



**YWCA**  
CANADA

NATIONAL ADVOCACY.  
COMMUNITY ACTION.

UNE VOIX NATIONALE.  
DES ACTIONS LOCALES.

# THE ROSE CAMPAIGN

ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



**YWCA Canada's Rose Campaign is a national advocacy campaign to end violence against women, girls, and gender diverse people. Named after the original rose button that commemorated the murder of 14 young women on December 6, 1989, the Rose Campaign calls on Canadians to mourn and use the symbol of the rose to act, educate, and work towards creating change. Our fight will continue in their memory until our streets, campuses, workplaces, and our homes are safe.**

## WHY DECEMBER 6, 1989?

December 6 is Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The date is etched in history to remember the 1989 mass shooting deliberately targeting women at the École Polytechnique in Montreal resulting in the death of 14 young women. Canadians reacted with shock, sorrow and outrage. Their loss served as a rallying point, igniting a powerful movement to speak out against gender-based violence and take action to end it.

Together, we remember: Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte, Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, and Anne-Marie Lemay.

YWCA Canada's Rose Campaign is part of the broader 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign starting on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, to the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6, ending on World Human Rights Day on December 10. This is a global movement to speak out against gender-based violence and create a world where all people can live free from violence. Join YWCA Canada's Rose Campaign to help create a safer world for women, girls, and gender diverse people. **#YWCARoseCampaign2024**

## WHY SHOULD YOU ACT BECAUSE WE SEE, WE LISTEN, AND WE ACT

- **71% students at Canadian post-secondary schools** witnessed or experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in a post-secondary setting.
- **1 in 10 female students** experienced a sexual assault in a post-secondary setting.
- **80% of women** who had experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours stated that the perpetrators were fellow students.
- **31% of women** who had experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in the post-secondary context reported being anxious and 8% reported being depressed.



## ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IS TODAY'S FIGHT

Everyone can take action to end violence against women, girls and gender diverse people. There are many small ways to create change that have a lasting impact. Participate in the Rose Campaign by planning activities or events in your workplace to raise awareness and inspire action.



- **Plan a Candlelight Vigil in Remembrance of the École Polytechnique Massacre:**

- Since the tragedy at L'École Polytechnique in 1989, vigils have been held every year across Canada to commemorate the lives lost and draw attention to taking action on violence against women and girls.
- Vigils are usually held outdoors as participants light candles and place lanterns, roses, and/or flowers to pay tribute to each of the 14 women.
- Invite other student organizations to join and show their support through art installations, dramatic readings, skits, and music or dance performances.
- Invite teachers, school staff, students, and community members to participate and share their reflections.
- Take pictures and share them on social media (with consent of attendees) and add

**#YWCARoseCampaign2024.**

- **Build Student-Led Recommendations to End Gender-Based Violence**

- Share what happened at École Polytechnique in 1989 and the importance of creating recommendations informed by student experiences and realities.
- Bring pens and paper to brainstorm what students need in order to feel empowered and safe.
- Write letters to share your recommendations and experiences with elected officials, policy makers, or decision makers in your school and community.

- **Among students who had been sexually assaulted in the post-secondary setting,** some reported to stop going to classes, asking for extensions on assignments, and dropping a class.
- **Adolescents who experience violence** in a dating and/or sexual relationship are at increased risk to experience revictimization in adulthood.
- **1 in 3 youth** reported physical, psychological, and/or adolescent dating violence victimization.
- **Nonbinary youth** reported significantly higher rates of all forms of adolescent dating violence victimization.
- **Nearly 25% of Canadian school age girls** have experienced sexual violence before they reach the age of 16.

- **Scatter Petals:**

- Cut out rose petals from construction paper.
- Hand petals out and invite your team to write a wish or message on a petal. The message should promote nonviolence or reflect a personal wish or memory. Overall, it is a wish for a better future for women, girls and gender diverse individuals.
- Hang petals in classrooms and hallways to inspire change and collective action.

## EVERY STEP IS A BIG STEP TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUITY:

- Encourage teachers to lead discussions on violence against women, girls, and gender diverse people in the classroom.
- Encourage your school or campus to build a more inclusive space for women and gender diverse people by including free pads and tampons in every bathroom.
- Foster an inclusive environment of kindness and respect for all genders.
- Learn about using inclusive language.
- Create a document full of resources from your community to share around your school. Check out the YWCA near you to find additional resources!

- **At least 1 woman or girl** is killed every 2.5 days in Canada, mostly by male accused.
- Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be murdered or missing than any other women in Canada.
- **More than 4 in 10 women** have experienced some form of intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetimes.
- **30% of all women aged 15 years of or older** report that they have experienced sexual assault at least once since the age of 15.
- **On any given night in Canada, 3,491 women and their 2,724 children** sleep in shelters because home is not a safe place.
- **2/3 of people in Canada** know a woman who has experienced physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.
- **44% of young women and gender diverse youth** aged 16 to 30 in Canada have been personally targeted by online hate speech.





## YWCA CANADA

YWCA Canada is a leading voice for women, girls, Two-Spirit and gender diverse people. For 150 years, we've been at the forefront of a movement: to fight gender-based violence, build affordable housing and advocate for workplace equity. We work to advance gender equity by responding to urgent needs in communities, through national advocacy and grassroots initiatives.

Local YWCAs invest over \$258 million annually to support over 330,000 individuals across the nation. Today, we engage young leaders, diverse communities, and corporate partners to achieve our vision of a safe and equitable Canada for all.

Please consider collecting **donations** as part of your event and pledging them to YWCA Canada.

**If you have any questions related to this toolkit, send us an email:**  
**[advocacy@ywcacanada.ca](mailto:advocacy@ywcacanada.ca)**

**For more information, check out [our website](#).**

**Stay in touch! Follow us on social media:**  
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