



National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

December 6th is the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women* in Canada. The day itself is part of a larger global campaign to end gender-based violence, the *16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence* which began on 25th November with the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women* and runs until *Human Rights Day* on December 10th.¹ December 6th also marks the 32nd 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 remain higher for those from marginalized communities, including women and girls who are racialized; immigrants and refugees; queer, transgender, nonbinary people; and/or those of low income. Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be murdered or missing than any other women in Canada,² and women living with a disability are three times more likely to experience violent victimization than women living without a disability.³

As we re-open shared spaces in this new stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital to remember that women have borne the brunt of the impact, through economic changes and stay-at-home orders that have restricted access to support outside the household. In 2020, women's labour participation fell to its lowest point in 30 years⁴ and shutdowns most severely affected 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. Moreover, gender justice advocates have warned of an ongoing "shadow pandemic" of femicide related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.⁵ In Ontario alone, femicide increased by more than 84 per cent in the first half of 2021.⁶

There can be no "just recovery" for women without childcare, safe and affordable housing, 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

¹ <https://16dayscampaign.org/>

² https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf

³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00014-eng.pdf?st=ff90fSbP>

⁴ <https://occ.ca/mediareleases/tackling-the-she-cession-critical-to-canadas-economic-recovery/>

⁵ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8040778/femicide-domestic-violence-increasing-2021-canada/>

⁶ <https://www.oaith.ca/assets/library/Femicide-in-Ontario-June-30-2021.pdf>



December 6 events:

Memorial and Reflections on Ending Gender-Based Violence in a Post-Pandemic World:

<https://www.svpscentre.utoronto.ca/learn/programming/ndravw/>

- webinar Monday Dec. 6, 2021, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. EST

Women Won't Forget

<https://www.womenwontforget.org/>

- Virtual Vigil and Installation at Philosopher's Walk:
Monday December 6, 2021, 11am to 3 pm EST (South side of Bloor, West of Avenue Road)
- Virtual Vigil: Live Stream on YouTube Monday December 6, 2021, 6:00 PM EST
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8goH_SL_SM

Resources:

- Tri-campus PEARS Project: <https://linktr.ee/ThePEARSProject>
- Women and Trans Centres at UofT
 - UTSC: <https://www.utscwomensandtranscentre.com/>
 - UTSG: <https://womenscentre.sa.utoronto.ca/>
- Dandelion Initiative <https://dandelioninitiative.ca/>
- WomenattheCentre <https://www.womenatthecentre.com/>
- 2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan: <https://mmiwg2splus-nationalactionplan.ca/>
- DoneWaiting: https://www.donewaiting.ca/harassment_violence