

# CRCVC

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CANADIAN RESOURCE CENTRE  
FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME



2008 / 2009

ANNUAL REPORT

# CRCVC Board of Directors

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Mother of a murder victim

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President, Canadian Police Association

**SHARON ROSENFELDT, Board Member (ON)**  
Mother of a murder victim

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# Who we are

Since 1993, the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC) has provided a voice for victims in the criminal justice system. We are a recognized, national, bilingual, non-profit advocacy organization. The CRCVC did not arise out of a personal incident and it is not a single-issue organization. We address a multitude of issues to promote public safety and to reduce re-victimization. All services are free of charge and confidential.

We are sponsored by the Canadian Police Association. This partnership has enabled police personnel to support victims of crime and strengthen their voice for increased recognition and consideration in our criminal justice system.

## Our Values

Victims of crime should be treated with courtesy, compassion and with respect for their dignity and privacy. We offer assistance and advocacy regardless of whether the perpetrator of the crime has been identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted. The CRCVC believes victims must be empowered to regain control of their lives.

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## Our beliefs



*Heidi Illingworth,  
CRCVC Executive Director*

"The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime worked diligently in 2008 and 2009 to help many individuals and families impacted by violence access the services and information they need to recover, as well as providing our members with free advocacy, research documents and long-term support. A special project was launched in the Ottawa-area – [www.HelpForVictims.ca](http://www.HelpForVictims.ca) – a poster and website campaign aimed at the Ottawa medical community designed

to direct victims of violent crime who visit a doctor's office to the short- and long-term community services that are available to help them.

In 2010, the CRCVC will continue to ensure the voices of victims and survivors of violent crime are heard by officials. In Canada, it is crime victims who bare the majority of the costs associated with crime. Victim costs include the value of damaged or stolen property, pain and suffering, loss of income and productivity, and health services. As a society, we simply do not adequately address or repair all the harm done to victims of crime."



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## What we do

We assist victims and survivors by helping them:

- obtain needed services and resources;
- deal with post-trial agencies such as Correctional Service of Canada and the National Parole Board and/or financial benefits/compensation programs; and by
- through long-term emotional support.

The CRCVC:

- lobbies for victims' rights by presenting the interests and perspectives of victims of crime to Government, at all levels; and
- provides free resource materials to crime victims and service providers in Canada, including a monthly newsletter.

### *Supporting victims during their healing journey*

The CRCVC assists hundreds of victims from coast to coast each year to access services they might need, provides them with general information about the criminal justice system and their rights, as well as helping them access specific information about the offender who harmed them. We offer a toll-free line to ensure that victims from coast to coast can easily reach the office: 1-877-232-2610.

We currently have approximately 200 active, long-term files. These clients receive ongoing support services, advocacy and representation (which include advocacy/support in their dealings with the agencies that provide information about the offender who harmed them).

## Education and awareness

The CRCVC works diligently to promote victims' concerns by addressing current events and issues in the media; and to conduct workshops/presentations at colleges, universities, community events, and conferences. As well, we act as a resource centre for victims by providing understanding and knowledge of the Canadian Criminal Justice System, and disseminate that knowledge through our monthly newsletter and web site.

## Supporting members

Since 1994, the CRCVC has prepared a monthly newsletter called the National Justice Network. Membership in the network is free and provides victims of crime, victim services workers, other criminal justice professionals and interested parties with a monthly update about current victims' issues, initiatives, and programs. There are currently more than 800 members (individuals and agencies) who belong to the Network.

CRCVC members benefit from exceptional resources including a large library of free resource materials for victims/survivors and service providers on our web site: [www.crcvc.ca/en/resources/](http://www.crcvc.ca/en/resources/). There are a number of information papers, which can be accessed to learn more about issues such as advocacy, elder abuse, child abuse, peace bonds, cyberstalking, sexual assault, homicide survivors, spousal abuse, the impact of victimization, recovering from trauma, etc. We also provide all of the research we conduct, consultation papers we write and briefs to various government committees for viewing on the web site.



## Research

Thanks to funding from the federal Canada Summer Jobs program, the CRCVC research team has, in 2009, added new information papers for victims and service providers to access on our website, [www.crcvc.ca](http://www.crcvc.ca). New paper topics include:

- *Resiliency*
- *Victim Blaming*
- *Restitution*
- *Identity Theft*

The CRCVC is committed to continued research in the field of victimology. We strive to provide victims, victim support workers, criminal justice personnel, legislators and concerned citizens with the most up-to-date, relevant information as pertains to victimization. To that end, the Resources section of our website is a constant work in progress.

## Shaping policy & advocating for change

The CRCVC is actively involved in public policy reform to effectively reduce criminal victimization in Canada, better balance the interests and needs of victims and survivors with those of the offender and to ensure public safety. In 2008-09, we participated in numerous consultation processes, advocating for increased recognition of—and consideration for—those persons most harmed by violent



# 2008 Activities

## *Air India submission*

The CRCVC was honoured to be granted intervener status in the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182. In our final submission in January, we reiterated the importance of a full and open public inquiry to the victims and survivors when a large-scale tragedy such as this occurs. We extended our gratitude to all of the family members who shared their personal stories of loss, their endless grief and their continued struggle to voice the total letdown they felt from their government during Part 1 of the Inquiry. Their heartbreaking stories are a very important part of Canadian history. We wait with great anticipation for the recommendations of the Honourable Justice John C. Major and are certain our concern for the victims and survivors of terrorism will be echoed.

## *Bill C-2, the Tackling Violent Crime Act*

The CRCVC urged the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on Bill C-2, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other Acts (Tackling Violent Crime Act) to pass the legislation while reiterating our support for increasing the age of sexual consent in Canada and the strengthening of the dangerous and long-term offender designations and recognizances to keep the peace. Bill C-2 is a fair and justifiable measure to protect Canadians and especially the most vulnerable among us: our children.



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## *Victims meet with Public Safety Minister on parole reform during Victims Week*



During National Victims of Crime Awareness Week 2008, we accompanied the families of murder victims to a meeting on Parliament Hill with then Public Safety Minister, the Honourable Stockwell Day. The Gardner and Prioriello families presented Minister Day with a petition signed by almost 5,000 Canadians, asking him to change the way the Canadian justice system treats families victimized by homicide. They wanted the Minister to amend current laws to stipulate that convicted murderers should only have parole hearings every five years after reaching their parole eligibility dates. The petition was later presented in the House of Commons. The Minister assured us of his support of the issue and it remains an important pursuit of the CRCVC.

# Special Events

## *Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Service*

The last Sunday of September each year marks National Police and Peace Officers' Day. A memorial service is held in Ottawa on Parliament Hill to honour and remember the sacrifice made by police and peace officers killed in the line of duty. The CRCVC proudly coordinates events for family members of fallen officers who come to Ottawa each year to attend the Service and honour their loved one's memory. On the eve of the Memorial Service each year, we hold a Welcoming Reception and Candlelight Vigil for immediate family members of fallen officers. The vigil is a beautiful candlelight ceremony with singing and prayers that takes place in the Pavilion behind Centre Block on Parliament Hill.



## *9/11 Commemoration Ceremony*

Family members of Canadian 9/11 victims, in an effort to pay tribute to their lost loved ones and to honour all Canadian soldiers for their sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, gathered at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa on September 11th, 2009, to remember and reflect upon the lives of the twenty-four Canadians who perished in the attacks. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, picture right with Canadian 9/11 widow Maureen Basnicki, was in attendance and helped to make the celebration of life ceremony a beautiful event. The Department of Justice Victims Fund graciously provided funding for this remembrance ceremony.



### *Brief to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics*

In June, we submitted a written brief addressing the need for a review and updates of the Privacy Act. We spoke specifically to the difficulties facing law enforcement in protecting and rescuing children from sexual exploitation on the Internet, concerns over the fact that the act allows for favouring the privacy rights of accused persons over their victims, and the need to address the speed with which requests are processed.

### *Youth Criminal Justice Act Review*

In August, the CRCVC voiced our concerns that the Youth Criminal Justice Act is not balancing the appropriate treatment of young offenders with the interest of public safety. We urged the government to make amendments that will allow courts to consider deterrence and denunciation in sentencing and change pre-trial detention provisions for youth who pose a risk to public safety. Among other issues, we raised concerns about the privacy provisions of the Act, in that the victim's identity is often withheld in order to protect the accused's privacy.

### *UN Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism*

For the first time ever at the global level, victims, Governments, experts, and civil society came together on September 9, 2008 to participate in the Secretary-General's Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism. The CRCVC's Executive Director, upon invitation from the UN, traveled to New York City to attend this important symposium. The UN has recognized the importance of giving terrorism victims a face and a voice, to protect their dignity, to give them status, to defend their legal rights, to provide medical and psycho-social support, to provide financial assistance, to improve media coverage, to create solidarity and to counter terrorism.

## 2009 Activities

### *Passing of Victims' Rights Advocate*

The CRCVC was saddened by the passing of Mr. Gary Rosenfeldt, co-founder of Victims of Violence Canadian Centre for Missing Children. Gary passed away in the company of his loved ones on Sunday, February 8th, 2009, after a hard fought battle against cancer. Gary's stepson, Daryn, was murdered by Clifford Olson in April of 1981, following which Gary became an outspoken advocate for victims. He successfully lobbied for police protocols for notifying next of kin, victim impact statements in court proceedings, financial assistance for victims, and tougher parole legislation. Gary sat on the Board of Directors of the CRCVC for many years and his loss will be felt by all the victims and colleagues whose lives he has touched.

### *Sustaining Funding*

In February of 2009, the CRCVC received official notice from Public Safety Canada that the organization would receive a grant of \$19,030 for the fiscal year 2009-2010 under the terms of the Sustaining Funding Program. We are very pleased to receive this financial assistance to help maintain a national structure and cover core operating expenses.



## National Victims of Crime Awareness Week

During Victims Week many events take place across the country in order to raise public awareness of the plight of persons victimized by violence and to educate people about assistance and support available to victims in their local communities.



In 2009, the CRCVC was one agency that received funding from the Department of Justice for Victims Week events. We developed an information kiosk (pictured left), which was displayed for outreach and awareness-raising purposes during the week.

## DNA missing persons' index

In May, the CRCVC appeared before the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on the Statutory Review of the DNA Identification Act. The focus of our presentation was to urge the development of a Missing Persons' Index in Canada. We believe the federal government, in cooperation with the provinces, should proceed with efforts to create a Missing Persons' Index, preferably as part of the National DNA Databank (NDDDB) to help identify unknown human remains. A DNA MPI would provide family members with a missing loved one with a measure of relief: they are reassured that by submitting a biological sample, their family members' remains will be identified regardless of where or when they are located.



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## CRCVC advocates for victim who is barred from his mother's killer's parole hearing

The son of a woman who was raped, strangled, and left to rot in the woods was barred from the killer's parole hearing. Jeremy Mead, who was six years old at the time of his mother's murder, was banned from the May 27 hearing in Kingston because he wrote a victim's impact statement that was deemed "disturbing" by officials at Correctional Services Canada.

Now 28, Mead says he was only venting his anger in writing for the first time and has no intention of acting out violently. He realized his threats were inappropriate, rewrote his statement and offered assurances that he would not disrupt parole proceedings. Yet, Correctional Services Canada refused to reverse its decision.

Our experience with family members of homicide victims has shown that it is natural for survivors to vent their anger toward the murderer. The CRCVC felt strongly that the National Parole Board and Correctional Services Canada were unjust in banning Mead from Babinski's parole hearing; we advocated on behalf of Mead's right to attend, and when Mead was still denied permission, members of the CRCVC attended the hearing in Kingston.

## Legislation

In June, the Federal Government proposed numerous legislative changes to the *Criminal Code*, the prison and parole system, and other legislation that will affect victims' rights. Of particular interest to the CRCVC and the victims we help are the proposed amendments to the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* and the *Criminal Code*, including enhanced sharing of information with victims, enhanced offender responsibility and accountability, strengthened management of offenders and their reintegration, and the repeal of the "faint hope" clause. While we hope for the speedy passage of this legislation, the possibility of a fall federal election is looming.



Executive Director Heidi Illingworth (left) with Director of Research Krista Gray-Donald in Yellowknife, NWT for the Northern Victims of Crime Conference, September 2009

### Northern Victims of Crime Conference held in Yellowknife

The federal Department of Justice held a conference at the end of September, entitled: "Northern Responses and Approaches to Victims of Crime...Building on Strength and Resilience." The conference was held from September 29 to October 1, 2009, in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The conference brought together the network of professionals who work with victims in Canada's north for the purposes of knowledge-sharing, networking, and raising awareness. It was attended by 270 delegates from across Canada, including the CRCVC's Heidi Illingworth and Krista Gray-Donald, who attended thanks to a grant from the Victims Fund, Department of Justice Canada.



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## HelpForVictims.ca

The CRCVC has hired Michael Boutilier, through funding received from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, for this project. Michael has been working diligently to design bilingual posters and websites to reach out to victims of crime in the Ottawa region in order to encourage them to access victim services.

Victim of violence?  
Don't suffer alone.



[www.HelpForVictims.ca](http://www.HelpForVictims.ca)



posters and websites to reach out to victims of crime in the Ottawa region in order to encourage them to access victim services.

The CRCVC believes that family physicians are of major importance to victims of violence. In many cases, apart from the police, the doctor of the victim may be their only link to the many resources that are available to help them. Statistical data suggests that victims of violence do not typically disclose their victimization to their doctor. We believe that displayed victims' resource information in doctors' offices and waiting rooms will help to bridge the gap

between the number of violent crime victims and those who access support.

The CRCVC has partnered with Ottawa Victim Services and the Ottawa Police Victim Crisis Unit to undertake this important outreach. The goal is to provide the physicians of the National Capital Region with display resources for their offices and waiting rooms, intended for the view of their patients. In addition, we will include information packages for physicians, to briefly highlight some of the support resources that are offered in the region.

## Looking ahead

The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime will continue to intervene on behalf of crime victims to attempt to solve problems they may encounter in their dealings with the criminal justice system.

We will also advocate for:

1. Earned Parole
2. Guaranteed Victims' Rights
3. Expansion of Information for Victims
4. An Effective Mechanism to Deal with High-Risk Offenders
5. Creating Standards to Assist Victims of a Terrorist Attack
6. Reducing victimization through crime prevention
7. Creation of a national program for financial assistance for victims of violent crime
8. Financial support for non-government organizations who serve crime victims



## Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime

### Statement of Revenue and Expenditure: • for the year ended December 31, 2008

REVENUE/FUNDING	2008	2007
CPA	90,000.00	115,000.00
OTHER	3,244.00	1,016.00
PROJECTS	-	9,583.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$93,244.00</b>	<b>\$125,599.00</b>

EXPENSES	2008	2007
Office Admin, Salaries, Professional Fees, Travel, Insurance, etc.	111,048.00	142,110.00
<b>NET REVENUE (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>\$(17,084.00)</b>	<b>\$(16,511.00)</b>



# Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime

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100-141 Catherine Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 1C3

1-877-232-2610 | [www.crcvc.ca](http://www.crcvc.ca)

