

Woman Abuse Prevention Month

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By Lynda Muir

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Over twenty years ago the Ontario government proclaimed November as Woman Abuse Prevention Month and, in 2005, Rob Hamilton, then Mayor of the City of Barrie, recognized November as Wife Assault Prevention Month.

It is a sad social commentary that we need to be reminded of the continuous abuse and violence faced by many women in their own homes at the hands of their partners. Tragically, some are murdered, often after seeking help from the very systems that let them down. As of October 31st of this year, 14 women and 1 child were murdered by their partners and fathers in Ontario.

Violence against women is a gender-based global tragedy that is exacerbated by poverty, homelessness, limited social resources, lack of education and work opportunities and political unrest or war. Violence against women has been identified by the United Nations as a "violation of women's rights caused by gender inequality" and has dedicated November 25th as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

As a society we need to do more to address gender inequality. Women are paid 77% of what men are paid for the same work. Women are more likely to live in poverty, are single parents and have limited access to affordable childcare and housing. Racism and oppression add to the barriers that women already face.

Enough is enough - women and children deserve more! Speak out and take action to eliminate violence against women.

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