

# 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

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## NEWS MEDIA

November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month, which includes the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, a global campaign calling for an end to gender-based violence. It begins on November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, includes The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6th, and ends on December 10th: Human Rights Day.

Thunder Bay City Council formally declared GBV and IPV an epidemic on September 25th immediately following our deputation. In addition, City officials have invited us to present to the local social services administration board and the Intergovernmental Affairs committee, and also supply a list of actionable goals for City Council to better support survivors of GBV in our community.

Our 2023 16 Days campaign will focus on these actionable goals - efforts at the municipal and personal levels to address gender-based violence.

### Why it matters

- The coverage and portrayal of gender-based violence in the media has for many years hidden the true nature of the problem. It is often either minimized or sensationalized, and both approaches obscure the actual facts. Media reporting often focuses on the behaviour and character of the victim as the apparent cause, instead of the actions and motives of the perpetrator. Many reports appear to blame the victim for making herself vulnerable, while failing to provide any recognition of her life or worth in the community.
- Media coverage also tends to not identify (or to deliberately obscure) the fact that it is a case of gendered and/or racialized violence. These are systemic issues, not one-off or individual problems. Reports are often not situated within the broader context gender-based violence and instead are framed as individual relationship or mental health problems.

### ACTION

- Become media savvy: learn to identify GBV and IPV in news reports (e.g.: murder-suicide, domestic dispute, etc.) if it is not directly named by the reporter
- Publicly acknowledge and/or congratulate your local media for accurate and sensitive coverage (and complain if it is not happening)
- Invite local media representatives to participate in GBV training and events
- Get your news from reputable sources

### Resources

- Counting Ourselves In: Women and Media: <https://informedopinions.org/about/research/counting-ourselves-in/>
- Intersectionality Research Hub: <http://www.intersectionalityhub.ca/>
- Informed Opinions (Shari Graydon, the original MediaWatch): <https://informedopinions.org/>
- Feminist Journalism: <https://canadianwomen.org/blog/feminist-journalism/> or listen here: <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/alright-now-what/episodes/Feminist-Journalism-e10048c/a-a8kjg3k>
- Hierarchies of worthiness: Women and victimhood in the Canadian media <https://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/hierarchies-of-worthiness>
- Reporting on Gender-Based Violence: A Guide for Journalists: [http://equalpress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/EP\\_Guidebook.pdf](http://equalpress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/EP_Guidebook.pdf)
- Missing and Murdered Women: Reproducing Marginality in News Discourse: <https://cjc.utpjournals.press/doi/full/10.22230/cjc.2006v31n4a1825>
- Reconciliation with Indigenous Women: Changing the Story of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: [https://www.onwa.ca/\\_files/ugd/4eaa9c\\_be059fe0cd844671839aef58558d893d.pdf](https://www.onwa.ca/_files/ugd/4eaa9c_be059fe0cd844671839aef58558d893d.pdf)
- Independent Media List: <https://sandyandnora.com/independent-media-list/>
- Use the Right Words: Guidelines for Reporting on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Canada <https://possibilityseeds.ca/use-the-right-words/> Or watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTEzирgjjN8>
- Work with Media to Get the Story Right on Gender-Based Violence: <https://gbvlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/backgrounders/work-with-media/Work-with-Media-GBV-Backgrounder.pdf>

Watch for language that places accountability on the person who has caused harm, not the person who has been harmed.

