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## EMPOWER

Please **share our free newsletter** with your colleagues and friends or sign up to receive it directly by clicking [here](#).

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

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

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

For hours of operation and other info, please [click here](#).

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Wishing everyone a safe and joyful holiday season! We look forward to connecting with you in 2023.

Sincerely,

The CRCVC team



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

From all of us at the CRCVC!

We hope that you have a safe and joyful holiday season.

*Please note our office will be closed from December 26th, 2022 until January 2nd, 2023.*

**We will reopen on Tuesday, January 3rd at 8:30 am EST.**

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## Setting Boundaries During the Holidays

This holiday season it is important to set boundaries and prioritize your mental health and well-being. **The holidays can be particularly difficult when dealing with grief.** It can be very painful to watch others celebrate with their loved ones, while memories of your past holidays serve as a constant reminder of what and who you have lost. Learning to develop new traditions can also be very difficult for survivors. One way that can help in coping with loss during the holidays is to set clear boundaries with yourself and with others.

To practice setting healthy boundaries, it is important to understand what this means. According to Brene Brown, a professor at the University of Houston, healthy boundaries are **“simply our lists of what’s okay, and what’s not okay.”** Setting realistic and healthy boundaries can help you to feel confident in yourself, and to avoid uncomfortable situations.

The Family Centre, an organization that provides counselling and support to families, has outlined **five ways to set boundaries for yourself this holiday season.**

### 1. Know your limits

Sometimes setting boundaries includes setting ones for yourself. One way to do this is to ask others about how they think you’ve been acting, and if they have noticed anything concerning. In addition, it may help to write down anything that has been causing you stress, and also note what you can do to lessen these stressors.

### 2. Prepare to speak up

Speaking up and sharing your thoughts and feelings can help avoid feeling resentful towards someone else, a situation, or yourself. Practice saying affirmations like “I can do this!” or “I need to do this for myself and my peace of mind.”

### 3. Speak up in a calm, simple, and direct way

Speaking up about your thoughts and feelings can be done calmly and respectfully, which lessens the possibility of relationship damage. It is important to use “I” statements when articulating how you feel. Here is one example of how you could set a boundary: “I felt embarrassed when I saw your reaction to my gift because I tried to give you a present that I could with the budget that I have. I wish I could buy you a nicer gift but I can’t.”

### 4. Just say “no”

Even though it can be helpful to describe what you are feeling like in the example above, saying “no” is just as effective and is a complete statement in itself. You are not always obligated to explain why something is making you angry or upset. Saying “no” is important and is an effective way of setting a clear boundary.

### 5. Tap yourself on the back

The more you set boundaries the better you will feel about doing it. Speaking up and sharing your feelings is honest, but also vulnerable, so setting any type of boundary is great and should be seen as an accomplishment.

Though setting boundaries can be difficult, they are important in making the holiday season more enjoyable for you. Setting boundaries can create a sense of peace within yourself and allows you to honour your feelings. Utilizing the above tips can help you to prioritize your mental health and well-being this holiday season.

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## 16 Days of Activism Campaign

From November 25 until December 10, CRCVC took part in the national 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign. However, it is important to note that though the 16 Days of Activism campaign is a strong initiative in the fight against gender-based violence, this issue is persistent and ongoing, therefore activism efforts should reflect this reality beyond merely 16 days. As part of our campaign, we have shared social media posts highlighting various resources related to important topics, and we have also sent a letter to federal minister David Lametti highlighting two important recommendations for change that were set out in the CKW inquest.

Through our social media posts, CRCVC has highlighted numerous important topics and issues such as gender equity, working to engage men to reduce and prevent gender-based violence, reconciliation with Indigenous women and girls, sexual femicide, and stories from survivors of intimate partner violence.

In our letter to minister David Lametti, we highlighted the CKW inquest into the triple femicide of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk, and Natalie Warmerdam which generated [86 recommendations for change](#). CRCVC focused on recommendations #79 and #85.

Recommendation #79 states that the term “femicide” should be added to the Criminal Code of Canada. Femicide is the killing or sexual violation of a woman by a man because they are a woman. In Canada, 1 woman is killed every 2.5 days. Therefore, this form of violence must be addressed in a legal context in order for legislation to be put into place to prosecute cases of femicide.

Recommendation #85 is to include coercive control in the Criminal Code of Canada. Coercive control is used to isolate victims and make them dependent on their abuser, taking away their freedom to make decisions about their own life. Coercive control can involve things such as assault, threats, humiliation, or intimidation. We feel it is important to create legislation on this issue in order to better serve the needs of victims of this type of violence.

We are glad to have participated in this important national campaign, and we will continue with our daily advocacy for victims of gender-based violence.

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## Clare's Law

In 2009, [Clare Wood](#) was found murdered in her home in Salford, United Kingdom. She was strangled to death and set on fire by an obsessive, former ex-boyfriend, George Appleton, who had broken into her home. In the months preceding her tragic murder, Clare had filed numerous reports to the Greater Manchester Police regarding the disturbing behaviour of her former partner. These complaints included threatening remarks of sexual assault and murder, and instances involving criminal damage and harassment. These occurrences even lead Clare to install a panic alarm in her home as she feared for her life. Unfortunately, despite these efforts and repeated reports to the police, Appleton managed to break into Clare's home and murder her.

During the investigation into Clare's death, her family came to learn that Appleton had a criminal history and a violent past. [George Appleton](#) spent several years in prison following multiple stints involving violence against women. This includes spending [six years](#) in prison for an incident where he held a woman at knifepoint for several hours, six months in prison for breaching a restraining order, and again spending another three years in prison for harassing a woman just a year after the previous incident.

[Clare's family](#) believes that had the police been able to disclose information about her former partner's violent past and criminal history, she may still be here today. As a result of this case and the efforts of Clare's family to campaign for a change in legislation to deter this from ever happening again, Clare's Law was passed.

[Clare's Law](#) is a domestic violence disclosure scheme that allows a person to request information from the police if they believe their partner may be a danger to them. Clare's Law was passed in 2014 in the United Kingdom. However, it wasn't until 2021 that Clare's Law was passed in Canada in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. [Bill 17: The Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence \(Clare's Law\) Act](#) is new legislation that allows police to disclose information to a current or former intimate partner, or a trusted third party such as a parent, about a person's prior criminal record or history of intimate partner violence. The [Government of Alberta](#) hopes that the passing of Bill 17 will encourage individuals at risk of domestic violence to seek information about potential or current partners, and subsequently help women to make informed decisions about their relationships.

[Highlights](#) of Bill 17: *The Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act* include:

- **The right to ask:** anyone who feels apprehensive about a partner or potential partner can make a request to the police to see that person's criminal record.
- **The right to know:** police have the authority to disclose an individual's criminal record to people at risk of domestic violence without requiring an application to be submitted.
- **The right to privacy:** the personal information of people requesting these disclosures from the police will be protected and only the most relevant information about a partner or potential partner's criminal record will be shared.

**Collette Martin**, a victim of domestic violence who was stabbed 37 times by a man she'd been in a relationship with, watched as Lt.-Gov. Brenda Murphy gave royal assent to Bill 17. Martin witnessed what felt to her like a legislative miracle, according to a [CBC News article](#).

At the time, Collette was unaware of her ex's previous charges where he broke the jaw of his ex-girlfriend. She mentions that if "this law would have been in then, [she] would have been able to get the information [she] would have needed to make an informed decision about [her] relationship".

Martin played an active role in lobbying for a version of Clare's Law in New Brunswick and she "never thought [she] would get to this point".

It took Martin 25 years to get royal assent, and words can not express the feeling of knowing that there are now measures in place to prevent domestic violence.

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## End of Year Giving - A Message to You

As the year comes to an end, we humbly ask you to consider supporting the victims we serve by donating today.

The year 2022 was difficult for many victims across the country. However, when they come to CRCVC, they find a safe space with an empathetic team focused on helping them on their journey.

All our services are free, which is why we consider your support crucial. It is never too late in the year to support victims and survivors of crime.

[You can click here to donate as little as \\$25](#)

Thank you,

Aline Vlasceanu  
Executive Director

[Donate Now](#)

## Upcoming Events

### Monthly Homicide Support Group

See you in 2023!

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.*

**When:** January 26, 2023 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](tel:1-877-232-2610)



[Donate Today](#)

