



Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association Recognizes Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

OTTAWA (December 7, 2015) Yesterday marked the 26th annual National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada. Introduced by Parliament in 1991, this day is a time to remember those lives lost in the 1989 shooting of 14 women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal in an act of gender-based violence. Candlelight vigils, memorial services and countless other events were held throughout the country yesterday.

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy (CCPA) marks this day of importance as a way of raising awareness of violence against women around the country.

"Each year, CCPA reflects on this day as a way to pay tribute to the women killed on December 6, 1989 as well as to shed light on those currently living with violence in their life and to offer resources to those struggling," said CCPA President Natasha Caverley. "Today, we join together to speak out against all forms of violence against women."

Counselling and psychotherapy services can offer a safe, supportive environment to talk about the situation, to help improve safety by creating a protection plan and by connecting people to access community resources through referral, advocacy and coordination.

"Counsellors and psychotherapists in our national association can assist with the emotional needs and institutional challenges faced by women and children who experience family violence," added Caverley. "As counsellors and psychotherapists, we need to ensure those who are experiencing or witnessing acts of violence against women know how to access help and stay safe. We also need to encourage people who have used violence against women to seek support to change. "

Statistics Canada indicates that half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence. Although violence prevention programs are having a positive effect in reducing the rates of violence, violence against women remains a very serious issue.

Victims of violence and witnesses of that violence often experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including fear, anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating, intrusive memories of the abuse, anger outbursts, and hyperarousal. Sometimes these feelings are accompanied by unexplainable physical ailments such as aches and pains.

CCPA strongly encourages anyone who may be experiencing threats, domestic violence, or abuse, or who knows someone who has mentioned personal safety issues, to seek immediate support. Talk to a trusted friend, dial 911, a crisis centre, local police, or a health facility. Do not stay silent.

If you are looking for therapeutic support, go to www.ccpa-accp.ca, where you can search for a Canadian Certified Counsellor in your region. Members of the public can also find authoritative information about the profession of counselling and psychotherapy by visiting CCPA's public website, www.talkingcanhelp.ca.

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The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. For more information on the counselling and psychotherapy profession, please visit www.ccpa-accp.ca or www.talkingcanhelp.ca.

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