

## The Primary Objectives of the PAR program are to:

- Increase an offender's understanding of domestic violence and abuse
- Increase an offender's understanding of non-violent strategies and skills to engage in healthy relationships
- Reduce an offender's likelihood of reoffending by increasing their self-awareness of personal triggers/warning signs that contribute to violent behaviour
- Assist victims/partners by reducing their isolation and providing information that will help them to make informed decisions about their safety and their relationship with the offender

### Program Principles

- Domestic violence is a crime
- Abusive behaviour is a choice
- Abuse is the sole responsibility of the abuser
- Abusive behaviour is not an anger management problem
- Victims/partners are entitled to receive support, safety planning and referrals to community services
- Victims/partners have a right to information about the PAR program, its philosophy, structure, content and limitations
- PAR programs must not operate in isolation from other Violence against Women (VAW) community stakeholders
- Domestic violence offenders and victims/partners have the right to be treated with respect



## What Our Clients Say:



*"Coming into the program I thought I could change people by yelling and threatening them into doing what I want, but leaving the program, I now realize that I can only change me."*

*"I see now that it was necessary for me to take this program. It gave me a lot to think about. I would recommend it. Thank you for sharing such important information."*

*"Before the program, I was like a horse with the blinders on; I could only see one way... my way! I gave it a chance and realized that this program was here to assist me in becoming a better partner, father and man."*

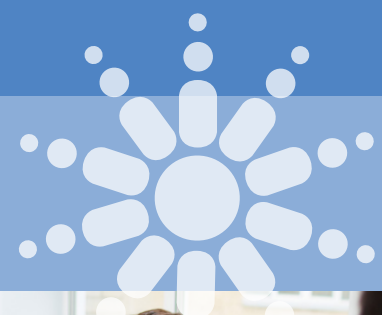


#### Abrigo Centre

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New Client Drop-in Hours: Weekdays 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Charitable Number 129515284 RR0001

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Abrigo Centre, visit our website: [www.abrigo.ca](http://www.abrigo.ca)  
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## Partner Assault Response (PAR) Program



Accountability, Education  
and Enhancing the  
Safety of Victims

## Abrigo Centre's Partner Assault Response Program

The Partner Assault Response (PAR) program is a court ordered initiative that delivers specialized community-based group education/counselling to offenders mandated to attend in response to a criminal charge involving domestic violence.

The 12-session program, funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General's Ontario Victim Services, holds offenders accountable for their behaviour and provides them with an opportunity to examine their beliefs and attitudes towards domestic abuse and learn non-abusive ways of resolving conflict.

PAR funding also provides for victims/partners safety planning, support and referrals to community resources, and information about the offenders' progress throughout the duration of the program.

Since 1997, Abrigo has been one of 10 agencies in Toronto to provide this specialized service. Our trained counsellors lead four on-going working groups at a time – three in English and one in Portuguese – throughout the year.

### PAR Topics Include:

- Domestic Violence – Defining Abuse
- How Beliefs and Attitudes Affect Behaviour
- The Effects of Abuse on Children, Partners and Self
- Understanding Triggers / Warning Signs
- The Impact of Substance Abuse
- Healthy Relationships and the Ingredients of a Healthy Relationship
- Respectful Communication
- Dealing with Conflict
- Responsibility and Accountability

## Facts About the PAR Program

The PAR program is designated for adult offenders who are 18 years of age or older at the time of the offence. Only eligible, court-mandated individuals are accepted into ministry-funded groups.

Individuals in Abrigo Centre's PAR program must first go through an intake process. This required first step involves speaking to one of our counsellors by telephone or meeting in person. During intake, they will ask a series of questions to gather relevant information. Among them, current address, family background, the criminal offence committed, any health concerns, etc. All participants reaching out by phone should do so in a location where personal information can be shared confidentially.

Once the intake process is completed, the next step is to attend a PAR Orientation session. During the PAR Orientation, a counsellor(s) will explain in detail all aspects of the program including the program principles. They will also discuss the PAR Client Agreement and the Client Fee Agreement. These documents outline the expectations of participation. All clients must agree to the terms of both the PAR Client Agreement and the Client Fee Agreement before being accepted into the program.



## Additional Program Details

PAR Orientation may take up to two hours. Once completed, we will provide clients with a program start date. Each program session is two hours in length, once a week, and runs for 12 consecutive weeks.

There is a fee for this program as an outcome of clients taking responsibility for their previous actions. However, clients may choose to apply for a fee reduction. Adjustments are made on a sliding scale for those who qualify.

Language Interpreters are provided for clients who need them at no cost to the participant.

Once successfully finished the 12 sessions, the Court or the client's referring Probation and Parole Officer will receive a closing report from the program counsellors.

