



**FAMILIES
FIRST**



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2013CFD0001-000086
Jan. 22, 2013

Ministry of Children and Family Development

B.C. opens public domestic violence consultations

SURREY – The Provincial Office of Domestic Violence is requesting public feedback to help advance the development of a three-year provincial plan to address domestic violence.

An online questionnaire is available at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/podv/questionnaire.asp

Respondents will answer questions dealing with six themes related to domestic violence in B.C.:

- Public awareness and prevention.
- Supports and services for victims, survivors and offenders.
- Justice system response.
- Co-ordination, information-sharing and referral.
- Research, training and evaluation.
- Approaches to address the unique needs of vulnerable persons (Aboriginal, immigrant and refugee, and women with disabilities).

Responses can be sent using the online questionnaire, by email or by mail to the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence.

While government is taking immediate and short-term term steps to prevent and respond to domestic violence, the overarching goal of this consultation process is to develop a comprehensive three-year provincial plan that will include an Aboriginal strategy and will address the unique needs of immigrant and refugee women and women with disabilities. Submissions to the questionnaire will be accepted until Feb. 18 and will feed into the three-year plan, which will be ready for implementation this summer.

As yet another step in the consultation process, seven B.C. cabinet ministers sat down with representatives from 46 key partner organizations yesterday to follow-up on discussions that began Nov. 6 with a community partners' forum led by the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence. Participating in the event were Children and Family Development Minister Stephanie Cadieux, Justice Minister and Attorney General Shirley Bond, Health Minister Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid, Education Minister Don McRae, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Ida Chong, Social Development Minister Dr. Moira Stilwell and Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Housing Rich Coleman.

The event was hosted by Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey.

Under B.C.'s Families First Agenda, government has committed to support vulnerable families and to listen and act on public input. The Provincial Office of Domestic Violence helps support that commitment by working with other provincial ministries, law enforcement agencies and anti-violence community partners to ensure continuous improvements that strengthen the effective co-ordination and delivery of domestic violence-related services in B.C.

Quotes:

Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Children and Family Development –

“To truly improve the way we address domestic violence requires not only co-ordination across government agencies, but also collaboration with our community partners and meaningful response to public feedback. Yesterday, ministers representing diverse sectors of government had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the experts who develop and deliver services and supports each day to British Columbians impacted by domestic violence.

“We are now expanding our consultation to give every British Columbian a chance to take part. Working together, we can and will develop a seamless approach that improves and strengthens supports for those affected by domestic violence.”

Shirley Bond, Minister of Justice and Attorney General –

“Our government has taken important steps to address domestic violence in B.C., including the new Family Law Act and the creation of the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence. By listening to the voices of those impacted by violence, and with help from experts in the field, we are building on that strong foundation.”

Quick Facts:

- Government commits more than \$70 million per year in prevention and intervention services and programs to help B.C. families involved in domestic violence and other crimes.
- In addition, the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence received \$878,000 this year to support eight full-time staff and ensure resources are in place to co-ordinate development of the three-year provincial plan. The office was created in March 2012 as the permanent lead for the B.C. government, focused on strengthening the services and supports available for children, women and families affected by domestic violence.

Learn More:

- Watch a video of the consultation event at: <http://youtu.be/oQA-pgckoeI>
- Learn more about the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence at: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/podv/index.htm
- To find out more about domestic violence in B.C., and to learn what to do if you have a friend or family member who is being abused, go to: www.domesticviolencebc.ca or www.victimlinkbc.ca

Contact: Sheldon Johnson
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Children and Family Development
250 356-1639

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect