

New Police partnership, campaign aims to increase reporting of intimate partner violence



A new three-month campaign launched by the York Regional Police and community partners will aim to raise awareness of intimate partner violence and encourage survivors to report their experiences.

Access to Justice: Integrated Services for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence was launched at the York Regional Police (YRP) on December 4 in conjunction with the York Region Centre for Community Safety (YRCCS) and 482 Collective.

The campaign will see increased advertising, including bus ads and billboards, to encourage victims to "Recognize, Report and Prevent" intimate partner violence.

"We are all working together in an ongoing initiative for access to justice, integrated services for survivors of intimate partner violence, with the underlying theme of Recognize, Report, and Preventing," said YRP Deputy Chief Alvaro Almeida. "The overall goal is to increase the public awareness and encourage survivors to report physical, sexual or emotional abuse and to spark conversations around changing societal attitudes about intimate partner violence."

Police and partners, he said, will continue "to work towards raising awareness of this important issue and crime," a crime that "affects every community, across every culture and societal boundary," encouraging all survivors to report physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

"Survivors can access a variety of services and resources, all centrally located at the York Region Centre for Community Safety," said the Police in a statement following the launch. "The 482 Collective provides essential items such as food and personal hygiene products to survivors and offers wraparound services and skills as survivors move forward. York Regional Police also has an officer embedded at YRCCS so survivors do not have to attend a police station to report and to ensure the interaction between police and survivors is supportive and as positive as it can be."

"In York Region, Police respond to more than 6,000 reports of related intimate partner violence each year. Criminal charges are laid in close to 2,000 of those incidents. The risk of violence is higher for women who are Indigenous, racialized or newcomers to Canada and this is a crime that is chronically under-reported."

Victims and survivors of intimate partner violence are encouraged to call the YRCCS at 1-855-541-2220.

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter