



Prevent All Forms of Violence

High Rates of Violence Persist

- Canada ranks 27 out of 31 countries in UNICEF rankings on childhood violence.
- 1 in 3 Canadians over 15 report having experienced violence in childhood.
- Violence against children includes many types: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect.
- The kinds of violence vary by age and circumstances. Girls and boys face different kinds of violence. Some groups are more vulnerable and need focused attention.
- Violence in the family, which affects children, is often not reported.
- The causes of violence, while complex, are factors that can be changed.
- Childhood violence can have life-long effects on health and developing potential.
- Childhood violence is costly to Canada as a country.

For a detailed analysis of violence against children in Canada, see: [Violence Against Children in Canada: It's Time to Act.](#)

Duty to Prevent

Article 19 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) requires Canada to take all measures to “prevent all forms of violence against children.” International research shows that a comprehensive approach to preventing violence against children is most effective. In the last review Canada was asked to “prioritize” a comprehensive, national strategy “to prevent all forms of violence,” with a coordinating framework, the necessary resources, and monitoring of impacts. It was also asked to repeal section 43 of the Criminal Code which legitimates hitting children as a form of punishment.

Canada’s official report for the 5th/6th review claims that “the Criminal Code and PT [provincial/territorial] child protection laws provide comprehensive protection to children against violence.” The experience of children, however, shows gaps in legislation, a piecemeal approach to programs that leaves many children out, and fragmented services that let children fall through the cracks.

Canada recently joined an international initiative to End Violence Against Children. In August 2019, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) tabled its plan of action for Canada. The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC) welcomes the move to have a plan for Canada and has proposed ways to make it more robust, in line with Article 19 of the Convention.

For an analysis of causes, what is working, and what is needed in Canada, see: [Finding Our Path toward Childhoods Free from Violence.](#) For PHAC’s plan: [Canada’s Road Map to End Violence Against Children.](#) To strengthen Canada’s plan, see: [CCRC recommendations for Canada’s Roadmap.](#)

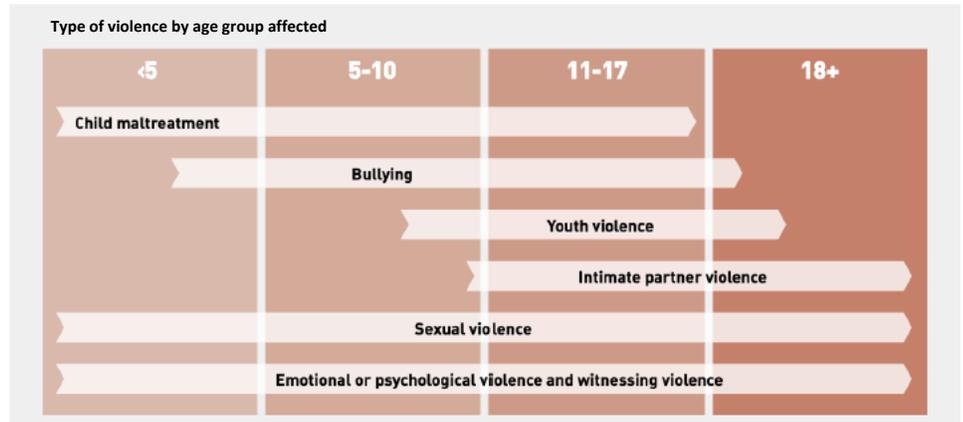
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Identified Areas of Action

All Children: Scale Up Good Programs and Close Gaps

Canada's 5th/6th report lists some good initiatives here and there; but many children do not have access to any of the preventive programs; too many fall through the cracks of protection systems; and there is no tracking of outcomes. Piece-meal approaches are less effective and more costly in the long-term.



All Duty-Bearers for Preventing Violence

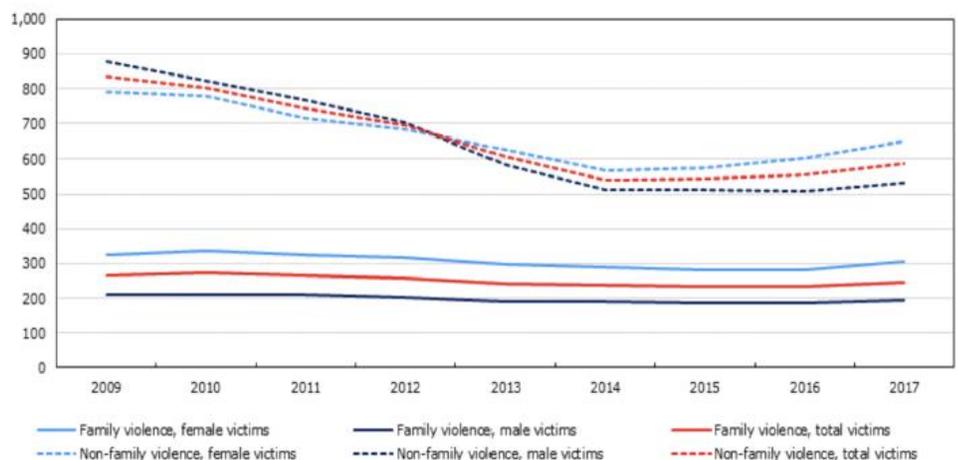
Make the PHAC plan a national plan that involves municipalities, provinces and territories, indigenous governments, families, and schools. Use public communications, measurable targets, and regular reporting to mobilize action. The INSPIRE framework is an opportunity for Canada to show how an integrated approach, based on children's rights, can make real progress with positive outcomes for children and long-term cost-savings.

All Forms of Violence

The links between different forms of violence are well-documented. International research shows clearly that countries with a complete ban on all forms of violence, including hitting children as a form of punishment, have lower rates of other forms of violence, compared to countries that allow physical punishment. It's time for Canada to join the 57 countries who prohibit all forms of violence against children.

Child and youth victims of police-reported family and non-family violence, by sex and year, Canada, 2009 to 2017

rate per 100,000 population



Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children

Share this with others and add your voice to support children's rights across Canada.

For more information, check the CCRC website at www.rightsofchildren.ca.

To discuss this further, send a message to info@rightsofchildren.ca.