



What is a Circle of Safety and Support?

A Circle of Safety and Support brings a woman worried about her safety because of family violence together with service providers and other supportive people. Together they develop a detailed plan for her safety and support. A trained Circle facilitator leads the preparation and meetings of the Circle.

There are some key steps:

- **Referral**—Women are referred to Circles of Safety & Support by victim support workers, either Victim Services or Outreach Workers.
- **Meeting with Woman**—The woman and the person who referred her meet with a Circle facilitator to prepare for a Circle and identify who else could help.
- **Invite Other Circle Members**—The facilitator contacts other support people to see if they want to support the woman through a Circle of Safety & Support.

- **Face-to-Face Meetings**—Meetings bring together the woman and support people to figure out the safety issues and make a complete plan that everyone supports. This will take several meetings.
- **Monitoring**—Once a Safety Plan is written, everyone knows their role for safety and support. The Circle can meet again if circumstances change or if the risk changes.

Who are Circles of Safety & Support For?

Circles of Safety & Support are for women worried about their physical or emotional safety because of family violence, who could benefit from a safety plan coordinated with many people who support her. Participation is voluntary and the woman is a key decision-maker. Support is available to help women with their concerns about meeting in a group.

Although I was fearful at first, it was a big step to discuss the intimate details of my fears and my past life, I was eventually able to take charge and feel better about the decisions I was making. I was so relieved to have these people to talk to. It really allowed me to take back my power and come up with ways to improve my situation.
(Woman who was in a Circle)

Who can Help at a Circle of Safety & Support?

Anyone who could be a support person can be part of a Circle of Safety: police, victim services, probation, mental health or addiction staff, family, neighbours, friends, employers, church or social group. The most important criteria is a desire to support the woman. At meetings, Circle members help to identify issues, ideas and resources, and bring together the supports a woman needs. Information about family violence is given to people so that everyone understands what the experience of the woman may have been like.

Having so many different people coming together I got lots more information and different points of view; sometimes these were different and we were able to clarify.
(Woman who was in a Circle)

Once we had discussed the different options for resolving or overcoming these issues I felt so much stronger, so much more in control of my life. I felt like we really touched on all the different aspects of my fears and found ways to alleviate them.
(Woman who was in a Circle)



Circles of Safety & Support

- Bring people together to make a safety plan for a woman worried about her safety and the safety of her children when there has been family violence
- Trained facilitators prepare for and lead the Circles to help everyone communicate, make the best decisions possible, and get the resources needed for safety and support
- Everyone knows the safety plan and what to do to support the woman and help her to be safe
- The woman feels supported by her community



Circles of Safety & Support

There is no fee for this service.

PEI Family Violence Prevention Services
Website www.fvps.ca

Circles of Safety & Support is a project originally created by Justice Options for Women, supported by Status of Women Canada.

***Safety Planning
with Women at
Risk of Violence
from a Partner or
Ex-Partner***

Circles of Safety & Support

