



Greetings!

Welcome to the **December** issue of the *National Justice Network e-Update*, a publication of the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime. PLEASE SHARE THIS **FREE** NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES & FRIENDS OR HAVE THEM SIGN UP TO RECEIVE IT DIRECTLY AT:
<http://crcvc.ca/en/newsletter/>.

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Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime
Visit: <http://www.crcvc.ca>
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Phone: 1.877.232.2610.

How to deal with grief and guilt during the holidays

If you are experiencing grief, you may have a harder time during the holidays. You might feel guilt surrounding the time of the year for different reasons.

Here are a few suggestions on how you can cut yourself some slack during the holidays:

First, give yourself a break. The grief you are experiencing can be stressful physically, mentally and emotionally. Because of this, someone experiencing grief might need a break this holiday season and you deserve to take it. Take some time to recharge.

Second, don't compare. You might be feeling the pressure of having a holiday season that is similar to ones you have before you experienced loss, but things have changed since then and it is not fair to yourself to compare the seasons. This holiday season, be in the present.

Third, it's okay to miss a party or two. Try not to be hard on yourself if you are not up to participating in holiday activities, such as an office Christmas party or a New Year's Eve party. You have an entire new year to connect with the people who care about you.



Wishing all of our readers a safe, peaceful and joy-filled holiday season! All the best for 2020.

Sincerely,
The CRCVC Team

OFFICE CLOSURE

Please be advised the CRCVC office will be closed for the holidays from December 24th, 2019 until January 3rd, 2020. Please note that only faxes, texts and emails will be monitored during this time. We will reopen on January 6th at 8:30am EST.

Consider supporting our work with victims and survivors this holiday season by making a donation to the CRCVC, and make a difference that counts. Click [here](#) to donate.

QUICK LINKS

Chat & Text Support

CRCVC's chat and text support for victims of crime who wish to access information as well as emotional support.



[Fourth](#), don't worry about what people think. Your friends and family accept you for who you are. They want you to be your best. Help them by worrying less about what they MAY want and more about what you DO want.

[Fifth](#), next year is just around the corner. If something didn't turn out how you would have liked it to this year, you can make the changes you need to change those next year.

The above was inspired and referenced from a What's Your Grief [article](#) on guilt and grief during the holiday season.

The following [link](#) has 64 tips for coping with grief during the holidays. The [Holiday Grief Guide](#) also has a number of helpful links for those dealing with grief during the holiday season.

Widow of OC Transpo Crash Victim Shares Her Heartache and Mistreatment

Elaine Thomlinson's husband Bruce Thomlinson was killed in the January 11th Westboro Station bus crash in Ottawa in early 2019.

In a recent [Ottawa Citizen](#) story, Elaine Thomlinson speaks out about how she has dealt with this tragedy. She reveals how the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Police Service, and OC Transpo treated her and her family during this time.

Thomlinson strongly believes that these agencies need to work together to develop better procedures in order to ensure that there is no lack of transparency, communication, or proper process in the future if similar events were to occur. Furthermore, Thomlinson feels as though there were no significant victim supports available to her while she was experiencing the trauma incurred by the crash.

Upon recounting the day of the crash, Thomlinson describes how her husband did not return home around the time he usually did on work nights.

Text: Our number is 613-208-0747

Chat: Please access through our [website](#).

For **hours of operation** and other info, please click [here](#).
Hoping to connect with you soon!

Brain injury from domestic abuse a 'public health crisis,' says B.C. researcher. [Click here](#) to read about this phenomenon.

A [woman](#) from Toronto was recently killed by a man in a murder-suicide.

Don't Be a Victim of This Holiday Hydro Scam: [A Warning](#) From Ontario's Four Largest Utilities.

Montreal's police service is launching a new special unit to tackle gun violence in the city. The new squad is made up of around 20 inspectors from the homicide and organized crime units. Read more [here](#).

30 years since the Montreal massacre, we still see a deadly hatred of women...Read and listen to this CBC Radio special [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ottawa Monthly Drop-in Support Group for "Loss to Violence" -> Back in 2020!
The drop-in support group for family members of homicide victims addresses the gap in support within the community



National Justice Network Update



Soon after, Thomlinson began to hear reports of a bus crash, and immediately tried to contact her husband through his cellphone, but to no avail.

She then learned that individuals looking to contact possible loved ones involved in the crash were meeting at a Westboro community centre. Thomlinson waited at the community centre for some time before being told that plans had changed, and that passengers of the crash had been sent home, and no one could provide her with any certainty about what would happen next.

Thomlinson frantically started calling hospitals to try and determine if her husband had been admitted. She could not find him. Eventually, after four hours of waiting, Thomlinson was contacted by the police, who in asking for some of her husband's most identifiable characteristics, declined to take the photo she offered, and simply sent her back home.

The following morning, [Thomlinson](#) saw a police media report that all families of the three crash victims had been contacted. Tomlinson had not been contacted, and as such ecstatically assumed that her husband would be alive and in a hospital.

However, the media report was not entirely accurate, as 27 hours after the crash, Thomlinson was finally informed that her husband was deceased. She was also told the Ottawa Police Service's victim crisis team would be available for support. However, Thomlinson says she did not hear from the team for two days, and had to contact them herself to get them to visit her at home.

This visit was fairly short, and once they had left, the team again took too long to get back to Thomlinson, who had to contact them again, and was told that they had not gotten back to her in order to "give them some space", which Thomlinson notes she never requested.

Adding to the trauma, Thomlinson's mother-in-law passed away within three weeks of the crash, resulting in Thomlinson's family being in a state of "turmoil". They were desperate for the support and guidance which had been offered to them.

and offers a place for peers to support each other in healing.

Please "like" the CRCVC [Facebook page](#) or email crcvc@crcvc.ca in order to stay updated about the support group. We welcome all family and loved ones to join us!

Where: Room p107, P Building, Algonquin College, 1385 Woodroffe Ave, Nepean, ON K2G 1V8

When: Last Thursday of January 2020

Women's March Ottawa 2020 Launch Event

In solidarity with the global marches occurring around the world, Ottawa Women's March will be hosting a celebration event featuring local Ottawa speakers, poster making and a photo booth. The Ottawa Women's March will be hitting the streets on Saturday, March 7th, 2020 for our own march.

When: Saturday, January 18th, 2020, 10:00am until 12:30pm

Where: Ottawa City Hall's Jean Pigott Place (110 Laurier Avenue W)

For more information [click here](#).

Formation: Femmes, violence et toxicomanie (French only)

Hosted by FemAnVi, a unique perspective on women, violence and the use of psychoactive substances and their interrelatedness.

When: February 6th, 2020



National Justice Network Update



However, Thomlinson and her family were left to cope with the tragic events on their own.

Thomlinson is now [advocating](#) that the City of Ottawa needs to have a better plan in place for emergency situations, because at the moment, the City is clearly not readily prepared and equipped to handle an emergency of fairly mild size, prompting one to wonder what would happen if a larger emergency occurred? Thomlinson argues that any new procedure implemented must have appropriate and timely communication with the families of victims.

With over ten months passing since the crash, Thomlinson [says](#) her family has been left to cope alone, and the City is not paying for any of her family's psychological and emotional trauma supports. It took Thomlinson and her sons months to find and access support on their own. Additionally, Thomlinson says she does not have access to details from the investigation into the crash, which further adds to her negative experiences.

In response to Tomlinson's message, [Chris Renwick](#), superintendent of the Criminal Investigations Directorate, responded on behalf of the Ottawa Police Service by stating that despite their best efforts, they regret not being able to properly inform Thomlinson despite their contact with her. The police are now reviewing their victim contact process to ensure that their processes are clearer during victim identification stages.

Additionally, City Solicitor David White responded on behalf of the City of Ottawa saying the city understands that there are many questions by residents regarding the crash, but that the city cannot provide any new answers to community members because the incident is still under investigation by the police.

Regarding Thomlinson's concerns about financial support, White notes that the city's insurers are still making interim payments to support those who were most severely impacted by the crash. Furthermore, White notes that during this difficult time for the Ottawa community where criminal charges have been laid, civil actions have also been taken against the city. In conclusion White thanks the public for their

Where: Faculty of Social Sciences, room 4004, University of Ottawa

For tickets and more information, please [click here](#).

SNAPSHOTS

The Ontario government is putting forward a new strategy to fight human trafficking

The Ontario provincial government recently [announced](#) it is developing a new strategy to help combat human trafficking. The strategy will be co-led by Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General, and Jill Dunlop, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues.

This new strategy will be a part of the current commitment by the Ontario government to protect women and children and combat gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. The first [priority](#) of the strategy will be a commitment of "\$20 million in annual funding for victim supports and anti-human trafficking enforcement initiatives".

Associate Minister Dunlop [stated](#) that "during discussions across the province, frontline workers and survivors of human trafficking told us there is a need for consistent and reliable funding." She also stated that this annual funding "will ensure victim supports are available on an ongoing



patience and understanding throughout the entire process.

So far in 2019, at least 118 women and girls have been murdered in Canada

The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (CFOJA) released an annual [report](#) which stated that as of this time this year at least 118 women and girls have been murdered in Canada. According to [Nneka MacGregor](#), the executive director of the Women's Centre for Social Justice in Toronto, "the numbers have not shifted. They have remained pretty much the same". She also said that this "[raises] the question, what can we as society do better? Do differently? There's a lot of time, energy, good intentions, and resources being allocated. And yet the shift in the public consciousness, and the shift in the actual numbers of women who've died – we're not making that type of dent that we want to make."

The CFOJA [report](#) stated that the killers were identified in a total of 98 cases and in 87 per cent of the cases a man was the primary accused. It was also mentioned that in only 77 per cent of the cases, the relationship between the victim and the accused killer was known. From those cases, the victim and the accused killer were in a current or former intimate relationship in 52 per cent of the cases.

The CFOJA [report](#) also included that shooting was the most common method of killing. As well as that the highest rates of femicide were in Nunavut, followed by Yukon, Manitoba and Alberta. The report also mentioned that Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately at risk, as well as those living in rural and remote regions. According to [Myrna Dawson](#), director of the CFOJA, these statistics "reiterate the importance of addressing gender-based violence". She also stated that the report "highlights a need for federal action".

The [report](#) was released near the date of the 30th anniversary of the Montreal massacre, which caused the death of 14 women. 30 years later, "women and girls continue to be victimized and killed because they are women and girls" according to the CFOJA. The issue can be connected to the "incel" (involuntary

basis, and that critical prevention and enforcement actions continue."

[According](#) to Solicitor General Jones "Ontario has more police-reported incidents of human trafficking than any other province in Canada," and "ensuring the safety and security of Ontarians is the government's most fundamental responsibility."

This past summer, the government of Ontario hosted 13 roundtable meetings on human trafficking with survivors, Indigenous partners, law enforcement and frontline service providers. According to the [news release](#), Solicitor General Jones and Associate Minister Dunlop "will continue to look for ways to collaborate across government, across sectors and across jurisdictions to raise awareness, help survivors, keep children and youth safe, and hold offenders accountable."

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Statistics Canada has released its report on Homicides in Canada in 2018

Statistics Canada has released its 2018 [report](#) on police reported homicides in Canada for 2018.

According to the [report](#), there was a total of 652 police reported homicides in Canada,



celibate) movement, where men are angry at women for not receiving attention from them. Men connected to this movement include Alek Minassian, the perpetrator of the 2018 Toronto van attack. According to [MacGregor](#), this movement "is becoming a bigger movement that people don't seem to be taking seriously".

And yet.....

Type of Gun Used in the Ecole Polytechnique Massacre Still Not Banned in Canada

[Heidi Rathjen](#) was a 21-year-old civil engineering student at the time of the Ecole Polytechnique massacre. She and a handful of other students hid in a dark room for about 20 minutes while the shooting occurred. Sadly, she later learned one of her close friends was amongst the 14 victims.

30 years later, [Rathjen](#) is an advocate for stricter gun laws in Canada. She notes that the first big step towards accomplishing this goal came six years after the massacre, when there were registration permits for gun owners, registration of all guns, and a theoretical ban on all assault style weapons. However, [Rathjen](#) also notes that over the past years, the conservative governments loosened these accomplishments, and what is concerning for her, is that "thirty years after the tragedy, we still haven't banned the weapon that killed 14 women and injured as many others in less than 20 minutes."

PolySeSouvient is an organization formed in 2009 as a result of the greater leniency the federal government had towards gun restriction. Since their foundation, the [PolySeSouvient](#) has excelled as an advocate for stricter gun laws, and is now pushing for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to enact "comprehensive, bold gun control measures" that includes a total ban on assault weapons and handguns.

The organization recently sent a letter to Bill Blair, the Federal Public Safety Minister urging him to implement the Liberal's "campaign [promise](#) to ban assault-style weapons and handguns."

[Rathjen](#) stands by the PolySeSouvient's message and adds to it by indicating that with the number of people who own guns in Canada at a record high, if

which is 15 fewer than 2017. Despite the lower number, the homicide rate remains higher than the national average for the previous decade.

Homicides represent less than 0.2% of all violent crimes in the country in 2018 but "homicide rates are considered benchmarks for levels of violent activity both in Canada and internationally".

The [report](#) also looks at provincial homicide rates. According to Statistics Canada, there were fewer homicides in 2018 compared to 2017 in the following provinces, Alberta (-38 homicides), British Columbia (-30 homicides), Quebec (-10 homicides) and Nova Scotia (-10 homicides). Census metropolitan areas in some of these provinces also had decreases in their homicide rates, including Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

The province of Ontario experienced 69 more homicides in 2018 compared to 2017, which is the largest year-over-year increase and the province had the highest number of homicides since data collection began. This higher rate of homicides in the province is connected to the increase of homicides in Toronto. The city had 49 more homicides in 2018 compared to 2017 and had the highest number of homicides for a census metropolitan area with a total of 142 victims.



National Justice Network Update



something is not done to change this now, the issue may never be resolved. Furthermore, [Rathjen](#) notes that “most Canadians support gun control, but they’re not really involved in the debate because it doesn’t concern them.”

“You don’t care about it until affects you” [Rathjen](#) says.

The Ecole Polytechnique massacre remains as the most [deadly](#) mass shooting in Canadian history, and initiated a major conversation about violence against women. Unfortunately, the shooting ended up taking [more](#) than 14 lives, as there were a number of reported suicides by individuals who had witnessed the event first hand.

On December 6, 2019, [the Globe and Mail reported](#) that the Liberal government will introduce legislation banning the type of firearm used in the Ecole Polytechnique massacre.

In this same article, Sheldon Clare, President of the National Firearms Association is quoted as saying;

“There is going to be a groundswell of outrage and resistance to this (proposed ban). People are just not going to go along.”

According to the [report](#) the rate of firearm-related homicides declined in 2018, for the first time since 2013.

Despite the fact that most provinces and territories had fewer firearm-related homicides in 2018, Ontario actually reported 36 more than in 2017.

In addition, gang-related homicides also decreased in 2018 by 5%. In Quebec, the amount of gang-related homicides increased and went from 15 victims in 2017 to 32 victims in 2018.

Indigenous victims of homicide represented approximately 22% of all homicide victims in Canada in 2018. This information is comparable to previous years, but there was a decrease in male Indigenous victims (-23 homicides) and an increase in female Indigenous victims (+6 homicides). Rates of persons accused of homicide in 2018 are approximately eight times higher for Indigenous people compared to non-Indigenous people. This is comparable to previous years, although this year’s rate (30%) was down from last years’ rate (37%).

Lastly, the majority of homicide victims knew their killer.

What the statistics don’t reveal are the number of living victims - family, friends, co-workers - who are left behind as a result of these homicides.



Read more from Statistics Canada:

1. [Data tables](#): victims of police reported violent crime from 2009 to 2018.
2. A [statistical profile](#) from 2018 of family violence in Canada.
3. [Initial findings](#) from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces: the gendered violence and unwanted sexual behaviour (2018).

A recent study of Canadian sexual assault cases deflates the 'statutory rape' myth

A [study](#) was completed by researchers from the Peter A. Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia that looked at three years of Canadian case law that involved sexual offences committed against adolescent girls, between the ages of 12 and 17. Researchers looked at a total of 680 written decisions from across Canada from 2014 to 2018. There was a total of 518 accused, 99% of which were men, and 625 female complainants.

The [study](#) demonstrated that, on average, the men accused in the cases were 19 years older than the complainant. In addition, over half of the victims reported that the sexual assaults were committed by male family members. According to the researchers, these findings



National Justice Network Update



from the study deflate the 'statutory rape' myth, which is "the idea that age-of-consent laws lead to the prosecution of large numbers of young men for engaging in sexual relationships with younger teenage girlfriends". Rather, these cases are more often "devastating abuse by male adults in positions of trust".

For more information on the study and its findings, click on this [link](#).