



## Greetings!

Welcome to the **June** 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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## THE PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY FOR MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

On Monday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, a 1,200 page inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) was made [public](#) and presented at a sacred ceremony of renewal. The ceremony was held in Gatineau, QC at the Canadian Museum of History where many families of victims and survivors attended, along with various public figures, including Prime Minister Trudeau.

The inquiry challenges governments, the justice system and others to make substantive changes to the way Indigenous people are treated, how criminal cases are handled and a call on all Canadians to play a role in ending the violence. Arguably the most important conclusion drawn from the inquiry is that the crimes committed against so many women and girls over decades was deemed a "[Canadian Genocide](#)". The report determined that a genocide driven by the disproportionate level of violence faced by Indigenous women and girls occurred in Canada though "state actions and inactions rooted in colonialism and colonial ideologies". [The report](#) goes on to say that "genocide is the sum of the social practices, assumptions, and actions detailed within this report – the national inquiry findings support

## 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.

**Text:** Our number is 613-208-0747.

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

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

[Theodore's Place](#), a virtual healing home for crime survivors, has been launched. Big congratulations to Margot Van Sluytman on the launch!  
*"One more step to the bricks and mortar!"*

The [sexual abuse convictions](#) of the accused in the case of the of three sisters whose sexual abuse story were presented in the documentary *Because we are Girls*, was tossed due to court delays.

The [woman](#) in a video released last month, in which an RCMP officer questionably interviewed her about the sexual assault she experienced, has decided to sue the officer involved.

An [Ontario](#) case could create special sentencing rules, similar to the Gladue ones, for black offenders.



characterizing these acts, including violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual] people, as genocide”

The inquiry held 24 hearings and events to gather statements across Canada since 2017. Of those hearings, the inquiry heard from 1,500 people personally affected by violence and more than 2,380 participants including Indigenous knowledge keepers, as well as experts and officials.

Some of the [recommendations](#) include a call to all levels of government to develop an action plan to counter violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA. In total, it delivers 231 individual Calls for Justice directed at governments, institutions, social service providers, industries and all. Some examples are:

- 2.1 Acknowledge, recognize, and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their cultures and languages as constitutionally protected inherent rights.
- 3.7 Provide continual and accessible healing programs and support for all children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people and their family members. Specifically, we call for the permanent establishment of a fund akin to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and related funding.
- 7.6 Ensure all persons involved in the provision of health services to Indigenous Peoples receive ongoing training, education and awareness in areas including the history of colonialism, anti-bias and anti-racism, local language and culture, and local health and healing practices.
- 12.8 End the practice of targeting and apprehending infants from Indigenous mothers right after they give birth.
- 12.15 Fully investigate deaths of Indigenous youth in care.

[Bill C-75](#) has been passed by Parliament, the next step is to wait for Royal Assent.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Comedy Night

#### Fundraiser: CRCVC

A fun comedy night fundraiser in support of the CRCVC! In addition to the comedy show, there will also be a 50/50 draw. More information can be found on the CRCVC [website](#) or on the [Facebook event page](#). We hope to see you there!

**Where:** Absolute Comedy, 412 Preston St., Ottawa, ON, K1S 4M9

**When:** Thursday July 25<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30pm EST

**Cost:** \$20 for show tickets. Raffle with great prizes at show. Tickets can be bought at the CRCVC office located at 100-141 Catherine Street, Ottawa, K2P 1C3 (CASH ONLY).

## SNAPSHOTS

A national hotline to help victims and survivors of human trafficking is now taking calls! Available 24 hours a day and in 200 languages: 1-833-900-1010.

### Diana McGlinchey wins 2018-19 CRCVC Advocacy Award

Congratulations to [Algonquin College Victimology](#) student, Diana McGlinchey, who won the 2018-19 CRCVC advocacy award for outstanding academics and student life this month! It is well



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So, what now? Many are looking to members of government to see what they're response is to the inquiry and what changes they're willing to implement. During a question period in the House of Commons, party leaders were asked what the Minister of Indigenous Service would do in response to the report. The Honourable Seamus O'Regan [stated](#) "...in the coming weeks we'll be announcing our initial response to the final report as well as a process and first steps to formally develop a national action plan. This plan will build on the efforts our government has already taken to address this ongoing national tragedy, including reforms to child and family services that recognizes the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples and investments in women's shelters, housing, education and safety on the Highway of Tears".

It was [announced](#) on June 24, 2019, that the federal government is planning on providing over \$13 million towards "community-led projects to help honour the lives and legacies of missing and murdered Indigenous Women and girls in Canada." According to the Women and Gender Equality Minister, Maryam Monsef, there will be over 100 commemoration projects. These projects will include art installations, monuments and productions. They will share the stories of the Indigenous women and girls who have gone missing or who have been murdered.

To read the inquiry's final report, please click [here](#).

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## QUEBEC TO RECEIVE \$4.49 MILLION TO HELP SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, the federal government [announced](#), in Ottawa, that they'd be investing \$4.49 million dollars in five organizations based in Quebec. The funding is to support survivors of gender-based violence which includes people who have been underserved, Indigenous women and their communities, children and youth, women who are newcomers to the country,

deserved. Diana is pictured below with Victimology Program Coordinator, Jennifer Barkley.



## Halifax refrains from adding surveillance cameras to a location where a young woman was killed

This past year, a 17-year-old offender was found guilty of manslaughter for the death of Chelsie Probert, an 18 year old girl. The incident affected the community tremendously. In response, the Halifax Regional Council proposed a pilot project in hopes of installing surveillance cameras in the Farrell Street pathway, where the crime took place. The proposal was brought forth by Deputy Mayor Tony Mancini who led the initial request to possibly implement closed circuit television.

Unfortunately, the request was not recommended to proceed. It appears that other



refugees or non-status and women living with disabilities.

The following organizations will receive funding:

- Conseil des Atikamekw de Manawan
- DisAbled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN)
- Fédération des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes
- La rue des femmes de Montréal
- McGill University

"With this investment, we are funding organizations which provide essential services to support survivors and their families in Quebec," said [Maryam Monsef](#) the Minister for Women and Gender Equality. Monsef goes on to [say](#), "For far too long organizations engaged in doing this work have been chronically underfunded, underestimated and undermined. We are finally changing that reality and listening to those who best understand: leaders from the women's sector."

Monsef continued by explaining that the leaders asked for more funding over a longer period of time, a simplified application process as well as for resources to help provide support for the most underserved and marginalized survivors of gender-based violence. Thankfully, the federal government is listening and taking these concerns seriously. Monsef [concluded](#) by stating that "gender-based violence must not be tolerated, and we will continue to work with survivors, community partners, the private sector and other orders of government to end GBV in all of its forms."

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## **TWO BROTHERS MURDERED IN OTTAWA, TWO YEARS APART**

A young man, Mouhamed Serhan, 24, died at the end of May just steps away from his accused killer's house in Ottawa, ON. Sadly, gun violence is a familiar tragedy for the young man's family, having lost the younger brother, Hamzeh Serhan, 20, just two years before.

alternatives seemed more logical to push forth. In fact, [Amy Siciliano](#), public safety adviser for the community, explained that recent research demonstrated that cameras would not be the best method to prevent crime within this area. Other measures such as making alterations to infrastructure and improving the lighting would appear to be more effective.

Mancini explains that based on numerous reports, adding surveillance cameras would most likely not have prevented the crime from occurring. However, the rest of the recommendations were implemented such as cleaning up the pathway and improving the lighting. Many residents have since expressed how they feel safer in the location. In addition, this last August, a new administrative order passed that governs how to assess and decide whether camera installation would be appropriate and effective. We are hopeful that this new process will be helpful in implementing future crime prevention measures.

## **Shortage of shelter space for human trafficking victims in Ottawa**

Recently, many human trafficking victims are facing the challenge of finding appropriate housing for their needs. In fact, in Ottawa, there is only one facility that is specialized in rehabilitating victims of human trafficking. The facility is run by the local



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[The family](#) of these young brothers are having trouble understanding how their choice to move to Canada from Lebanon for a better life has only shattered the family unit due to gun-related violence in the short span of two years.

[Ottawa police](#) have charged Idris Ismail with second-degree murder. Family and friends say Mouhamed Serhan didn't know his alleged killer, and was visiting someone else who lives in the Heatherington neighbourhood.

Ismail may be in police custody, however Mouhamed's younger brother Hamzeh's alleged killer is still on the loose. In 2017, a Canada-wide arrest warrant was issued for Farah Handule, who investigators believe is in hiding somewhere in the Greater Toronto Area.

Ottawa has seen an increase in gun-related violent crimes over the last few years. With [2016](#) remaining the highest number of homicides due to guns recorded to date. There were **16** killings in the city in 2018, up from **14** killings in 2017, but down from **24** in 2016. [Ottawa police say](#) gang related activity is playing an increasingly larger role in gun related crimes.

There has been a surge of guns being smuggled into Canada from the US and sold on the black market. Some Canadian registered gun-holders are illegally selling their weapons to other Canadians, making the illegal trade increasingly difficult to track. [Before 2012](#), about 75 per cent of the firearms were trafficked from the United States. By 2017, however, about half originated from domestic sources.

Kadijah Serhan, the eldest sibling of the two men said this latest killing opens old wounds for the family, as well as inflicting new ones; she explains "We're alive, but we're not normal."

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organization A New Day Youth and Adult Services.

Unfortunately, the single house is supposed to serve victims across all parts of Ontario. In addition, the facility is only able to hold a few beds. As a result, getting into the program can take a long time and most victims are put on a wait list.

Based on the organization's website, the program consists of an [18-month](#) residential program that offers victims "trauma and addictions counselling, job training and art therapy". Although the response to the program has been positive, the limited housing capacity makes it difficult to help a large range of victims. In fact, board member Jodi Mosley explains "We only have four beds. There's a waiting list. If we could have three programs like that, they'd probably all be full right now. But we don't."

In 2017, the facility was provided with \$1.5 million for a three year period by the provincial Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. However, there is no guarantee that similar funding will be granted in the years to come.

In response, many victims of human trafficking have been referred to a facility in British Columbia that is better equipped to help these individuals. However, this can often bring up its own set of problems and is just a



## **ANNUAL CAMPAIGN IN B.C. ENCOURAGE MEN AND BOYS TO STAND UP AGAINST VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, now known as [Moose Hide Awareness Day](#), more than 100 people took to the streets in downtown Fort St. John, B.C. to protest and take a stand to end violence against women and children. The ceremony was part of the city's inaugural Moose Hide Walk that was started by indigenous and non-indigenous men and boys along the Highway of Tears back in 2011 and has transformed into an annual friendly protest. The goal is to challenge boys and men to use their voice to speak out and support the women in their communities who have been affected by violence.

David Stevenson of the Moose Hide Campaign spoke of the event "Women have borne the brunt of advocacy to respond to domestic violence in the communities, and people don't know about this issue... So, what we want to do is challenge men and boys to become more aware of the issue, and start to hold ourselves and each other accountable regarding this issue, and to stop it in this country, to stop domestic violence and gender-based violence in this country. We believe that's doable. It's about love, it's about respect."

City councillors have been encouraging residents since 2011 when this first started to take a pledge to end the violence by wearing a piece of moose hide (moose skin) to stand in solidarity. More than two million square pieces of hide have been distributed across Canada since the campaign began, including to businesses and organizations around Fort St. John. The campaign is being supported locally by [Shell Canada](#) and the City of Fort St. John.

"We're here because we care about our community, and we're here because we want to take a stand against violence in our community," said Mindy Henryu, external relations advisor with Shell, and the key organizer of the event on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

The event included drumming and dancing from the Doig River Drummers and the SD 60 Spirit of the Peace Drummers & Dancers.

temporary solution, for a much bigger issue. Due to the large housing gap that is in charge of assisting these individuals, ensuring that victims are receiving the appropriate resources needed has become a difficult task within Ottawa.

## **Mother still seeking answers in the death of her son Ashton Dickson**

In [June 2017](#), Ashton Dickson was shot and killed outside a bar in Ottawa. The night of the death, Ashton was at a bar when an argument broke out between Ashton and someone who was trying to skip in the line for the bathroom. This led to some men being thrown out of the bar. Ashton was then shot outside. There have been no arrests in the case.

His mother, Donna Dickson, gave her [first interview](#) since the death of her son to CBC. She did this in hopes that this would help with the search for the person who killed her son, saying that the "only way we're going to stop them is for people to start speaking up". There have been no updates on the case provided by the Ottawa police since the release of grainy photos of seven potential suspects since August 2017. Donna said that "if we know who [the killer] was and he's brought to justice, then we can start healing". Det. Jim O'Connell-Smith, the lead investigator on the case, [says](#) that "the homicide



Garry Oker, councillor with Doig River, said violence also must end against men, and against frontline workers helping those who have experienced violence. Oker explains, "We want everyone to live in a good way, to be the best that they can be, to add something to build the community, to bring something to the ceremony."

Mayor Lori Ackerman noted the city has spent \$85,000 a year over the last two years to help police bring in extra staff to digitize boxes of old, cold case files, and open new leads in their investigations. So far, that work has resulted in an arrest and conviction in at least one old sexual assault case. "The Moose Hide Campaign recognizes all forms of violence are unacceptable regardless of gender" Ackerman said.

"We really encourage you to get a moose hide and take the pledge," Ackerman said.

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## CANADIAN VICTIMS OF OVERSEAS TERRORISM ARE NOT BEING OFFERED ENOUGH SUPPORT

Many Canadian victims of overseas terrorism have [spoken out](#) about the lack of support they received from the Canadian government. In recent years, the amount of Canadians that have been victims of overseas terrorist attacks and have been killed is growing. Between [2013 and 2019](#), a total of 25 Canadians were killed in overseas terrorism attacks. Despite the growing number, [according](#) to those impacted the "federal government is ill-prepared to help them". These individuals have explained the response by Canada as "uncoordinated and inadequate" and many "felt betrayed and abandoned by their government".

This lack of support has been an ongoing struggle for Canadian victims of terrorism, including victims from terrorist attacks dating from 1985. The article [quotes](#) Susheel Gupta, [Chair of the Board of Directors](#) for the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime, who spoke about his own experience and view on the situation. Gupta, who lost his mother in the 1985 Air India Flight 182 terrorist attack, stated that "when it

investigation hasn't gone cold and is still "active". Donna believes more can be done by police, including releasing video footage of the suspects or for Crime Stoppers to offer a reward.

[Ashton](#) had attended St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, where he "shattered records" in football. He was a "celebrated football star" and he had hopes of being called-up to the Canadian Football League. The night of his death, he had spoken to Donna about proposing to his longtime girlfriend, Jennifer Gonzales, and made plans to go look at engagement rings. Three days before his death, Gonzales had told Ashton that he would be a father. Their daughter is now 15 months old. [Gonzales](#) said that "Ashton left her with us and I'm so grateful for that".

The family has decided to collect donations to help underprivileged youth from 12-18 years old have access to sport. This was done to help make meaning to Ashton's untimely passing and to give back to the Ottawa community. Donations can be made to the Ashton James Dickson Memorial Fund by clicking [here](#).

**Bill C-337, which would have made it mandatory for federal appointed judges to receive sexual assault training, is dead**



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comes to the treatment of terror victims, the government of Canada lags far behind". Similar thoughts were expressed by 9/11 victim, Maureen Basnicki, whose husband was killed during the attack and stated that Canada "doesn't take care of our victims in an adequate way when they've been victimized outside our borders".

[Canada](#) does not offer the same type of support to Canadian victims of terrorism that is often available for victims of different western countries. These [other countries](#), such as the United States, are aware that this type of victims will "face unique challenges and need help, both immediately after the attacks and over the long haul". The United States have an Office of Justice for Victims of Overseas Terrorism and American victims can also apply to the International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Programs. In the European Union, compensation regimes are present for victims of terrorism and they are in the process of creating a Centre for Expertise for Victims of Terrorism. This shows the variance in support to victims of overseas terrorism in western countries and how Canada lags behind.

[In Canada](#), victim services are provincially based and the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights only applies to those that were victimized in Canada. This means, that those victimized abroad do not have the same support options as those victimized in Canada. The Department of Justice was [quoted](#) in an article as mentioning that those victimized abroad "could apply to a federal victims fund for reimbursement for counselling and medical expenses". They could also receive additional assistance, which would help these victims return home after the attacks and to travel to any trials connected to the attack, according to officials. This funding has a \$10 000 award limit.

Those who have experienced terrorism will face a multitude of [obstacles and impacts](#). One particular obstacle is the lack of information for victims and their families. In addition, they might experience post-traumatic stress disorder, or other mental health problems. There will also potentially be financial losses that can impact them. [An article](#) explained the stories of many individuals who have experience the loss of someone due to terrorism overseas. It explained their different experiences with terrorism, the impacts it

[Bill C-337](#), which was created by Rona Ambrose, the former Conservative interim leader, is dead. This bill would have made it mandatory for federally appointed judges to complete sexual assault sensitivity training. The bill had been unanimously passed more than two years ago in the House of Commons. It is now [dead](#), due to some "procedural manoeuvring in the Senate". Even if the Senate had passed the legislation, the House of Commons would have had to be recalled and accept the changes made by the Senate. This would have been difficult to achieve, as the House of Commons rose Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, most likely for the last time before the next federal election. [This means](#) that all bills that have not been passed, including Bill C-337, will "die on the order paper because an election wipes the parliamentary slate clean." The [Federal Liberals](#), have stated that if re-elected, they would re-introduce the bill.

[Ambrose](#) believes that this type of training would have prevented another similar scandal to the one of Robin Camp, a federal judge who had asked the complainant in a sexual assault case "why she didn't keep her knees together". After the bill was not passed, Ambrose [spoke](#) out saying that the actions on the senators in regards to the bill were "shameful". She also said that "Canadians rightfully expect more from Parliament.





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had on them and what kind of support they received from the federal government. Some were also quoted explaining certain things they believe would be good for the federal government to do going forward in supporting victims of terrorism.

[Many individuals](#) have been advocating to the federal government to better support victims of overseas terrorism. This includes the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime and the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime. The previous Federal Ombudsman for victims of crime, in 2016, "called for a national security strategy that addressed the "needs, concerns and rights" of victims". The latter, in 2017, asked for a "federal office of national program to assist/support Canadians harmed by terrorism (both domestic and abroad) and other violent crimes abroad". [Heidi Illingworth](#), the current Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, was quoted in the article as planning on "raising the issue of terror victims once again with the government".

June 23rd 2019 marked 34 years since the 1985 terrorist attack on Air India flight 182. This appalling and cowardly act left families and friends grieving the loss of loved ones, and shook our country to its core. Each year, the victims are honoured at ceremonies across Canada and Ireland. Their surviving loved ones continue to call for peace across the globe.



Victims of sexual assault deserve representatives who will stand up for them, especially when they don't have a voice in the fight. It's shameful that powerful senators lack the will to stand up for victims of sexual crimes."

More information on Bill C-337 can be found in our [March 2019](#) and [May 2019](#) newsletters.

## **SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH**

### **State of the Criminal Justice System report published**

The [2019](#) report for the State of the Criminal Justice system has been published. In the report, information on victims is mentioned in the outcome 7, which was called "Outcome 7 - The criminal justice system respects victims' and survivors' rights and addresses their needs".



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June 23rd also marks the National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism in Canada. [Prime Minister Justin Trudeau](#) stated, "We have lost many others to acts of terrorism since that day. Those who commit these acts want to sow discord, divide us, and weaken our values. Time after time, they fail. In moments of tragedy, we find out how truly resilient we are. The shared values that unite us – inclusion, compassion, and equality – are stronger than fear and hatred."