 20 times a day
- Forcing the other to consult a sex therapist to have a sex life, even if they no longer want to

UNDERSTAND

ACT

PREPARE



Economic, material, or financial VIOLENCE

This type of violence involves **depriving the other person of the financial and material resources needed at home**^[4].





Economic, material, or financial VIOLENCE

ACTION
VIOLENCE
ACTS OF VIOLENCE
GESTURES

IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Controlling and monitoring the economic activities of the other, which renders them helpless in the situation, whether or not they work outside the home ^[4]
- Letting the other bear the financial burdens of the family
- Using the other's money for personal purposes ^[10]
- Taking the other's money or bank cards
- Telling the other to go "out to the streets" or sell their body if they want money ^[21]
- Controlling the other's expenses ^[11, 15]
- Being obligated to give their salary to the other because they "need money"
- Being obligated to transfer all their money to the other's account
- Not having the necessary financial autonomy ^[15]
- Being forced to beg for money
- Being forced to pay for all expenses ^[6]
- Making the other person sign documents under false pretenses, making them unwittingly accept conditions such as lease termination or surrendering patrimony
- Withholding information regarding bank accounts
- Withholding information about pension amounts
- Not wanting the other to spend money on resources such as hairstylists
- Extorting money from the other
- Breaking objects (e.g.: valuables)

Note : These acts of violence lead to financial dependence ^[4, 13].

INACTION
NEGLECT
OMISSION OF ACTS
ABSENCE OF
GESTURES

IN INACTIVE FORM:

- Depriving the other of the financial and material resources necessary for the proper functioning of the home ^[4]

UNDERSTAND

ACT

PREPARE



Coercive VIOLENCE

Coercive control is “**violent behaviour that seeks to deprive a person of their freedom, causing them to lose their own identity.** The person who resorts to violence creates a world in which the person under coercive control is constantly watched and criticized; their every move is controlled with a set of unpredictable, changing, and unknowable rules” (p. 12) ^[23].

Coercive control encompasses acts of coercion and control through the use of force or deprivation to make the abused person obey the abuser, ultimately eliminating their sense of freedom in the relationship, which Stark refers to as «being trapped» ^[24].

Coercive control refers to behaviours that aim to manipulate and intimidate a partner and instill fear in them. ^[25]



Coercive VIOLENCE



ACTION
VIOLENCE
ACTS OF VIOLENCE
GESTURES

IN ACTIVE FORM:

- Controlling how much money the other has and how they spend it
- Exercising monetary control over the person
- Damaging a person's property, such as furniture ^[23]
- Monitoring the other's daily activities and movements
- Preventing the other from going out, such as seeing their family, using confinement measures as excuses
- Controlling or limiting the autonomy of the other ^[26]
- Maintaining control over the other
- Exercising control by referencing the signing of a power of attorney ^[16]
- Wanting to dominate the other
- Imposing things on the other
- Demanding things from the other
- Seeking to control the behaviour of the other ^[27]
- Preventing the other from sleeping, for example by asking them to cook at impossible times ^[15]
- Putting pressure on the other

Note : There are control issues in all forms, types and manifestations of DVS.

UNDERSTAND

ACT

PREPARE

2 - ACT

Origin of the video clips

Purpose of the video clips and effects on domestic violence (DV) organizations and seniors

Video clip scenarios

- **Scénario 1 - Charlotte et Yvon**
- **Scénario 2 -Hélène et Ricardo**
- **Scénario 3 - Maryse et Simon**
- **Scénario 4 - Maria et Robert**
- **Scénario 5 - Jean et Lucie**

Materials included in the companion kit

Equipment needed in DV organizations

Human resources needed in DV organizations

How to successfully distribute these videos

Available training



Origine des capsules vidéo

To protect the health of seniors, who are more at risk of dying from complications related to COVID-19, the governments of Quebec and Canada have recommended that they stay at home ^[28,29]. However, DVS can be exacerbated during confinement periods ^[2,30]. Several conditions may be met, including social isolation, alcohol or drug use, mental health problem, loss of functional autonomy, neurocognitive disorders, and inability to leave home. There may also be a history of DV ^[3].

During confinement periods, SOS Violence Conjugale and the Simonne-Monet-Chartrand Emergency Shelter — two non-profit organizations dedicated to preventing and intervening in the context of DV — expressed concern over an increase in the number of requests for help, **but a decrease in the number of requests for shelter** ^[31]. DV affects those who experience it regardless of age, **particularly in terms of their physical, mental, or financial health, well-being, quality of life, and safety** ^[4, 5, 32, 33, 34, 35]. It also has repercussions on their family (e.g., reproduction of their parents' relational models, post-traumatic stress disorder) and society (e.g., costs associated with recourse to police services, as well as to judicial, health and social services) ^[36]. These consequences can be even more serious for abused seniors during confinement periods due to greater social isolation ^[2].

Seniors have difficulty reporting the violence they experience, as well as asking for help, for various reasons: shame, fear of judgment, of not being believed or of reprisals, feelings of guilt, values related to the conjugal union, economic dependence, ignorance of DV support organizations, services not adapted or not accessible ^[8, 10, 30], or inability to find someone to confide in when the partner is nearby.

Considering the social and scientific relevance of researching this current and complex issue, the Collegial Center of Expertise in Gerontology (CCEG|CCTT) of the Cégep de Drummondville, the Living Lab in Open Innovation (LLio) of the Cégep de Rivière-du-Loup, SOS Violence Conjugale, the Simonne-Monet-Chartrand Emergency Shelter, the Applied and Interdisciplinary Research Team on Intimate, Family and Structural Violence (RAIV), as well as the La Source Institute and Higher School of Health (HES-SO) have decided to join forces to carry out this research-action project.

Its general objective was to prevent and counter DVS occurring at home during confinement periods through a better understanding of these situations, as well as the production, distribution and evaluation of awareness videos.



THE PROJECT TARGETED FIVE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- to identify and better understand situations of DVS occurring at home, especially during confinement periods
- to identify interventions aimed at preventing and countering DVS
- to produce five awareness videos aimed at seniors and their families
- to disseminate the videos, especially to Quebec seniors
- to evaluate the videos, in particular their distribution and effects on seniors living at home during confinement periods

Unlike other means of raising awareness (e.g., pamphlets, posters), videos allow us to reach a wider population; get people to identify with the characters represented; and bring abused people, violent people and those around them to act in such situations (e.g., contact DV organizations). **The videos promote learning by modeling the behaviours to be adopted**^[37]. By observing the behaviour of others, viewers can visualize the skill they need to acquire, discover the essential characteristics of the skill, organize and evaluate what they know, and pay particular attention to what they lack^[37, 38]. This observation of useful behaviours and skills increases their belief in their own abilities to act.

A review of existing videos on the Web^[39, 40, 41] shows that they are not adapted for the elderly population. They almost exclusively depict young women who are subjected to violence by a man, and they do not depict characteristics that are more specific to seniors (e.g., values related to the conjugal union). They also do not show interventions aimed at preventing or countering DVS situations. Their content, visuals and accessibility are not adapted to an older audience. These observations are corroborated by our partners in the field (SOS Violence Conjugale and the Simonne-Monnet-Chartrand Emergency Shelter).

The **Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age: Understand, act and prepare! videos are based on the comments of 14 DV workers from 8 regions of Quebec, whom we met during interviews**. They have shared situations of DVS occurring at home, particularly during confinement periods, as well as interventions to prevent or solve them. Interviewing seniors living in a DV situation was not possible due to several factors, including increased difficulty in reaching them during confinement periods, and ethical and safety issues. Our analysis of these situations and these interventions made it possible to create the scenarios contained in the five awareness videos.

In addition, the videos were produced, broadcast and evaluated by involving actors affected by these DVS situations (e.g., seniors, DV workers). We opted for an iterative process, in which we presented the videos to them, receive their feedback, and improve the videos so that they are adapted to an older audience and that they meet the needs of DV workers. A total of 22 seniors and 10 DV workers took part in these meetings. Here are some of the comments we received:



« [It is] very interesting to see the point of view of people who commit violence, it is uncommon.»

(DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKER)

« [The video shows a] very human side, it is very emotive, and it led me to identify myself with their stories. This is something not necessarily found in other existing tools and videos for DV. »

(DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKER)

« The shot is captivating for the audience. The actors are engaging and play their roles well. I thought it was a real couple at the start of the first video. I would not hesitate to share this on social media. »

(DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKER)

« Many people still believe that DV is only about physical violence. The clips lead to reflection on several types of violence. »

(SENIOR)

« I really appreciated the testimonies from caregivers and immigrants. They are important in raising awareness and the help required. »

(SENIOR)



«[The videos are] so believable that I wondered if they were actors or not. The stories and information presented made me think of the stories we hear every day in shelters. »

(DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKER)

UNDERSTAND

« I found the clips very touching and guilt-free for the victims, by showing them real-life situations that are probably close to their own because they are different situations from one another. Sometimes you do not think you are in such a situation until you are told. »

(SENIOR)

ACT

« As an older person, my ability to tolerate ‘faults’ or habits that appear over time has increased. I am not a victim of DV, but I know that if we do not talk about the small ‘pernicious’ changes as soon as we recognize them, they can become a source of conflict and deteriorate the relationship. »

(SENIOR)

« We know little about the other tools. They are government advertisements I assume. The clips are much more interesting, and they encourage more action. »

(SENIOR)

PREPARE



CONTACT DETAILS:

For more information on the action research project **Violence within elderly couples living at home during confinement periods: strengthening the feeling of security through a better understanding of these situations and the production, distribution and evaluation of awareness-raising video clips**, to give us your feedback on the video clips, or even for training, contact us:

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Purpose of the videos and effects on domestic violence (DV) organizations and seniors

The **Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age: Understand, act and prepare!** awareness videos aim to prevent and counter DVS occurring at home during confinement periods. They highlight DVS situations, interventions to prevent and counter them, as well as references to DVS organizations.

FOR DV ORGANIZATIONS:

DV organizations will have awareness videos **to better prevent and counter DVS occurring at home during confinement and post-confinement periods**. They will be able to integrate them into their own prevention programs to improve their awareness-raising actions with the senior or general population. These videos will help them better understand DVS, as well as identify and implement interventions aimed at preventing and countering it. In this sense, they will help organizations, as well as seniors, relatives and witnesses, to act earlier, before a climate of violence is established. The videos will help better identify DVS situations as they arise, intervene and end such situations, and prevent them from happening again.

FOR SENIORS:

The videos will also allow seniors **to better recognize the violence that can occur within their household** by considering the role played by their life partner and the support they can benefit from (e.g., their entourage, DV organizations). They will learn that **DVS is not insurmountable, that it is possible to act even at an advanced age, that DV organizations have services available for seniors**, and that they can contact these organizations if the situation deteriorates or they feel they are in danger. These videos can help reduce the feeling of vulnerability experienced by seniors by informing and preparing them ^[42]. This will help increase their ability to defend themselves against DV ^[32]. Likewise, their self-esteem, their power to act and their sense of security will be reinforced — essential conditions for maintaining their autonomy, well-being and quality of life ^[43, 44]. The more information seniors have to act, the more they can make informed decisions (e.g., contacting DV organizations) ^[45]. In other words, they can say:

«I feel safer because I know that I am not alone, that I can ask for help, that professionals have already encountered situations like mine, and that they can offer me appropriate interventions.»



Video scenarios

VIDEO USERS

The videos are intended for seniors and those around them and can be used by DV workers.

They are an innovative tool for raising awareness, educating and sharing knowledge with the population. People who want to learn more about DVS occurring at home during confinement periods, as well as ways to prevent and counter it, can use this tool. These include people who work in DV organizations in Quebec, Canada or internationally, but also, more broadly, in seniors' organizations, and the trainers of future workers in these organizations.

Quebec, Canadian and international DV organizations, especially seniors' organizations, will be able to integrate the videos into their prevention programs to improve their awareness actions with the senior or general population.

VIDEO SCENARIOS

The videos depict five scenarios produced in a mockumentary style, as if seniors were invited on set to talk about their couple, their story and how they experienced the pandemic and confinement periods. We see the arrival of the protagonists, the moment when we welcome them, when the technicians install their microphones and when they get their makeup done. In each case, gradually, we feel the amusing tone that turns into forced laughter, forced smiles, a feeling of unease. We then see the DVS take place.

In these videos, we not only see the victim from DV, but also the perpetrator (except in Maryse's scenario, where she is alone). We see that people with violent behaviour can look friendly, which helps to correct the misapprehension that they always look mean or that one can tell from their appearance that they commit DV.

The scenarios presented in the videos are presented below. Each of them is followed by discussion points to engage with seniors or DV workers who participate in awareness activities.



SCÉNARIO 1 - Charlotte et Yvon



Charlotte is a senior woman who experiences **physical and psychological violence, as well as control**, from her husband Yvon. She illustrates the patriarchy and a situation of danger, which leads her to call the police. In this scenario, we see that Charlotte does not want to part with her cat Mumu.

- Inform seniors about the services or people available to care for animals in a DV situation (e.g., humane society [SPA], family). Seniors hesitate to ask for help for fear of having to part with their animals.



SCÉNARIO 2 - HÉLÈNE ET RICARDO



Hélène is a senior woman who experiences **psychological violence and control** from her husband Ricardo, a professor emeritus at the university. The latter denigrates Hélène's physical appearance and develops a feeling of jealousy. Hélène is at her wits' end. She is afraid of losing everything, but decides to secretly call a DV organization.

- This type of violence is less visible and more subtle than physical violence, and thus more difficult to recognize. Therefore, when you discuss psychological violence with the seniors who watch the videos, do not hesitate to name the attitudes or behaviours associated with it (e.g., insults, mockery, degrading remarks).
- In this scenario, we see a couple of high socioeconomic status. You can discuss with participants that DVS can occur in all types of couples, regardless of socioeconomic status.



SCÉNARIO 3 - Maryse et Simon



Maryse is a senior woman who suffers **sexual, physical and psychological violence** from her partner Simon. Simon asks Maryse to reproduce sexual scenes he has seen on the web and denigrates her. Maryse does what he wants to have peace, but the situation always comes back, and quickly. Maryse consults the website of a DV organization and recognizes herself in the information presented. She decides to call them.

- This video is emotionally difficult. It is best not to introduce it first to seniors.
- While discussing with the participants, you can deconstruct conjugal and marital duty, then give notions on consent.
- You can explain that pornography is not life. In the practice of sexuality, there is not only genitality: caressing erogenous zones, kissing, and having a progression that leads to sexuality, like a dinner where there is touching, caressing, and where there is a desire to go further. We must not forget that older people lived through the era of chastity nightgowns, of sexuality in the dark, these practices being associated with sin and reproduction. Women used to say to their daughters on their wedding day: «Let [your husband] do to you as he pleases.” This was the sex education of the time.
- You can specify these three important points:
 - Discuss your wishes
 - Ensure the consent of both partners
 - Respect consensual sexual exchange



SCÉNARIO 4 - Maria et Robert



Maria is a senior woman originally from the Dominican Republic. She comes to live with her husband Robert, in Quebec. Robert does everything so that she lacks nothing. He lacks self-confidence and fears that Maria will leave him. He isolates her from her family, does not want her to go out, and threatens to cut her off financially. He exercises **psychological violence and control** over Maria. She finds a DV organization to help them.

- You can mention to the participants that there are help resources for people who are abused or exhibit violent behaviour, regardless of their gender.



SCÉNARIO 5 - Jean et Lucie



Lucie is a senior caregiver who is **psychologically and physically violent**, and neglectful towards Jean, her husband, who is losing his physical autonomy. The latter moves with a walker, and is slower and less skillful. He needs help with his daily activities. Lucie feels increasingly tired and stressed, and ends up abandoning Jean. The latter meets a pharmacist who directs him to a DV organization.

- You can address the fact that women can be violent towards their partners. Even in an exhausting caregiving situation, violence is not justifiable.
- When exhaustion is felt, and even before it happens, it is advisable to contact a support organization for help. You can suggest that participants call the **Info-Aidant telephone intervention line at 1-855-852-7784.**

For your awareness activity, you can select one or more videos, then discuss the different types, forms and manifestations of DVS. You can tell participants that, if they want to know more about the subject, there are five videos available. They are a tool to open discussion, reflect and demystify DVS. You can also make use of key messages (see Appendix 2) to encourage discussion and raise awareness.



Materials included in the companion kit

FREE WEB LINK TO ACCESS
THE FIVE VIDEOS

[Link to the videos](#)

PRINTABLE MATERIALS (AVAILABLE IN THE APPENDICES):

- Two documents explaining different ways to view the videos. Simply choose one of the following options and follow the corresponding instruction sheet.
 - If you want seniors or DV workers to be able to view the videos on their own, choose “Individual activity”.
 - If you want to organize a group activity by showing the videos on a single large screen, choose “Group activity”.
- Key messages addressed to abused older adults, older adults with violent behaviour, or people witnessing DVS to promote awareness and knowledge of possible actions. These can be used by DV workers during awareness-raising activities.
- Preferred interventions to prevent and counter DVS resulting from action research:
 - for DV workers
 - for seniors
 - for witnesses
- A list of help resources
- A poster to promote activities or viewing times of the video clips, which can be modified (e.g., date, place).
- Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age! cards to be given to people who have viewed the videos, in order to create a sense of belonging - membership, identification, involvement - towards this awareness.



Equipment needed in DV organizations

A COMPUTER OR ELECTRONIC TABLET,

Participants can also view the videos on their cell phone.

EARPHONES,

if the videos are viewed in a room with several computers or electronic tablets.

PRINTABLE DOCUMENTS,

which you will find in the appendix.

A PROJECTOR,

as well as a large screen and microphone for group activities.

Human resources needed in DV organizations

To distribute the videos, it is important to ask the following two questions:

- **Who is the best person within the DV organization to bring the videos to life?**
- **Who is the best person for people to confide in regarding problematic situations after watching the videos?**

This can be the same person or different people.

The person bringing the videos to life within the DV organization can be an employee. This person will be able to promote them, lead awareness-raising activities, and explain how they work, if the participants have questions. This person must be familiar with the accompanying kit.

The person responsible for addressing problematic situations can also be an employee. Among other things, this person will be able to listen to and support participants if they are experiencing, have experienced, or have witnessed DV situations, and help them find solutions. This person must possess psychosocial training, be a trusted person in whom the participants can confide, and act confidentially.

ACT

How to successfully distribute these videos

No matter how you choose to distribute the videos, it is essential to promote, involve the community, and conduct medium and long-term follow-up to achieve the expected awareness. Here are some ways to do so.

- Multiply the activities or broadcast times of the videos to raise awareness among as many workers and seniors as possible of DVS, its consequences and how to prevent and counter it.
- Organize regular theme days or discussions on DVS to ensure that the workers remain alert to it over time.

ACT

Available training (charges apply)

The Collegial Center of Expertise in Gerontology (CCEG|CCTT) of the Cégep de Drummondville and its partners can offer you the following services:

- Accompany the persons in charge of DV organizations in the use and distribution of videos
- Train and equip resource people within the organizations. These people would have the mandate of receiving, listening to, and supporting employees or seniors who are experiencing, have experienced, or have witnessed a DVS situation
- Organize awareness-raising activities: get-togethers, video viewings, feedback and discussions
- Present a conference on DVS, in particular, the kind experienced by elderly couples living at home during confinement periods.

Other training is also available, as needed. Please see the **Contact Information** section of this kit for more information.



3 - PREPARE

Activity sheets

Key messages

**Interventions to prevent
and counter DVS**

Help resources

Promotional poster and card



PREPARE - APPENDIX 1

SHEET 1 - Individual activity

INDIVIDUAL VIEWING OF VIDEOS

Do you like watching videos? Do you want to learn more about domestic violence among seniors (DVS)?



We present:

**Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age:
Understand, act and prepare!**



Videos that aim to raise awareness among seniors and DV workers about DVS occurring at home during confinement and post-confinement periods, its consequences, and how to prevent and counter it.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Allow 20 minutes to view the videos. You can watch all five videos or select one or more for an activity.
- Open your computer, tablet or cell phone. Make sure the sound is on.
- Go to the videos link : [LINK TO THE VIDEOS](#)
- Click on a video to watch it.
- Invite your friends, neighbors, relatives and even your colleagues to watch the videos.

The more sensitized people there are, the easier it will be to prevent and counter DVS occurring at home during confinement and post-confinement periods.



APPENDIX 1

SHEET 2 - Group activity

VIDEO VIEWING GET-TOGETHERS

Do you like watching videos? Do you want to learn more about domestic violence among seniors (DVS)?



We present:

**Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age:
Understand, act and prepare!**



Videos that aim to raise awareness among seniors and DV workers about DVS occurring at home during confinement and post-confinement periods, about its consequences and how to prevent and counter it.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- A computer
- The web link to access the videos
- A projector
- A large screen
- A microphone to guide the activity, if necessary
- Chairs
- A poster to promote the activity (see Appendix 5 of the kit)
- **Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age!** cards printed on cardboard (see Appendix 5 of the kit)
- Documents with interventions to prevent and counter DVS printed on paper (see Appendix 3 of the kit)

INSTRUCTIONS



Before the activity: Preparation

- Determine who will facilitate the activity.
- Identify in advance the person responsible for receiving people who are experiencing, have experienced or have witnessed problematic situations, including DVS situations, and who need to talk about them after watching the videos.
- The facilitator should watch the videos beforehand to familiarize themselves with the content. Allow 20 minutes to view the five videos or those that will be used for the activity.
- Reach out to the people you want to raise awareness in (e.g., seniors, DV workers).
- Determine when you want to show the videos: for example, during a particular event, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25) or the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15), or simply with an invitation to come and watch the videos.
- Choose the location, date and time of the activity.
- Prepare promotional posters. Put them up a week before the activity in frequently visited places in the organization.
- Collect registrations if space is limited.
- Print and cut out the Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age! cards and preferred intervention documents on letter-size paper (8½ X 11).

The day of the activity, before the arrival of the participants

- Set up the computer, projector and screen.
- Go to: [LINK TO THE VIDEOS](#)
- Test the microphone and perform sound tests (video and microphone clips).
- Have the Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age! cards in hand and the preferred intervention documents ready to give to the participants at the end of the activity.
- Have the list of registrants on hand, if applicable.

During the activity

- Welcome the participants and explain the importance and relevance of watching the Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age: Understand, act and prepare! videos. Mention that this is a way to raise awareness among seniors and DV workers about DVS, its consequences and how to prevent and counter it.
- Watch the videos. You can watch all five, or select one or more for an activity.
- After viewing the videos, elicit comments from the participants.
- Start a discussion about DVS (see points to discuss in the video scenarios section of the kit). At this step, you can direct the participants to additional information and resources.
- Distribute the cards and preferred intervention documents to participants at the end of the activity.
- Encourage participants to talk about the videos to their friends, neighbors, loved ones and colleagues.

The more sensitized people there are, the easier it will be to prevent and counter DVS occurring at home during confinement and post-confinement periods.



APPENDIX 2

These key messages are intended for abused seniors, seniors with violent behaviour and people who witness DVS. They aim to promote awareness and knowledge of possible accessible actions. They can be used by DV workers during awareness-raising activities.

SHEET 1 - Key messages for an abused senior

DIRECT MESSAGES TO THE ABUSED SENIOR

- You are experiencing DVS.
- It can happen to you too. It does not just happen to others.
- Your life is important. It has value.
- Your integrity is worth more than your material belongings.
- You have the right to love and a healthy relationship, regardless of your age. Even if you have endured this violence all your life, you have the right to no longer accept it.
- Do not fade away; be alive.
- You can say enough is enough.
- Now, stop, leave, enough!
- It is possible to act. There are solutions.
- Talking about your situation does not necessarily mean leaving your home or your partner.
- If you are scared, call the police.
- If you are in danger, call the police.
- Choosing to leave a DVS situation does not mean you are going to grow old alone.
- You are not alone.
- This situation is inadequate and unacceptable. You cannot stay there.



MORE GENERAL MESSAGES TO THE ABUSED SENIOR

- DVS exists.
- DV does not stop at retirement age.
- DVS is not just beatings.
- Sex is not a marital duty.
- Older men and women can be abused.
- DVS can occur in a caregiving context.
- Femicide and homicide also exist among seniors.
- Abused seniors have the same rights as younger people.
- DVS affects everyone, regardless of social status.
- DVS must stop!





SHEET 2 - **Key messages for seniors with violent behaviour**

DIRECT MESSAGES TO SENIORS WITH VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

- You are committing DVS.
- Your violent behaviour can cause harm to others.
- It is possible to act and repair your mistakes. There are solutions.
- Talking about your situation does not necessarily mean leaving your home or your partner.

MORE GENERAL MESSAGES TO SENIORS WITH VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

- DVS exists.
- DVS does not stop at retirement age.
- DVS is not just beatings.
- Both men and women can commit DVS.



SHEET 3 - **Key messages for people witnessing DVS**

DIRECT MESSAGES TO THE WITNESS

- You are witnessing a DVS situation.
- It is possible to act. There are solutions.
- You can make a difference. Be there, listen and support the abused person.

MORE GENERAL MESSAGES TO THE WITNESS

- DVS exists.
- DVS does not stop at retirement age.
- DVS is not just beatings.
- Both men and women can commit DVS.

SHEET 1 - Interventions to prevent and counter DVS

The interventions proposed below are suggested behaviours to adopt to prevent and counter DVS. They are based on knowledge acquired through action research.

FOR DV WORKERS

Raising awareness about DVS in the general population

- Remove taboos about DVS (e.g., DVS exists, and it can take different forms).
- Talk about DVS using different means (e.g., videos, posters) and in different places (e.g., seniors' organizations, DV organizations, schools).
- Facilitate access to information for obtaining support, such as the SOS Violence Conjugale telephone intervention lines (1-800-363-9010), The Elder Mistreatment Helpline (1-888-489-2287), and the Caregiver Support Helpline (1-855-852-7784).

Raising awareness can help seniors recognize their situation, overcome shame and guilt, and report their history of DV. It should be noted that DV workers may receive confidential information during awareness-raising activities.

Intervene with the abused senior (especially women)

- Carry out telephone interventions. Use empathetic listening. Senior women want to be listened to, perhaps because their family is no longer present, the children no longer want to hear about the situation, or people take their partner's side. Here are some recommended messages:

«You can receive help even if you do not want to start official procedures. We want to offer you empathetic and caring listening to determine what your options are.

If you wish, we can guide you to the various resources and offer you possible solutions. We want to help you and we will accompany you in respect of your needs and your boundaries.»

- Help women realize that what they are experiencing is DV and that it is not "normal". Senior women can live with DV and not know it. You can tell them :





«You are experiencing violent treatment. You are not the only one experiencing this. In your situation, I too would have self-esteem issues. You are not the problem. It is one of the consequences of what you are going through.»

- Tell them that you recognize their situation and that you believe them.
- Accompany them at their own pace, according to their preferences and their need for safety, taking into account factors like divorce procedures, complaints, lease terminations and relocations. Remind them that these procedures are confidential and done with the consent of the abused person. Here are some possible scenarios:
 - Pets are often a barrier for seniors to leave the violent environment. Consider this factor and help the person find a suitable arrangement for the animal.
 - Minimize the concerns and stress of abused seniors who wish to take action (e.g., in the event of a police intervention, if possible, ask for a ghost car, offer help to store furniture, or accompany the senior in legal and financial procedures). These are often obstacles to leaving the DV situation.
 - Be aware, in their interventions, of the specificities of DVS situations and of the values specific to their generation (e.g., the importance of marriage “for better or for worse”).
- Give them choices, such as access to anonymous support, joining support groups, or dealing with the police or a lawyer. Trusting that they are making the best choices for themselves and their lives. It is important to cultivate the confidence and self-esteem of women and help them believe in themselves,
- Respect their self-determination by assuming that they are capable of taking action and regaining power over their lives (“you are capable”). Avoid deciding for them – their abuser is already doing it.
- Create a bond of trust so that women regain power over their lives, are willing to talk about their reality, and find strategies to allow them to have a good life. Consider their life stories (e.g., children used to be raised with physical punishment).
- Accept information in a non-judgmental manner.
- Avoid infantilizing interventions.
- Pay attention to their body language.
- Encourage the expression of emotions.
- Encourage change, but do not rush them. They have worked hard all their lives to protect their families in difficult circumstances.
- Avoid making them feel guilty for staying in a DV situation, for saying they could have left long ago. Avoid blaming them.



- Validate the emotion of the abused person and their desire to act, even after a long DV relationship. Women have the right to love and a healthy relationship, regardless of their age. They have the right to no longer accept a behaviour even if they have accepted it all their lives. Be aware that certain situations (e.g., departure of children, retirement, health problems, confinement) can modify or intensify violent behaviour.
- Educate them about DVS, its dynamics and manifestation. Highlight the fact that DV is not the result of stress or anger, but of a choice of behaviour. Educate them about relevant issues such as affirmation, communication, boundaries, regaining power over their lives, empathy, taking care of themselves, thinking positive thoughts, neurocognitive disorders and violent behaviour, financial autonomy, and patrimony.
- Give them protection tools and scenarios if they want to go back with their partner. They can learn to protect themselves in the presence of their spouse.
- Set up a safety net and protection scenarios. For example:
 - Use code words with the abused person.
 - Request a medical emergency bracelet, which can extend its functions to a DVS situation.
 - Create help requests in the form of giveaways in places that are usually frequented by seniors (e.g., win a blow-dry at the hairdresser). The small form to be completed constitutes the request for help.
 - Create a lost-and-found system (e.g., scarves). If you need help, you bring the object back to the reception or to a resource person who can help the abused person.
 - Identify a trusted person with whom to leave a safety kit (e.g., money, clothes).
- Plan activities to counter the isolation of senior women (e.g., art workshops, yoga), so that they find an interest and regain self-esteem and balance.
- Support female caregivers who continue to experience DV. Be aware that a caregiver situation can lead to DVS.



Intervening with older adults who display violent behaviour (especially for men)

- Emphasize that there is no age to change marital or family behaviour.
- Promote the self-determination of the senior.
- Respect their pace in grasping concepts that, culturally, are less consistent with the values of their time.
- Maintain telephone contact to make them aware of the impact of his actions on themselves, such as the loss of relationships or family ties.
- Focus on raising awareness in the person with violent behaviour. Help them recognize that their behaviour constitutes DVS and that it causes harm to others.
- Support the spouse or family member who calls the DV organization by sharing information with them about the work in progress with the senior and the implementation of security measures to protect the caller.
- Remind them that one can refuse to accept a person's behaviour without condemning the person as a whole.

Intervening in the context of a pandemic

- Adapt the interventions according to the confinement and the health measures imposed by the Government of Quebec. For example, carry out short telephone interventions with the abused person to give them tools to protect themselves, when the person with violent behaviour has gone out for a walk.
- Modify certain activities of DV organizations, such as conducting workshops online rather than face-to-face.
- Set up a resource person to network within the community and raise awareness of DV organizations. You can create links with DV workers.
- Implement initiatives to inform seniors of existing resources, for example through newspaper ads, on the radio, on social media, fridge magnets or door-to-door messaging.
- Ask pharmacies and grocery stores to display messages about DV (e.g., "Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age!"), and to make a phone number available to abused people so that they can call and ask for help.
- Appear in the media to remind people that shelters are accessible and safe 24/7. Demystify the services offered by shelters.
- Keep in touch with the people who have spent time in DV shelters to find out how they are coping with the pandemic situation.
- Use the telephone as a means of intervention to maintain contact.



Intervening with adult children

- Avoid minimizing what the abused person is going through.
- Call a DV organization for information. You can accompany the abused person to make an appointment or to confirm if it is a good resource for them or their partner.
- Consider options if the abused person needs to leave the abuser, the children need to take on a caregiver role, or they incur expenses.

SHEET 2 - Interventions to prevent a nd counter DVS

FOR SENIORS

What to do if you are an abused senior ?

- If you need immediate assistance, **contact 911**. ^[46]
- If you need support, a listening ear or advice on the steps to follow, contact **SOS Violence Conjugale at 1-800-363-9010**. This helpline is confidential, bilingual and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The workers who answer the phone will put you in touch with resource people who can listen to you, reassure you and answer all your questions. They can also help you find a temporary shelter. ^[46]
- If you are considering ending the relationship or leaving the house and you do not know how to go about it, think about protection measures, which will protect you in key moments such as episodes of DV or even during separation (e.g., be ready to leave the house quickly, avoid being trapped, identify people you can trust). ^[46] **For more information, visit the website: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/violence/conjugal-violence/protective-measures>**

*These are just some possible approaches to prevent and counter DVS.
There are other things you can do!*

What to do if you are a senior with violent behaviour ?

- Realizing that you have abused your partner can be very destabilizing. It may be difficult to face reality and take responsibility for what has been said and done ^[46]. Recognizing these gestures is the first step towards change.
- If you need to talk to someone or if you have questions or doubts about something you have done to your partner, **contact SOS Violence Conjugale at 1-800-363-9010**. This helpline is confidential, bilingual and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The workers who answer the phone will put you in touch with resource people who can listen to you, reassure you and answer all your questions.

*These are just some possible approaches to prevent and counter DVS.
There are other things you can do!*



SHEET 2 - Interventions to prevent and counter DVS

FOR PEOPLE WITNESSING DVS

What to do if you witness a DVS situation ?

- If you witness a situation that requires immediate assistance, contact 911 ^[46]. A report can be made anonymously.
- If you have witnessed disturbing situations and you do not know what to do, **contact SOS Violence Conjugale at 1-800-363-9010** at any time. Resource people can help you clarify the situation ^[46].
- Witnessing a DV situation can put you in a delicate situation. You may also be uncomfortable with the idea of meddling in matters that are “none of your business”. Be aware, however, that it is completely legitimate to want to help a person living with DV. For the sake of those abused, acts of violence should not remain private ^[46].
- You can verify your suspicions. To do so:
 - Approach the person presumed to be abused in an understanding way, without blaming them, remembering that it is difficult for abused people to talk about the violence they are experiencing.
 - Let them make their own decision without telling them what to do. They are the experts on their situation.
 - Remind them that DVS is unacceptable, that their partner is solely responsible for their actions, and that they do not deserve to be treated like this. Avoid speaking against the partner and instead speak against the violent behaviour.
 - Support them and direct them towards resources that can accompany them in their efforts ^[30].
- Under no circumstances should you put yourself in danger. Make sure the situation is safe enough before you act.

*These are just some possible approaches to prevent and counter DVS.
There are other things you can do!*





Some help resources

Do not hesitate to tell seniors that they can contact a help resource to support them in their efforts, according to their needs. This may lead them to ask for help. Seniors have usually been isolated by the person with violent behaviour. They must be able to tell themselves that they are not captive and that there are things that can be done. Talking about these resources can also help seniors pick up the phone on their own and verify this information.

EMERGENCY

If you need immediate help, **contact 911.**

TELEPHONE INTERVENTION LINES

SOS violence conjugale

SOS Violence Conjugale offers telephone support, psychological support, immediate intervention, and a referral service to shelters (they can call for you). It offers bilingual, free, anonymous and confidential help 24/7 by phone, text, chat and email.

1-800-363-9010 ● www.sosviolenceconjugale.ca/en

Elder Mistreatment Helpline (EMH)

The EMH offers confidential, bilingual and free service from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week. Calling the EMH allows you to obtain information on the types of violence, as well as their consequences on your quality of life, your physical health and your psychological well-being. It also helps you become aware of the resources available to support you in this difficult situation or to help you put an end to it.

1-888-489-2287 ● www.aideabusaines.ca/en

Caregiver Support Helpline

The Caregiver Support Helpline is a confidential and free telephone service for listening, obtaining information and getting professional referrals. It is intended for caregivers and those around them, as well as workers and health professionals. You can contact the Caregiver Support Helpline for listening, information and referrals. The service is available every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

1-855-852-7784 ● <https://www.lappui.org/en/about-us/contact-our-caregiver-support-helpline/>



FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS

The shelters offer free 24/7 telephone support, outpatient consultation and safe accommodation.

www.fmhf.ca

ASSOCIATION OF SHELTERS FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF DV

www.maisons-femmes.qc.ca

À CŒUR D'HOMME

This is a referral, intervention and follow-up service that offers help to spouses and fathers with violent behaviour.

1-877-660-7799 ● www.aceurdhomme.com

SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS FOR MEN IN DIFFICULTY

These support organizations offer support services, mutual support or treatment for men who are experiencing difficulty, who have violent behaviours, who have committed sexual assault or who were sexually abused during childhood.

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/violence/conjugal-violence/support-organizations-men-in-difficulty>

LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION – REBUILD

This service offers a free legal consultation service with a lawyer for people who suffer from DV. They can receive four hours of consultation free of charge, in all areas of law related to the violence suffered.

1-833-732-2847 ● www.rebatir.ca/?lang=en



HUMANE SOCIETIES (SPA) AND SOCIETIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (SPCA)

SPAs or SPCAs are organizations whose general mission is to protect animals, improve their quality of life and raise public awareness of the importance of animal life. These organizations are present in most regions of Quebec. Here are the main addresses of SPAs and SPCAs in most regions of Quebec:

- **Montreal SPCA: 514 735-2711, ext. 2230**
- **Quebec SPA: 418 527-9104**
- **Estrie SPA: 819 821-4727**
- **Outaouais SPA: 819 243-2004**
- **Mauricie SPA: 819 376-0806 (Trois-Rivières) or 819-538-9683 (Shawinigan)**
- **Lanaudière Basses-Laurentides SPCA: 450 222-1112**
- **Montréal SPCA: 450 460-3075**
- **Beauce-Étchemin SPA: 418 774-8803**
- **Côte-Nord SPCA: 418 964-3272**
- **Saguenay SPCA: 418 695-5055**
- **Drummond SPA: 819 472-5700**

MYPLAN CANADA

myPlan Canada is a free app to help you with your safety and well-being if you have experienced abuse from a current or past partner. Their services are private, secure, personalized, and backed by research.

The app looks like a calendar where you can, among other things, document situations of violence (e.g., what happened and when). It is a useful tool when you want to accuse a person and demonstrate that there has indeed been DV, with concrete examples. It is also easier to prove your claims in court when everything is documented.

To learn more about this tool, visit the following link: www.myplanapp.ca/en

APPENDIX 5



Promotional poster and card

This kit is accompanied by documents to modify and print to help you promote activities related to the **Domestic violence does not stop at retirement age: Understand, act and prepare!** videos.



An **editable poster** to allow you to promote your events and your video viewing activities.



Cards to print out and give to people who have viewed the videos, to create a sense of belonging towards this awareness.

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