LearningNetwork

Online Training to Promote Safety from ICT-Related VAW

The **Technology and Woman Abuse online training** provides a series of e-presentations that raises awareness of how information and communication technologies can be used to abuse women and their children and how to implement technology safety strategies to minimize this risk of abuse. The first module discusses telephone technologies, such as cordless phones, cell phones, and blue tooth. The second module discusses computer technologies including information on the internet and wireless connections. Our Learning Network team completed the training and found it to be very informative and user-friendly. Each module takes approximately half an hour to complete but you are able to complete it at your own pace. The training also provides a number of resources including a technology power and control wheel, technology safety planning with survivors, and a data security checklist. The training is offered by the Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses (OAITH) with the original training materials developed by members of Safety Net – the National Network to End Domestic Violence in the U.S.

How Technology Impacts the Safety of Women Staying In Housing Programs
By Rhiannon Wong and Cynthia Fraser, Safety Net Canada and BC Society of Transition Houses

Technology is evolving in dynamic ways with new services and devices promising to make our lives easier. A woman using an Internet-connected computer or phone can quickly learn about the local transition house/shelter, map bus routes via her children's schools, find a local pharmacy, message her sister on Facebook about plans, make calls to work, and attend the local shelter with her children by sundown. She may arrive at the shelter with cell phones and computers that her

children use daily to do homework and connect with friends, or that she uses to work or plan for their safety and future. However, if the person who is abusing her knows how to remotely spy on their phones, computers, or online communications, he might intercept plans as she makes them, prevent them from leaving, and punish her for attempting to flee.

This is why it's important that we educate ourselves about technology, its capabilities, risks and benefits in order to best safety plan with women about technology. Any house/program policies we create related to technology use must reflect our commitment to supporting women's rights to safety, privacy and accessibility in the context of empowerment and self determination.

The reality of technology use is it can help create paths to safety and it can be misused by abusers to terrorize and control. Women enduring violence don't necessarily have time to research each technology. In a crisis, they may rely on frontline workers to alert them to safety risks and discuss strategies and options with them, so they can make informed decisions about which technologies work best for them.

Anti-violence workers can attend a "Technology Training to Enhance Women and Children's Safety" through Safety Net Canada housed at the BC Society of Transition Houses. We've trained anti-violence workers, law enforcement, and members of the civil and criminal justice system in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario.

Safety Net Canada is a national initiative that addresses how technology impacts safety, privacy, accessibility, self-determination, justice and human rights for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, harassment and abuse. For more information, resources or trainings, please contact us at safetynetcanada@bcsth.ca.

The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV) designed the **Technology Safety Online Training Course** for directors, administrators, and shelter and program managers to increase their knowledge and awareness of how technology can put clients' and the agency's privacy and safety at risk.

The first section of the training focuses on increasing agency and client safety when using technology to communicate on behalf of clients. Specifically, topics around safety when using agency computers and laptops, email, voicemail, cell phones, and wireless networks are discussed. The second section of the training provides information on the risks associated with technology in order to assist survivors in making more informed decisions on their use of technology. Specifically, the training recognizes the importance of talking with clients about their own use of technology, whether or not they have experienced an abuser using technology to control them, and how technology can impact their safety. Furthermore, the training discusses the importance of embracing new communication technologies used with survivors and being cognizant of accessibility, risks, and benefits of using these different modes of communication. The training

highlights a survivor-centred approach by informing survivors about safety and privacy issues associated with technology use and allowing survivors to decide how they wish to communicate. Finally, the training provides a guide and checklist on how an agency can implement and ensure technology safety within their internal practices to minimize client and agency risk.

The Use of Technology to Stalk online training initiative was developed by the Stalking Resource Center of the National Center for Victims of Crime and the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of this online training is to educate and inform criminal justice professionals and victim service providers about the use of technology to stalk and harass victims in order to enhance their ability to work with survivors.

The course objectives are to define stalking, discuss the prevalence in the U.S. and in your community, learn about the dynamics of stalking, identify different types of technology and how stalkers use them, and identify resources for responding to stalking. Technologies such as cell phones, GPS, computers, cameras, and the internet are discussed. The course takes approximately an hour to an hour and a half to complete but you can complete at your own pace. Those who successfully complete the course receive a certificate of completion. The Learning Network team completed the training and found it to be very user-friendly and informative. After completing each module, you are asked to write a brief action plan for your agency on how to deal with each type of technology abuse. Once the training is completed, you will receive an email with your entire action plan listed.