



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
Canada

PCVI News - Spring 2015

Department of Justice Canada

Welcome

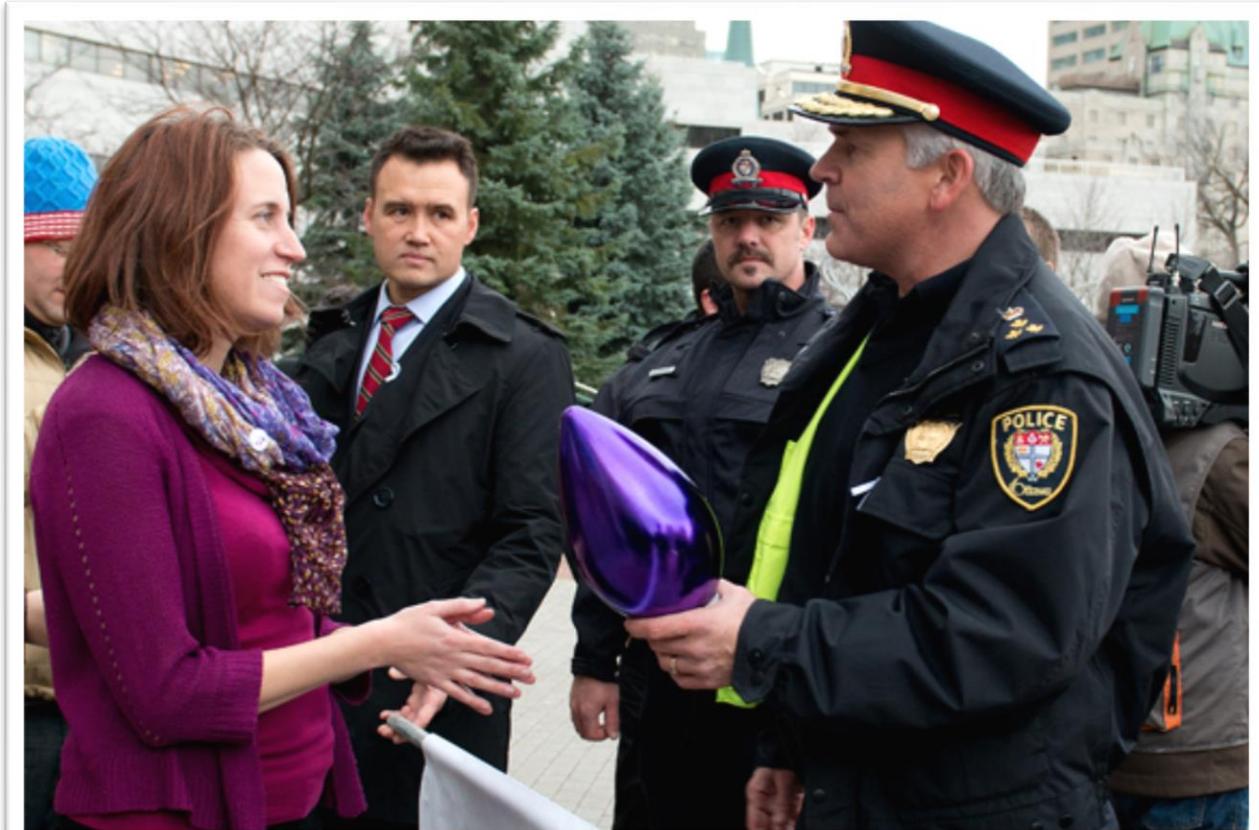
Welcome to the spring edition of the PCVI News. In this edition, we'd like to highlight a few activities and program developments from several victim serving organizations across the country. The variety will surely astound you!

First, we highlight several different awareness raising activities that took place in Ontario. We look at two Ottawa based campaigns aimed at raising awareness about violence against women. Then, we explore a Toronto-born Twitter event where victims worldwide shared their personal stories in 140 characters or less. In addition to these activities, we look at an emerging form of therapy becoming available to victims – horse therapy – and learn about one Ontario woman's success story.

In this edition, we also explore a variety of programs providing services including the work of the Victims of Homicide of Edmonton Support Society, a new clinical therapist program at Manitoba Justice and a Trauma K9 coming to Surrey Memorial Hospital in British Columbia.

We'd love to hear your story of innovation and variety in meeting the needs of victims of crime! If you have a story to share, information to pass on to colleagues in the field of victim issues, or suggestions for improvement, please contact us at PCVI-CPCV@justice.gc.ca.

Shine the Light



[Shine the Light](#) is a campaign that was first launched by the [London Abused Women's Centre](#) in 2010. The campaign aims to bring community awareness to violence against women and girls by engaging local businesses and organizations to display the colour purple in their shops and streets. Why purple? The London Abused Women's Centre describes that purple has come to symbolize the fight to end violence against women, serving as an emblem of their courage, survival, and honour.

On November 25th, 2014, the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) launched its third annual *Shine the Light* campaign, in collaboration with the Ottawa Police Service and the City of Ottawa. Local businesses and organizations on downtown Elgin Street were asked to display the colour purple using light bulbs, posters, ribbons, and window decals. A total of 22 local businesses and organizations, including the Ottawa Police, Jack Purcell Community Centre, and City Hall, joined this effort to show their support and to raise awareness about violence against women.

Shine the Light ended on December 6th, 2014, which marked the 25th National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The day's events included a lantern making workshop, monument illumination ceremony, and the [annual vigil](#) hosted by the

[Women's Event Network](#) in Minto Park, Elgin Street, to commemorate the women murdered at École Polytechnique in Montreal on that same day in 1989.

“This year we had incredible collaboration and support from partners in the city,” said Erin Leigh, Executive Director of OCTEVAW. “Needless to say, for only its third year running, we are delighted at the increasing engagement of the community in helping raise awareness of violence against women, and know this will continue to grow exponentially”.

Didn't get a chance to participate in *Shine the Light*? Be sure to visit the [National Victims of Crime Awareness Week](#) website in April, 2015, to browse through the upcoming *Shine the Light* photo essay.

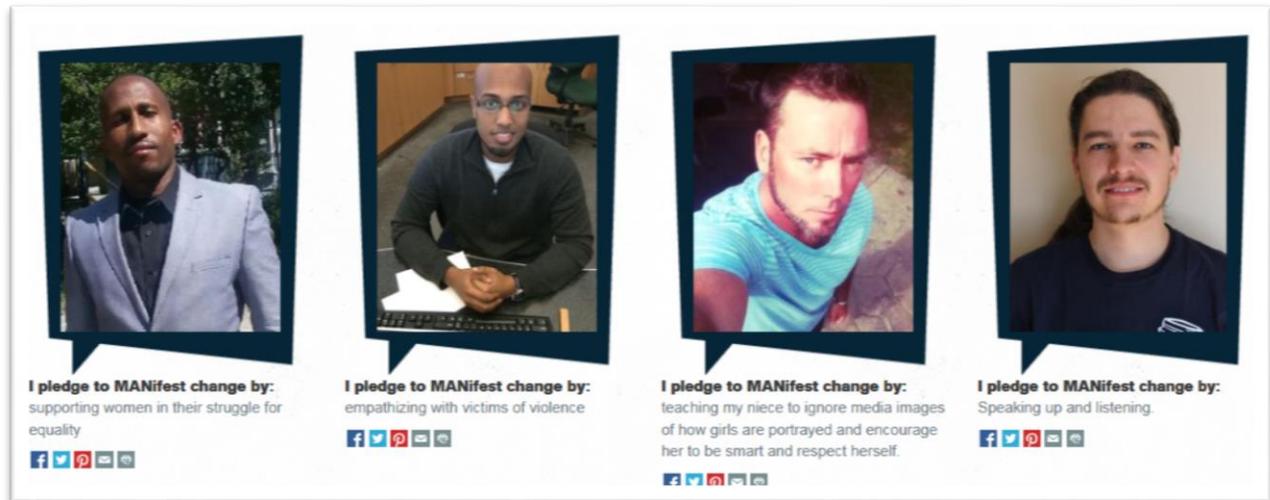
I Can MANifest Change



<http://www.manifestchange.ca/>

[I Can MANifest Change](#) is a public awareness campaign by the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), the Ottawa Police, and Crime Prevention Ottawa. The campaign's goal is to engage and empower men and boys to help put an end to violence against women.

Men and boys can take action by simply going to the campaign website and making a pledge online. The online "Make Your Pledge" form allows participants to upload a photo of themselves and describe, in their own words, how they are going to help put an end to violence against women.



<http://www.manifestchange.ca/pledge?page=4>

The website offers advice to bystanders, including women and girls, on how to respond to situations of violence or harassment, from sexist jokes to sexual assault. As a witness to such situations, bystanders are asked to consider three questions:

- Is a line being crossed?
- Does the situation require action?
- Is there a safe and positive way I can help? Such as calling the police or a counselor.

Participants in the campaign are also encouraged to take action by speaking out against sexist jokes and behaviours, building healthy relationships, helping to build a community where sexist and violent behaviour is not tolerated, and more.

By March 3rd, 2015, the I Can MANifest Change campaign reached 143 pledges.

To find out more or to make your pledge, visit the [I Can Manifest Change website](#).

A Unique Space for Victims to Share their Stories

Victims of sexual assault are sharing their stories in a unique way, using 140 characters or less. In what has been described as a social media phenomenon, thousands of victims have taken to using Twitter as a space to share their personal stories of sexual assault. The event sparked the interests of victim advocates, politicians, news broadcasts, and the general public - many wondering if this new wave of sharing has marked a turning point in the fight to end violence against women.

It began with Antonia Zerbisias, a reporter from the Toronto Star, on the night before she would retire. On October 30th, 2014, after discussion with her friend Sue Montgomery of the Montreal Gazette, Zerbisias was inspired to create the hashtag [#BeenRapedNeverReported](#) on Twitter. Hours later, Zerbisias decided to share her own experience as a victim of multiple sexual assaults. The next day, the hashtag had gone viral worldwide reaching 39 tweets per minute.

The flood of mostly positive responses didn't end there. By November 3rd, 2014, the hashtag had been used a total of 41, 549 times. Many of the responses were from victims in Canada and abroad who had also experienced sexual assault and wanted to share their stories, as well as their reasons for not reporting to police. Zerbisias had successfully created a unique space for victims of sexual assault to share their stories, illustrating the chronic issue of under reported sexual assault in a sobering and personalized light.

For an interactive and visual representation of this twitter story, visit the [Twitter Reverb Page](#).

How it unfolded:

October 30th, 2014 –Antonio Zerbisias (@AntoniaZ) creates the #BeenRapedNeverReported hashtag

- **Tweet 1:** "I've been raped (more than once) and never reported it" – @AntoniaZ
- **Tweet 2:** "If all women who've been raped stepped out of our shame & shared, we would make the stigmas go away" - @AntoniaZ
- **Tweet 3:** "It was 1969 when, if you found you were the only girl in the rec room and no parents were home, it was your fault." - @AntoniaZ
- **Tweet 4:** "1970: My friend's friend from out of town "forgot his wallet" in his hotel room, it will only take a minute." - @AntoniaZ
- **Tweet 5:** "1974: A half-empty 747 to London. Traveling alone. Fell asleep in my seat in the back. Thank God for the stewardess." – @AntoniaZ

October 31st, 2014 – The hashtag goes viral reaching 39 tweets per minute and trends as one of the top 5 hashtags of the day.

November 3rd, 2014 -The hashtag reaches 41, 549 tweets

Horse Therapy for Victims

The PCVI has been following the many success stories of dogs, known as Trauma K9s, who are providing therapeutic support to victims of crime across Canada. That's why the November/December 2014 issue of [Victims Matter](#) peaked our interest with a feature on *Healing Through Horses: Equine Therapy Aids Victims in a Non-Clinical Setting*. The feature looks at how horses, like dogs, may have something unique to offer victims.

Where some victims may not feel comfortable with traditional talk therapy, horse therapy can offer an alternative approach. In Canada, horse therapy programs often use Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy, where the therapist provides counseling and the horse provides therapeutic support during each session. A Global News documentary titled [Horse Therapy](#) tells of one survivor's success with this type of therapy.

Lauri Walker, a survivor of domestic violence, never felt comfortable with traditional talk therapy, so she eventually opted for horse therapy at [Melody Acres](#) farm in Ontario. At Melody Acres, clients are able to build a connection with their therapy horse, helping them to feel more comfortable during therapy sessions. It was Walker's therapy horse, Whisky, who would be the first to provide her with a positive experience of therapy.

"It's more, with Whisky, he already knows everything about me and I don't even have to tell him," she said. "He recognizes my emotions, what's really bothering me even when I hide."

For Walker, it was this experience of feeling comfortable and understood in the context of therapy that eventually led to breaking the cycle of violence in her life and to releasing four decades worth of suppressed emotions that stemmed from abuse.

To learn more about Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy and the programs available in Canada, visit the [Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association](#) website.

Support for Victims of Homicide

In Canada, there are a number of community-based and peer-led support groups available to support victims of homicide. These groups are often established by grassroots, not-for-profit, organizations that recognize the unique needs of families and friends of loved ones whose lives were taken by homicide. The [Victims of Homicide of Edmonton Support Society](#) is one such organization that has been successfully providing support to victims of homicide in Edmonton for two decades.

Victims of Homicide began as a grassroots initiative by an Edmonton couple, Joyce and Noel Farion. They established this initiative in 1995, the year after their son Scott was murdered, to support other parents and survivors of homicide as they deal with their grief and loss. The

Edmonton group has since grown to support around 50 victims and is actively supporting and mentoring a group in Lloydminster, Alberta, which currently has 7 members. There is also a newly forming group in Calgary, Alberta. These groups provide victims with emotional support, information on the criminal justice system and referrals to various community agencies.

The Edmonton group support meetings are held on a monthly basis with criminal justice professionals in regular attendance. These professionals include an Edmonton Police Service homicide detective, a volunteer from Victim Services, and an RCMP Investigator from General Investigative Services. The meetings are also held at the Edmonton Police Service Southeast Division, helping to further enhance the relationship between victims and law enforcement.

The Victims of Homicide of Edmonton Support Society will be hosting their fourth annual Victims of Homicide Conference on April 12-14, 2015, at the Delta Edmonton South Hotel and Conference Centre. More information about the conference and registration is available at: www.vohconference.ca

For more information, visit the [Victims of Homicide Support Society website](#).

Some other organizations or groups providing support to victims of homicide in Canada include:

- [BC Victims of Homicide](#)
- [Victims of Homicide of Edmonton Support Society](#)
- [Canadian Parents of Murdered Children and Survivors of Homicide Victims Inc](#)
- [Distress Centres – Survivor Support Program](#)
- [Lean On Me](#)
- [Association of Families of Persons Assassinated or Disappeared \(AFPAD\)](#)
- [Victims of Violence](#)

New Clinical Therapist for Manitoba Justice Staff

[Manitoba Justice Victim Services](#) and [Manitoba Prosecution Service](#) have employed a clinical therapist since 2012 with support from the federal government. The therapist's role is to support and provide therapy to victim service workers, Crown attorneys, and support staff within Manitoba Justice. Staff often encounter traumatic situations and are exposed to traumatic images on a daily basis. The department recognized the need to provide their employees with support and counseling to mitigate the effects of this trauma.

One goal of this initiative is to acknowledge the effect the work has on staff and to begin to reduce the stigma associated with being personally impacted by it. This is done through education about trauma and vicarious trauma, with specific attention being given to systemic

stressors that may be out of an employee's control but may add to the employee's stress. The therapist uses traditional talk therapy, as well as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) when appropriate. Staff are encouraged to become more intentional and aware of their work styles, the daily impact of the work, and to look for more preventive strategies to shed the stress.

"We have only begun to touch the surface of wellness in the workplace, as there are so many issues that can affect professionals working in this field," said Janelle Braun, acting executive director of Manitoba Victim Services. "The support of the therapist is crucial in continuing to address vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue amongst Manitoba Justice staff."

From the Desks of PCVI

From: British Columbia Victim Services

Subject: New Restitution Program

In June, 2014, British Columbia Victim Services established a new Restitution Program to provide assistance for victims who have experienced financial loss as a result of crime. The program was created by the Victim Services, Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch, at the Ministry of Justice. Its' aim is to enhance victim services by:

- providing support and general information about restitution
- encouraging offenders to make payments on their restitution order
- communicating with probation officers regarding unpaid restitution orders, and
- providing referrals to appropriate resources.

If you would like more information about the Restitution Program in British Columbia, download the [British Columbia Restitution Program brochure](#).

From: Niagara Child Advocacy Centre

Subject: 6th Anniversary Celebration

The Child Advocacy Centre in Niagara celebrated its sixth anniversary on September 16th, 2014. As part of the celebration, the centre was renamed after Kristen French who was a 15-year-old girl abducted and murdered by Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka in 1992. The official new name for the centre is the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara.

From: Missing Children Society of Canada

Subject: Attended European Parliament on topic of Child Alerting

The Missing Children Society of Canada (MCSC) was invited to the European Parliament in October, 2014, to share their knowledge at a conference on *Child Alerting in the European Union (EU): Saving the Lives of Endangered Missing Children*. The conference brought together police, ministry representatives, speakers from the European

Parliament, international organizations, and NGO's to share expertise and further improve child alert systems in the European Union. Together, MCSC's Executive Director, Amanda Pick, along with Carole Bird, Director of the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains, RCMP, were the only Canadians invited to attend.

Visit the [Missing Children Society of Canada's website](#) for more information.

From: New Journeys

Subject: Website Launch

In 2011, the National Association of Friendship Centres received funding from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to start the New Journeys project. In 2014, the centre launched the New Journeys website to assist Aboriginal people who are planning to move to an urban centre, or who have already moved, and need access to programs and services that can help them with their transition. Jeff Cyr, NAFC's Executive Director, explains that this is the case for many Aboriginal women and children who are fleeing from violent and abusive situations.

The website includes a searchable database of programs and services from 119 urban centres across Canada, as well as online guides and tips on safety planning, registering children for school, finding work, housing, and more.

To find out more about this initiative and to explore the online resources, visit the [New Journeys website](#).

From: Walking With Our Sisters

Subject: Commemorative Art Installation for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Walking With Our Sisters, an art installation, commemorates the lives of the 1,181+ missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada and the United States. Since a call was issued on Facebook in June, 2012, over 1,763 pairs of moccasin vamps (tops) have been donated, plus 108 pairs for children. Each pair of the unfinished moccasins represents the unfinished lives of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and children.

The exhibit is currently on tour until 2018 and will be displayed in 25 locations across Canada and the US. Next up for April 11th – 25th is the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre in Whitehorse, Yukon.

To find out more about the exhibit and each location on the tour, visit the [Walking With Our Sisters website](#).

From: Forensic Nursing Service Team, Surrey Memorial Hospital

Subject: New Trauma K9

Victim service dogs, or Trauma K9s, are being used in more and more communities across Canada to help provide comfort, care, and support to victims of crime. In our [summer edition](#) of the PCVI news, we celebrated the work of Trauma K9s in Camrose, Alberta, and York Region, Ontario. In this edition, we get to celebrate another Trauma K9 coming soon to British Columbia!

The Forensic Nursing Service team at Surrey Memorial Hospital recently received acceptance from the [Pacific Assistance Dogs Society](#) (PADS) to have a Trauma K9 join their team. PADS is a not-for-profit organization that works to breed, raise, train, and place assistance dogs in Western Canada. Once PADS has selected a K9 for their team, nurses will participate in a training course to learn how to work with their new partner. Then, they will begin their new adventure together in providing support to patients, families, and hospital staff dealing with the effects of trauma and vicarious trauma.

