

November 29, 2007

Remembering and acting – Violence against women

Women and girls of all ages continue to experience violence in their homes, on the streets and in their workplaces. December 6 marks the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This is a day to remember our Sisters who have experienced violence in their lives. It is also a day to renew our commitment to fighting against violence.

Why December 6?

On December 6, 1989, a man singled out and shot 14 women at École Polytechnique in Montreal based on their gender. The perpetrator claimed he was “fighting feminism”.

The statistics on violence against women are painful:

- On average, 182 females were killed every year between 1994 and 2003.
- It is estimated that seven per cent of women in a current or previous spousal relationship have experienced spousal violence during the five years up to and including 2004.
- Fifty eight thousand four hundred and eighty six women sought refuge in one of 473 shelters across Canada between April 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004.

Violence against women – What can I do?

There are many ways to stand up in opposition to violence against women:

- Talk to co-workers, family and friends about the issue.
- Encourage your male co-workers to talk about violence against women amongst themselves.
- If you think a Sister is facing violence in her life, support her and talk to her. She may not want to discuss it but knowing she has support can help.
- Organize an event through your local women’s committee:
 - Hold a candlelight vigil or silent march;
 - Arrange for a speaker from a local women’s shelter or a specialist in women’s health to give a talk about violence against women; or
 - Screen a film dealing with violence against women.

- Sign a petition.
- Lobby politicians at all levels to increase funding for women’s shelters, centres and organizations.

Support women’s organizations that fight violence against women

Many of our national, provincial and local women’s organizations that work to prevent violence against women and support victims of violence have been affected by the Conservative government’s anti-women agenda.

The changes to the funding guidelines at Status of Women Canada, the government department charged with promoting women’s equality, mean many women’s organizations that do research, policy and advocate about violence against women are struggling to survive.

- Send a letter to Stephen Harper – Tell him to support research and advocacy from women’s organizations.

For more information, see the winter issue of *The Rose* which has been mailed to all CUPW women members’ homes and is also available on the CUPW website www.cupw.ca.

Solidarity,



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