



Resource Guide for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

Tools, services, and safety planning for women impacted by abuse or violence

This guide is created with compassion, cultural understanding, and deep respect for the lived experiences of Black women and gender-diverse individuals who have experienced or are experiencing gender-based violence. It offers tools to support emotional safety, outlines available services in Nova Scotia, and provides safety planning strategies to empower you to make informed choices about your well-being and future.

1. What Is Gender-Based Violence (GBV)?

- GBV includes physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, and financial abuse based on gender, gender identity, or expression.
- It often involves power and control tactics to isolate or dominate a person.
- GBV disproportionately impacts Black women, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and those navigating multiple systemic barriers.

2. Recognizing the Signs of Abuse

- Monitoring your location, phone, or online activity.
- Name-calling, threats, or emotional degradation.
- Controlling access to money, food, transportation, or healthcare.
- Physical or sexual violence, coercion, or intimidation.

3. Creating a Personalized Safety Plan

- Memorize or write down emergency contacts and hide in a safe location.
- Pack a go-bag: ID, bank cards, keys, medications, and important documents.
- Establish a signal word with trusted friends or family to indicate you need help.
- Know your exits and keep a phone charged at all times.
- Use code words with children if applicable and practice safe exits together.

4. Local Emergency Services & Shelters in Nova Scotia

- Bryony House (Halifax): 902-422-7650
- Chrysalis House (Kentville): 902-679-1922
- Alice House (Dartmouth): 902-466-8459
- Adsum for Women & Children: 902-423-4443
- Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS): thans.ca

5. Support Services for Black Women

- Association of Black Social Workers (ABSW): 1-855-732-1253
- Nova Scotia Sisterhood (Community health & mental health navigation)
- Healing on Purpose (Therapeutic support, trauma coaching)
- Sacred Lotus (Wellness & culturally rooted healing programs)
- Empowerment for Hope (Survivor circles & support programs)

6. 24/7 Crisis Lines & Resources

- NS Mental Health Crisis Line: 1-888-429-8167
- Talk Suicide Canada: 1-833-456-4566
- Kids Help Phone (text): 686868
- Legal Aid Nova Scotia: 902-420-6578
- Victim Services Nova Scotia: 1-888-470-0773

7. Your Rights & Next Steps

- You have the right to leave at any time, and support is available to help you do so safely.

- You have the right to confidentiality when seeking help from shelters, legal services, or support workers.
- You are not alone. There are communities of care ready to hold, protect, and uplift you.