DAY 01 · WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2026

# 01 SAFETY TAKES ALL OF US.



**Today, Women's Habitat begins our 16 Days series and announces that we're joining Wrapped in Courage. We'll explore how to recognize abuse, support survivors and help prevent violence.**

## ABOUT THE 16 DAYS

The16 Days run from November 25, the International Day for theElimination of Violence Against Women, to December 10, Human Rights Day. In Canada, they include December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Gender-based violence is violence directed at someone because of their gender, gender identity or gender expression. Responsibility stays with the person causing harm.

## WRAPPED IN COURAGE

### WHY A PURPLE SCARF?

Wrapped in Courage is a campaign of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH). Throughout November, people across Ontario wear a purple scarf to show support for survivors of gender-based violence and to call for increased funding for essential services.

## LET SOLIDARITY LEAD TO ACTION

- Listen without judgment. Believe them; let them lead.
- Challenge harmful attitudes. Speak up when victims are blamed.
- Support local services. Know where to find real help.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### WEAR PURPLE—THEN EXPLAIN IT.

Wear a purple scarf this week. When someone asks about it, explain what it stands for and share one practical idea from this series.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** — **Solidarity is a starting point. Action is how it grows.**

## LEARN MORE

Wrapped in Courage (OAITH)
wrappedincourage.ca
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemo rations-celebrations/16-days.html

## NEED SUPPORT?

You don't have to work out next steps alone.
Women's Habitat 24-hour crisis line: 416-252-5829
Assaulted Women's Helpline (24/7): 1-866-863-0511 · #SAFE (#7233) on a Bell, Rogers, Fido or Telus mobile
In immediate danger, call 911.

# 02

DAY02·THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026

# VIOLENCE ISN'T ALWAYS VISIBLE.

**Abusecanbeemotional, financial, sexual ordigital—notonlyphysical.Someone's experiencedoesnothave toleave avisible marktomatter.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Many people picture abuse as physical violence. But many forms of abuse leave no injury at all. They can still cause fear, affect health and wellbeing, and narrow someone's choices about their own life. Different forms of abuse often happen together and build over time. A person may not use the word "abuse" to describe what is happening to them, especially at first.

You might notice other changes instead: someone withdrawing from friends, seeming anxious about a partner's reactions, or no longer having money of their own.

Someone does not need visible injuries to deserve to be believed, taken seriously and offered support.

## FORMS ABUSE CAN TAKE

- Emotional abuse: humiliation, constant criticism, intimidation or threats to harm them, their children or pets.
- Financial abuse: controlling money, work or access to resources.
- Sexual abuse: pressure or coercion into sexual activity, or ignoring a "no."
- Isolation: cutting someone off from friends, family, work or community.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### RESPOND TO WHAT YOU NOTICE—WITH CARE.

If someone describes being belittled, threatened or cut off, take it seriously. You might say, "That sounds really hard. I'm here if you want to talk." Let them name their own experience, and don't pressure them to act.

**KEY TAKEAWAY**

**You don't have to wait for a bruise to take someone seriously.**

## LEARN MORE

Assaulted Women's Helpline — Is this abuse?
awhl.org/is-this-abuse

Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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DAY03·FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2026

## “IT’SONLY BECAUSE I CARE.”

# 03 WHEN CARE BECOMES CONTROL.

**Concern can be used to justify behaviour that slowly restricts another person’s freedom. When does care become control?**

### UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Coercivecontrol isapattern ofbehaviour that limits someone’s autonomy—their ability to make their own decisions. It can include monitoring, isolation, rules, threats and punishments.

Each act on its own can look minor, or even caring. What matters is the pattern and its effect: over time, the person may change how they live to avoid consequences.

Not every disagreement or jealous moment is abuse. In a healthy relationship, both people can disagree, say no, and keep their own friends, money and privacy without fear.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Is it repeated? Demanding passwords or checking a phone again and again.
- Does it shrink their world? Deciding who they can see or monitoring where they go.
- Is there fear? Feeling they must check first, or “walk on eggshells.”
- Are there consequences? Being punished for saying no.

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### LOOK AT THE PATTERN, NOT ONE MOMENT.

If someone shares concerns about a partner, focus on how they feel rather than debating whether one incident “counts.” You might ask, “Do you feel free to make your own choices?”

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Care respects your choices. Control restricts them.**

### LEARN MORE

Assaulted Women’s Helpline — Woman abuse
awhl.org/woman-abuse

Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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DAY04·SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2026

# 04 REPLACE “WHY DIDN’T SHE LEAVE?”



**It’sacommonquestion, and oftenwell-meant.But itputsthefocus on the survivor’s decisions—insteadofon the personcausingharm andthebarriers that make safety hard to reach.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Leaving is rarely a single moment. It can involve decisions about safety, housing, money, children, health, immigration status and community ties. The period around separation can carry increased risk, so leaving is not always the safest immediate step. Many people leave more than once. Staying, leaving or returning does not make someone responsible for the abuse. They are making decisions within real constraints, and they know their situation best.

## BETTER QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What made leaving unsafe?
- Was affordable housing available?
- Could she access money or support?
- What might happen to her children?
- Why did the person choose to cause harm?

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## CHANGE THE QUESTION.

When the topic comes up—in conversation, in the news or online—replace “Why didn’t she leave?” with “What was standing in her way?” or “Why did he choose to cause harm?”

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Shift the scrutiny: from the survivor’s decisions to the person causing harm—and the barriers to safety.**

## LEARN MORE

Assaulted Women’s Helpline
awhl.org
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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DAY05·SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2026

# 05 YOUR FIRST RESPONSE MATTERS.



**Ifsomeonetellsyouthey're experiencing abuse,youdon'tneed aperfect speech. Howyourespondcanshape whetherthey feelsafereachingout again.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

A disclosureis whensomeone shares an experience of abuse. It maycomeout slowly or indirectly. Your role isn't to fix the situation or decide what happens next. It's to listen, believe them and help them think about options—if they want to.

Avoid demanding details, telling them what to do or confronting the person causing harm. They understand their own safety best.

Be honest about privacy. Don't promise secrecy you can't keep: some roles carry duties to report, especially where a child may be at risk. If that applies to you, say so early.

## THINGS YOU CAN SAY

- "Thank you for telling me."
- "This is not your fault."
- "What would feel helpful right now?"
- "You don't have to decide anything today."

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### PRACTISE ONE SUPPORTIVE SENTENCE.

Choose one phrase above and say it out loud so it's ready when you need it. For guidance on supporting someone, friends and family can also call the Assaulted Women's Helpline.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** — **Listen without taking over.**

## LEARN MORE

Assaulted Women's Helpline
awhl.org

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# 06

DAY06·MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2026

# FINANCIAL FREEDOM MATTERS.

**Economicabusehappenswhen someoneuses moneyor otherresourcesto control, exploitorharmanotherperson. It canbehardto see—and itseffectscanlast long after a relationship ends.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Accesstomoney shapes practical choices: rent, transportation, a phone, child care or legal help. When someone else controls those resources, planning for safety can feel out of reach.

Economic abuse can also leave lasting harm, such as debt, damaged credit or gaps in work history. Interfering with someone's job is sometimes called employment sabotage.

It is common among people seeking safety. In 2022–2023, 49% of women admitted to residential facilities for victims of abuse in Canada reported financial abuse.

## ECONOMIC ABUSE CAN INCLUDE

- Blocking access to money or hiding information about shared finances.
- Interfering with work or education by sabotaging shifts, studies or job searches.
- Creating debt in someone else's name.
- Pressuring someone to sign documents such as cheques or contracts.

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## FOLLOW THEIR LEAD ON PRACTICAL NEEDS.

If you're supporting someone, ask what practical resources would help, rather than suggesting financial steps on your own. Changes to accounts can be noticed, so let them decide—ideally with a specialist.

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Access to money can mean access to options.**

## LEARN MORE

Women and Gender Equality Canada — Economic abuse
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-violence/economic-abuse.html

Statistic: Statistics Canada, Juristat (Heidinger, 2024), as cited by Women and Gender Equality Canada.

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DAY07·TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2026GIVINGTUESDAY

# 07 SUPPORT MAKES MORE POSSIBLE.

GivingTuesdayisaglobaldayof generosity.ThisGivingTuesday, we're inviting our communitytosupportWomen's Habitat'sworkwithwomenand children experiencing violence.

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Safety rarely depends onone person or one moment. It depends on services being there when someone is ready to reach out—at any hour, for as long as support is needed.

Women's Habitat provides emergency shelter, crisis counselling, case management, referrals and advocacy, help with housing applications and support with the legal system. Ongoing community support helps sustain this work all year, not only during the 16 Days.

## WAYS COMMUNITY SUPPORT HELPS

- Give. A donation helps sustain services for women and children.
- Share. Pass on accurate support information, like the numbers on this sheet.
- Learn. Understanding abuse helps you respond well when it matters.
- Speak up. Support public investment in services for survivors.

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## GIVE, OR PASS IT ON.

If you're able to, make a GivingTuesday donation to Women's Habitat. If giving isn't possible right now, save or share the support numbers on this sheet. They could matter to someone you know.

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Support makes more possible—today and all year.**

## LEARN MORE

Women's Habitat of Etobicoke
womenshabitat.ca

## NEED SUPPORT?

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DAY08·WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2026

# 08 SAFETY NEEDS SOMEWHERE TO LIVE.



**Leavinganabusivesituationraisesan urgentquestion:“Where can I go?” A decision toleaveneedspracticaloptionsbehind it.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Housing shapes the choices available after violence. When no safe, affordable place is available, someone may face staying in an unsafe home, staying temporarily with others or becoming homeless. Housing is part of safety planning, not a separate issue. Shelters provide immediate safety, but people also need somewhere stable to go next. Women’s Habitat offers emergency shelter and help with housing applications.

## THREE THINGS THAT SHAPE OPTIONS

- **Affordability.** Can someone cover rent, especially after losing a partner’s income or while raising children alone?
- **Availability.** Are shelter beds, transitional housing or subsidized units available now, or is the wait long?
- **Accessibility.** Does the housing meet disability needs, fit the family and stay close to school, work and support?

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## BRING HOUSING INTO THE CONVERSATION.

When you hear discussions about violence against women—at work, in your community or in local news—point out that safe, affordable and accessible housing is part of the answer.

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Housing belongs in the conversation about ending violence.**

## LEARN MORE

211 Ontario — housing and community services (or dial 2-1-1)
211ontario.ca
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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09

DAY09·THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2026

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

# SUPPORT MUST BE ACCESSIBLE.

**OntheInternationalDayofPersons withDisabilities,we'reaskingwhat accessible supportlookslikeinpractice.When servicesaren'taccessible,people areleftwithout support.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Women with disabilitiesface higher rates of violence. Women and Gender Equality Canada reports that 55% of women with disabilities experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime, compared with 37% of women without disabilities.

Abuse can also involve a partner or caregiver controlling medication, mobility devices or personal care. Removing barriers is the responsibility of organizations, not of the person seeking help.

## WHERE ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPROVE

- Physical: step-free entrances, clear routes and accessible rooms and washrooms.
- Communication: TTY, text and email options, sign language interpretation and plain language.
- Digital: websites and forms that work with screen readers; captioned videos.
- Service process: asking about access needs at intake, and support that doesn't cost someone essential assistance.

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## REMOVE ONE BARRIER.

If you work or volunteer with an organization, review one way people reach you— your phone line, website, intake form or entrance. Name one barrier and a step to remove it this month.

KEY TAKEAWAY

**Accessibility is part of safety.**

## LEARN MORE

DisAbled Women's Network Canada (DAWN Canada)
dawncanada.net
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html
Statistic: Women and Gender Equality Canada news release, December 2025.

## NEED SUPPORT?

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Assaulted Women's Helpline (24/7): 1-866-863-0511 · #SAFE (#7233) on a Bell, Rogers, Fido or Telus mobile
AWHL TTY: 1-866-863-7868
In immediate danger, call 911.

DAY10·FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2026

# 10 ABUSE CAN FOLLOW SOMEONE ONLINE.

**Technology-facilitatedgender-based violence happens whensomeoneuses technologytoharmorcontrol another person. Phones, accountsand devices can extendabuseintoeverypart of life—even when people are physically apart.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Thereisno single digital-safety checklist that works for everyone. Changingpasswords, deleting apps, removing tracking or blocking someone can alert a person who is monitoring and may increase risk. Messages and records may also matter later. Decisions about devices and accounts belong to the person experiencing abuse, ideally with specialist support.

If you're in touch with someone affected, ask how they prefer to be contacted. A shared or monitored device may not be private.

## TECHNOLOGY CAN BE USED TO

- Monitor someone's location.
- Access their accounts or messages.
- Send repeated threats or harassment.
- Share intimate images without consent.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### READ BEFORE YOU ADVISE.

If you're supporting someone, read Tech Safety Canada's guidance for supporters before offering tech advice. Respect their choices, and never check or change their devices without permission.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** — **Digital safety is personal.**

## LEARN MORE

Tech Safety Canada — Supporting others
techsafety.ca/supporting-others
Tech Safety Canada — For survivors
techsafety.ca/for-survivors
~~Tech Safety Canada is a project~~ of Women's Shelters Canada.

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Assaulted Women's Helpline (24/7): 1-866-863-0511 · #SAFE (#7233) on a Bell, Rogers, Fido or Telus mobile
If your internet use may be monitored, calling a helpline may be safer than searching online.
In immediate danger, call 911.

DAY11·SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2026

# 11 YOUNG PEOPLE DESERVE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.



**Consent,boundariesand respect can belearned andtalkedabout early. Young people learnasmuchfromwhat adultsdo as fromwhat wesay.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Healthy relationships—with friends, partners and family—leave room for privacy, honest disagreement and the freedom to say no.

Conversations don't need to wait until a young person starts dating. Everyday moments teach what respect looks like.

Try open questions: "It's okay to say no to a hug, even from family" for younger children, or "What would you do if a friend's partner kept checking their phone?" for teens.

## EVERYDAY LESSONS MATTER

- A boundary deserves respect. Ask before hugging or posting someone's photo.
- Consent can change. A yes to one thing isn't a yes to everything.
- Privacy matters. Checking someone's phone isn't a sign of love.
- Disagreement doesn't justify intimidation. You can be angry without threats.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### START ONE CONVERSATION THIS WEEK.

Use a moment from a show, song or news story to ask a young person in your life what they think respect looks like. Listen more than you talk.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** — **Model the respect you want young people to experience.**

## LEARN MORE

Canadian Women's Foundation — How to talk to your teen about healthy relationships
canadianwomen.org/blog/how-to-talk-to-teens-about-healthy-relationships- 2

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Assaulted Women's Helpline (24/7): 1-866-863-0511 · #SAFE (#7233) on a Bell, Rogers, Fido or Telus mobile
Kids Help Phone (24/7): 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868
In immediate danger, call 911.

DECEMBER 6, 2026 · NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

# REMEMBER. REFLECT. ACT.

**OnDecember 6, 1989,14 womenwere murderedatÉcole Polytechnique in Montréal because they were women. Today, we honour them.**

~~WE~~ REMEMBER

Geneviève Bergeron
Hélène Colgan
Nathalie Croteau
Barbara Daigneault
Anne-Marie Edward
Maud Haviernick
Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz
Maryse Laganière
Maryse Leclair
Anne-Marie Lemay
Sonia Pelletier
Michèle Richard
Annie St-Arneault
Annie Turcotte

In 1991, Parliament established December 6 as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. It is a day to remember the lives taken, to reflect on the misogyny behind this violence, and to commit to action.

> ONE PRACTICAL ACTION
>
> Pause, and choose one action. Take a moment of silence today. Then consider one way you will act against gender-based violence in the year ahead—in your relationships, community or workplace.

**We remember them. We recommit to ending gender-based violence.**

LEARN MORE

Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16 -days.html

The Canadian Encyclopedia — Polytechnique tragedy
thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/polytechnique-tragedy

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DAY13·MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2026

# 13 VIOLENCE DOESN'T STOP ATTHE WORKPLACE DOOR.

**Violenceathomecanaffectsafetyat work.Workplacescanplayameaningfulrolein supportingemployeesexperiencing abuse.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Aworkplace isoften a place where a person causing harm knows where to find someone. Abuse can also affect concentration, attendance and job security. Coworkers may be the first to notice changes.

Clear processes mean an employee's support doesn't depend on one manager's instincts. Respond with care, explain any limits on confidentiality, and involve the employee in decisions about safety at work wherever possible.

Coworkers can help by checking in privately, respecting the person's choices and avoiding gossip.

## IT MAY APPEAR AS

- Repeated unwanted calls, messages or visits.
- Threats involving the workplace.
- Interference with getting to work or staying there.
- Harassment by a partner or former partner.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### KNOW YOUR WORKPLACE'S PLAN.

Find your organization's policy on domestic or family violence, or ask HR whether one exists. Learn who to contact and what support is available before anyone needs it.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** — **A supportive workplace needs a plan.**

## LEARN MORE

Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children (Western University) — Workplace solutions
learningtoendabuse.ca/training_and_certificate/workplace_solutions

Make It Our Business
makeitourbusiness.ca

This sheet is general information, not legal advice. Workplace rights and obligations vary; check your policies and applicable law.

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DAY14·TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2026

# 14 EVERYONE DESERVES A PATH TO SUPPORT.



**Seekingsupportcanmeannavigating barrierswithinservices as well as harm within a relationship.Inclusivesupportmeans examiningassumptions and changing processes that exclude people.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Barriers suchas language,racism, fear linked to immigration status,homophobia and transphobia come from how systems are designed and how people are treated—not from the people seeking help.

Someone may hesitate if they have faced discrimination before, if information isn't in their language, or if they're unsure how their information will be used. Improving access is the responsibility of organizations.

## WHAT INSTITUTIONS CAN DO

- Language: offer professional interpretation, not family members or children.
- Racism: review practices with the communities you serve, and act on what you hear.
- Immigration status: explain what information you ask for and how it is used.
- Homophobia and transphobia: use inclusive forms and recognize abuse in 2SLGBTQI+ relationships.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### ASK WHO ISN'T BEING REACHED.

If you're part of an organization, review one way people find you—your website, intake form or outreach materials—with someone from a community you want to reach. Then act on their feedback.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

**Ask who your service isn't reaching—and what needs to change.**

## LEARN MORE

Assaulted Women's Helpline
awhl.org
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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DAY15·WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2026

# 15 MEN AND BOYS HAVE A ROLE IN PREVENTION.

**Preventingviolenceinvolves the attitudes andbehavioursweacceptin everydaylife. Menandboyscancontribute by practising respect,questioningharmful expectations andholdingthemselves and their peers accountable.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Preventionmeans stopping violence before it starts. Everyday attitudes—degrading jokes, pressure to prove masculinity, a sense of entitlement to someone's time, body or obedience—help create a culture where abuse is excused.

Peers carry weight. A word from a friend, teammate or coworker can shift what a group treats as acceptable. Accountability means owning harm without excuses and changing behaviour.

None of this is about earning credit. Respect is the baseline; the goal is to make it the expected standard.

## WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Respect boundaries. Hear "no" as a complete answer.
- Challenge sexist jokes. Silence can sound like agreement.
- Reject pressure and entitlement. No one owes you attention, sex or obedience.
- Take responsibility when you cause harm. Listen, don't minimize, and change.

## ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

### DECIDE NOW WHAT YOU'LL SAY.

Pick one place you're likely to hear degrading comments—a group chat, team or workplace—and plan your response: "Not cool. Let's not talk about her like that." Then use it.

**KEY TAKEAWAY** Make respect visible—especially among your peers.

## LEARN MORE

White Ribbon
whiteribbon.ca

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DAY16·THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2026

HUMANRIGHTS DAY

# 16 SAFETY IS A HUMAN RIGHT.



**December10isHumanRightsDay,markingthe United Nations' adoption of the UniversalDeclarationofHumanRightsin1948. Italso closes the 16 Days of Activism.**

## UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Article3 of the Universal Declaration states: "Everyone has the right tolife, liberty and security of person." Gender-based violence denies people safety, dignity and the freedom to make their own choices.

Protecting those rights takes more than awareness. It takes accessible services, safe housing, prepared workplaces and communities that share responsibility for change.

To stay involved, keep and share these sheets, keep the support numbers below handy, and support community services all year.

## OVER 16 DAYS, WE'VE EXPLORED

- Recognizing abuse in its less visible forms.
- Respecting survivors' choices and responding with care.
- Removing barriers to housing, services and support.
- Sharing responsibility for prevention and change.

ONE PRACTICAL ACTION

## CARRY ONE COMMITMENT FORWARD.

Choose one thing to keep doing after today: a better response to a disclosure, a conversation about respect with a young person, support for community services, or taking part in advocacy. Write it down.

KEY TAKEAWAY

**The 16 days end. Our responsibility continues.**

## LEARN MORE

United Nations — Human Rights Day
un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day
Women and Gender Equality Canada — 16 Days of Activism
canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/commemorations-celebrations/16-days.html

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