EMPOWER

A publication of the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime

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Victims and Survivors Crime Week 2020 has gone virtual! Scroll to our EVENTS section for more details!

Snapshots

The mother of a 26-year-old son who was murdered in September is seeking answers.

Stacy Cook is seeking closure after the devastating news of her son's murder in September. She explained that due to the amount of time that has passed and the nature of the crime she would not be able to see her son's body. She then stated, "We're just going to have to put him in a box and I just hope that it was him that we put there."

Woman escapes after the man she met online allegedly locks her in vehicle

A woman from London Ontario was forcibly confined to a vehicle. The police report stated that the victim and the suspect had met online and arranged to meet in person.

The woman was eventually able to escape and flee on foot. The suspect has still not been found.

When someone is murdered, the death is sudden, violent, final and incomprehensible. The survivors' world is abruptly and forever changed. The awareness that your loved one's dreams will never be realized hits. Life has suddenly lost meaning and many survivors report that they cannot imagine ever being happy again.

An online fundraiser was set up to help cover legal and funeral costs for the family, it helped raised over \$26,000.

Have you read our "Homicide Survivors - Dealing with Grief" resource? Check it out here.

The Canadian Bankers Association describes
Romance Scams as a situation in which the victim
and criminal meet through a social media or dating
site. The criminal will then try to develop a
relationship with his or her victim, sometimes
spending several months making the victim feel
they are in a romantic relationship.

Romance scams are described as being among the top ten frauds affecting Canadians according to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, costing Canadians more than \$18.3 million in 2019.

If you think you may be a victim of a romance scam or any other kind of fraud, consider reading our publication on recovering from fraud.

For more information on Romance Scams and how to recognize the signs, click here.

Quebec launches inquiry into Joyce Echaquan's death

Watch here - Read here

Global News writes: "Joyce Echaquan, a 37-year-old Atikamekw mother of seven, died soon after she filmed herself from her hospital bed in Joliette, Que., about 70km north of Montreal, last Monday while she was in clear distress and pleading for help."

Joyce was the primary victim of systemic racism in this case and she leaves behind a family of seven to mourn her death and fight for justice. Since Joyce's passing, the Echaquan family has made a call for justice and the Quebec leaders along with the leaders of Canada to recognize systemic racism and take action.

The Globe and Mail stated: "Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett said on Friday that Ms. Echaquan's treatment was evidence of a systemic problem that exists coast-to-coast-to-coast. The federal government intends to table legislation on First Nations, Métis and Inuit health, she said, noting she hopes the bill will impose expectations around culturally safe and trauma-informed care."

As defined by the Government of Canada, "Systemic racism consists of organizational culture, policies, directives, practices or procedures that exclude, displace or marginalize some racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. This is often the result of institutional biases in organizational culture, policies, directives, practices, and procedures that may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantaging others."

'Back to square one': Calls to domestic violence lines jump again as coronavirus surges

Angela MacDougall, the executive director of Battered Women's Support Services based in Vancouver has stated that the urgency and severity of callers' cases have intensified as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Read here.

"What women are saying is that it's like a pressure cooker in the house and there isn't a valve," MacDougall said in an interview.

The helplines have received calls from women who have been kicked out of their homes by their abusers after testing positive for the coronavirus. On the other hand, helplines are also receiving calls from women who are cut off from their support networks and confined to their homes.

The calls have been described as an escalation of many different types of abuse (emotional, verbal, and

physical). In some circumstances where abuse was already physical, it has progressed to threats and fear for safety.

Claudine Thibaudeau, a social worker and clinical supervisor at the Montreal-based helpline SOS domestic violence said the pandemic has become a "new tool" for abusers to gain power. As cases climb across Canada, particularly in Quebec, and several provinces tighten health restrictions again, "we're basically back to square one."

The National Post released an article about the epidemic of violence against women . The writer stated "We are paying so much attention to the pandemic that it is easy to ignore the epidemic. News headlines about women killed, missing or assaulted have become so ubiquitous that they barely register anymore."

Although we are seeing the number of callers rise since the pandemic hit; it is important to remember we have heard of isolation being one of the major tactics in domestic violence since the "Power and Control Wheel" was developed in the 1980s as a response to the Battered Women's Movement.

Thibaudeau explained that the pandemic has exacerbated existing fears and challenges.

The Globe and Mail spoke with Jan Reimer, the executive director of the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters. She expressed that in the best of times, the journey for women leaving a difficult situation and going to a shelter isn't an easy one, and so in these unprecedented times, shelter staff knew they had to be there for any woman who needed the help, even as governments told people to stay home. For women's shelters across Alberta, and indeed across Canada, the possibility of closing down or packing up the office to work from home was never on the table. Read more here.

In our April 2020 newsletter, we outlined the reality that women's shelters and sexual assault centres faced funding shortfalls during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this time of uncertainty, there is one thing we are still certain of, victims need support.

'It had to be someone we knew well': Christine Jessop's family speaks after 1984 murder solved.

Watch here.

For the past 36 years, Christine Jessop's family has been hanging onto hope that they would one day know who murdered their daughter and sister.

On October 9th, 2020 that hope prevailed. A DNA sample found on Jessop's clothing matched that of Calvin Hooper, a neighbour to the Jessop family home when Christine was raped and killed.

Investigators involved in the case have expressed a sense of relief. Kenny expressed his gratitude towards the investigators who stayed on the case by saying "It's a miracle that they solved this, an absolute miracle. ... I owe them everything, we owe them everything for solving this."

Kenny described the last 36 years as a constant time of questioning and wondering. "Even 35 years later, you think about it every day. Was it this person? ... From day one, I truly believed it was someone who knew our family, knew my dad was in jail and knew that we were going to visit him that day (without Christine,)" Kenney said.

Losing a loved one through an act of violence is a very traumatic experience. No one can ever be prepared for such a loss. No amount of counselling, prayer, justice, restitution or compassion can ever bring a loved one back.

Although feeling "happily stunned", Kenny described this experience as experiencing the seven stages of grief

once again.

Dealing with the aftermath of homicide is not something that can easily be overcome. It is a process, which affects each person differently.

Many homicide survivors have found it helpful to speak with others who have been through a similar experience. Being able to openly express the pain of their loss, and reveal "revenge fantasies" (a normal reaction to violent victimization) can be beneficial to the grieving processes. Support groups can be very normalizing for families and friends of victims, allowing them to feel that they are not going crazy and that others are experiencing and surviving the same complexity of emotions.

Are you a survivor of homicide? The CRCVC hosts a monthly "Loss to Violence" support group on the last Thursday of each month. To RSVP for this group, simply email crcvc@crcvc.ca

'Fed up... frustrated... hurt': Families of Nova Scotia shooting victims are tired of waiting for the public inquiry.

Family members of the 16 Portapique, NS shooting victims along with 4 individuals who were injured by the shooter, are feeling victimized by the inaction of the inquiry.

Welland Tribune stated: "In July, Nova Scotia and federal governments announced an independent review of the events before, during and after a gunman — dressed as a Mountie and driving a replica RCMP car — killed 22 people in an April shooting rampage in northern Nova Scotia. The shooter was eventually killed by police at a gas station in Enfield, some 100 kilometres away from where the shootings began."

Mapleleaf web describes a public inquiry as an official review, ordered by the government, of important public events or issues. Its purpose is to establish the facts and causes of an event or issue and then to make recommendations to the government. All levels of government (federal, provincial, and territorial) have the power to call public inquiries.

The Nova Scotia shooting happened 6 months ago.

"A lot of this is just really upsetting to (the families) in a time when they're trying to mourn and trying to put this behind them because they've been looking forward to the inquiry to provide answers," said Lawyer Robert Pineo, the representative of the 16 victims and the 4 individuals injured by the shooter.

Victims have the right to information. Gaining general information about the offender or accused, and the investigation and proceedings is not only helpful, but it is mandated by the Victims' Bill of Rights.

"We know the wait has been hard on the families and surviving victims," Heather Fairbairn said, on behalf of Nova Scotia's Department of Justice. "We will advise them first of any new details, before sharing information publicly or through the media."

Wayne MacKay, Professor Emeritus at the Schulich School of Law said "I think it's another unkind injury to those surviving from the awful shooting, it's really counter to what both levels of government have said all along that they're very aware of how hurtful this is and they're going to proceed as quickly as they can to get some answers and investigate but that's not what they're doing it's been months since the last activity." Read more here.

The process of forming the public inquiry is more than just a decision to share information. This process has the potential to stir up emotions and horrific realities for victims and their families.

"Healing is very painful because you do have to drag up the past, you do have to remember how you were

treated, what happened and what those feelings were," said Truro-based human rights activist Linda MacDonald, who has counselled women and some men who have suffered abuse.

Sexual assault training bill for judges passes second reading in House of Commons

Long-standing barriers faced by many sexual assault survivors within the legal and justice systems often lead to underreporting of assaults and can be seen as a direct result of the many flaws within these systems. Many victims feel that the disclosure of their sexual history, among other private personal records requested from them through the process of reporting their case, is an intrusion into their personal lives, and both unnecessary as well as extremely revictimizing. Not only does this make victims hesitant to report, it impacts their personal lives and mental health as well, as it often means they also do not seek out support services such as counselling for fear of the same re-victimizing practices.

CTV News explained that the proposed legislation originated as a private member's bill from former interim Conservative leader Rona Ambrose, which the Liberal government-supported. It was unanimously approved by the Commons but stalled in the Senate and died when Parliament was dissolved for last fall's election.

This same article states "Bill C-3 would require new federally appointed judges to agree to take training, including learning about rape myths and stereotypes and how to make sure biases about race, gender and other social factors do not influence their decisions. It would also require judges to put their reasons on the record when ruling on sexual assault cases."

Ambrose's original bill was sparked by some high-profile rulings, including Alberta judge Robin Camp asking a sexual assault complainant in 2014 why she couldn't keep her knees together and Halifax judge Gregory Lenehan ruling that "a drunk can consent" while acquitting a taxi driver of sexual assault on a passenger in 2017.

Bill C-3 will now be scrutinized by the Commons justice committee, which could yet propose amendments.

Lasting Impact of the October 22 Shooting at National War Memorial

The trauma continues to haunt some Parliament Hill security guards that were on duty Oct. 22, 2014. On this day, Cpl. Nathan Cirillo was gunned down and killed in Ottawa, ON.

Every year on Oct. 22, former House of Commons security guard Maurice Montpetit makes a solemn pilgrimage to the National War Memorial before heading to Parliament Hill.

Montpetit spent the years following the event comforting other people. After three years of this, he was overcome with terror, anxiety and exhaustion. Montpetit described his day as something he finished with tears. He cried because he knew he wouldn't be coming back the next day.

Other guards who were on duty that day have also since described bouts of depression, anxiety and exhaustion as a part of their daily lives. One guard died by suicide a few years after the shooting.

Radio-Canada has interviewed several guards and supervisors and has identified more than 12 House of Commons security guards who have suffered serious mental health problems as a result of the shooting. Every interviewee agreed that the way they were treated after the attack only contributed to their stress.

There was a change in the way security was administered on Parliament Hill. Most security guards described it as though they were pushed aside and that their services were no longer needed or wanted. The security moved into being under the influence of the RCMP unit.

The lasting impact of October 22, 2014, is one filled with grief and trauma. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental disorder that may occur after a person experiences or witnesses a traumatic event, with trauma being understood as involving any scary or disturbing situation or event.

Two guards who were present on the hill that day courageously shared their experience. They have sought professional help and have explained that in doing so, they are learning to cope with the horror. One of the guards described this step as saving his life.

If you have experienced a traumatic event and are looking for tips on how to cope, please visit here to help.

A new law proposed by Federal NDP aims criminalize domestic emotional abuse

On October 5th Randall Garrison, the MP for Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke and NDP Critic for Justice introduced a private member's bill in the House of Commons aimed at tackling domestic violence. The bill (Bill C-247) would make coercive control within an intimate relationship a criminal offence.

If passed, the law would include psychological and emotional abuse such as controlling behaviour, isolation and threats, though it has been noted that these types of behaviours can be harder to recognize than physical abuse. They are, however, equally damaging and thus extremely important to be identified as criminal acts. These acts of violence may be hidden from view at times, however, a Statistics Canada survey found that "one in 10 women were 'very or extremely concerned' about the possibility of violence inside the home."

Garrison hopes that the bill will help minimize the harm experienced by domestic violence victims. It would firstly help those already experiencing intimate partner violence, as well as making it possible for police to intervene before situations escalate. This would mean that police would be able to charge the coercive or controlling partner with criminal harassment upon attending to a domestic abuse call. A charge under this new law could potentially result in a five-year prison sentence.

The Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime had a great influence in the introduction of this bill, as she urged the minister of justice to consider coercive control as a criminal offence, in line with Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced in the United Kingdom.

NDP critic for Women and Gender Equality, Lindsay Matthyssen, expressed her belief that "People living in fear of violence should not have to experience violence before receiving help and protection."

Bill C-247 would drive this sentiment towards actualization. Victims would be able to have their abuser charged before experiencing physical or further physical harm.

You can watch Randall Garrison's statement introducing Bill C-247 here.

Spotlight on Research

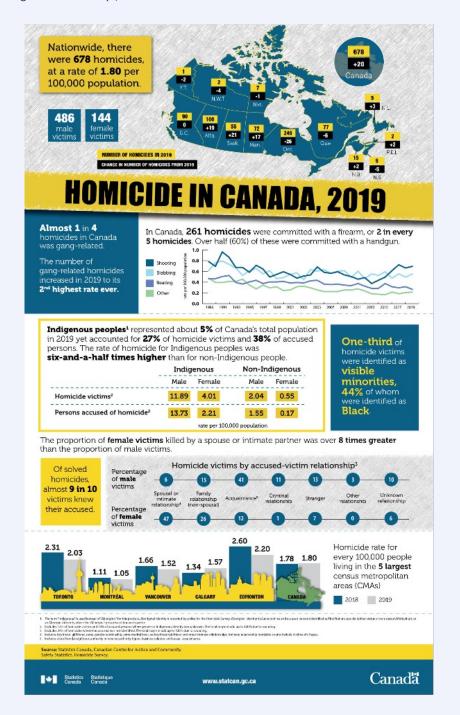
Homicide in Canada, 2019



Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Statistics Canada has researched police-reported data on homicide, 2019. The Homicide Survey collects police-reported data on the characteristics of all murder incidents, victims and accused persons/ chargeable suspects since 1961 and all homicides (including murder, manslaughter, and infanticide) since 1974. This survey is a census with a cross-sectional design. The Victim Questionnaire gathers information on the characteristics of the person who is the victim of the homicide. Demographic characteristics (e.g. gender, date of birth, marital status, employment status) of the homicide victim as well as additional information relating to the cause of death, the weapon used, firearm details (if applicable) as well as the relationship and any history of family violence between the closest accused and the victim are collected. For more information on the homicide survey, click here.

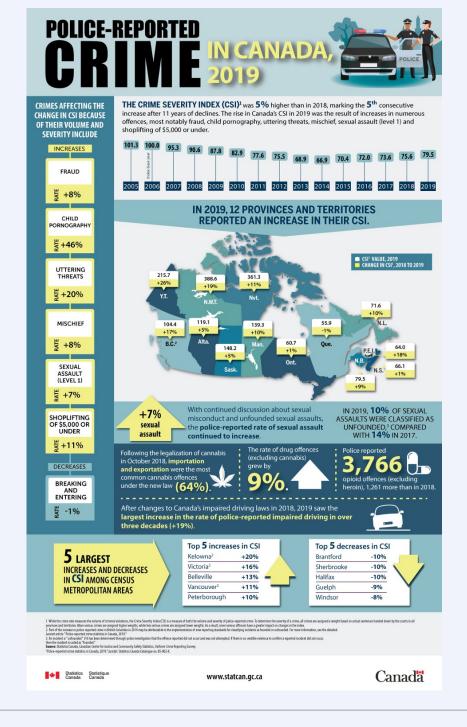
In 2019 alone, there were 678 homicides reported nationwide. Out of that total, 486 victims identify as male and 144 victims who identify as female. Two of every five homicides in 2019 were committed with a firearm. In most cases of solved homicides, the victim knew the accused. To access the variables of the survey, click here. To see existing homicide surveys, click here.



Police Reported Crime in Canada, 2019



Statistics Canada reviewed the Crime Severity Index and reported that police reported over 2.2 million *Criminal Code* incidents (excluding traffic offences) in 2019, 164,748 more than in 2018. A detailed analysis of police-reported crime is provided in the new *Juristat* article released today, "Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2019". It examines trends in the volume and seriousness of the police-reported crime for both violent and non-violent offences at the national, provincial/territorial and census metropolitan area levels. Specific violations, such as homicide, sexual assault, fraud, shoplifting and breaking and entering are examined, as well as trends in youth accused of a crime. Click here to view the research tables. The report states "The police-reported CSI and crime rate include only those incidents that come to the attention of police, either through reporting by the public or pro-active policing. Results from the most recent General Social Survey on Victimization found that just under one-third (31%) of violent and non-violent incidents were reported to the police." Click here to review the PDF of the full report.



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.

Woman's death in Surrey sheds light on a bigger conversation around domestic abuse, says advocate. Read more here.

The Canadian Military is taking a closer look at culture as part of its plan to eliminate sexual misconduct in its ranks. Marie-Claude Gagnon of "It's just 700" a page run by a group of Canadian volunteers also living with a military sexual trauma; expressed that a plan is needed to help victims reintegrate back into the Canadian forces, or back into civilian life after coming forward with complaints. Read the article here.

Have you experienced sexual assault and are looking for help coping? Click here to read our publication on

Upcoming Events





Semaine des victimes et survivants d'actes criminels

Victims and Survivors of Crime Week 2020 Virtual **Event**

Due to COVID-19, Victims and Survivors of Crime Week (Victims Week) 2020 has been rescheduled to November 22 to 28, 2020.

In lieu of an in-person federal symposium, the Policy Centre for Victim Issues will be hosting a virtual Victims Week event online.

This year's event will commemorate the 15th annual Victims Week, the 20th anniversary of the Federal Victims Strategy, and five years since the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights came into force.

Register online now!

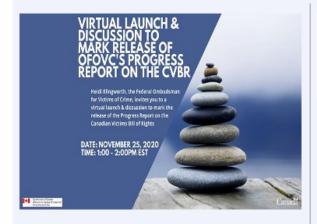


Community Responses to Homicide

The CRCVC (that's us!) is partnering with Algonquin College Victimology Research Centre, Crime Prevention Ottawa and the Ottawa Provincial Police to host a virtual event on Community Responses to Homicide.

The event will take place Tuesday, November 24th, 2020 from 1:00 - 3:00 PM EST.

Registration is available here.



Virtual Launch & Discussion to mark the release of the Progress Report on CVBR

Join the Federal Ombudsman Heidi Illingworth for her assessment of the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (CVBR) on November 25th.

Date: November 25, 2020 Time: 1:00 - 2:00 PM EST

Register here!



Les expériences de justice réparatrice des personnes victimes de violence sexuelle

processus.Inscription gratuite ici.

Dans le cadre de la Semaine des victimes et des survivants d'actes criminels, vendredi 27 **Novembre**, ce webinaire vise à sensibiliser au vécu des personnes victimes de violence sexuelle, à l'option de la justice réparatrice pour celles-ci et mieux connaître leurs expériences dans ce



National Victims and Survivors of Crime Week

2020 Alberta Restorative Justice Conference

The Alberta Restorative Justice Association will be hosting its 2020 Alberta Restorative Justice Conference online, on November 19th and 20th.

Global Classroom

Topic: Criminal Victimization and the Impact of Media in the Social Media Age on Victims and Survivors of Crime

Date: November 26, 2020 Time: 12:30 - 2:00 P.M. (EST)

For registration information, please visit the Victim

Justice Network website here.

You will be able to hear informative and inspiring keynote presentations and workshops, explore their exhibitor hall and take advantage of the networking opportunities all from the comfort of your own home.

For more information, and to register, please visit their website.



Victim Support Europe: Annual Conference for 2020 to be held online!

This premier virtual meeting, being held on November 19th, will provide plenty of creative formats of live and recorded conference sessions:

- Video tour of the organization/ behind the
- Digital gadget demonstrations
- Product walkthroughs
- 5-minute lightning talks
- Live in-person interview
- Live debate

This year's conference theme is 'Bridging High-Tech and Victim Support Services'.

The conference will unite tech companies that are passionate about technology and social good with victim support community leaders who are leveraging technology for the benefit of victims of

For more information, please visit their website.



2020 National Restorative Justice Symposium

Start: Sunday, November 15, 2020, 8:00 AM (PST)

End: Sunday, November 22, 2020, 3:00 PM (PST)

Location: Online

Click here for a message from the 2020 National Restorative Justice Planning Committee.

Stay tuned on social media for registration information.

View the events schedule here.

Crime Prevention Ottawa Awards

Tune into the 12th annual Crime Prevention Ottawa Awards online. Monday, November 2nd, 2020, noon to 1:00 PM.

Register here.

Human Trafficking CE Course

This course will discuss various aspects of human trafficking including sex and labour trafficking.

Register here.

Men & Healing Workshop

"Men & Healing Phase I is a short-term, therapistled group program designed for male survivors of childhood sexual and/or physical abuse. Its purpose is to help men begin their journey of trauma recovery through psycho-education, coaching on the recovery process, and mutual support.

While the format of the group is interactive,

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.

members are not required to divulge personal information to the group. This group seeks to expand coping strategies and increase knowledge and awareness of post-traumatic stress, impacts of abuse, and paths of recovery. All participants receive a guidebook that covers the teachings."

To register, please visit their website.



To RSVP please email us at crcvc@crcvc.ca







