

Request for Envision's services spike

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High numbers of domestic violence are plaguing Saskatchewan according to Statistics Canada partner-reporter domestic violence. Weyburn area is no exception but Envision Counselling and Support Centre is trying to help.

Executive director of Envision, Christa Daku, said they have definitely noticed a spike in requests for service in the last six months for all their programs, including those that help people in domestic violence situations.

"I think the first step is just picking up the phone and giving us a call or going through our website. We definitely have many services available in all four of our offices in Weyburn, Estevan, Carlyle and Oxbow," said Daku. She explained counselors are on hand who are specifically trained to handle domestic violence situations. There is also a page that teaches users how to clear their browser history and ensure their visits to the page remain their secret if they need it to be.

"That provides a safe way for anybody from any computer to go on our website, be it a library, school, anywhere, to access the information. Perhaps (they want to) send the counselor an inquiry about our services and what's available (...) so that we offer some type of safe bridge to be able to access our services within our agency," she said. The 'Ask a Counselor' button on website offers a quick way for those in need to and a counselor an email and they will get a response within 24 hours.

Daku said many people come in to one of their four centres looking for help but they aren't even thinking about getting away from their partner. She adds no

counselor will pressure a client to make a decision they are not ready for.

"There is absolutely no pressure whatsoever, and I can confidently say that, within our counselling services. Our counselling services are strength based and client directed so it is whatever the client decides they want to work on and get towards."

Some people do feel they need to leave their partners to get away from an unsafe situation, however, and Envision is also there to help in those circumstances.

"So if someone is ready to flee a domestic violence situation we definitely want to enforce that safety is always first so contact the police. Often times we work closely with the police. Victim services will be called in and we will provide the aftercare of the counselling and if they need to get out of the area completely, we will make sure to arrange some sort of transportation to shelter," said Daku.

Envision's website offers a [CLICK HERE](#) button if you would like to email or speak with an Envision counselor. Daku said all calls are handled confidentially.

In a broader contest, Daku said education and prevention are key to decreasing domestic violence numbers in the province. She attributed Saskatchewan's uniquely rural, and often isolated communities, to the high numbers of domestic violence in the province.

"People don't have close neighbours to be able to reach to. It's definitely a challenge to be able to seek support."