



Family Support Resources

Background

Navigating Family Law matters can be emotionally challenging, and we understand that mental health support is an integral aspect of your well-being during this time. We also know that many of our clients have experienced family violence in the past or may still be experiencing it. We have prepared this resource to ensure you have access to necessary support should it be required.

Know that you are not alone. It is normal to seek out and need additional support during times of significant transition, such as the breakdown of a relationship. It is also in your best interest to have supports in place to ensure you are in control of your emotions while faced with difficult decisions and adapting to new realities.

Our Role

Please remember that while we will walk alongside you throughout this journey, we are not trained mental health professionals. Our expertise is in providing legal advice and advocacy. If you are experiencing depression, anxiety, reliance on substances or negative self-thoughts, it is crucial to seek help from the appropriate professionals.

Personal Help

Some suggestions that help with managing the emotional work of a separation or divorce include: practicing self-care by establishing a new routine, exercising, sleeping, eating healthy and spending time doing activities that bring you happiness. It can be important to spend more time with your children, reassuring their sense of security and maintaining their routines as best as you can. It is also important to have an outlet, a trusted friend or family member who you can share your worries, your highs and your lows with.

Professional Help

During relationship breakdown, feelings of anger, guilt, uncertainty and confusion are all common and can cause you to spiral downwards. This can make it more challenging to move forward, clouded decision-making and even impact your ability to parent.

You should seek medical attention to address ongoing feelings of sadness, anxiety or depression. It is also helpful to see a professional in relation to your mental health to address the impact of the relationship breakdown on you and your family. Counselling or therapy can help you to process and develop coping strategies to overcome negative emotions. It also may assist you with strategies to co-parent effectively, including understanding how various actions may affect your children.

A counsellor or therapist can meet with couples working on their relationship, individuals going through separation or divorce, children with one or both parents and children individually. There are also support groups that are offered online and in-person. Through these programs you can hear from folks who may be a chapter or two ahead of you or behind you. There are resources available specific to certain personal characteristics or specialties, as well as provided free of charge, covered through benefits or paid for on a sliding scale based on income.

Parenting After Separation Courses

The government of BC provides free Parenting After Separation (PAS) Courses to guide you in making informed decisions, dealing with arising conflicts and ensuring decisions are in the best interests of children. Completion of PAS is mandatory before you can proceed with an application about a family matter in Provincial Court (not Supreme Court) so it's a good idea to keep a copy of your certificate just in case.

The courses are currently offered in [English and Punjabi \(linked here\)](#) or you may also opt to take [Parenting After Separation for Indigenous Families \(linked here\)](#).

Crisis

Your physical and emotional safety are essential throughout this process. Family law professionals have an obligation to inquire about the presence of safety risks and so we apologize in advance for any invasive questions.

In the context of the BC [Family Law Act](#), "Family Violence" is defined broadly to include such things as:

- physical abuse, neglect of necessities, sexual abuse, attempts at physical or sexual abuse
- threatening or harming your pets or property
- threats, emotional/psychological abuse, harassment, intimidation, stalking/following

- unreasonable restrictions on your finances, freedom, employment, etc.
- excessive litigation and court applications
- intentional refusal to sell family assets (such as the family home) or pay support
- abuse of these kinds toward any other family members, including children
- any abuse of other people occurring in front of the children is itself a form of family violence

In these situations or if a child is exposed to Family Violence, whether directly or indirectly, protection may be necessary. There are a number of options to pursue, including protection orders and conduct orders through court. There are also resources that can be accessed in crisis further referenced below. Please keep us informed in relation to any history of or ongoing Family Violence. If you or one of your family members is in immediate danger, you should contact 9-1-1 for emergency services.

A mental health crisis generally includes intense anxiety or depression, suicidal thoughts or attempts, threatening violence, distorted thinking and self-harming. A number of resources are included below. If during our communication we perceive you to be at serious risk of harming yourself, we must take action to support your safety. This may involve our reaching out to an emergency contact family member or friend (if provided by you), and/or emergency services such as the police to conduct a wellness check.

Your well-being is of the utmost importance to us and we need to take suicidal ideation or threats of self-harm seriously. We commit to protecting your confidentiality as much as possible by disclosing only enough information to prevent the harm.

GENERAL SUPPORT		
Fraser Health Mental Health Centre	Support to adults (19+) experiencing mental illness and substance issues for moderate to severe persistent mental illness. Allows for self-referral. Guide: community-mental-health-and-substance-use-services-529139.pdf (fraserhealth.ca)	Abbotsford & Chilliwack: 604.702.4860 Langley: 604.514.7940 Mission: 604.814.5600 Location finder: Mental Health Centres - Fraser Health Authority

HealthLink BC	Government site with over 2600 service listings for publicly-funded or not-for-profit mental health and substance use supports. Can search for counsellors, support groups, etc.	HelpStartsHere.gov.bc.ca/
Archway/Abbotsford Community Services	Adult and children counselling programs, will also assess and refer to other services as appropriate. Programs : Archway Community Services	604.859.7681 Montrose@Archway.ca 2420 Montrose Avenue Abbotsford
Langley Community Services Society	Free counselling for residents of Langley and Aldergrove age 16+. Programs specific to marriage and relationship issues as well as dealing with separation, divorce and blended families. Programs: Family Counselling - LCSS	604.534.7921 info@lcss.ca 5339 207 Street Langley
Attend your Family Physician/Walk-in Clinic	You can request a referral to your local Fraser Health Rapid Access Clinic with a psychiatrist and nurse from your local Mental Health Centre	Brochure Outlining Resources
Hope for Wellness Helpline	Experienced and culturally competent counsellors reachable by phone or online chat 24/7. Services available in English, French, Ojibway, Cree and Inuktitut.	1.855.242.3319 Chat online: Hope for Wellness Helpline
Métis Crisis Line	Available for both immediate crisis intervention as well as general relationship troubles, depression anxiety and financial issues.	1-833-638-4722
SARA for Women	Counselling, support groups, and transition housing programs in Mission and Abbotsford.	Abbotsford: 604.855.3363 Mission: 604.820.8455 www.saraforwomen.ca

<p>Foundry</p>	<p>Support for ages 12-24 with mental health care, substance use services, peer support and group workshops. Services are offered in-person and virtually.</p> <p>App can be downloaded here: Foundry Virtual BC - Foundry BC App -</p>	<p>1.833.308.6379 online@foundrybc.ca</p> <p>Abbotsford: 101-32555 Simon Ave, 604.746.3392</p> <p>Langley: 20616 Eastleigh Cres 604.546.2700</p>
<p>Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society (VLMFSS)</p>	<p>Provide services to immigrants, refugees, visible minorities, and women without immigration status and children facing family violence. Set up with community services, including translation and court assistance, emotional support and counselling.</p>	<p>236.865.1194 help@vlmfss.ca</p> <p>https://www.vlmfss.ca</p>
<p>Canucks Autism Network</p>	<p>Mental Health & Wellness programs to support autistic youth and adults ages 13+ (formal diagnosis not required). Programs: CAN-Program-Guide</p>	<p>604.685.4049 info@cancuksautism.ca</p>
<p>MOSAIC – Newcomers to Canada</p>	<p>Victims Resources, Anger Management Care Program for Men Interpretation and translation, Anger Management Care Program for men, counselling, women’s support group.</p>	<p>604.254.9626 info@mosaicbc.org</p> <p>https://mosaicbc.org/find-a-service/</p>
<p>DivorceCare</p>	<p>Divorce recovery support group hosted in person or online. DivorceCare for Kids (DC4K) is also offered periodically designed for children. Program is based on Christian principles, while people of all faith backgrounds are able to attend.</p>	<p>Current groups can be located here: https://www.divorcecare.org/</p>

CRISIS SUPPORT		
Fraser Health Mental Health Crisis Line	Immediate, free, confidential emotional support, crisis intervention and community resource information to people of all ages 24/7.	604.951.8855 Toll free: 1.877.820.7444
KUU-US Crisis Response Services Line	Culturally sensitive crisis line specific to First Nations, Inuit and Métis 24/7.	Toll free: 1-800-588-8717 1-833-638-4722 (Métis)
Suicide Crisis Helpline	Support available 24/7 if experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including thoughts of suicide	Call or text 9-8-8 1.800.784.2433
24-Hour Helpline for Children	If a child or youth needs someone to talk to they can call any time of day or night and do not need to provide their name.	310.1234 (no area code needed)
Kids Help Phone	Free mental health services available 24/7 across Canada. Can request a First Nations, Inuit or Metis crisis responder.	Text "Connect" to 686868 Call 1.800.668.6868
VictimLinkBC	Multilingual, 24-Hour, confidential, immediate crisis support with information and referrals for victims of any family, sexual or criminal violence	Call or text 1.800.563.0808 VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca
Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS)	Crisis support for women fleeing domestic violence, including transitional housing, counselling, support groups. Specific LGBTQ2S, Indigenous, Black and Latin American Women's programs.	1.855.687.1868 information@bwss.org https://www.bwss.org/
9-1-1	If you or your family member require immediate medical attention for injuries or overdose, or you or the person are at risk of seriously harming yourself or others you should call 9-1-1.	