

## Fotonovela workshop Q and A

Card # 1      Woman Abuse is also known as domestic abuse or domestic violence. Even though anyone can be a victim of abuse, the majority of the victims are women. True or false? (True)

### **Answer: From OCASI lesson plan:**

The term **woman abuse** has been incorporated throughout the NFF materials. The reason for this is that underlying systemic issues of power and control are less apparent when non-gendered terms such as domestic violence or marital conflict are used.

Although a woman may be abused by another woman in a same-sex relationship, the NFF campaign focuses on the woman likely to be abused by a man in an intimate relationship (spouse, common-law-partner, lover, or boyfriend).

The term woman abuse refers to various forms of abuse ranging from disrespect, mistreatment and neglect to violence.

Any woman — regardless of her age, class, cultural identity, ethnicity, education, occupation, physical or mental abilities, race, religion, or sexual orientation — may experience abuse.

A woman may be at risk of abuse at any point in her life — from infancy to old age. However, since the NFF focuses on intimate partner relationships, the age range is from teen years when girls start dating to when women are in their senior years.

A woman may experience a single episode of violence that cracks the relationship, or she may face a pattern of abuse over many years.

Card #2      Woman abuse is only physical violence like kicking, choking, or biting. True or false? (False)

- **From fotonovela, page 4-5, box 14: Women abuse** may physical, but it also can be sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal and /or financial. Women abuse is the use of power and control over a woman by crating fear and isolation.
- The term woman abuse refers to various forms of abuse ranging from disrespect, mistreatment and neglect to violence.

Card # 3 In Canada, it is not against the law to threaten or assault someone if you are married to them. True or false? (False)

False. (simple and clear)

Card #4 Woman abuse only happens in some cultural and economic groups.

True or false? (False)

Fotonovela page 6 - 7 Any woman — regardless of her age, class, cultural identity, ethnicity, education, occupation, physical or mental abilities, race, religion, or sexual orientation — may experience abuse.

Card #5 Only 25% of domestic violence is reported. Many women do not report abuse because they feel ashamed or believe that it is their own fault.

True or false? (True)

Fotonovela 6 Only 8% of women with domestic violence experience tell neighbours, friends and friends about their experience of being abused.

Other reasons:

May not know what kind of support is available.

May depend on the abuser for financial support.

May be scared because of her immigration status.

May be under family or community pressure to stay the relationship.

Other barriers, such as language

Card #6 If she seems sad, lonely, withdrawn and is afraid, it may be a warning sign of abuse. True or false? (True)

Review page 16 of Fotonovela

Card #7 The danger may be greater if he says “If I can’t have you, no one will” True or false? (T)

Review page 17 & 18 of Fotonovela

Card #8 One of the good ways to support her is talk to her what you see and assure her that you are concerned. Tell her you believe her and that is not her fault. True or false? (T)

Here are some of the ways you can help when you recognize the warning signs of abuse:

- Talk to her about what you see and assure her that you are concerned. Tell her you believe her and that it is not her fault.
- Encourage her not to confront her partner if she is planning to leave. Her safety must be protected.
- Offer to provide childcare while she seeks help.
- Offer your home as a safe haven to her, her children and pets. If she accepts your offer, do not let her partner in.
- Encourage her to pack a small bag with important items and keep it stored at your home in case she needs it.
- Know that you or she can call the Assaulted Women’s Helpline, your local shelter, or, in an emergency, the police.

If she denies the abuse:

- Assure her she can talk to you any time.
- Don’t become angry or frustrated with her decisions. It is important to understand that she may be afraid or not ready to take the next steps.

- Try to understand why she might be having difficulty getting help. She may feel ashamed.
  - Offer to go with her if she needs additional information or support. (don't say this).
  - If she has children, let her know gently that you are concerned about her and her children's safety and emotional well-being. She may be more willing to recognize her situation if she recognizes her children may also be in danger.
- **Talking To Abusive Men**

Are you concerned about someone you think is abusive to his partner, but don't know what to do? Here we discuss how you can talk to abusive men about their behaviour and describe the warning signs.

You may suspect abuse is happening to a neighbour, friend or family member, but do not know what to do or how to talk about it. You may worry about making the situation worse. By understanding the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse, you can help. If you recognize some of these warning signs, it may be time to take action:

Sometimes people around an abusive man overlook his behaviour and only focus on supporting the abused woman. At other times, people may sympathize with the abusive man, which may inadvertently escalate his abuse.

Talking to an abusive man is an important part of preventing woman abuse, but it needs to be done carefully. Abusive behaviour won't go away on its own. There are services to help him in his community.

Here is what you can do when you recognize the warning signs of abuse:

- Choose the right time and place to have a full discussion.
- Approach him when he is calm.
- Be direct and clear about what you have seen.
- Tell him that his behaviour is his responsibility. Avoid making judgmental comments about him as a person. Don't validate his attempt to blame others for his behaviour.
- Inform him that his behaviour needs to stop.
- Don't try to force him to change or to seek help. Tell him that you are concerned for the safety of his partner and children.
- Never argue with him about his abusive actions. Recognize that confrontational, argumentative approaches may make the situation worse and put

her at higher risk.

- Call the police if the woman's safety is in jeopardy.

If he denies the abuse:

- Men who are abusive will often minimize the impact and deny that they have done anything wrong. They may state that it isn't that bad or blame the victim for their actions. This type of behaviour deflects his own responsibility for his actions.
- Keep your conversation focused on your concerns for his family's safety and well-being and reiterate that abuse is never an answer.
- Keep the lines of communication open and look for opportunities to help him find support.

**Always keep yourself safe. Don't get in the middle of an assault. Call the police in an emergency**

Card #9 You should call the police if you hear neighbours fighting and you think someone may get hurt. True or false? (True)

- Refer to handout

Always keep yourself safe. Don't get in the middle of an assault. Call the police in an emergency. Everyone can work to prevent woman abuse.

Card #10 A safety plan may help abused women, but it is not important.

True or false? (False)

Is important, for both women who remain in the home and women who leave. It helps women to:

Protect themselves while living with an abuser

Prepare to leave an abusive situation

Know where to go and what to do after leaving

Card #11 Assaulted Women's Helpline provides services only in weekdays,

9am-5pm, and only in English. True or false? (False)

Resources on pamphlets and fotonovela.

Card #12      Everyone has a role to play in preventing woman abuse in our community.  
True or false? (True)

Neighbours, Friends and Families (NFF) Campaign is a public education campaign to raise awareness of the signs of woman abuse so that people who are close to an at-risk woman or an abusive man can help them change their situation for the better.

Card #13      Does woman abuse have any impact on child development?

True or false? (True)

- As many as 25% of women have experienced abuse during pregnancy – violence during pregnancy can affect attachment between mother and child, increase the chance of physical harm to the fetus, and can damage the normal development of the fetus
- Children learn about attachment and relationships through their connections with their parents or caregivers - The longer the exposure the more likely it will turn into “trauma”
- Living with violence can result in toxic stress in children which affects brain development in a child’s early years – it is not until the adolescence years that they begin to understand the power and control issues involved with violence (so often they may blame the mom)
- Childhood experiences, both positive and negative ones, have a tremendous impact on lifelong health and opportunity. Women who witnessed abuse as children are more likely to experience it as adults - Men who experienced or witnessed abuse as a child are more likely to be abusive
- Community programs that take a social determinants of health approach can help to address the root causes of violence (address income, job security, food, housing, health care etc)
- Community programs that help children be supported to become resilient – helping mothers helps children
- Helpful resources: breaking the cycle/Mother Craft Building Connections –

Supporting community-based programs to address interpersonal violence and child maltreatment

Family Support Programs can help families:

- Identify behaviours of children that may be experiencing or witnessing abuse
- Can speak informally to mothers about what they may be experiencing at home, and let them know that in Canada it is not acceptable
- Can inform mothers of what resources are available to help her
- Can help mothers and children establish healthy attachments
- Can provide a safe environment for mothers and children to interact