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## EMPOWER

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We respectfully acknowledge the CRCVC office is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the Omàmiwininiwag (Algonquin peoples) Nation.

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### Injustice in the Justice System: The survivor's perspective

By: **Melodie Casella**, Katzie/Shishalh Nation  
CRCVC Victims Advisory Committee Member  
BSW, SWI Candidate with UVIC  
UBCIC BC Coalition for MMIWG

The postponement of parole hearings is common and unfortunately an issue that CRCVC clients experience all the time. The devastation that the families have to endure time and time again after getting

postponement notifications is something that this loving Indigenous family knows all too well. Read what one of our clients has to say about the sixth postponement of the parole hearing for the murderer of Cheryl Ann Joe.

“As we sit in the 21st century, the ongoing difficulties in trying to find justice as an Indigenous woman have not become any easier.

Over a span of 30 years, my Auntie Linda Joe, the mother of a murdered daughter Cheryl Ann Joe, had fought tirelessly for ongoing justice on behalf of her daughter and her daughter’s children. As the ongoing fight became too tiring and ultimately had my Auntie Linda give up on all that mattered to her, the torch per se had been passed along to her sister Gertie Pierre and her niece Melodie Casella.

The murderer Brian Allender had been sentenced to first-degree murder, life imprisonment, and no eligibility for parole for 25 years in 1993. Amid the span of the 25 years preceding parole, the murderer had applied for multiple work releases and had been approved to leave the confines of the medium-security prison he had been transferred to. He ultimately had been denied day and full parole on the 25th benchmark parole hearing in December 2016, but he had been granted escorted temporary absences from the medium security facility for ‘rehabilitative services.

Correctional Service Canada made a new policy for parole hearings to be scheduled every five years (as opposed to every three years) for federal offenders, so the murderer Brian Allender had once again applied for day and full parole and had been scheduled for his hearing December 2021.

As a family member on the receiving end of such an application, we not only mentally and emotionally prepare ourselves to relive our trauma of the most horrific events, but we also prepare ceremonially for our loved one Cheryl Ann Joe. The absolute anxiety builds up weeks in advance of the supposed month of the offender’s parole hearing, then we receive a phone call that the offender had not only applied for and had been granted approval for transfer to a minimum federal facility, but he also has postponed his parole hearing! Once again, a direct violation of the victim’s rights.

As we all try to calm the anxiety that had built up and sort through the trauma of deeply ingrained horrific memories, we also had to write about it in our Victim Impact Statement. Can you imagine doing this as a family member, not once but six times? It is enough to drive you crazy after the first couple of times, but my family has been informed that the offender has postponed his parole hearing another six months down the road to January 2023!

There is no policy to prevent this constant recurrence of ongoing injustice to a family; we are in dire need of judicial reform to prevent this travesty from happening at the leisure and will of an offender who caused great harm to a family and a community. There is a great injustice to the victims, all the power has been given to an offender to postpone at will as many times as they choose to see fit, and the Federal Ministers need to hold the Parole Board of Canada and Correctional Service Canada accountable to the Victims and hold great consideration on how their decisions will directly affect the family and public at large.

Creating a policy that an offender cannot postpone their parole hearing more than three times. A family should never have to endure this type of trauma through a loophole which gives an offender all the power to continually re-traumatize and re-victimize a family.”

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## A Push to Include “Femicide” in Canada’s Criminal Code

On the night of June 27th, 2022, Anne-Marie Ready and her daughter Jasmine were stabbed to death in Ottawa’s Alta Vista neighbourhood by the son of their next-door neighbour. A few days prior to the attack, the perpetrator was arrested and released for the sexual assault and stalking of another woman.

After this act of violence, advocates are calling for the inclusion of the term “femicide” in the Criminal Code of Canada.

According to a [CBC News Article](#), lawyer Pamela Cross explained that the term “femicide” represents “the killing of a woman because of the fact that she’s a woman”.

Similar to the 2015 murders of three women in Renfrew County, the murders of the Readys were clear acts of femicide.

It is important to recognize that such killings are not solely related to intimate partner violence. Femicide goes well and beyond domestic relationships. It extends to family members, known relationships, and even unknown relationships.

The Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses mentions that “we’re on a dangerous trajectory”; the deaths of Anne-Marie and Jasmine Ready mark the 23rd act of femicide across Ontario since November 2021 and the 5th in June alone.

Recognizing the term “femicide” in the Criminal Code could help many women identify significant risk factors or red flags in their relationship in hopes of getting support before any attacks take place. In general, Cross explains that including the term in the Criminal Code will get citizens to think differently about the murder of women which will lead to a reduction in incidents of femicide.

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## Triple Homicide Inquiry

On September 22nd, 2015, a triple homicide occurred in three separate locations in and around Wilno, Ontario. Anastasia Kuzyk, Nathalie Warmerdam, and Carol Culleton were murdered by their former partner Basil Borutski.



The murderer was in a relationship with Nathalie for seven years when it finally came to an end in July of 2012 after he caused mischief to her property, threatened to kill her dog and hurt her son. He was convicted in December of 2012 and was released a month later, bound by a two-year probation order he broke when he assaulted Anastasia.

In 2013, when his relationship ended with one victim Anastasia, he assaulted her, tried to choke her, and caused mischief on her property while he was on probation for the crimes he committed against Nathalie the year before. In 2014, he was convicted and a month later released from jail bound by a two-year probation order and a lifetime weapons ban that he would ultimately break again when he murdered all three women.

Borutski has been found guilty on November 24th, 2017, of murdering Anastasia, Nathalie, and Carol after what has been called one of the **worst cases** of domestic violence in Canadian history.

He was convicted of two counts of first-degree murder and one count of second-degree murder.

Based on this tragedy, a coroner’s inquest began on June 6th and ran until June 28th. This inquiry examined the circumstances surrounding the deaths and came up with **86 recommendations** to avoid this happening to other women.

The jury had 73 recommendations specific to the Government of Ontario. They were categorized by:

- Oversight and Accountability;
- System Approaches, Collaboration, and Communication;
- Funding;
- Education and Training;
- Measures Addressing Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV);
- Intervention; and
- Safety.

Five recommendations were given to the Chief Firearms Officer, four to the Office of the Chief Coroner, one to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, seven to the Government of Canada, and one to the Parties to this Inquest.

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## Police-reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2021

According to **Statistics Canada data released on August 2nd, 2022**, there were over 2 million police-reported incidents in 2021, which is about 25,000 more than reported crimes in 2020.

Specifically, the rate of police-reported sexual assault in Canada saw an 18% increase from 2020, indicating its highest level since 1996. Statistics Canada mentions that the number of reported sexual assaults is still likely to be a significant underestimate considering the fact that many incidents go unreported to authorities.

Prior to a decrease in 2020, the rate of reported



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sexual assault in Canada has steadily increased over the last five years.

A jump this large cannot be dismissed.

Executive Director of Ottawa Victim Services, Heidi Ilingworth, said in a [CTV News Video](#) that we are seeing an “epidemic of sexual violence”. She adds that “we invest millions of dollars in response to sexual violence and we don’t do enough at the front-end to prevent it from happening”.

According to [Statistics Canada](#), the COVID-19 pandemic further exposed and exacerbated issues related to discrimination in Canada, including hate crimes. Police-reported hate crimes are up 27% across the country in 2021, which follows a 36% increase from 2019 to 2020. In total, police-reported hate crimes have increased 72% over the last two years. However, these statistics do not account for

all hate crimes, as nearly 80% of hate incidents go unreported.

The main motivators of hate crimes across the country last year were race and ethnicity according to Statistics Canada. Andrea Freedman, President of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, stated in a [CTV News Video](#) that the increase in police-reported hate crimes is a “call for action”.

Following this significant data, the [Canadian Race Relations Foundation](#) (CRRF) wants Ottawa to invest over \$44 million to create a national fund for organizations that support victims of hate and a direct fund for survivors of hate crimes.

After conducting research, the CRRF found many gaps in victim services and that many victims of hate have nowhere to turn for support.

With an initial investment of \$44 million to support victims of hate, the CRRF wants to allocate up to \$29 million annually to a national fund for organizations that support victims of hate to create new projects in order to prevent hate and support its victims. The CRRF is also recommending that \$15 million annually be allocated to a national support fund for survivors of hate crimes that includes uninsured costs such as mental health care, lost wages, and physiotherapy.

Their report also recommends an emergency response fund for municipalities to mobilize an emergency response to mass violence and a national Support Hub for Victims of Hate and Support Services to gain access to victim services.

With these recommendations to the federal government, the CRRF is taking direct action in response to the increase in police-reported hate crimes over the last two years. All victims should have easy access to a system of support and services that can help them heal and overcome any trauma they may have experienced.

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## Updated Publications!

We are excited to announce that we have uploaded ten new updated publications on our website; [Restorative Justice in Canada](#), [Peace Bonds](#), [Cyberstalking](#), [Child Abuse](#), [Recovering from Violent Crime](#), [Preparing a Victim Statement for the Parole Board of Canada](#), [Criminal Harassment](#), [What to do if You are Sexually Harassed](#), [Restraining Orders](#), and [Publication Bans](#).

## Upcoming Events

### Monthly Homicide Support Group

Our [Homicide 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. This support group is offered nationally meaning that we can connect with and support survivors from across the country.  
*English only.*

For the month of September 2022, we are excited to

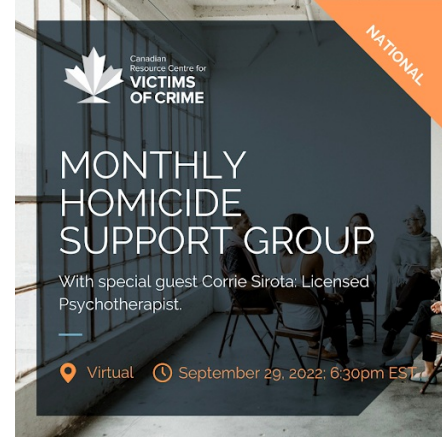


announce that we will have a special guest: Corrie Sirota! Corrie (she/her) is a licensed psychotherapist who specializes in Loss and Bereavement, Parenting, Stress management, and Relationship issues in her private practice. She is the author of *"Someone Died... Now What - A personal and professional perspective on coping with grief and loss"* and *"Loss & Found - A grief activity journal"*. Corrie is also the Clinical Director of Myra's Kids Foundation and co-hosts "Life Unrehearsed" on CJAD 800.

**When:** September 29th at 6:30 pm EST

**Where:** Virtually

**To RSVP:** email us at [crcvc@crcvc.ca](mailto:crcvc@crcvc.ca) or call us at 1-877-232-2610



### Next-Of-Kin Welcoming Reception & Candlelight Vigil

A reception with hors d'oeuvres is being held to welcome both new and returning families in Ottawa. They will have an opportunity to interact with one another for support and build a family wreath.

**When:** Saturday, September 24th from 7:00 – 8:30 pm

**Where:** Room 035B in the West Block Building, Parliament Hill

### Candlelight Vigil

After the welcoming reception, families are invited to a Candlelight Vigil at the glass panels. This is a beautiful outdoor ceremony to commemorate those who have made the ultimate sacrifice by allowing families to view their loved one's names by candlelight forever.

**When:** Saturday, September 24th, 8:45 – 9:15pm

**Where:** Glass Panels, Summer Pavilion

Please note, that registration is required for this event. For registration or any questions or concerns, contact Aline Vlasceanu at 1-877-232-2610 or at [crcvc@crcvc.ca](mailto:crcvc@crcvc.ca)

Canadian Police and Peace Officers Memorial (CCPOM) are ensuring people can gather on the front lawn of Parliament Hill to honor the officers who we lost these past three years. A full Regimental Parade, a non-denominational memorial service, presentation of headdress, and March past will be happening.



For those who cannot join in person, a live social media broadcast will be made accessible.

**When:** September 25th, at 11:00am to 12:00pm

**Where:** Parliament Hill

For any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Aline Vlasceanu at 1-877-232-2610 or at [crcvc@crcvc.ca](mailto:crcvc@crcvc.ca)

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