



# BRIEFING NOTE

## COVID-19 media briefing notes - Karen Redman Friday, May 8, 2020

Physical distancing and staying at home are important measures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, but for some, these measures eliminate the ability to escape or de-escalate conflict, even if only temporarily, from partner or family violence.

The stresses of economic insecurity together with the anxiety created due to COVID-19 can escalate conflict and violence within the home.

While community supports continue to operate, we know that people who need help may not be accessing them.

You can help by:

- Reaching out to someone who is isolated
- Sharing information about free mental health support and community services
- Watching for signals. For example, you can establish non-verbal cues to identify if someone is need of assistance on video calls.
- If you suspect that someone needs help contact police, Family and Children's Services or your local shelter.

### Easing restrictions

As the province slowly eases restrictions and begins to open access to businesses and retails stores, we cannot relax and assume that it's "business as usual."

Let's ensure that we don't undo the progress that we've made.

Now, **more than ever** we must continue to practice physical distancing, hand washing and sanitizing and if you choose, wearing a face covering to protect others.

Our new reality is that physical distancing measures will continue to be part of every aspect of our lives for the foreseeable future.

We need to continue our fight against COVID-19 and we need to keep doing what we can to reduce the spread of this virus in Waterloo Region.



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## **Mother's Day**

Mother's Day is this Sunday. For many of us, it will be difficult to be away from our extended families, especially our mothers.

If you don't live in the same household as your mom, it's important to keep your distance in order to protect her. A card, phone call, virtual greeting or porch drop-off of food or flowers can still be meaningful and will help keep us all safe.

If you visit a cemetery this weekend, remember to use caution and maintain physical distance from others while paying your respects.

Thinking about Mother's Day this year, I can't help but think about the many stories I am hearing in our community about people who have lost loved ones during COVID-19.

The added tragedy of possibly not being able to properly say good-bye is heartbreaking to consider – not to mention the modifications that have had to be made to funeral services in order to maintain physical distancing.

My thoughts are with those people and especially those who lost their mothers during the pandemic. I cannot imagine how difficult this would be to navigate.

This is why we owe it to our neighbours and community members to keep going. Let's be careful to not undo what we've achieved together over the past several weeks. Many have experienced great loss and sacrifice and we would never want it to be for nothing.

As we start to move forward, please remember to take care of yourselves and each other so we can celebrate with our mothers, families and friends soon.