



December 6 National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, observed on December 6th each year in Canada, holds immense significance in our society. This solemn day commemorates the tragic events of December 6, 1989, when 14 women were brutally murdered at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal simply because they were women. They were promising engineering students, each with dreams and aspirations and their lives were tragically cut short by an act of gender-based violence. By remembering their names and stories,

we ensure that their lives and the meaning of their deaths are never forgotten. This day serves as a powerful reminder of the pervasive issue of gender-based violence and the urgent need to take action to address it. It's a call to confront and eradicate the deep-rooted misogyny and gender-based violence that persist in our society. As those tragic events shocked the nation, it prompted discussions about the deeply ingrained attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence against women. It compels us to continue these conversations and work towards a society where such violence is unthinkable.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women underscores the importance of education and awareness. It encourages schools, communities, and individuals to learn about the issue of gender-based violence, its causes, and its consequences. By educating ourselves and others, we can break the cycle of violence and foster a culture of respect and equality.

This day emphasizes the critical role of advocacy and activism in addressing violence against women. It serves as a platform for organizations, activists, and advocates to raise their voices, demand change, and support survivors of gender-based violence. It is a day to rally together in solidarity and demonstrate our collective commitment to ending violence against women. We must urge the governments at all levels to prioritize this issue and allocate resources to programs and services that assist survivors and work towards prevention.

This day encourages men to be allies in the fight against violence against women. It acknowledges that this issue is not solely a women's concern but a societal problem that affects us all. Men are encouraged to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviors, challenge harmful stereotypes, and actively work towards creating a safer and more equitable world for all.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women calls on us to educate ourselves and others, advocate for change, and work towards a society where violence against women is no longer tolerated. This day is not only important for honoring the past but also for shaping a more just and equal future for all.

By: I. Gingras and M. Desmornes—Members of the Provincial Status of Women Committee

16 Days

of Activism Against
Gender-based
Violence

Canada

Ways to get involved

(from Gender Equality Canada)

- Kick-off the 16 Days by wearing purple on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to raise awareness about gender-based violence.
- Throughout the 16 Days, follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Share the 16 Days campaign posts or create your own using the images from the digital toolkit below (coming soon!) and the hashtag #16Days.
- Use 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence 2023 background during your virtual meetings.
- Learn more about gender-based violence:
 - Find out about [16 ways you can help end gender-based violence](#)
 - Check out “It’s Not Just”, our [youth awareness campaign](#) to end gender-based violence
 - Learn about gender-based violence
 - Watch a movie, video or documentary related to [gender-based violence](#) such as those available on the [National Film Board website](#) (various languages; viewer discretion is advised for some films).
- Attend an event in your community to show your support to the victims of GBV. Consider donating to a shelter near you if you can.
- On the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6, honour the victims of the Polytechnique Montréal tragedy by wearing a white ribbon. Visit the web page of [the National Day](#) for other ideas
- On December 10, Human Rights Day, read the full text or simplified version of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) or consult the illustrated booklet of the Declaration.
- Become an ally by adopting these simple but powerful actions all year long:
 - **Listen:** be open to learning from the experiences of others.
 - **Believe:** support survivors and those affected by violence. It is very important that you say the words “I believe you” and “This is not your fault”.
 - **Educate (yourself and others):** learn the facts about GBV; know what your workplace policies say about violence and harassment; take a course; participate in an event.
 - **Speak out:** add your voice to call out violence.
 - **Intervene:** find a safe way to help when you see acts of gender-based violence. Name what you see. Express your concern and ask how you can help. Intervening can also mean providing support and resources.
 - **Act:** give your time or donate to organizations working to end gender-based violence.

16 Days 2023 digital toolkit

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- Social conservatives are pushing to check Poilievre's power
- Hamilton set to officially declare gender-based violence an 'epidemic'
- Confronting Violence Against Women—What Has Worked Well and Why
- Facts and figures: Ending violence against women
- 'An unspoken epidemic': Homicide rate increase for Black women rivals that of Black men
- A Layered Look at Domestic Violence in the Black Community
- Fact Sheet on Women with Disabilities and Violence

Canada's Gender Gap with Shari Graydon

Canada ranks **61st in the world** for women's political representation (as of August 2023). So, what needs to happen for women to achieve parity in politics?

Join Heidi Yetman, CTF/FCE President, for a conversation about women's political representation in Canada with Shari Graydon of Informed Opinions.

This episode discusses:

- The Balance of Power campaign;
- The gender gap in Canada and around the world;
- Measures other countries are taking to ensure a balance of power in politics;
- Importance and benefits of gender parity in politics;
- And more.

Tune in to your Source, connecting you to the stories behind Canada's education eco-system.

[Listen Now](#)



Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is a form of gender-based violence that involves altering, injuring or partial/total removal of the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. More than 200 million women and girls worldwide have undergone some form of female genital mutilation in 30 countries in Africa, Middle East and Asia where FGM/C is still being practiced. The practices of FGM/C has no health benefits for girls and women. It often causes severe bleeding and problems urinating, later cysts, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and increased risk of deaths of newborns.

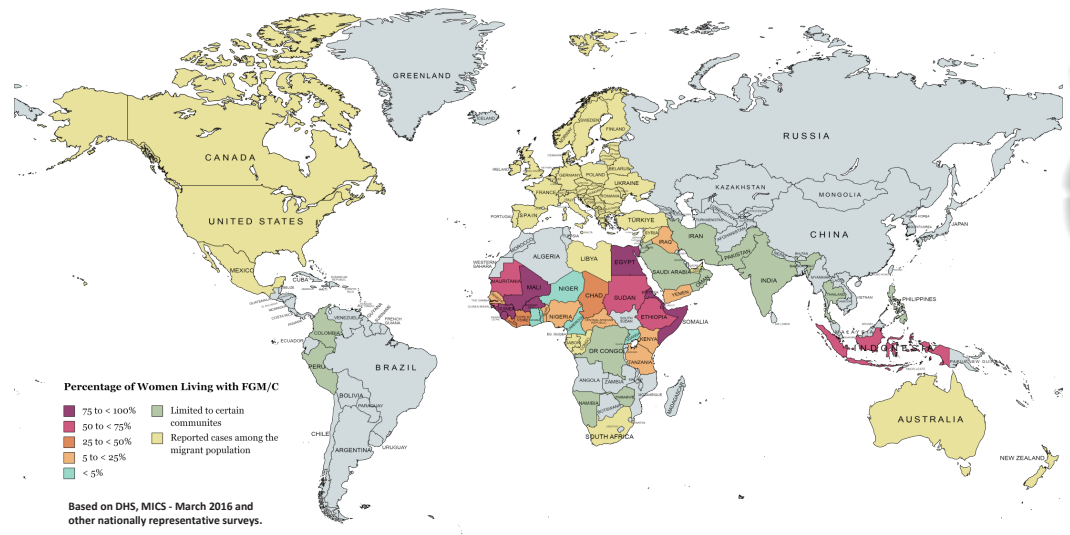
FGM/C is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15 and is a violation of the human rights of girls and women. Most times it is carried out by traditional practitioners, violating the rights of children and is a function of inequality between the sexes. This painful practice also violates the rights of women and girls to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. In some instances, this torture results in death. Often, and more recently, this procedure is being carried out by health care providers due to the improper belief that the procedure is safer when medicalized.

In addition to the physical health complications of FGM/C, which cost healthcare systems over 1.4 billion US dollars per year, the emotional and mental effects stay with women and girls who have experienced FGM/C for their entire lives and causes trauma well beyond their physical injuries.

More than 3 million girls are at risk every year in approximately 30 countries where the practice of FGM/C is documented.

The World Health Organization has urged health care providers not to perform FGM/C and has created a global movement to end FGM/C in the countries where it is practiced. (all statistics from [World Health Organization](#))

Estimated Percentage of Women Living with FGM/C Worldwide



FGM/C Law in Canada

[Learn More](#)

Since the early 1990s, groups like [Flourish](#) (Communities Collaborating to End FGM) in Canada have pushed to have fear of gender persecutions, such as FGM/C recognized as a basis for requesting refugee status. Canada became the first Western nation to grant refugee status based on FGM/C in 1994. As of May 1997, performing FGM/C is recognized as aggravated assault and an indictable offence liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years under federal criminal code 268(3).

What can we do to stop female genital mutilation and cutting?

(from [Flourish](#))

Empowering and Supporting Survivors

1. Contribute to Awareness and Education in the Community

- Adopting six principles reflected throughout the Flourish project—anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, community-based, survivor-centred, equity and cultural safety—as a foundation.
- Strengthening support systems by delivering education and awareness-raising resources for survivors, healthcare and community service providers.

2. Foster Cultural Competence

- Understanding the diversity of needs and interacting effectively with women living with FGM/C to allow them to live to their full potential as Canadians.

3. Use Empowering Terminology

- Language is an essential and powerful tool in ending this harmful practice. Terminology, narratives and discourse are crucial tools to convey messages that contribute to raising awareness, to women's, girls' and communities' empowerment and to their ability to speak out against the harmful practice of FGM/C.

4. Support Resilience and Resistance

- Supporting survivors through collaborative approaches, cultural humility, and intersectional design allows for better healthcare outcomes, social interventions, and opportunities for those affected by FGM/C to tell their own stories.
- Capitalizing on the leadership of women and families affected by FGM/C, networks of service providers, and community organizers can better coordinate culturally competent interventions and care.