

MEDIA RELEASE



Woman Abuse Working Group
Coalition d'action contre la violence faite aux femmes

WAWG shares with profound sadness and rage that Barbara Church, a 77 year old woman, was murdered by femicide at the hands of her male neighbour in our city of Hamilton on August 8th. In 2023 in Ontario, every 7 days a woman or child was killed in a femicide.

The most common perpetrators of gender-based violence and femicide are men, who are either the woman's current or former intimate partner, a family member, or someone known to them. Gender-based violence has been called the shadow pandemic. For every femicide, there are more survivors who are not safe in their homes, workplaces and communities. We can do more to reach out and support them. We can engage their intimate partners, family members, friends, coworkers and acquaintances to end the violence. Indigenous, Black and 2SLGBTQ+ women, girls, gender-diverse individuals and women with disabilities are at increased risk and experience disproportionate levels of gender-based violence.

WE CAN CHANGE THE OUTCOMES

There is no commitment to prevention in Ontario. As previously raised by Violence Against Women (VAW) shelter operators, critical attention and investments are needed across all levels of government to address VAW shelter capacity and safe housing options given the number of women and children turned away each day across our province. For 20 years domestic homicide death reviews have provided recommendations that can move us toward prevention. It is time to review our progress and invest in the evidence to see stronger social returns. There are successes to build on. There are experts and advocates in every community who can help.

WE MUST DO BETTER

As the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee, consisting of organizations and individuals who are the subject matter experts committed to supporting survivors of gender based violence, intimate partner violence, and sexual violence in the City of Hamilton, we know that it takes a community to end violence. On August 18th, 2023, the City of Hamilton took another step towards that goal, showing survivors that they are not alone. We call on the Province of Ontario to do the same.

Most femicides are preventable. ***We Count Femicide Because...*** is intended to mark the tragic loss of each life, to raise a public alarm and to engage everyone in working together toward prevention. Professionals, coworkers, neighbours, friends and family members can learn to recognize the warning signs and how to respond safely and supportively. It is a call to action to prevent future deaths.

To anyone facing violence, to survivors, please know you are not alone. There are programs and services in place to support you and your family. Please do not hesitate to reach out when you are ready to do so. Make the call to get information, to get support, to let someone know what you are experiencing. We believe you.

Woman Abuse Working Group (WAWG)

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In partnership with:

WE COUNT
FEMICIDE
BECAUSE...



Femicide describes the intentional killing of women, girls and other gender-diverse individuals, by men.