



EMPOWER

A publication of the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime

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“I ran for safety in the upstairs bathroom. Then I heard the intruder shoot my husband dead.”

It was always our wish to live in Jamaica in our dream home. So, in August 2012, my husband Sedrick Levine and I left Canada to move into our new home. We were thrilled to finally be starting the next chapter in our lives, in Sedrick’s beloved homeland. He bought a little bus and planned to operate tours for visitors to the island. I was helping him run this business venture, as part of our semi-retirement in Jamaica.

My life as I knew it was suddenly shattered when two masked men broke into our home on Sunday, November 17, 2013. Sedrick struggled with the men, allowing me to flee upstairs to call the police. His actions saved my life that day, and that of my father and his housekeeper, who were visiting us at the time. One of the masked intruders chased me upstairs and kicked in the bathroom door, but he stopped when he heard a gunshot from downstairs.

My husband Sedrick was killed that day and the men fled our home with a laptop. The Jamaican police have not yet found these men or charged them with killing my beloved husband. Their motive remains unknown.

This crime has completely changed my life. I suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder now and have depression as a result. I came back to Canada, but I feel very isolated since this happened. These emotional scars may never heal.

I managed to find the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime by searching online one day. I didn’t know where to turn for help when I came home to Canada.

The CRCVC has provided me with a lot of emotional support, which has been tremendously helpful.

They've also written numerous letters to Jamaican officials seeking justice for Sedrick, as well as intervening with Canadian officials on my behalf. The office also helped connect me to a trauma therapist for counselling sessions too.

To try and make sense of what happened to Sedrick, it is my hope that others could support the work of the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime.

There are so many other victims/survivors out there who also need their assistance.



Did you know that Canada offers Financial Assistance for Canadians Victimized Abroad?

Canadians who have been the victim of a serious violent crime in a foreign country may be eligible for financial assistance through the Victims Fund.

As of April 1, 2007, financial assistance is available to individual Canadians who are victims of specified serious violent crimes in a foreign jurisdiction for serious situations of undue hardship where no other source of financial assistance is available.



The Canadians Victimized Abroad Fund (CVAF) may help to cover expenses such as:

- Hospital and medical expenses due to being victimized;
- Expenses to replace stolen official documents;
- Upon return to Canada, financial assistance for professional counselling;
- Funeral expenses if the crime resulted in the death of the victim (includes funeral home and burial costs, but does not include expenses for flowers, reception, etc.); and/or

- out-of-pocket expenses due to being a victim of a violent crime.

The **CRCVC** is pleased to help victims as they navigate the CVAF application process. We support victims in filling out paperwork and explain the different options available to them to empower decision-making. We advocate for victims to receive the CVAF and obtain access to counselling and resources after being victimized abroad.

For more information on the Canadians Victimized Abroad Fund, click [here](#).

If you have been victimized abroad and need support, reach out to the CRCVC via:

Text: Our number is 613-208-0747

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

Phone: Call our office toll-free at 1-877-232-2610

Email us: crcvc@crcvc.ca

January 8th marked the first anniversary of the Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 crash in Iran.

On January 8, 2020, Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 was shot down after taking off from Tehran, Iran, by an Iranian surface-to-air missile. All 176 passengers and crew members were killed. Fifty-five Canadian citizens and thirty permanent residents were among the 176 people killed in this national tragedy. It was made known by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, that 138 people on that flight were on-route to Canada. Many victims aboard called Canada their home for the time being. Among these victims were students, families, and children.

The Government of Canada released its [response to the Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 tragedy](#). This response stated that Canada's priority is to provide the families and loved ones of the victims with the support they need. On March 31, 2020, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appointed the Honourable Ralph Goodale as his special advisor to:

- examine lessons learned from the crash of Flight PS752 and other air disasters
- develop a framework to guide Canada's responses to international air disasters
- provide recommendations on best practices, including advice on tools and mechanisms needed to prevent future events

Ralph Goodale rejected Iran's offer to compensate Canadian Victims. The families of the victims were offered \$150,000. Goodale responded to the offer by stating that Iran does not have the right to offer compensation to victims' families unilaterally. Goodale told The Canadian Press the final amount will be subject to negotiations between Iran and Canada and the four other countries whose citizens were killed on the plane.

In a Canadian Press article, Trudeau said Canada would offer a pathway to permanent residency for some family members, while those already here could apply to stay if needed. Canada, he said, was designating January 8 as the National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Air Disasters. The federal government also said scholarships would be set up in memory of the victims. Goodale said, there has been discussion about building a memorial, but the government wants the full input of families on how it might look and where in Canada it will be erected.

The crash in and of itself is a tragedy. Families have expressed the difficulty of grieving during a pandemic. Victims' families have expressed the desire for information, justice, and closure. Experience and research show that victims of mass criminal victimization react differently than victims of natural disasters largely because of the human factor – that someone did this on purpose to hurt innocent people.

How we respond to victims of terrorism in the aftermath of an event can impact their recovery. The response must be sensitive to the unique needs that these victims have from the outset. Too many past traumas have shown that a lack of coordination has led to more pain and intensified grief for those impacted.

Have you read our publication “A REPORT ON RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF CANADIAN VICTIMS OF TERRORISM”? [Click HERE](#) to read now!



A memorial stone (pictured) with the inscription “PS 752, 08.01.2020” was unveiled on February 17, 2020, at Boryspil International Airport outside the Ukrainian capital.

Lasting Effects of Terrorism and the Murder of a Canadian Businessman, Husband and Father.

Maureen Basnicki was in Europe on business, her children were at their home near Toronto and her husband Ken, was in a meeting at the World Trade Center.

Ken was murdered that day. It was September 11, 2001.

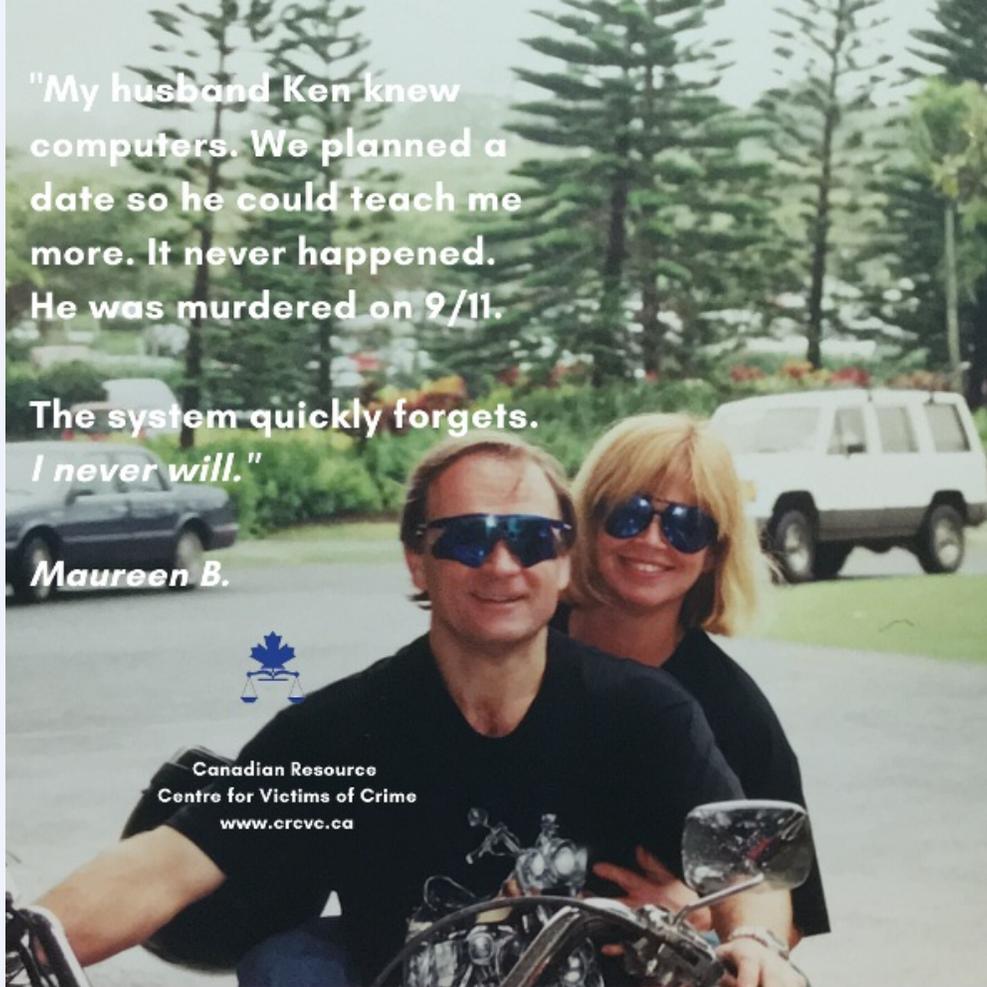
Since then, Maureen has been a tireless advocate for the rights of Canadians who are terrorized or victimized abroad.

During a one-day symposium designed to understand and assist Canadian victims and survivors, Maureen shared some of her challenges.

She spoke of the struggles to deal with not only the psychological impact of losing her husband to terrorism but also the lack of assistance she has received from her government. She also highlighted some issues that are unique to victims of terrorism: the ongoing identification of body parts, the intense media coverage, fear of future attacks, compensation, lack of prosecution, and the fact they are unlikely to be afforded the same rights that a victim of a crime other than terrorism will be offered (for example, attendance at trial, victim impact statement, attendance at parole hearings).

The CRCVC is committed to helping anyone and everyone who is a victim or survivor of terrorism.

[You can join us to help Maureen and others like her by clicking here to make your donation.](#)



Bill 84, introduced by Quebec Minister of Justice Simon Jolin-Barrette in mid-December.

In mid-December, the Quebec government introduced a bill that will change crime victims legislation to expand the number of victims it will cover. Quebec made this announcement shortly after the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime called on Parliament to overhaul the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (CVBR). In the Federal Ombudsman's review of the bill during Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, it was made known that the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights lacks teeth and there are no real repercussions of rights that are promised but violated.

The implementation of this bill will reach a wider range of victims of crime. The Lawyer's Daily released an [article](#) on the bill which provides education on what the bill entails. The bill will provide financial assistance to crime victims that were not covered before, eliminates prescription periods for victims of certain crimes and repeals two provincial laws dealing with crime victims (Crime Victims Compensation Act and Act respecting assistance and compensation for victims of crime) and replaces it with an integrated legislative framework titled "An Act to assist persons who are victims of criminal offences and to facilitate their recovery."

This change will improve the post-victimization experience for many victims. The implementation of this bill creates inclusion for those who may not have been included before, specifically victims of sexual exploitation, child luring, and criminal harassment.

Specifically, this bill will extend the time when crime victims can apply for assistance. In the past, victims had two to three years after becoming aware of an injury suffered due to the crime. Now, an application can be filed anytime, for people who were victims of violent crime

suffered during childhood, sexual aggression, or spousal violence.

Sexual victimization is an extremely traumatic experience for anyone, regardless of age or gender. Feelings may stay with victims for many weeks, months, or even years. It may be necessary to seek professional counselling to help with the healing process. The ability to file for compensation at any time after victimization is extremely important for vulnerable victims of these crimes.

Although the eligibility criteria are extending, Manuel Johnson, a researcher with the non-profit organization Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques (IRIS) with expertise in indemnities and landlord-tenant issues, commented on the availability of the fund. He stated "The law needed to be modernized and on the surface, it seems to be a very successful exercise. But the devil is in the details and so while they're extending the coverage to a lot more people, it's clear that there's a real risk that the financial compensation victims will receive will be drastically curtailed." Under Bill 84, Compensation will be limited to 90 percent of income to a maximum of \$78,500. It now stands at 90 percent of the income to a maximum of \$200,000.

Jo-Anne Wemmers, an international expert on victimology who is a professor at the School of Criminology at the Université de Montréal and Board of Director member at the CRCVC, [believes](#) the Quebec government should put in place a monitoring mechanism to ensure the IVAC follows the spirit of the bill.

[Furthermore](#), former Quebec Minister of Justice Marc Bellemare does not mince his words when he talks about Bill 84. The biggest gap, he says, is not considering compensation for people unemployed at the time of the crime, such as students, those on social assistance etc. Ms. Sophie Mongeon, a lawyer also specialized in the field, says she too is worried. She gives the example of victims of childhood abuse, or victims of domestic violence who may not have been able to properly invest in their careers, given their trauma and who may be more inclined to be working lower-wage jobs or not be able to work at all, and who will therefore not qualify when the time comes for compensation. "We were impatiently awaiting this law, but unfortunately, we were disappointed with the content. This is a massive setback." she said.



[Click here and support Morgan and other survivors of crime abroad by donating today.](#)

Spotlight on Research

Resilience and Survivors of Violent Crime.

In partnership with the Victim Justice Network, researchers at Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa conducted a mixed-methods study that sought to answer these questions:

1. How do people recover from violence?
2. What supports and resources are most meaningful and helpful to victims and survivors of violence?

View the research [here](#).

“Male Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada.”

One in five cases of intimate partner violence in Canada involves a male victim. Yet, there are no dedicated intimate partner violence shelters for men in Canada. In the unlikely event that men do reach out for support and resources, they are often ridiculed and shamed.

This research titled “Male Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Canada.” was prepared for the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC)

Click [here](#) to view.

Snapshots

In ruling on rape, B.C. judge pleads for action to protect Indigenous girls from 'horrible crimes'

After a 14-year-old girl was raped in a B.C. motel room, a B.C. judge is making an urgent appeal for action to protect Indigenous women and girls from violence.

In a CBC Article, Judge Wolf, a member of the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation, stated "Indigenous females have a greater chance of being victims to spousal violence. They have an increased chance of being sexually abused while in care and sexually assaulted when out of care. If you are a female teenager in jail, chances are that you are an Indigenous girl."

Wolf provided several judgments and opinions on the lack of protection against Indigenous young girls and women. CBC writer Bethany Lindsey states "Most significantly, Wolf lays out what it means when he says he cannot convict the man accused of raping this teenager, despite the evidence of wrongdoing."

The accused invited underage girls to his hotel room, he and his friends gave them alcohol. There was additional evidence that he grabbed one of the young girls and kissed her.

The CBC article explains that the standard of proof in criminal law is not what is possible or even probable, the judge said. Rather, it's about what can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. In this case, that bar was not met. Judge Wolf wrote "Please do not mistake the concept of an acquittal with the concept of innocence. The accused and these other males are guilty of not taking care of these young girls."

Judge Wolf was shocked that when this young victim went home and disclosed to her mother that she had been raped, her mother's immediate reaction was to change her clothing to preserve the evidence. Judge Wolf retracted his shocking reaction when he learned that this victim's mother was also raped when she was 16.

Correctional Service Canada takes concrete actions in response to Board of Investigation results

Correctional Services of Canada provided news that the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and the Parole Board of Canada (PBC) responded to the release of a report from a National Joint Board of Investigation (BOI) into the circumstances around the January 2020 murder of Marylène Levesque.

The Lawyers Daily informs us that In January 2020, massage parlour employee Marylène Levesque was killed by Eustachio Gallese, who was on parole after serving several years in prison for killing his wife. Gallese, who later pleaded guilty to first-degree murder, was living at the Maison Painchaud community residential facility (CRF) at the time.

The BOI report made note of "warning signs" which Gallese's case management team did not properly assess. It also identified weaknesses in information sharing with contacts like Gallese's employer and psychologist. The report included several recommendations to CSC. CSC has reviewed, analyzed, and accepted these recommendations as an effort to do everything possible to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again.

CSC stated their response to the report's recommendations as:

In response to the report's recommendations, CSC is:

- Changing its direct supervision model in Quebec. Currently, Community Residential Facilities (CRF) provide accommodation and support to offenders, while some directly supervise a small number of offenders (approximately 155 out of 2000) on release in the community, in Quebec. By March 31, 2021, CSC will take over all aspects of community supervision from the Maison Painchaud CRF. In addition, CSC is reviewing all other contracts in Quebec with the goal of returning all direct supervision responsibilities for federal offenders back to CSC. These contractors will continue to house offenders, as is the case across the country. CSC values these partnerships, as they are essential to supporting offenders in their transition from institutions to the community.
- Strengthening community supervision policies and tools so that specific elements, such as collateral contacts of the offender (employer, family members and friends) are regularly discussed

during case conferences between Parole Officers and their supervisors to help continually re-assess an offender's risk. CSC is revising its Information Collection policy to clearly define a serious offence for the purpose of information collection, specify which types of documents are required and relevant to an offender's history, and implement a formal monitoring mechanism.

- Implementing new, mandatory Intimate Partner Violence training, which will become a core component of the existing Parole Officer Continuous Development Training. It will be required for all Parole Officers and their supervisors to support them in assessing and managing the risk of offenders.

In addition, CSC conducted a nation-wide review to ensure that all supervision strategies are sound, appropriate, consistent with legislation and policies, and serve to protect public safety. This review found there were no similar cases.

The Lawyers Daily article explains that the CSC said it will implement new, mandatory intimate partner violence (IPV) training for parole officers and revise its information collection policy to clearly define a serious offence, specify which types of documents are relevant to an offender's history and implement a formal monitoring mechanism.

For more information and to read the full release from CSC, click [here](#).

To read the full article from The Lawyers Daily, click [here](#).

Quick Links

Do you need help finding victim services in your area? Follow the link for The Victim Services Directory (VSD) created by the Policy Centre for Victim Issues. Click [here](#) for help locating services for victims of crime across Canada.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights. The office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime released a Progress Report. Read the full report [here](#).

Mandatory reporting of choking necessary in the fight against domestic violence, police say. Newfoundland emergency rooms are required by law to report gunshot and stab wounds, but not strangulation. Read the article [here](#).

COVID-19 exacerbated violence against women. Frontline workers want essential service funding. Read [here](#).

The government of Saskatchewan sets out new legislation for survivors of sexual violence. Read the article [here](#).

After Candace: The Art of Healing

Cliff and Wilma Derksen share their story of resilience and post-traumatic change following the murder of their daughter Candace in 1984. Wilma reflects on complex grief and healing, while Cliff shares the power of art to transform trauma.

Film and Discussion guide [here](#).
Translation and French subtitles [here](#).

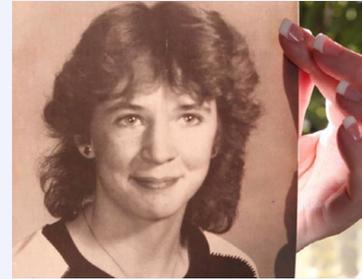
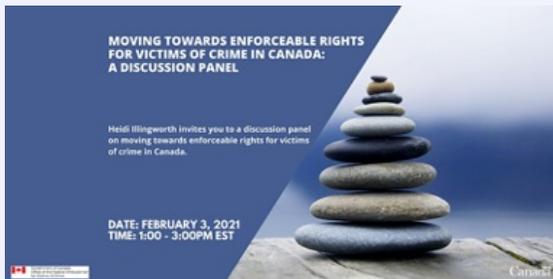


Photo Credit: Winnipeg Free Press.

The Faculty of Law and the School of Criminology at the University of Montreal are joining forces to establish the Legal Clinic for Victims of Crime. With a grant from Justice Canada, its activities include designing a website, raising awareness and hiring a coordinator as well as being able to evaluate the activities by hiring research students. To read more, the original article can be found [here](#), (French only).

Upcoming Events



Webinar: Moving Towards Enforceable Rights for Victims of Crime in Canada: A Discussion Panel

During the February 3rd event, Heidi Illingworth, Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, will continue the conversation on strengthening victims' rights in Canada by focusing on a complaint frequently raised by victims of crime to her office: that there is no recourse available when victims are not afforded their rights.

Date: February 3rd, 2021

Time: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM EST

Register by clicking [here](#).



Domestic Sex Trafficking of Youth During COVID-19: Parents & Prevention

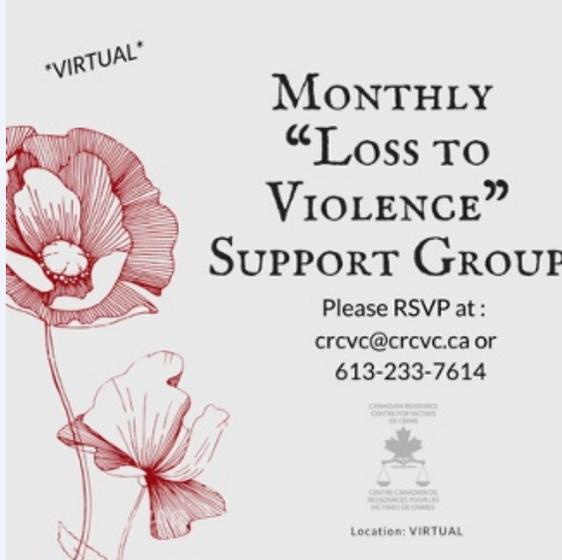
Victim Services of Durham Region knows that caregivers' attention, love, and awareness is the biggest defence against Human Trafficking.

This workshop empowers parents with psycho-education on human trafficking to prevent youth from being trafficked.

Date: Wed, February 24, 2021

Time: 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM EST

Register by clicking [here](#).



CRCVC's Monthly Drop-In Support Group for "Loss to Violence"

The drop-in support group is for family members, friends and close loved ones of homicide victims, and is intended to offer peer support to those dealing with violent loss.

Last Thursday of every month.

Please note, we have gone VIRTUAL.

To RSVP please email us at crcvc@crcvc.ca



Preventing Elder Abuse - What You Need to Know!

This presentation is designed to help you identify Elder Abuse and learn how to report it.

Date: Tuesday, February 23rd, 2021

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM EST

Registration information [here](#).

