



December 6<sup>th</sup> is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada. It also marks the 31st anniversary of the murder of 14 women engineering students at l'École Polytechnique de Montreal in 1989. It is important that we not only reflect on this terrible tragedy, but also re-affirm our commitments to ending gender based violence.

We have a collective responsibility to end all forms of oppression and that includes ending rape culture, sexism, racism, and transphobia. Rates of gender-based violence persistently remains higher for those from marginalized communities, including women and girls who are racialized, immigrants and refugees, queer, transgender and/or low income. Indigenous women and girls are 2.5 times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women, and 60% of women with a disability experience some form of violence throughout their lifetime<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, mandated social/physical isolation during this time of crisis creates conditions for violence and barriers to escaping abusive situations<sup>2</sup>.

As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, it is women who are bearing the brunt of the chaos as governments and other decision makers try to navigate our communities into a “new normal”. Women’s labour participation has fallen to its lowest point in 30 years<sup>3</sup> and shutdowns during this pandemic most severely affects sectors that employ women. This reduced economic freedom for women not only hurts them, but their families and communities who benefit either directly or indirectly from women’s participation.

There can be no “just recovery” for women without childcare, without safe and affordable housing, without decent wages and workers’ protections. Whether they are on the frontlines as healthcare and other essential workers, managing households while working from home or trying to re-enter the job market, we need proactive and progressive policies that will support the diverse needs of women and protect them from all forms of gender-based violence.

In solidarity,

APUS Executive Committee

For more resources and events, check out:

- [Global 16 Days Days Campaign](#)
- [Dandelion Initiative](#)
- [#DoneWaiting \(Canadian Labour Congress\)](#)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/gender-based-violence/>

<sup>2</sup> [covid19\\_\\_genderbased\\_violence\\_in\\_canada\\_key\\_issues\\_and\\_recommendations](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/tackling-the-she-cession-critical-to-canada-s-economic-recovery-818104311.html>