

# Relationship Safety and Alcohol Use during Pregnancy



## Information for Service Providers

In Canada, partner violence during pregnancy is common. Alcohol and other substance use is one way that many women cope with violence and abuse and many women who have a difficult time stopping their alcohol use during pregnancy have past or current experiences of trauma.

You can support women who disclose current or past experiences of violence or abuse by:

- » Helping her understand the links between trauma and alcohol use
- » Helping her find support in the community to begin healing
- » Develop strategies to keep herself safe and identify key people and organizations in the community that can help her (often called a 'safety plan')

### Key Messages

Some women find it helpful to hear about what other women have experienced. If you feel comfortable, you could consider sharing information such as:

“Many women find that getting help for the violence in their relationship is the first step towards changing their drinking.”

“Some women find it hard to feel like they deserve to be healthy and happy if their partner is always making them feel bad about themselves.”

“Some women find it harder to not to drink, or to drink less, if their partner is drinking heavily.”

After making any of the above statements, consider asking her how this information fits with her experience, or what she thinks or feels about what you have just shared.

Regardless of your approach, it's important to respect each woman's wishes on what she wants to see happen with her relationship.



## The Prevention Conversation

It's time to talk about alcohol and pregnancy