



## EMPOWER

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### **We stand in solidarity with #OurLondonFamily**

On June 6th, 2021, Salman Afzaal, 46, Madiha Salman, 44, Yumna Afzaal, 15, and Talat Afzaal, 74, were killed in what police have described as a targeted attack on Muslims.

Fayez Afzaal, 9, was the only survivor. He suffered serious injuries and has since been released from the hospital. He is [said](#) to be surrounded by extended family as he continues his physical recovery. Those close to him [say](#) it will be a long road to recovery emotionally for the boy, but having the strength of the community behind him will help in that journey.

The family had been out for an evening walk along Hyde Park Road at South Carriage Road when they were hit by a driver in a black pickup.

The accused is facing [charges](#) for first-degree murder, attempted murder, and terrorism.

Twakkal (*London Mosque Imam*), [says](#) only now does the real work begin in terms of healing

and recovery.

“There are long-lasting impacts and repercussions that have come from this, and so there’s a lot of support that is going to continue to be needed on various levels, for the family, as well as members of our community.”

*Have you ever been a bystander witnessing Islamophobia and were wondering what to do? We recommend the 5 D’s of Bystander Intervention: Direct, Delegate, Distract, Delay, and Document. Please ONLY intervene if it is safe as instances of islamophobia are on the rise throughout Canada and your safety is a priority. To learn more about the 5 D’s of Bystander Intervention, [click here](#).*

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## Violence against women advocacy groups calling for change after death of Hanadi Mohammed

Hanadi Mohammed’s death was “predictable and preventable”, according to violence against women advocates across Ottawa. 16 women’s shelters and community advocacy groups, including CRCVC, co-signed a [letter this week](#) calling for “concrete, measurable action” the way police respond to intimate partner violence cases.



On June 15th, 50-year-old Hanadi Mohammad was stabbed to death by her 54-year-old husband, Hamid Ayoub, after trying to obtain a restraining order. Mohammad had been living separately from her husband for approximately a year and had been actively trying to conceal her location. She tried to obtain a restraining order nearly three months before her death due to her husband’s violent behaviour.

In May 2021, Ottawa police responded to a 911 call allegedly involving an altercation between Ayoub and Mohammad. No charges were laid at the time and Ayoub was not taken into custody. Ottawa police Inspector Heather Lachine stated that the domestic incident did not meet the “criminal threshold” at the time of the incident and had told Mohammad to obtain a restraining order instead.

Melissa Heimerl, the executive director of Ottawa Victim Services, stated that there was a 2020 stoppage in Ontario courts’ [abilities to issue both restraining orders](#) and peace bonds during the pandemic.

Leighann Burns, a family lawyer working with survivors of intimate-partner violence, said, “there seems to be hesitancy about issuing restraining orders”. Burns suggested changes made to the law around restraining orders, which criminalized breaching them, made the courts reluctant to issue them.

“Hanadi Mohammad knew she was in grave danger, and she tried to get protection and support, and our systems failed her”, reads the letter from Erin Leigh, executive director of the [Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women](#) (OCTEAW) and numerous other advocacy groups.

Violence against women advocates are calling on the Ottawa Police and Ottawa Police Chief Peter Sloly to take immediate measures to prevent another femicide. We are demanding urgent action on the standardization of police guidance for domestic violence cases, improvements to recognizing and assessing risk, and more complete documentation of interactions where police are called but did not result in criminal charges.

These advocacy groups have long called for risk assessment in every case. This would entail taking enough of a history of what has happened with both people to determine the level of risk. Police in Ontario currently are mandated to charge in domestic-violence cases where grounds for offence exist. However, there are no required risk assessments done by police, which is the key to maintaining women's safety.

Advocacy groups have been pushing for a holistic approach during investigations where each domestic violence complaint helps police gain a better understanding of dynamics – even though a single incident may not meet the threshold for criminal charges.

We are calling upon Ottawa communities to support and believe survivors. [Crime Prevention Ottawa](#) actively supports research that sheds light on [gender-based violence](#). We urge you to check out the resources and tips for how to prevent violence.

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## CRCVC Executive Director discusses the impact of parole hearings on victims and their families

CRCVC's Executive Director, Aline Vlasceanu, joined Sam Laprade on Ottawa City News' "The Mark Sutcliffe show" to discuss the impact parole hearings have on the victims and their families.

The discussion took place on June 22nd – the day Paul Bernardo, the Scarborough Rapist, had his second parole hearing. The offender has been serving a life sentence for the rape and murder of teenagers Leslie Mahaffey, Kristin French, and his sister-in-law Tammy Homolka.

"The whole parole process is offender-centric", said Vlasceanu. She talked about how victims are forced to sit through these hearings and hear about the offender's actions and feelings about staying in correctional facilities. Furthermore, she mentioned that while victims can write a victim impact statement, they are not allowed to address specific things – including address the offender directly. This can retraumatize victims, as they are once again left without a voice, and having to work within said system.

The families, understandably opposed to the release, have been preparing victim impact statements for [the hearing](#); less than three years since the offender's last hearing. In October of 2018, the offender was denied full or day parole after a three-hour hearing at the Millhaven

### DID YOU KNOW?

The CRCVC provides assistance and support to victims working with post-trial agencies such as Correctional Service of Canada and Parole Board of Canada.

If you are a victim navigating parole and corrections, we can help you exercise your right to information about the offender who harmed you by offering:



Victim registration assistance



Representation (victims can appoint us to receive notifications on their behalf)



Accompaniment to parole hearings



Advocacy on your case

\*All our services are FREE and Confidential. The system quickly forgets. We never will.

 CANADIAN RESOURCE CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME  
Ensuring the equitable treatment of crime victims in Canada

Institution.

“It’s a gut-wrenching experience for them to try to explain the impact of something as horrific as to what happened to their children”, said Tim Danson, the lawyer representing the families of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy. Danson further stated that parole hearings bring back horrid memories for the families, and they tend to never get any easier. Danson stated, “it’s as if we were back to the early 1990s and the trial of ‘95: it’s that vivid for all of us that have been involved.”

While the victims struggle to even afford legal advice, offenders are provided with case management teams from Correctional Service Canada to support them through the process of parole. If victims require assistance, it is often organizations like the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime that step up and support victims in every way possible. We offer free services to victims of crime throughout Canada. CRCVC advises victims on their rights, helps write victim impact statements, and provides additional support to help victims of crime.

The families are saddened to know that the offender could apply for release again so soon. Donne and Doug French, the parents of Kristin French, argued that a five-year interval between hearings would have been much more appropriate. “The pain is a life sentence. So often, there is the ominous black cloud ... this evil dark cloud is very persistent and continues to haunt us. We cannot and will not accept this happening to another girl by the same perpetrator”, said the Doug family in their victim impact statement during the hearing.

The offender was denied parole during his second hearing on Tuesday, June 22nd. The hearing officers of the Parole Board of Canada took about an hour before denying the offender’s release, saying they were not persuaded that he no longer posed a substantive risk of reoffending.

[Listen](#) to our Executive Director, Aline Vlasceanu, discuss parole hearings and re-victimization on The Mark Sutcliffe Show.

*Are you looking to help change the system? Consider donating to [CRCVC](#). Every single dollar goes to help victims of crime in Canada. Head over to the [CRCVC website](#) and fill out the [donation form](#). With your generosity, we can continue providing barrier-free services throughout the country.*

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## 751 Unmarked Graves Uncovered in Former Residential School

A Saskatchewan First Nation has discovered 751 unmarked graves near the Marieval Residential School, making this the [largest uncovering of such remains](#) in Canada. The remains are in unmarked graves in a communal gravesite adjacent to the former residential school, which was founded and operated by the Roman Catholic Church beginning in 1899.

Chief Cadmus Delorme of Cowessess First Nation noted that it is likely that some buried were adults, while the majority being children. The chief of the Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations (FSIN), Bobby Cameron, said “we will tell the stories of our children, of our people who died, who were killed by the state, by the church and we won’t stop until we locate all of them.”

In 2015, the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#)

(TRC) stated that at least 3,200 Indigenous children died while attending residential schools and that administrators generally agreed “not to send the bodies of students who died at schools to their home communities.”

The discovery comes less than a month after the unfathomable finding of the remains of 215 Indigenous children in unmarked graves near the Kamloops Indian Residential School outside Kamloops, British Columbia. With the recent uncovering in Saskatchewan, the total number of remains discovered in Canada since May 2021 has passed 1000.

*Anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their residential school experience can access the 24-hour, toll-free and confidential National Indian Residential Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419.*

*The [Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#) toll-free line can be reached at 1-800-721-0066.*

To educate and learn more about the land you’re on, use the interactive map on [Native Land](#) to look up whose territorial land you are on.

To learn more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, read the [calls to action](#) that were published in 2015.

*The CRCVC stands in solidarity with the Indigenous communities throughout Canada as we too work on decolonizing and Indigenizing our work. We respectfully acknowledge the CRCVC office is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the Omàmiwinini wag (Algonquin peoples) Nation.*

**June 23, 2021**

**1,323**

**215 - Kamloops, BC**

**104 - Brandon, MB**

**38 - Regina, SK**

**751 - Cowessess, SK**

**35 - Lestock, SK**

**180 - Carlisle, PA**

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## Spotlight on Research

### **Ottawa Homicide Project: An analysis of 126 cases of homicide in Ottawa**

The Victimology Research Centre at Algonquin College Ottawa partnered with Crime Prevention Ottawa to conduct a review of all cases of homicide in Ottawa from 2010 to 2020. The CRCVC is extremely pleased to have been a part of the process.

The Ottawa Homicide Project analyzes the gender, age, and ethno cultural background of victims and suspects, and uses GIS mapping to consider geographic areas that are most at risk.

Key findings from the report indicate that Ottawa is one of the safest large cities in Canada. From 2010 to 2020, men were 3.3 times more likely than women to die by homicide while women were two times more likely than men to be killed by a partner or family member. The report also found a significant decline in intimate partner homicide in Ottawa. However, there has been an increase in the homicide caused by gun violence in young men from radicalized communities. These cases are less likely to be solved by the police.

The report also intended to better inform prevention efforts and effective victim assistance over specific recommendations. The report recommends the CRCVC's peer support group for people who have lost loved ones to homicide. The CRCVC is hopeful to be able to expand our group in the future. Stay tuned for news!

You can read the full report [here](#).

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### **Documents detail take up of little-used federal victims benefit**

In May 2021, the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, Heidi Illingworth, expressed her concern over the largely unused financial aid for parents of murdered or missing children despite new and proposed changes to the program. Newly released documents indicate that despite an increase in aid being paid out, the rate of denied applications remains steady. Despite an annual budget of about \$10 million, the program has never once come close to spending that amount. CRCVC stands with parents of victimized children and is disappointed to learn that the program continues to fail in providing adequate assistance to victims.

Read the full article [here](#).

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### **Candace House Wants To Hear From You**

Candace House is a new and first of its kind organization that supports victims and survivors of violent crime, located in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

They are currently exploring the design of spaces in which victims and survivors receive services and support. You are invited to take part if:

- You are at least 18 years old
- Speak English, and
- You have survived violence (either directly yourself, or experienced the murder or criminal loss of a loved one) **and/or** support violence survivors in some capacity (paid or volunteer).

*Direct experience with Candace House is not required.*

Find out more at <https://www.candacehouse.ca/evaluation>.

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## **Snapshots**

### **Charges Laid After Toronto Shooting at Toddler's Birthday Party Injures Three Kids (SB)**

Toronto police have laid charges in connection with a shooting that injured four people – including three children – at a toddler's birthday party in Rexdale on Saturday, June 19. Read the full article [here](#).

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### **Police believe man accused of sexual assault in Montreal may have offended across North America**

Montreal police investigators say they have reason to believe a man they arrested for alleged sexual assault may have committed similar crimes across North America. Read the full article

here.

## Upcoming Events

### **CRCVC's Monthly Drop-In Support Group for "Loss to Violence": Paused for July & August**

Please note that our monthly "Loss to Violence" Support group is paused for July and August 2021. We will continue with our monthly sessions in the fall.

For further information or to RSVP, please email us at [crcvc@crcvc.ca](mailto:crcvc@crcvc.ca).

