



HANDS LIFTING HEARTS
INITIATIVES SOCIETY
RESOURCE 16

SAFE ONLINE, SAFE AT HOME.

Phones, apps, privacy and respect in families

For African, Black and Caribbean families,
youth, and caregivers in Alberta

Technology connects us.
Learn the signs of control
and explore safer ways to
protect your privacy.

Family Violence Prevention /
Breaking Silence, Building Safety

Sponsored by the Ministry of Children and Family
Services, Government of Alberta
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Alberta
Government

Your privacy matters

Families use WhatsApp, shared phones and location apps every day. When these are used to check on, track or threaten someone, they become tools of control. These activities help you notice the difference and take careful steps.

Make this your own

Tick boxes and type in the spaces, or print and write by hand. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. You can skip any question, pause, or return later. There are no scores. Save only if it is safe to keep your answers.

Privacy matters. A completed workbook may contain personal information. Use a device and storage location you trust. If someone monitors your device, consider using a safer device or completing the activities without recording answers.

Choose an activity

Caring or controlling?

Signs my device may be watched

Careful privacy steps

Online harm and young people

Our family tech agreement

Support you can choose

Safety first: If someone is monitoring you, changing settings suddenly can alert them and increase danger. Talk to a support worker first, using a safer device if possible.

Caring or controlling?

Choose Caring or Controlling.

	Caring	Controlling
1. Sharing locations on a trip, both agreed	☐	☐
2. Demanding to see someone's messages	☐	☐
3. Keeping the only copy of a partner's passwords	☐	☐
4. Texting "Home safe?" after a late shift	☐	☐
5. Calling or texting nonstop until they answer	☐	☐
6. Threatening to post private photos	☐	☐

Compare: Rows 1 and 4 are caring when both people agree and can say no. Rows 2, 3, 5 and 6 are controlling. Sharing intimate images without consent is a crime in Canada.

One thought or next step I want to keep

Signs my device may be watched

Tick any that apply. These are possible signs, not proof.

- ☐ Someone knows where I have been without me telling them
- ☐ Someone repeats things from my private messages
- ☐ My battery drains fast or there are apps I did not install
- ☐ Someone set up my phone or knows my passcode
- ☐ My accounts show logins I don't recognise

One thought or next step I want to keep

Careful privacy steps

Discuss options with a support worker using a safer device first. Changes can alert someone monitoring you. Do not change settings, remove apps or block access until you have considered the risks.

- ☐ Use a trusted friend's phone or a library computer to look for help
- ☐ Check location sharing in your phone settings and in apps
- ☐ Review which devices are signed in to your email and social media
- ☐ Consider a new passcode on a safer device only after safety planning
- ☐ Keep copies of important documents somewhere safe
- ☐ Ask how to preserve threatening messages safely; do not download or forward sexual images of minors

One thought or next step I want to keep

Online harm and young people

For youth, or caregivers talking with youth.

Someone online I would block or report

A trusted adult I would tell if a photo or message was shared

☐ I know I can ask for help if someone shares or threatens to share my images

Kids Help Phone and Cybertip.ca can help young people with online harm.

One thought or next step I want to keep

Our family tech agreement

Complete with willing family members.

- ☐ Respect privacy. Discuss age-appropriate, transparent safety supervision with children.
- ☐ Location sharing is voluntary. If monitored or threatened, plan safely before changing it.
- ☐ We do not post photos of each other without asking.

Screens off at (time) for rest and family time.

One thought or next step I want to keep

Support you can choose

You do not have to complete this workbook alone. In immediate danger, call 911. Click a service name for its official information.

Family Violence Info Line

Call or text 310-1818. Available 24/7; phone support in 170+ languages.

Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society

admin@handsliftinghearts.ca | handsliftinghearts.ca

Kids Help Phone

Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.

ShelterSafe

Find women's shelters and support services across Canada.

211 Alberta

Call or text 211, or use online chat to find local services.

Plan for your safety

Government of Canada safety planning information.

Cybertip.ca

Help with online sexual harm involving young people.

One support option I may want to explore

Sources and further reading

[Tech Safety Canada planning checklist](#)

[Cybertip.ca intimate images](#)

Support information checked October 15, 2026. This workbook is not a substitute for personalised safety planning, legal advice or professional support.

Prepared as part of the Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society Family Violence Prevention: Breaking Silence, Building Safety Toolkit. Images are AI-generated and do not depict participants.