



## Health Nexus Weekly Bulletin

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**COVID-19: RESOURCES TO ADDRESS FAMILY  
VIOLENCE**

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been reported links between social isolation and increased domestic violence ([Canadian Women's Foundation, 2020](#)).

To support families across all healthcare and community settings, service providers can access the following resources to recognize and respond to the increased risk of domestic violence during the pandemic:

- [VEGA - Family Violence Project](#). With funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and in collaboration with 22 national organizations, the VEGA (Violence, Evidence, Guidance, and Action) Project has created pan-Canadian, evidence-based guidance and education resources to assist healthcare and social service providers in recognizing and responding safely to family violence. VEGA focuses on three main types of family violence: child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, and children's
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exposure to intimate partner violence. To find out more, visit VEGA project website at <https://vegaproject.mcmaster.ca>.

- The Canadian Women's Foundation has created a [video](#) to show "the signal for help" to help those who suffer from domestic violence and need help. To learn more about "the signal for help" and safe ways to "check-in" on a person safely, visit the Canadian Women's Foundation website at <https://canadianwomen.org/signal-for-help/>.
- WHO has issued Q&A resources on the [\*Violence Against Women during the COVID-19 Pandemic\*](#) which can be found here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>.
- Providers can also access videos and resources FIFA, European Commission and World Health Organization [\*#SafeHome campaign\*](#) to support those at risk from domestic violence by visiting this website: <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/26-05-2020-fifa-european-commission-and-world-health-organization-launch-safehome-campaign-to-support-those-at-risk-from-domestic-violence>

In addition to the resources above, providers can review the Best Start by Health Nexus resource on [\*Abuse in Pregnancy: Information and Strategies for Prenatal Educators\*](#) by visiting this link: <https://resources.beststart.org/product/h04e-abuse-in-pregnancy-prenatal-educator-booklet/>.

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Individuals can also be provided with the booklet called [\*You and Your Baby\*](#), which contains information on abuse and pregnancy for future mothers in nine languages.

To access the booklet, please visit: <https://resources.beststart.org/product/h05e-you-and-your-baby-handout/>

Recently, Health Nexus also partnered with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) to produce a webinar: *When Home Is Not a Safe Place*. The webinar is presented in the form of a short online course with a How-To Guide, the Video and Supplementary Resources. Sign up is not required. The course provides strategies to support families who could be experiencing violence or abuse at home during social distancing and social isolation. The course can be accessed here: <https://360.articulate.com/review/content/dcbb75c6-8352-4dbb-9dce-7f281e995e56/review>

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**PERSON AND FAMILY-CENTRED CARE: INFORMED  
DECISION MAKING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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Person and Family-Centred Care and informed decision-making does not stop during the pandemic. Many organizations around Canada have engaged in patient partnerships to develop practices and guidelines that are responsive to persons' needs in the COVID-19 era.

The Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement has launched a series of webinars on the patient, family, and caregiver partnerships in the time of COVID-19 that can be accessed here: <https://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/WhatWeDo/on-call/pfe-covid-19>

[\*Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care\*](#) has also released a webinar on Patient- and Family-Centered Strategies in the Time of COVID-19, providing insights, strategies, and hope during the pandemic. To learn more, go

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to <https://www.ipfcc.org/bestpractices/covid-19/index.html>.

Helping clients to make an informed decision has always been one of the key concepts of Person and Family-Centred Care practices. This is especially important during the time of pandemic to ensure that client's choices around their own care and treatment, as well as care for their children and families, are respected and valued.

Providers can access Health Nexus' evidence-informed [resource for healthcare providers to support families in making health-related decisions for a child](#), which contains important information relevant to families and providers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An informed decision is the selection of an option after reviewing enough information about the different choices available to recognize and understand the facts, implications, and consequences of the decision.

An informed decision requires two-way communication between a healthcare provider and a decision-maker, based on the following elements:

- An accurate understanding of the health risk/condition.
- The availability of different care and treatment options.
- The clinical evidence regarding the benefits and risks of different care and treatment options.
- The values, preferences, and cultural context of the decision-maker.
- Literacy skills and an understanding of the language used to present the choices.

When supporting families and caregivers to make an informed decision, the role of the provider shifts away from the paternalistic model that views the provider as the sole decision-maker. Instead, the provider is positioned as a partner in the decision-making process who:

- Provides information about the health risk/condition.
  - Presents the care and treatment options available.
  - Describes the risks and benefits of each option.
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- Ensures the decision-maker understands the information that has been shared.
- Supports the decision-maker in selecting care and treatment options.

For additional tools and strategies on communicating with clients and supporting informed decision-making, access Best Start by Health Nexus guideline at <https://resources.beststart.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/J37-E.pdf>

The Baby-Friendly Strategy for Ontario has also developed a toolkit and a series of 6 videos on how to make an informed decision regarding infant feeding. The toolkit and videos are available at:

<https://breastfeedingresourcesontario.ca/resource/informed-decision-making-having-meaningful-conversations-regarding-infant-feeding>

## PROVINCIAL FASD FAMILY AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP PROJECT

*"This group has given us unconditional support and caring when we need it the most."*

*"My daughter and I go out and really enjoy the events planned by the group leader. We call it date night."*

*"I get to play with kids who are like me now."*

*"Scary FASD is greater in society that I was aware of."*

*"I have had this kind of deficiency in memorizing things (my lessons at school) when I was little and I was trying harder and harder at time and now I came to know this thing was happening to me."*

*"The difficulties with violence in the home is accepted in this group, whereas we can't share these stories with other people as they just don't get it!"*

*"10 second child in a one second world."*

*"I'm learning how to play with her BETTER WITHOUT GETTING ANGRY."*

*"Just having people who truly understand is an amazing gift. Also, the planning of events we can attend that are geared to the special needs of our kids has been amazing. It allows us to get out, to have fun, and to be with others who are not judging you."*

Great News! The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) remains very committed to improving outcomes for children, youth and families

affected by Prenatal Exposure to Alcohol (PAE) and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). We at Health Nexus are very pleased to share that this Provincial FASD Family and Caregiver Support Group Project will continue. Call for applications is coming soon! To learn more about this exciting opportunity, visit the [FASD Family and Caregiver Support Group Project page](#) for the latest information!

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Visit [our resources page](#) to discover all our many evidence-based, up-to-date resources!

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**We have moved! Our new location is:**

**Nous avons déménagé ! Notre nouvelle adresse :**

**WeWork**

**c/o Health Nexus**

**240 Richmond Street W**

**Toronto, ON M5V 1V6**

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