
Gender-based violence & newcomer communities

— Building our capacity to respond, together —

**Sidrah Ahmad-Chan
February 2, 2021**

List of support resources

These services can also help you find local services that are available in your area.

Shelter Safe - www.sheltersafe.ca

- Provides a Canada-wide map of shelters and transition houses

Ending Violence Association of Canada - Getting Help - <https://endingviolencecanada.org/getting-help/>

- Provides a Canada-wide list of sexual assault centres, crisis lines and support services
- Provides a Canada-wide list of shelters, transition houses and support services
- Provides a list of provincial and territorial organizations and resources

Crisis Support/National Suicide Prevention - www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en

- You can find qualified crisis support at <http://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/> or by calling 1-866-863-0511, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, the Canada Suicide Prevention Service is available 24/7 for voice and 4pm to 12am ET for text.

2-1-1 - <http://211.ca>

- Canada's primary source of information on government and community based health and social services
- Available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, in over 150 languages
- Offers specialized support for Indigenous Peoples, newcomers and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people
- Available by phone, chat, website and text in different regions

Assaulted Women's Helpline - www.awhl.org

- 24/7 assistance in English and up to 200 different languages

Kids Help Phone - <https://kidshelpphone.ca/>

- Kids Help Phone is a 24/7, national support service
- Offers professional counselling, information and referrals and volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French
- Can connect by phone, text, mobile app or through our website

Femaide for Francophone Services - www.femaide.ca

- Fem'aide, a provincial telephone helpline for Francophone women dealing with violence, has benefited the French Community in Ontario

Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse -

https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/ovss/male_support_services/

- The Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse program provides help for male survivors of sexual abuse, both recent and historical. The program is the first of its kind in Canada and is delivered by agencies across the province
- 24-hour, multilingual, toll-free phone line for immediate crisis and referral services

Trans Life Line - www.translifeline.org

- Available any day from 10am-4am EST
- Hotline staffed by transgender people for transgender people

Nisa Helpline - www.nisahelpline.com

- Nisa helpline is a peer-to-peer faith-based counselling line available to Muslim women of all ages

Gender-based violence happens across the globe and in Canada

Gender-based violence is a global public health problem and a violation of human rights.

About 1 in 3 of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.

About once a week, a woman is killed by her male partner in Canada.

In a single day in 2019, over 1800 women and 1500 children were staying in shelters or transition houses.

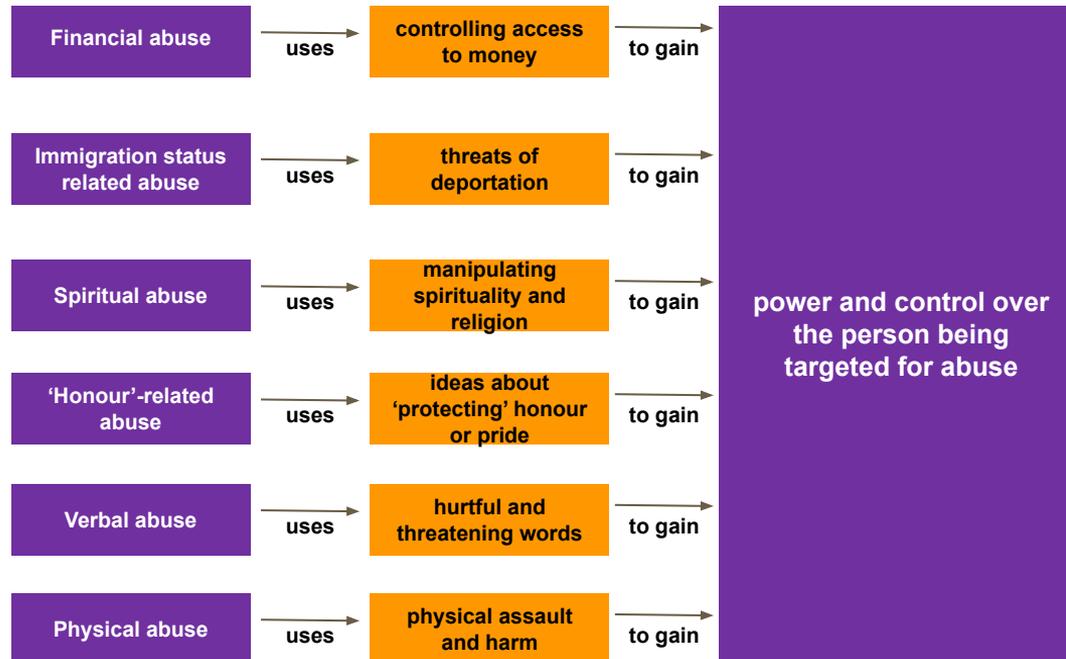
One woman or girl is killed every other day on average in Canada.

- Women in Canada are more likely than men to experience intimate partner violence. According to 2018 police-reported data, women accounted for almost **8 in 10 victims** (79%) of intimate partner violence.
- In Canada, women also account for the vast majority of victims of intimate partner homicides. According to police-reported data, women accounted for close to **8 in 10 victims** (77%) of intimate partner homicides committed in 2018 in Canada.
- Women in Canada are more likely than men to be sexually assaulted. Between 2009 and 2014, the vast majority (**87%**) of police-reported sexual assault victims were women or girls, most of whom (70%) were under the age of 25

Most gender-based violence looks like men's violence against women

All gender-based violence is about power and control

All gender-based violence is about **power and control**. The “goal” of gender-based violence is to have power and control over the person being targeted by the violence. Abusers may use a wide range of **tactics** to “achieve” the goal of power and control.



- Gender-based violence is not unique to newcomers to Canada - **it can affect anyone**, including those who were born in Canada and have lived here for many generations.
- Newcomers face the **same rates** of gender-based violence as other communities
- Newcomer may face **unique barriers** to accessing supports and services.

Survivor voice

“I was in a relationship waiting and living [in] hell because I didn’t know that we have all this kind of supports.”

Unique barriers faced by newcomer survivors of violence

- Fears and concerns regarding immigration status / fear of deportation
- Social isolation (due to the impact of language barriers, racism, and/or geographic distance/lack of transportation)
- Lack of information about gender-based violence services
- Lack of information about laws, legal rights
- Fear of child protective services / fear of losing access to their children
- Fear of social stigma if they speak up
- Economic exclusion / underemployment / lack of recognition of foreign credentials
- Concerns about racism and stereotyping from service providers
- Difficulty in accessing culturally sensitive resources after disclosing
- Services that are not culturally safe / lack of accommodation for cultural or religious needs

Gender-based violence and racism

For many racialized and newcomer communities, discussions of gender-based violence have been used to fuel racism and stigmatize their entire communities.

The belief that gender-based violence is “imported” by immigrants and refugees

The anti-Black and racist myth that Black and brown men are more prone to committing gender-based violence.

The Islamophobic belief that Muslim communities are “barbaric” and more prone to gender-based violence.

What is victim blaming?

Victim-blaming is a very harmful practice that transfers the blame or responsibility for violence *onto the person who was affected by it*. While supporting survivors of abuse, we must avoid victim blaming at all costs.

Victim-blaming creates more trauma for the survivor of violence (called “secondary trauma”).

“Why did you...?”

“You shouldn’t have...”

“Next time you should...”

“You should have known...”

“There’s something about you...”

“Don’t you care...?”

How you can help

Everyone can make a difference
in ending gender-based violence.

Learn more:

neighboursfriendsandfamilies.ca

immigrantandrefugeenff.ca

Make sure she knows that you believe her

Remind her that it's not her fault (she is NOT blame)

Walk with her, stay connected

Connect her with resources (in a safe way)

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