



Family Law Resource List

The PEACE Program mandate does not include providing legal advice and counsellors should be clear about the Program's scope with the families they are supporting. BCSTH recommends that PEACE Program counsellors consult their Clinical Supervisor, Program Manager and Executive Director if situations arise that feel beyond their scope of comfort and practice. When in doubt, reach out to your circles of support. Remember to be clear about your boundaries and the scope of practice under which you work.

The following resources can support with Family Law issues and questions that commonly arise when supporting mothers.

BCSTH Resources for PEACE Program Counsellors

1. [PEACE Program Toolkit](#)

The *Administrative and Legal Issues* section of the PEACE Program Toolkit (p.333) provides guidance on record keeping and management, informed consent, reporting suspected child abuse or neglect, working with MCFD and Children as Witnesses in Court, and the relevant legislation governing these issues.

2. [BCSTH Legal Toolkit](#)

The BCSTH Legal Toolkit was developed for anti-violence workers responding to violence against women, children and youth. This comprehensive toolkit includes information on preparing program participants to be a witness in court, protection orders, and responding to subpoenas and records requests. Chapter 10 specifically focuses on PEACE Program Legal Information, including issues relating to parental consent under the Family Law Act.



3. [BCSTH Webinar Library](#)

The BCSTH webinar library includes a growing collection of free webinars that cover legal issues and working with women, children and youth that includes:

- BCSTH (2016) Legal Issues and Court Matters: PEACE Counsellors
- BCSTH (2017) Legal Toolkit Webinar: MCFD and Frontline Work
- BCSTH (2017) Legal Toolkit Webinar: The Family Law Act and Frontline Work

4. If your agency does not have a lawyer or is looking for guidance on how to respond to subpoenas, please contact info@bcsth.ca. BCSTH is maintaining a list of lawyers who can support you.

There may be times when you are required to turn down mothers' requests for support, for example if a mother asks you to appear as an expert witness in court. [Chapter 2: Strategies for Supporting Mothers](#) shares information about using a strength-based approach. This can be an effective way to build trust and encourage healthy dynamics with mothers.

Community Resources in BC

Many mothers inquire about accessing legal advice. If a mother is in need of legal advice and does not have a lawyer, RISE Women's Legal Centre or Legal Aid BC may be a helpful support.

1. [RISE Women's Legal centre](#)

RISE is a Community Legal Centre based in Vancouver that provides accessible legal services that are responsive to the unique needs of self-identifying women all over British Columbia. More specifically, RISE provides:

- An intake line for clients and potential clients that can be contacted by phone (236-317-9000), email (intake@womenslegalcentre.ca) or using their [online intake form](#).
- A Family Advocate Support Line (FASL) to assist advocates across BC, including frontline anti-violence workers, in delivering legal services to their clients.
- A Virtual Legal Clinic to provide legal services to women outside the Vancouver Lower Mainland.



RISE Women’s Legal Centre have delivered the following webinars for BCSTH member programs:

- S. 211 Toolkit and Family Law by Kim Hawkins, 2021 (available in the [BCSTH Webinar Library](#)).
- [Creating a Bridge Over the Canyon](#) by Andrea Bryson, 2020
- [Protection Orders: Helping Self Reps Apply](#) by Taruna Agrawal, 2020

2. [Legal Aid BC](#)

Legal Aid BC is a non-profit organization that provides legal information, advice, and representation services. Legal Aid BC’s services include:

- A [Family LawLINE](#) that provides free legal advice by telephone to low income people experiencing family law issues in BC.
- [Resources for community workers](#), including a range of [community resources](#) such as their [Family Law](#) website, [My Law BC](#) website with information about getting free help for legal issues, and their [Aboriginal Legal Aid in BC](#) website, as well as [training videos](#) and free [publications](#) on a variety of subjects.

3. [Society for Children and Youth of BC’s Children and Youth Legal Centre](#)

The Children and Youth Legal Centre provides legal support for young people experiencing problems relating to family law, child protection, a breach of their human rights and other legal issues.

4. [BC211](#) offers an online service directory to find available services in your area. You can search for services by topic, including ‘Legal and Advocacy’.

5. PEACE Program counsellors frequently support mothers who are navigating complex co-parenting issues. In these situations it may be helpful refer mothers to a [Family Justice Centre](#). Family Justice Centres operate across the province. They provide services free of charge to parents and other family members. Family Justice Counsellors can also provide a full range of services virtually through telephone and video conferencing, so services are available even if



there is no Family Justice Centre or Justice Access Centre in the community. To find the location nearest to you, see [Clicklaw's Directory](#).

6. While the following resources do not relate specifically to abusive relationships, they may still be helpful for some mothers who are navigating co-parenting complexities:
 - [Parenting After Separation \(PAS\) Courses \(Government of BC\)](#)
 - [Making Plans: A Guide to Parenting Arrangements After Separation or Divorce](#)

Further Resources and Information

Remember, not all mothers will have time to read handouts and information. It might be helpful to go through the most relevant handouts with mothers during a check-in, or group or individual session for mothers. Some resources may be helpful for mothers to share with their lawyer.

Books

- Berhman, L. J. 2018. *Loving Your Children More Than You Hate Each Other: Powerful tools for navigating a high conflict divorce*. Oakland, CA : New Harbinger Publications, Inc. (Available in the [BCSTH Library](#)).
- Corcoran, J. 2011. *Joint Custody with a Jerk: raising a child with an uncooperative ex: a hands-on, practical guide to communicating with a difficult ex-spouse*. New York : St. Martin's Griffin (Available in the [BCSTH library](#)).

Handouts

- Activity Book for Children and Youth Going to Court (Sophie's Place, 2021) Available in:
 - [Arabic](#)
 - [English](#)
 - [Punjabi](#)
 - [Tagalog](#)
- [Coercive Control](#) (EVA BC, 2020)

- 
- [Defining Coercive Control in Comparison to Situational Couples Violence](#) (CREVAWC, 2019)
 - [Separation Agreements: Your Rights and Options](#) (West Coast Leaf, 2019)
 - [The Misuse of Parental Alienation in Family Court Proceedings with Allegation of Intimate Partner Violence - Part 1](#) (The Learning Network, 2021)
 - [The Misuse of Parental Alienation in Family Court Proceedings with Allegation of Intimate Partner Violence – Part 2](#) (The Learning Network, 2021)

Websites and Articles

- [Family Violence Family Law: Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence in Family Law Proceedings](#) – includes [webinar recordings](#) and [research briefs](#) (Western University).
- [Staying in the Family Home After Separating from an Abusive Partner](#) (Luke's Place, 2021)

Webinars

- [Safety Planning Before, During and After Separation from an Abusive Partner \(Webinar\)](#) (Luke's Place, 2020)
- [Why Can't Everyone Just Get Along? How BC's Family Law System Puts Survivors In Danger](#) (Webinar, Rise Women's Legal Centre, 2021)

Reports

- [What You Don't Know Can Hurt You: The importance of family violence screening tools for family law practitioners.](#) (Department of Justice, 2018)
- [Why Can't Everyone Just Get Along? How BC's Family Law System Puts Survivors in Danger.](#) (Rise Women's Legal Centre, 2021)



This document is part of the [Supporting Mothers in the PEACE Program online guide](#). This document, or any portion thereof, may be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever as long as acknowledgment to the BC Society of Transition Houses is included in the product.

This document was published March 2022.

