



## ***Abuse in Pregnancy***

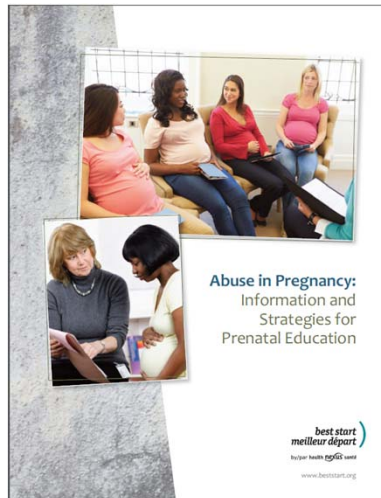
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**best start  
meilleur départ**  
by/par health **nexus** santé

### **Before we start...**



## **Abuse in Pregnancy: Information and Strategies for Prenatal Education**



## **Definition**

- **Pattern of abuse experienced by women by her current or former intimate partner (including dating partners). It is an expression of power, control and domination through a range of ongoing and escalating behaviours.**

(SOGC, 2005)

## Types of Abuse

- Physical
- Psychological/Emotional
- Verbal
- Sexual
- Spiritual
- Financial
- Digital

PHAC, 2014; National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2013

## Why is Abuse Against Women a Concern for Prenatal Education?



## Prevalence Rates

- **6-8% of pregnant women in Canada**
- **30.2% of women who reported physical or sexual abuse in Ontario said the abuse occurred during a pregnancy**

(SOGC, 2005; PHAC, 2009)

## Impact of Abuse



## Impact of Abuse

Women	Fetus	Infants/Children
Physical injuries Internal bleeding Unwanted pregnancy Decreased self-esteem Depression Anxiety PTSD Sleep and eating disorders Substance use Death	Premature rupture of the membranes Rupture of the placenta Fetal hemorrhage Miscarriage Possible changes in brain architecture (toxic stress)	Higher rates of abuse Physical injury Disorders of attachment Reduced self-regulation Mood and anxiety disorders School-related problems Substance use

Sources: RNAO, 2005; Taillieu, 2010; SOGC, 2005; National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2010; Infant Mental Health Promotion, 2012; OACAS, 2015; Jordon, 2010; Rose, 2010; Wathen, 2012

## What Can Prenatal Educators Do?

- **Provide information**
- **Discuss**
- **Screen**
- **Support**
- **Refer**

## Information

- Wallet cards
- Pamphlets
- Posters



## Discussions about Abuse

- With pregnant women only; not with partners present



## Screening

- **When women are alone**  
(Ontario Woman Abuse Screening Project, 2000)



## Before Screening

- **Explain duty to report**
- **Give rationale**
- **Ask permission**



## Duty to Report



## Before Screening

- Explain duty to report
- Give rationale
- Ask permission





## **Your own practice**

- **Do you discuss abuse with women in your prenatal education practice?**
- **If you ask about abuse, what do you say? What words do you use?**
- **Do you use a violence/abuse screening tool? If so, which one(s)?**

## **Screening**

1. **Within the past year, or since you have become pregnant, have you ever been hit, slapped, kicked or otherwise physically hurt by someone?**
2. **Are you in a relationship with a person who threatens or physically hurts you?**
3. **Has anyone forced you to have sexual activities that made you uncomfortable?**

Antenatal Psychological Health Assessment

## Support

- If disclosure, help with safety planning  
[www.sheltersafe.ca](http://www.sheltersafe.ca)



## Leaving the Relationship



## Support

REFERRALS

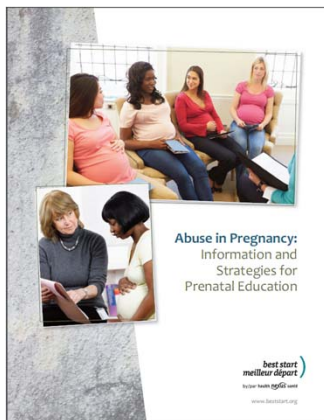


## Documentation



- RNAO Woman Abuse Best Practice Guideline (2005, 2012 supplement)
- SOGC Clinical Practice Guideline, Intimate Partner Violence Consensus Statement (2005)

## Abuse in Pregnancy: Information and Strategies for the Prenatal Education



[www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)

### Questions?





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## Johnson's Types of Intimate Partner Violence (2008)

	Client		Partner	
Type of IPV	Violent	Controlling	Violent	Controlling
Intimate Terrorism	✗	✗	✓	✓
Violent Resistance	✓	✗	✓	✓
Situational Couple Violence	✓	✗	✓	✗

Johnson, 2008; Kelly & Johnson, 2008