

Family Violence During COVID-19: Common Forms and How To Access Support

Stress and isolation during this time can make abusive family situations worse. Family violence is any form of abuse or neglect that a child or adult experiences from a family member, or from someone with whom they have an intimate relationship. It is an abuse of power by one person to hurt and control someone who trusts and depends on them. Family violence affects Canadians in all types of families and relationships—no matter how old they are, where they live, or how much money, education or type of job they have. It can affect people of every race, religion and sexual orientation. Common forms of family violence include physical, sexual, emotional, financial abuse and neglect. If you have concerns about the safety of family, friends or neighbours during this time, please contact the police, child welfare services in your region or call/email the Access Line for Information, Service or Support at 1-888-536-3599 or access@iicanada.net.

Some common forms of violence include:

Physical abuse—physical injury or death of a family member or intimate partner caused when someone:

- pushes, shoves, hits, slaps or kicks
- pinches or punches
- strangles or chokes
- stabs or cuts
- shoots
- throws objects
- burns
- holds someone down for another person to assault
- locks someone in a room or ties them down

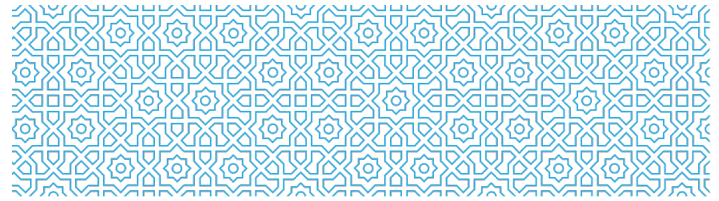
Sexual abuse—forced sexual activity on a family member or intimate partner, when someone:

- touches another in a sexual way without consent
- has any sexual activity without consent
- continues sexual activity when asked to stop
- forces another to commit unsafe or humiliating sexual acts

Sexual abuse can also happen in intimate partner relationships. Even if you are married or engaged, your partner cannot force you to have sex.

Children under the age of 16 cannot give informed consent, so any sexual contact between an adult and a child is a crime. Children under the age of 18 cannot legally give consent to sexual activity that exploits them.





Emotional or psycho-social abuse—words or actions to control or frighten a family member or intimate partner, or destroy their self-respect, when someone:

- makes threats
- intimidates or bullies
- puts down, insults or calls a person names
- yells or criticizes all the time
- isolates a person from friends and family
- destroys belongings
- hurts pets

Financial abuse—control, or misuse of a family member's or intimate partner's money or property, when someone:

- takes another person's money or property without permission
- prevents a person from going to work or otherwise obtaining money or other resources
- withholds or limits money
- pressures a person to sign documents
- forces a person to sell things or change a will

Neglect—not meeting the basic needs to provide care for a dependent family member or intimate partner, when someone:

- does not provide proper food, warm clothing, health care, medication or appropriate hygiene
- does not protect another person from physical harm or provide proper supervision
- abandons another person

Supports:

If you or someone you know needs help in the Ismaili Community please call/email the Access Line for Information, Service or Support at 1-888-536-3599 or access@iicanada.net.

Find family violence supports or programs in your area by visiting [this government of Canada website](#)

If you are concerned about a child being harmed please contact your local Child Welfare agency. You can [find your local agency here](#)

If you know an elder who needs support, visit [this government of Canada website for resources](#)

