

## EDITORIAL: On the homefront

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We welcome with open arms the launch of the new North Shore Domestic Violence Unit. It brings together the North Vancouver RCMP and West Vancouver Police Department, the Squamish Nation, the province and Hollyburn Family Services to investigate cases of domestic violence and ensure the victims receive the support they need.

If anything, we were a little surprised to learn this wasn't happening already.

The province is also to be commended for its #StopViolenceBC and #SaySomething awareness campaigns. These are steps toward shifting the culture that has been largely complacent in allowing domestic violence to flourish.

If you ask any of the shelters that take in women and children fleeing abuse, they'll probably tell you they could use more support.

Tuesday's announcement came with some unsettling but all too easy to believe statistics. Two thirds of domestic violence incidents are never reported to police. Some victims of violence in the home face assault up to 70 times before police are alerted, thanks in part to the stigma that victims face.

Will the police take them seriously? Will the Crown see charges through to a conviction? Will they be safe? What will happen to the complicated relationships within the family after police have intervened?

These are scary questions. But nothing justifies living with abuse, whether it's sexual, physical or emotional. Hopefully our new domestic violence unit will help assuage those fears and have some more positive statistics to show for it in the years to come.

*What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.*

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