

You Empowered Strong Program



Wildfires, evacuations, and the loss of homes can deeply impact the well-being of our people, families, and communities. These experiences can bring stress, grief, uncertainty, and disruption to our sense of safety and connection. While emergencies do not cause interpersonal violence, they can increase pressures such as financial strain, displacement, isolation, and changes to daily life that may heighten the risk of violence or abuse in some relationships.

The You Empowered Strong (YES) Program recognizes the strength, resilience, and teachings that exist within our Nations. During times of crisis, we encourage community members to look after one another, check in with family, friends, neighbors, and Elders, and reach out for support when needed. Seeking help is a sign of courage and strength.

If you or someone you know is experiencing interpersonal or family violence, or simply needs someone to talk to, the You Empowered Strong (YES) Program is here to provide confidential support, safety planning, advocacy, and connections to culturally safe community resources.

Together, by walking alongside one another, honoring our relationships, and drawing on the strength of our cultures and communities, we can support healing, safety, and resilience throughout wildfire season and the recovery journey.

Darryl-Jean Peeman

YES Team Lead

250-462-1332

YES.TeamLead@Syilx.org

Leslie Fabriz

YES Coordinator

250-487-9783

YES.Coordinator2@syilx.org

Sippiimyniakii (Alice) George

YES Coordinator

250-859-1619

ageorge@syilx.org

Proactive Support for Interpersonal Violence

Connection is prevention. Staying connected, checking in with one another, and reaching out early can reduce isolation and help prevent situations from escalating. Everyone deserves to feel safe, supported, and respected before, during, and after an emergency.

For Individuals & Families

- Check in regularly with family, friends, Elders, and neighbors.
- Create a personal safety plan before an emergency occurs.
- Keep important documents, medications, and emergency contacts in an accessible place.
- Identify a trusted person you can call if you feel unsafe.
- Reach out for support early if stress or conflict begins to escalate.

For Communities

- Share information about local violence prevention and support services at evacuation centers and community gathering spaces.
- Ensure community members know how to access confidential support.
- Create welcoming, culturally safe spaces where people can connect and reduce isolation.
- Include violence prevention information in emergency preparedness materials.
- Encourage neighbors to look out for one another while respecting privacy.

For Leaders & Service Providers

- Check in with individuals and families who may be at increased risk because of isolation, disability, caregiving responsibilities, or previous experiences of violence.
- Train staff and volunteers recognize warning signs and respond in a trauma-informed, culturally safe way.
- Display information about local support in washrooms, reception areas, and private spaces where people can access it discreetly.
- Collaborate with local Nations, victim services, transition houses, health centers, and emergency response partners.

Safety & Supportive Resources

1. If You Need Immediate Help

- Call 911 if you or someone else is in immediate danger or requires emergency assistance

2. VictimLinkBC

- Confidential support, safety planning, crisis intervention, and referrals
- Call or text: 1-800-563-0808
- Email: victimlinlbc@bc211.ca

Vernon:

Archway Society for Domestic Peace

- Transition House
- Community-Based Victim Services
- Stopping the Violence Counselling
- 24-Hour Crisis Line: 250-542-1122
- Office: 250-542-3322

Penticton:

South Okanagan Women in Need Society (SOWINS)

- Emergency shelter
- Outreach and counselling
- 24-Hour Crisis Line: 250-493-7233
- Toll-Free: 1-800-814-2033

Okanagan Nation Emergency Transition House

- Indigenous-led emergency shelter and support
- Phone: 250-493-4902
- Toll-Free: 1-877-493-4909

Kelowna/Central Okanagan

Kelowna Women's Shelter

- 24/7 crisis support and emergency transition housing
- Safety planning and advocacy

- Community-Based Victim Services
- Individual and group support
- Services for women and children impacted by domestic abuse
- 24-Hour Help Line: 250-763-1040
- 24-Hour Text Line: 236-970-0704
- Toll-Free: 1-877-877-9957
- General Inquiries: 778-478-7774

Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society

- Emergency shelter
- Safety planning
- Outreach and support
- 24-Hour Help Line: 250-763-1040
- Text: 236-970-0704

Oliver

Desert Sun Counselling & Resource Centre

- Individual, family, and children's counselling
- Trauma-informed mental health support
- Support for stress, grief, anxiety, and life transitions
- Referrals to additional community resources
- Crisis Line: 1-877-723-3911

Keremeos / Similkameen

Lower Similkameen Community Services Society (LSCSS)

- Victim Services
- Stopping the Violence Counselling
- Family Support Programs
- Mental Health & Counselling
- Housing and community support services
- Phone: 250-499-2352
- Toll-Free: 1-855-499-2352

Merritt / Nicola Valley

Journeys Into Tomorrow Transition House (Coldwater Indian Band)

- 24-hour emergency shelter for women (including cisgender and transgender women), with or without children, experiencing or at risk of violence
- Safety planning and crisis intervention
- Emotional support and advocacy
- Referrals to community resources
- Primarily serves Coldwater, Lower Nicola, Nooaitch, Shackan, and Upper Nicola, and also accepts referrals for Métis and non-Indigenous women
- 24-Hour Crisis Line: 250-378-6170
- Office: 250-378-6174
- Toll-Free: 1-877-378-6174
- Email: transitionhouse@coldwaterband.org