



EMPOWER

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Controlling behaviour should be part of the criminal definition of domestic abuse, advocates argue.

A local domestic violence prevention group is lobbying the federal government to include coercive or controlling behaviour in their definition of violence within intimate relationships.

In a CBC article, Andrea Silverstone, executive director of Sagesse Domestic Violence Prevention Society in Calgary, said the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights is now looking at updating the criminal code on the topic, with the introduction of [Bill C-247, An Act to amend the Criminal Code \(controlling or coercive conduct\)](#), in October 2020, by Randall Garrison, NDP justice critic and the MP for Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke. This will recognize coercive control, which is a pattern of abusive behavior, as a liberty crime and a human rights crime.

Silverstone said, "Those impacted by domestic violence are going to feel like they can trust that the police will address what's happening for them and by extension, the courts."

She mentioned that victims feel their sense of personal agency is taken away from them and often make decisions out of fear. Silverstone explains that by having the term coercive control a part of the definition of domestic abuse, the police, justice system, and the general public will be better able to recognize warning signs. Silverstone stated, "If the police had the tool in their toolbox to try and intervene when they see coercive control, I think that we would see less incidence of lethality and we would hopefully see less homicides."

At the moment, the Standing Committee is still studying the legislation.

On February 4th, 2020, Heidi Illingworth, the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime also spoke to the Standing Committee. "Currently, intimate partner violence is approached as an incident-based problem. It is treated as an episodic or one-time event and the repetitive

dynamics of coercive control are not recognized. This makes it extremely difficult for law enforcement to intervene effectively. Experts have identified coercive controlling behaviours as important precursors for femicide worldwide. This harmful and dangerous behaviour has been criminalized in other jurisdictions, such as England and Wales, Ireland, Scotland and several American states... I would like to say in closing that I believe the Canadian legal and justice systems must be more responsive to the lived realities of victims and survivors. I work directly with survivors, and that is why I think it is time that we address this gap. Victims deserve access to justice, which is often not possible due to our limited legislative framework.”, she [said](#).

The CRCVC believes that by making these Criminal Code amendments, we can create a safer life for women and children across the country. We can only do so by addressing the current gap. To read the CRCVC’s submission on this matter, click [here](#).

Meanwhile, Yvonne Harding, the manager of Canada's Assaulted Women's Helpline [told CBC](#) that when the second wave of COVID-19 hit the country, 'Everything closed overnight, and our crisis lines lit up.'

The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic did not stop a rising tide of reports of domestic violence, experts say, warning that the stress of life in lockdown continues to put victims at risk.

Canada's Assaulted Women's Helpline fielded 20,334 calls between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2020, compared to 12,352 over the same period the previous year, said Yvonne Harding, manager of resource development at the organization.

The manager stated opportunities to leave the house to get help — such as daily trips to and from school — have in many cases been eliminated during the pandemic. Access to friends and family has also been cut off, she said, leaving victims with fewer options.

Sgt. Julie Randall who specializes in domestic and intimate partner violence [said](#) "Statistics tell us that domestic violence goes on long before someone actually picks up the phone to call the police," Randall said. "So anecdotally, I can say that often our calls are lower than what's actually happening in the community."

Randall is part of a coordinating network of police services dealing with domestic violence, and she said other forces in the province are reporting similar increases.

"Intimate partner violence and mental health are often closely connected, and from what's been reported worldwide, the pandemic has had a profound effect on people's mental health," she said.

Government of Canada provides support to survivors and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in BC.

Violence against Indigenous women, girls, Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people in Canada has been an ongoing national tragedy.

The Department of Justice Canada stated that everyone has a role to play in ending this violence. The Government of Canada continues to work in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous people, Indigenous women's organizations, and others, to develop an effective National Action Plan to address the root causes of this violence and ensure the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls, Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people

in Canada.

The Government of Canada is supporting the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre Society (VACPCS) and the Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) Rape Crisis Centre in British Columbia. These organizations offer a range of culturally relevant support services and activities for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The Department of Justice Canada is providing a total of \$882,562 in financial support to these projects through the Victims Fund.

“Indigenous survivors of violence and their families need our support. This is especially true for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people who are overrepresented as victims of violence. The VACPCS and the WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre’s important initiatives will offer a range of culturally relevant support services and activities to meet the ongoing needs of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.”, The Honourable David Lametti, P.C., Q.C., M.P., Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. For more information, click [here](#).

For immediate emotional assistance, call 1-844-413-6649. You can also access long-term [health support services](#) such as mental health counselling, community-based emotional support and cultural services and some travel costs to see Elders and traditional healers.

Secret recording suggests Iranian officials concede the truth about the downing of Flight PS752 may never be revealed.

CBC News has shared information that the Canadian government and security agencies are reviewing an audio recording in which a man — identified by sources as Iran's foreign affairs minister — discusses the possibility that the destruction of Flight PS752 was an intentional act.

CBC Stated the individual, identified by sources as Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif, is heard saying on the recording that there are a "thousand possibilities" to explain the downing of the jet, including a deliberate attack involving two or three "infiltrators" — a scenario he said was "not at all unlikely."

Ralph Goodale, the prime minister's special adviser on the Flight PS752 file, said the government is aware of the recording. Canada's forensic examination and assessment team obtained a copy in November, he said.

Goodale said the audio file contains sensitive information and commenting publicly on its details could put lives at risk.

The individual refers more than once during the recording to compensation as a means to close "the issue" and says Iran wants to compensate victims' families to prevent other countries from turning the disaster into "an international crime."

Iran proposed compensation of \$150,000 for each of the victims' families, but Canada rejected that offer. Goodale said Iran doesn't have the right to offer compensation to victims' families unilaterally.

For more information, read the full CBC article [here](#).

Activists say human trafficking ‘should be talked about like we talk about the weather’

Two retired public health nurses told The Signal Journal that hearing about more disclosures of human trafficking in Nova Scotia is a good sign.

Jeanne Sarson and Linda MacDonald are now full-time activists and educators in Truro, fighting against human trafficking.

"I think it's important to know that it's an age-old crime," MacDonald said. "It's been happening under our noses for many, many years."

They point out a book they discovered from 1910 by Ernest Bell called *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or The War on the White Slave Trade*. In it, Bell states that over 100 young women and girls had been trafficked into Boston and that one-third of them were from Nova Scotia.

For many people, human trafficking still conjures up images of kidnappings taking place overseas like in the movie *Taken*. But according to Statistics Canada's [most recent report](#) from June 2020, only about 12 percent of sexualized human trafficking cases in Canada involve abduction or forcible confinement. In the vast majority of incidents, the perpetrator is a person the victim knows, most commonly a friend or a romantic partner.

Meanwhile, OPP just launched a human trafficking research [project](#) in northwestern Ontario. OPP hopes the new research project will give the police service and its officers more insight into human trafficking in northwestern Ontario.

The project, which is being funded by the Ontario Solicitor General, will have a special focus on Indigenous people and will help shed light on a very underreported crime, said Det. Staff Sgt. Andrew Taylor of the OPP's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit. "We know that it is underreported across the province and Canada, generally speaking, due to the traumatization of the victims involved, as well as in some cases, the lack of trust between those victims and the police," Taylor said. "We do know that in Ontario, it is an issue. Two-thirds of all reported human trafficking cases in Canada are in the province of Ontario."

Taylor said he hopes any information gathered will help police better understand the process by which a victim is recruited into human trafficking, particularly in Indigenous communities in northwestern Ontario.

Drunk driving is Canada's deadliest crime – and one of our most lightly punished.

This month, the Parole Board of Canada granted full parole to Marco Muzzo, a Toronto man responsible for one of the country's most horrific drunk driving crashes.

Muzzo had just arrived on a private jet from a Miami bachelor party when despite being extremely intoxicated, he decided to drive home from the airport in his Jeep Cherokee. Within minutes, after blowing through a stop sign and striking a minivan, he had killed three young children and their grandfather as well as injuring two other people.

Although given a 10-year prison sentence in 2016, he's been on day parole since April 2020. And, in another eight years, Muzzo will be able to drive again.

In his [article](#), Tristan Hopper states that Canada has the [worst rate of drunk-driving deaths in the developed world](#). With an [estimated 1,500 fatalities every year](#), it is Canada's leading cause of criminal death, well above the 600 to 700 Canadians who die annually in homicides. Yet there is startlingly lenient treatment handed to the perpetrators of Canada's single

Spotlight on Research

Statistics Canada is updating and developing new statistical metadata standards to better respond to the information needs of Canada's LGBTQ2+ communities. This consultation will ensure that Canadians have a say in the gender and sexual diversity statistical metadata standards.



This consultation will be open until March 12th, 2021. Click [here](#) to participate.

Human traffickers use transportation corridors to avoid detection: report

The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking prepared a report on their study that outlines both inter- and intra-provincial routes that allow traffickers to move victims within and between provinces.



The report outlines questions and definitions about human trafficking. There is a thorough explanation of how corridors operate and barriers to exiting.

The report can be viewed [here](#).

Snapshots

Frauds surged across Canada in 2020 amid pandemic.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) warned Canadians to be aware of thieves that may steal money or sensitive information by exploiting people's desperation and fear.

According to new statistics from the CAFC, the top 10 types of fraud targeting Canadians, based on the number of reports last year, accounted for more than 56,000 reported incidents of fraud. In contrast, the cumulative number of reports received for the equivalent top 10 list in 2019 totaled just over 36,000.

To view the full report, click [here](#).

Ontario Has a New Tort: Internet Harassment

Christina Wallis wrote "*A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes*"

She borrowed a quote often attributed to Mark Twain, in responding to a vicious campaign of defamatory online posts that targeted Ms. Wallis and others.

Ms. Wallis is one of the many plaintiffs in the recent Ontario Superior Court case recognizing a new tort of internet harassment.

The facts of this case were particularly egregious and admittedly unique, in the types of allegations made, the wide circle of victims, and the extended period over which the postings occurred.

For more information click [here](#).

SANE program in Cape Breton focuses treatment on individual needs

'It validates the experience of survivors': Marking the 1st National Human Trafficking Awareness Day

Christina Sanford, coordinator for the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners program in Cape Breton said a key priority for the service is ensuring victims receive the care they want and are not made to do things for which they are not ready.

“What matters is that we not traumatize individuals again. It takes a lot of courage to access our services and we’re going to do our best not to let anyone down.”

Read the full Cape Breton Post article [here](#).

Monday, Feb. 22nd, 2021 marked the first National Human Trafficking Awareness Day in Canada. On February 15th, federal members of Parliament unanimously agreed on the motion to adopt the day, coinciding with the 2007 declaration to condemn all forms of human trafficking and slavery.

Read more [here](#).

Quick Links

Given the five-year anniversary of Bill C-32: Canadian Victims Bill of Rights (CVBR), please read the letter we have sent to all MPs across Canada as we try to make sure the mandated Parliamentary review will take place. Read our letter [here](#).

Danforth shooting victims clear first hurdle in class-action suit against gun maker. Read more [here](#).

Most Canadians have been fraud targets, 33% have been victims. CPA study reveals that most people are taking extra steps to protect their finances. Read more [here](#).

Manitoulin opens Ontario’s first community-based sexual and domestic violence clinic. The name of Manitoulin Island’s first clinic dedicated exclusively to sexual and domestic violence survivors is Ka Naad Ma Go which means “we will help you” in the Ojibway language. Read more [here](#).

Cyber fraud complaints in Canada took a huge leap in 2020. Read more information [here](#).

Woman loses \$340K in wire transfer scam — alleges 4 banks did little to stop it. Vivien Zheng says she will never forget the phone call that led to losing her family's entire life savings — \$340,000. Read the full article [here](#).


Man responsible for one of B.C.’s most horrifying mass murders can apply for parole again in July. Read more [here](#).

Upcoming Events


VIRTUAL

MONTHLY “LOSS TO VIOLENCE” SUPPORT GROUP

Please RSVP at :
crcvc@crcvc.ca or
613-233-7614



Location: VIRTUAL



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

Children Exposed to Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence

When a child is exposed to violence in their homes, it can lead to lasting physical, emotional, behavioral and cognitive changes. Children who experience childhood exposure are six times more likely to commit suicide, fifty percent more likely to use drugs or alcohol, and seventy-four percent more likely to commit a violent crime.

This training will provide an overview of the impact domestic and intimate partner violence has on children in childhood and as adults and offer information about services and resources that help when working with families.

Date: Thu, March 11, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM AST

Register [here](#).

2021 Human Trafficking Speaker Series

ASU Office of Sex Trafficking
Intervention Research
Arizona State University

Thursday
March 4th
10-12 MST

Virtual Event via
Zoom

INFORMATION MINING IN
CORRECTIONS - THE ROLE OF
TATTOOS IN TRAFFICKING

Sgt. Molly McDade
Multnomah County Sheriff's
Office (MCSO)

2021 Human Trafficking Speaker Series

This workshop helps practitioners, law enforcement personnel, parole & probation, advocates and other stakeholders understand the significance of tattoos and tattooing in the world of human trafficking. As a part two, there will be someone speaking on “Mining of Traffickers While Incarcerated”.

Date: Thursda, March 4, 2021

Time: 12:00 - 2:00 PM EST

Registration: [here](#).



Male Victims of Sexual Assault

Male victims are largely misunderstood, overlooked, and underrepresented despite the fact that 1 in 6 men will be a victim of sexual assault in their lifetime. Attend this breakout session to learn more about the unique dynamics male victims of sexual assault face.

Date: Wed, March 31, 2021

Time: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM EDT

Register [here](#).

