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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.

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

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### Message from the Executive Director - Sarah

This year I embraced the role of Executive Director and as the year draws to a close, I'm grateful to each one of you who has played a vital role in our journey at the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC). It has been a true honour to join this incredible organization and collaborate with such dedicated staff, stakeholders, and supporters. Thanks to your partnership, we've continued to champion the rights and well-being of victims and survivors of crime across Canada.

Your support this year has had a profound impact. Because of you, we've been able to provide immediate support to survivors, offer critical resources, and advocate for stronger victim rights. Your generosity helped us continue to support victims of crime, providing an informed helpline, ensuring that victims had a compassionate ear in their moments of greatest need. Your contributions have directly supported our ability to address critical issues and amplify the voices of those who deserve to be heard. This year, we had the honour of advocating for victims of crime twice at the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee.

As we prepare for the year ahead, we invite you to stay by our side. Your support fuels our mission to create a more just and compassionate society. Every contribution—whether it's a donation, sharing our message, or partnering with us—makes a lasting difference. We're excited to continue this work together and look forward to the impact we'll achieve in the coming year.

With heartfelt appreciation,

**Sarah Crawford**  
Executive Director  
Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC)

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## Search at Winnipeg Landfill for the Bodies of Two Indigenous Women

On December 2nd, the search for the remains of two Indigenous women, Morgan Harris, 39, and Mercedes Myran, 26, began at the Prairie Green Landfill, just north of Winnipeg. The search for the two women, which is expected to continue into the spring, comes almost two years after their murders in 2022.

In July 2024, [Jeremy Skibicki](#) was convicted for the murders of Harris and Myran in addition to two more women: Rebecca Contois, 24, and an unidentified woman named Buffalo Woman. The murders went unidentified for months, until a man found partial human remains in a bin outside of Skibicki's apartment. He is currently serving life in prison.

Manitoba officials initially rejected the proposal to search the landfill, [stating](#) it would be too costly and put the health of the search personnel at risk. However, Indigenous leaders and Harris and Myran's families led an impactful campaign to advocate for the search to be conducted. Manitoba's premier, Wab Kinew, [pledged \\$20m CAD](#) to fund the search for the remains, which was later matched by the federal government.

In a [news conference](#) on Monday, Kinew stated, "We found some items that indicate that we are in the right date range and time," referencing dates found on some garbage, including a milk carton and newspapers. Kinew is frank about the unknown odds of the search but remains optimistic, [saying](#), "We don't know what the odds of the situation being successful are [but] we can say with confidence that we have a chance for this search to succeed."

All of Skibicki's victims were Indigenous women. As mentioned in our September 2023 edition of [EMPOWER](#), September 18th is the International Day of Action to Search the Landfills, as marked by Amnesty International Canada. This day honours the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and gender-diverse people whose remains are believed to be in the Prairie Green, Brady Road Landfills, or other landfills across Canada. On September 18, 2023, the families of Myran and Harris, supporters, and First Nation advocacy organizations marched to Parliament Hill to meet with Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Gary Anandasangaree to advocate for the funding of the search.

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## Prioritizing your Mental Health During the Holidays

The holiday season is an important time to prioritize your mental health and well-being. However, it can be a particularly difficult time when dealing with grief. It can be painful to watch others celebrate with their loved ones, while memories of your past serve as a constant reminder of what and who you have lost. We must take extra care of ourselves to avoid additional stress and other negative impacts.

Here are [six ways to prioritize your mental health and avoid holiday stress](#)

### **Acknowledge your feelings**

It is okay to not always feel festive during the holidays, don't pressure yourself to conform to festivities. Allow yourself to recognize and feel any sadness, grief, or stress you are feeling without guilt.

### **Prioritize time for yourself**

Self-care can take any form, whether maintaining a regular sleep schedule, eating nutritious meals, or

setting aside time for your favourite hobbies. Engaging in activities that bring you joy can empower you to take control of your mental health and minimize sadness and grief.

### Lean on your support system

Fostering connections and community can be largely impactful in combating isolation. This can be done through in-person gatherings, phone calls, and video chats. You can plan group activities, like game nights or movie marathons, or engage in casual conversation. Building a support system can have positive impacts on mental health and create positive coping strategies in the long term.

### Be okay with saying “no”

Recognize your bandwidth and set expectations for what can be achieved. It is okay to say no to commitments and activities you may not have the time or energy for. Give yourself permission to do what is best for you. Engage in activities that support your well-being and make you happy. It is an effective way to set and manage your boundaries.

### Create new traditions

The holiday season can evoke difficult memories. However, consider creating new traditions that bring you joy. This can take on many forms, whether it be volunteering at a not-for-profit, spending time with people that make you happy, taking time for yourself, or trying out a new hobby.

### Reach out to someone if you need support

You do not have to navigate the holidays alone. Whether it be from a family or friend or a professional, recognize that you can have a safe space to process and feel your emotions. [Mygrief.ca](https://mygrief.ca) has a variety of online resources that can help with navigating and understanding grief.

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## National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Women

On December 6, 1989, 14 women were killed by a man in the engineering school at Montreal’s Ecole Polytechnique. Parliament designated December 6th as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This year marked 35 years since this massacre.

Ottawa held a Vigil on Friday, December 6th at the Women's Monument at Minto Park on Elgin Street.

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## Upcoming Events

### 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.*

**When:** 6:30 pm EST January 30th, 2025

**Where:** Virtually

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



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