



National Justice Network Update



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Greetings!

Welcome to the **NOVEMBER** 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 OR HAVE THEM SIGN UP TO RECEIVE IT DIRECTLY AT: <http://crcvc.ca/en/newsletter/>.

This newsletter was written and compiled with the assistance of Carleton University Criminology and Gender Studies placement student, Mari-Lisa Mank.

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Ombudsman for Victims of Crime releases results of cross-country engagement on Canada's CJS

The Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, Sue O'Sullivan, has released five reports detailing the perspectives of victims and victim advocates on topics including restorative justice, bail reform, administration of justice issues, the criminal justice system in general, and the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. The reports revealed that there is little confidence in the criminal justice system as it exists today, and that victims and survivors feel that there is a need for a refocusing of the system toward victims and vulnerable groups.

The [first report](#), on Canada's criminal justice system as a whole, highlights delays in criminal trials, and the need for better support of victims and survivors of sexual assault. Participants' in-group discussions conducted by the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC) felt that change was needed in the criminal justice system, as many individuals experienced re-victimization simply by trying to obtain justice. They called for changes in both legislation and

QUICK LINKS

[Donate](#) to the Ashton James Dickson Memorial Fund. Ashton Dickson was senselessly shot and killed in downtown Ottawa on June 26, 2017. Donations to this Fund will be used to support young athletes to play club level football in the Ottawa area.

Read the CRCVC's latest blog post on harassment and violence in the Canadian workplace [here](#).

[Sign the petition](#) to the Minister of Justice against sexual exploitation of minors. The petition calls for better support of child sex abuse and trafficking victims.

Read the Department of Justice's [fact sheet on no-contact orders](#), which prevent accused individuals from contacting victims or their kin.

Read the CRCVC's letter to the Minister of Health about a healthcare approach to preventing and responding to interpersonal violence [here](#).

The Division of Violence Prevention under the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention has published a [Technical Package on Preventing Intimate Partner Violence](#).



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Ensuring the equitable treatment of crime victims in Canada



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attitudes toward victims. Additionally, the report notes a need for prevention-focused, people-centred, and evidence-based initiatives. Participants noted that victims should be given help in navigating the justice system, and that people working in the system should be given adequate training. Finally, they noted that children, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQ+ individuals should receive special consideration. The recommendations outlined in this report include preventing crime by addressing its root causes, addressing delays in the system, and establishing standardized practices for supporting victims' rights.

The [second report](#), on restorative justice, emphasizes the importance of recognizing crime as a violation of law *and* of people, relationships, and communities. Victim impact panels, victim-offender panels, and sentencing/healing circles are examples of methods that can help to achieve restorative justice. Participants in the discussions felt that restorative justice should be an option for victims, and that such methods should not be forced upon them. While current restorative justice practices tend to focus on offenders, participants felt that victims should be better acknowledged. Further, the report points out that cultural considerations should be made when following the restorative justice path. Recommendations include increasing awareness and understanding of what restorative justice means, and the types of options available to victims and survivors, increasing accessibility to resources, passing more comprehensive legislation, and following up with research.

The Ombudsman's [report on bail reform](#) touched upon the issue of victims being bypassed during bail decisions for their offenders. The safety and security of the victim should be brought to the forefront, and victims should be made aware of their right to request a copy of the bail release order. Participants identified a lack of systemic flexibility to the needs of victims in these situations. Victims will differ in what they feel is threatening behaviour. The report suggests enshrining further rights in the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*, providing better information and support to victims, and giving greater weight to their security concerns.

The [report on administration of justice offences](#) shines light on the impact that breaches of conditions can have on victims. For example, when offenders fail to

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Forum on Human Trafficking

On meeting the needs of trafficked persons and working toward advocacy and awareness.

When: December 3rd, 2017

Where: Brock University, St. Catharines, ON

[Click here](#) for more information and to register.

2017 CHFS Canadian Violence Link Conference

On the link between violence against human beings and animals.

When: December 4th-6th, 2017

Where: Ottawa Conference and Event Centre, Ottawa, ON

[Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Enhancing Leeds & Grenville's Response to Child Sexual Abuse

Free workshop by Geraldine Crisci on Assessing & Understanding Trauma in Children

When: January 31st, 2018

Where: Brockville, ON

Contact [Brandy Morton](#) for more information.

Summit on Criminal Guns and Gangs

A national summit on challenges, solutions, and best practices in the fight against criminal guns and gangs

When: March 2018

Read the Public Safety news release [here](#).



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appear in court, this can cause unnecessary disruption and emotional distress for victims, given the burden of preparing for court. Participants lacked trust in the criminal justice system to protect victims, and felt that there should be an effort to understand why breaches have occurred. Additionally, authorities should be proactive in notifying victims if there is a potential threat to their safety. In its current state, the system lacks the consistency and flexibility to address victim safety. The report recommends informing and educating victims, criminal justice system workers, and the general public, and ensuring that victim safety is taken into consideration.

The [final report](#), on the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR), identifies a lack of awareness about victims' rights, in part because of inadequate accessibility to such information. Participants called for better training in favour of a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach, as well as fewer restrictions on who can act on behalf of a victim (i.e. to enable representation by organizations). They also felt that more attention should be paid to interpersonal, gender-based, and power-based crimes, emerging Internet crime, and the specific needs of certain marginalized populations. Recommendations include expanding the CVBR, providing alternatives for victim participation, proactively providing victims with more information, supporting victims in getting restitution, and installing better oversight and accountability mechanisms.

These reports provide useful insight into victims' views of the operation of the criminal justice system, and the recommendations are, in general, sound. The CRCVC looks forward to seeing the work that the Office of the Ombudsman does in the coming years to reach these goals.

Sue O'Sullivan has [reached the end of her term](#) as Ombudsman as of November 15th after seven years. She is pleased with the shifting focus of the criminal justice system toward victims and survivors, and hope that this continues to progress. While recognizing the important work that has already been done, she notes the need to find more ways for victims to be included as active participants of the criminal justice system. In the future, she hopes that the government will enhance the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*, provide

SNAPSHOTS

December 6

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women in Canada.

Established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada, this day marks the anniversary of the murders in 1989 of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. They died because they were women.

What will you do?

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women is about remembering victims; it is also [a time to take action](#).

Why a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women?

As well as commemorating the 14 young women whose lives ended in an act of gender-based violence that shocked the nation, December 6 represents an opportunity for Canadians to reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also an opportunity to consider the women and girls for whom violence is a daily reality, and to remember those who have died as a result of gender-based violence. And finally, it is a day on which communities can consider concrete actions to eliminate





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better support for victims regarding deportation issues, and being prepared to support victims in circumstances of mass victimization. We wish her all the best in her new endeavors!

Supporting victims of revenge pornography and cyberbullying in Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan government intends to change its Privacy Act in order to better support victims of revenge pornography or unauthorized sharing of intimate images. Cyberbullying is a growing problem often targeting the young demographic, but victims of these types of crime often struggle to find justice due to the high burden of proof. The amendments to the Act will attempt to make it easier for victims to sue for compensation through small claims court. Additionally, the onus will be shifted onto the defendant to prove that consent was obtained.

An American survey by the Data & Society Research Institute on non-consensual pornography (the first of its kind) found that online uploading of images or threats has victimized approximately 10.4 million Americans. This problem is prevalent in Canada, too. Nova Scotia's Cyber Safety Act was in effect from 2013 until 2015. During this time, the CyberScan unit conducted 820 investigations, with more than 100 of these being resolved informally.

A law professor at Dalhousie University called for cyberbullying laws to encourage faster legal action in response to these crimes. Victims of revenge pornography and unauthorized sharing of intimate images must often endure lengthy police investigations or expensive civil court processes. Professor MacKay identifies a need for timeliness and accountability in removing harmful online posts.

Gatineau teen reports being assaulted by her father for removing her hijab

A Gatineau teen reported to the police that her father for repeatedly assaulted her over a year. His violence escalated after he discovered that his daughter was removing her hijab after leaving home. Police spokesperson Jean-Paul Lemay noted that such a case had not been seen in Gatineau heretofore, but suggested that this case may encourage other victims of this type of violence to come forward.

all forms of violence against women and girls.

November and December are important months for raising awareness of gender-based violence in Canada and around the world. In addition to the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women takes place on November 25 and marks the first day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which ends on December 10, with International Human Rights Day.

Comfort dog joins Robson Valley Police Based Victim Services team

The Robson Valley Police Based Victim Services team in British Columbia has welcomed a new canine member of their team: a comfort dog named Skipper. Skipper will be able to provide support to victims of crime, and also attend court in aid of those who are testifying. He has also been attending various community outreach programs, such as the Robson Valley Support Society's Strong Start Program and the McBride Library's Ready, Set, Learn Program.

Skipper was trained by the Pacific Assistance Dog Society (PADS), a non-profit organization that breeds and trains dogs. These highly trained dogs cost





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The accused father was arrested on October 25th and charged with assault, assault with a weapon, and uttering death threats. The daughter has been removed from the household and is safe under youth protection. The president of the Outaouais Islamic Centre – Hayet Laggoune – noted that wearing the hijab should be an act of free will.

An [op ed by Amira Elghawaby and Manaal Farooqi](#) identified the danger in labelling these types of incidents as “honour-based violence”. They state that “using ‘honour’ to describe such cases only results in further stereotyping of Muslim or racialized households as particularly backwards, barbaric and uncivilized.” Further, this denotation obscures the patriarchal undercurrents of violence against women.

Elghawaby and Farooqi call attention to the power of language in our attitudes toward violence and toward victims of violence. The characterization of “honour-based violence” essentially poses religion as a scapegoat. They feel that the language used to describe such incidents – both in societal norms and in policy/legislation – should be victim-centred and victim-oriented.

Safer Ontario Act, 2017 – Bill 175

Earlier this month, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Marie-France Lalonde, and Attorney General Yasir Naqvi announced the upcoming introduction of the *Safer Ontario Act, 2017*. This bill would represent an unprecedented revitalization of Ontario policing and public safety. The changes are directed toward modernizing community safety and policing practices, and adapting to Ontario’s evolving demographic.

Specifically, the Bill proposes a collaborative approach of community safety by assigning greater responsibility to municipalities to address the needs of their local populations. Additionally, the Act would involve the creation of a new office of Inspector General of Police to reinforce police accountability. Police service boards would have higher standards of training (including diversity training) and reporting.

Along the same lines, the Act hopes to strengthen police oversight, enforce strong penalties for officers who do not comply with investigations, and conduct

approximately \$35,000 to raise, and PADS does this solely through donation funds. Skipper has been partnered with Jennifer Quam, who will be able to adopt him after his career with the Victim Services team.

Manitoba clothing company inspired by #MeToo to fundraise for local family violence agency

Erin Kembel, owner of Winnipeg-based EMK Clothing, was inspired by the #MeToo movement to raise money for the Willow Place Shelter through her scarf sales. The #MeToo movement addressed the stigma and silence surrounding sexual assault and harassment, and resulted in an onslaught of individuals coming forward with their stories of victimization. Kembel could relate to some of these experiences, and felt that her position with EMK Clothing gave her the opportunity to make a difference.

Half of the profits from her scarf sales will be forwarded to the Willow Place Shelter, which is a family violence agency also in Winnipeg. They help women and children victims of domestic violence, specifically. Kembel’s fundraiser coincided with Domestic Violence Awareness Month (November).

Addressing music festival vulnerabilities





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investigations and public reporting in a timelier manner. Further, it aims to standardize police education, training, and standards with the establishment of a Public Safety Institute.

Importantly, the *Safer Ontario Act* seeks to be more responsive to the needs of First Nations individuals, by enabling them to choose their own police service delivery mode. This is a significant step in recognizing the need for equitable and flexible policing that is responsive to individual and cultural needs. Other aspects of Bill 175 include creating a new *Missing Persons Act*, amending the *Coroners Act*, and requiring forensic lab accreditation.

The CRCVC wrote to the Attorney General to express our disappointment with the Bill missing a key focus on crime victims, in our view. Ontario should do more to actively meet international standards on services and rights for victims. Basic practical actions for victims of crime are important and could significantly improve the response to victims of crime in Ontario. We called upon the Attorney General to require police to inform victims of rights and services available to them and to establish the office of victim advocate who can monitor access to victim support structures/services and reductions in victimization, among other issues. Read the full Bill [here](#).

Cybercrime and cyber fraud comes to light in several provinces

The [Government of Canada defines cybercrime](#) as “a criminal offence involving a computer as the object of the crime (hacking, phishing, spamming), or as the tool used to commit a material component of the offence (child pornography, hate crimes, computer fraud).” Rapidly changing technology capabilities have provided a widening arena in which offenders can carry out their illicit activities. Offenders are drawn to the Internet, as it is borderless, accessible, affordable, and anonymous in nature. New technologies have often proved to be hurdles for investigations into online crime, but have exacerbated vulnerabilities of Internet-users.

Recent occurrences in various Canadian provinces have brought attention to these vulnerabilities, and the need for awareness on the individual level for best practices of Internet use, and for forward-looking

Music festivals, by nature, are chaotic assemblies of strangers wherein drugs and alcohol are common. This, combined with the tendency of bystander apathy, makes such festivals a vulnerable space for many individuals. Dr. Kari Sampsel, the medical director for the sexual assault and partner abuse program at the Ottawa Hospital, said that music festivals are “a perfect setup to prey on people.”

Several news pieces have identified the problem of assault at music festivals. In 2016, a young Oakville man was charged with sexual assault, said to have occurred during the WayHome Festival in Ontario. Also that year, a woman named Melanie Doucet was vocal about being drugged while at the Osheaga music festival in Montreal.

In an effort to address this problem, the aforementioned Dr. Sampsel is developing a mobile app to keep people safe at music festivals and other mass gatherings. After finding that approximately 25% of sexual assault cases at the clinic were linked to mass gatherings, she began working on her [Night Light project](#).

The app would enhance communication between groups of friends who are attending festivals together, as well as between attendees and festival organizers or officials. While ensuring the safety of festivalgoers, NightLight would also improve





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policy and legislation that is attentive to technological developments.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre is the central agency that has been established to address cyber fraud matters. Last month, during Cyber Security Awareness Month, a [bulletin](#) was published to raise awareness of types of online scams, including romance fraud, wire fraud, continuity scams, phishing, etc. Such scams have appeared in Alberta and Yukon, though they are not by any means limited to those regions.

In Edmonton, police have warned Chinese communities in the city of a cyber scam that first appeared in July 2017 in BC. The scam involves individuals posing as Chinese government officials or law enforcement, and telling victims that they must go into hiding because they are suspected of committing crimes in China.

Police have noticed that the scam is targeted toward young female Chinese foreign nationals, especially students. These scammers will threaten victims' families or threaten deportation. After victims comply and go into hiding, suspects may demand a ransom from their families claiming that they have kidnapped their loved ones.

The Edmonton Police encourage those who have been impacted by such a scam to contact them at 780-423-4567. Additionally, anonymous tips can be submitted at 1-800-222-8477 or at www.tipsubmit.com/start.htm.

In the Yukon, romance fraudsters, according to the executive director of the Yukon Public Education Association, Carmen Gustafson, have victimized several citizens. These romance frauds involve scamming vulnerable individuals by creating fake social media and online dating profiles with the goal of earning enough trust to make financial requests. The victims have been scammed out of their life savings in this manner.

Gustafson states that even social media accounts that are full of information and photos could be scams. Often, the offenders will go to great lengths to keep the relationship virtual, and will refuse to meet in person. She also noticed a pattern of scammers

festival security's ability to address security concerns.

Treaty Three Police Call attention to violence against women

The Treaty Three Police Service, in partnership with Kenora's Saakaate House (a women's shelter), is working to bring attention to violence against women. In a ceremony that opened National Woman Abuse Prevention Month, a flag was raised and the police service's teepee was lit up with purple lights, representing the ongoing effort to end violence against women. The Treaty Three police oversee several Indigenous communities in the Kenora-Rainy River area in Ontario.

Sgt. Gervais with the police service emphasized the importance of inter-agency partnership, as well as effective internal policy for supporting such victims. One of the programs offered by the Treaty Three police is "Support our Survivors," which attempts to address the specific needs of sexual assault victims, while incorporating cultural aspects.

Nova Scotia offering free legal advice for survivors of sexual assault

The Nova Scotia government is offering up to four hours of free legal advice for survivors of sexual assault. The conditions of eligibility for the program include being 16 years of age or older, and that the assault took place in





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claiming to be from a western country but that they are working overseas.

In 2016, the RCMP found that approximately 748 Canadian victims had lost around \$17 million to romance scams such as these. Larry Crandall, with accounting and risk management firm Grant Thornton, identifies preventative measures to avoid being scammed.

Of course, the first step is to be aware of the possibility of becoming involved in romance fraud. Additionally, Internet users and online daters should be wary of online relationships that seem to progress at a fast pace. If you, yourself, are being secretive about the relationship, that is also a red flag. Crandall warns that long-term relationships are not necessarily safe from romance scams either. He suggests delving deeper into your significant other's online presence. Finally, it is important to report romance and cyber scams when they do occur, despite potential feelings of shame and embarrassment.

Addressing the needs of sex trafficking survivors in London, ON

London Police and St. Joseph's Health Care are working together to address the unique needs of sex trafficking survivors. The Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program at the St. Joseph's hospital sees approximately 300 victims of sexual or domestic violence each year. It is difficult, however, to put a number to how many of those individuals have been victims of trafficking. There can be a great deal of shame surrounding such an experience, and some people may not even think that they have been victims of trafficking.

The goal of this partnership is to help sex trafficking survivors to begin their recovery process early on. They have a wide array of staff that is trained and able to help victims who have experienced sexual violence and/or trauma. Additionally, an interview room has been set up at St. Joseph's for police, so that victims need not go to the police station, where the environment could have the effect of compounding trauma and stress. Medical Director of the Program, Dr. Susan McNair, emphasizes the need for long-term

the province. Sexual assault victims in Nova Scotia can call 211 to register for the program. Once registered, survivors will receive a package with a certificate for two hours of legal advice and a list of lawyers. The additional two hours can be requested if more time is needed after using the first certificate.

An assault survivor who was found naked from the waist down in Bassam Al-Rawi's taxi has met the program with support. She was subpoenaed and forced to testify, though she did not wish to pursue charges. She feels that, had this program been in place, it would have been helpful to receive information about the criminal justice process, and her involvement in it.

Find more information about the legal advice program [here](#).

Teen receives youth sentence for involvement in murder

A Saskatchewan teen has received a youth sentence after pleading guilty to the second-degree murder of 16-year old Hannah Leflar in 2015. Ms. Leflar was stalked and attacked by her ex-boyfriend, Skylar Prockner. The sentenced teen was a close friend of Prockner's and stood by as Ms. Leflar was stabbed over ten times.





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attention to such survivors, especially in terms of their psychological needs.

This program is one of the first of its kind in Ontario, and provides initial examination, STI testing, and both physical and psychological care for survivors. Dr. McNair pointed out that these victims may also require support in terms of "safety, housing, legal advocacy, and the most basic necessities." As such, counseling, forensic evidence collection, and safety planning services are also available. Currently, the program services London, Oxford, Elgin, Huron-Perth, and Middlesex counties. This is a positive example of what can be done to support victims and survivors, and hopefully similar programs will be implemented nation-wide.

Justice Lian Schwann held that the threshold of moral culpability to receive an adult sentence had not been met. As such, the offender was sentenced to seven years in the Saskatchewan Intensive Rehabilitative Custody Supervision (IRCS) program, with four years in custody. In her reasoning, Justice Schwann noted that the teen in question had not physically participated in the crime, and that there was no evidence that he had contributed to a plan of the murder.

