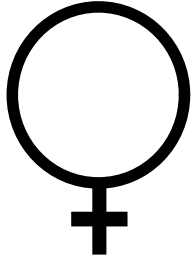


NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION
ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
December 6, 1999



Actions to eliminate violence against women

In 1991, the federal government declared December 6 the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women*. This date coincides with the anniversary of the massacre at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal in 1989 when 14 young women were tragically killed.

This day provides time to stop and think about those 14 young women as well as all women who live daily with the threat of violence or who have lost their lives as a result of deliberate acts of violence. It is also a time to reflect on concrete actions each of us can take to prevent and eliminate violence against women in our society.

Violence against women is a complex problem, which requires a variety of strategies to modify attitudes, values and systems that contribute to maintaining and perpetuating violence. These strategies must include, among other things, improvement of treatment of violence against women in the legal system, sensitization and education campaigns against violence and changing social institutions, which contribute to maintaining inequality of women.

Everyone can **do** their part. Here are a few things that you can do every day to eliminate violence against women.

- ✓ Find out about support services offered in your community for abused women and those aimed at partners and men who abuse.

What can I do to end violence against women?

You could...

- ✓ Find out more about the problem of violence against women and abuse of power, the issues and the consequences. **How?** Read articles or books; listen to radio broadcasts or watch television documentaries on the subject.
- ✓ Visit your public or school library, speak with a women's centre or a group of women in your community, or with Status of Women Canada to get more information on the subject and the information sheets produced by Status of Women Canada for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.
- ✓ Visit Status of Women Canada's Web site that offers links to other sites.
- ✓ Examine your own attitudes and behaviour towards others.
- ✓ Question the stereotypical socio-sexual roles portrayed at home, at school, at work or in the media.
- ✓ Avoid laughing at jokes and insults that are discriminatory or sexist.
- ✓ Stand up against sexist behaviour and tolerance of violence even as seen in sports.
- ✓ Boycott films and other media that glorify violence.

Status of Women Canada
350 Albert Street, 5th floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1C3

Telephone : (613) 995-7835
TDD : (613) 996-1322
Fax : (613) 943-2386

Web site : www.swc-cfc.gc.ca

As parents, you could...

- ✓ Help your children develop a positive self-esteem by listening to them, respecting them, and offering them positive reinforcement and lots of love.
- ✓ Help them learn to be responsible for their choices and actions and to accept the consequences.
- ✓ Teach them that violence is an abuse of power and confidence.
- ✓ Teach them that using physical force and insults is unacceptable in relationships.
- ✓ Help them understand that there are other, more passive ways to resolve conflict and manage their tempers.
- ✓ Be an example to your children; follow your own advice.
- ✓ Avoid buying toys for your children that are violent in nature or sexist.

As a man or boy, you could...

- ✓ Evaluate your own attitudes and how you treat women/girls.
- ✓ Openly oppose sexist behaviours and violence among your friends and family.
- ✓ Ignore men or boys who tease you or try to make you feel inferior because you speak out against discrimination and violence against women.
- ✓ Assume responsibility for your choices and actions.
- ✓ Learn new ways of expressing your needs and feelings.
- ✓ Learn new, quieter ways of resolving conflicts and manage your aggressiveness.
- ✓ Avoid buying magazines, CDs or renting videos that depict women as sexual objects or abuse them.
- ✓ Start a discussion group for men/boys at school, at work, among your friends, in the community, to talk about subjects that impact on men/boys such as interpersonal relationship, aggressiveness, masculinity, changing violent behaviour, etc.
- ✓ Encourage your friends and family with anger problems to seek professional counselling.
- ✓ If you have a violent temper, seek professional help. Even with the best intentions, it is sometimes difficult to change aggressive behaviour without professional help or a support group.

In your own community, you could...

- ✓ Work with others to develop new resources to help abused women, their partners or abusive men or to improve existing services.
- ✓ Push your school board officials to integrate courses and programs that denounce sexism and sexual violence into their regular curriculum and other school activities, at all levels.
- ✓ Be a volunteer or donate money to a crisis centre or shelter for battered women.
- ✓ Participate in a national or local campaign to fight violence against women or start a campaign of your own.

Source:

The Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women (1993), Final Report, *Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence ~ Achieving Equality*, Section 5 p. 101-105.

This information is also adapted in part from information sheets produced by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters from their campaign "Violence: you can make a difference".