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→ Harper Government Invests in Community Projects across Canada to Support Victims of Violence

## News Release



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# Harper Government Invests in Community Projects across Canada to Support Victims of Violence

*Government also announces a grant to the World Health Organization for the development of a global violence prevention information system*

July 27, 2015 - Toronto, Ontario - Public Health Agency of Canada

Today, the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health announced that the Government of Canada is investing in five new community-based projects across Canada to support victims of family violence.

Family violence is a public health issue. Long-term exposure to violence can lead to substance abuse, mental illness, suicidal behaviours, and chronic illnesses such as heart disease. In 2011, family violence accounted for approximately 25% of all violent crimes reported to police. This figure does not represent the full scale of the problem given that many incidents go unreported.

In February the Minister launched a [Call for Proposals](#) for organizations to submit applications to advance community-based projects that support the health of victims of domestic violence and child abuse and those at risk of these forms of violence. Today's announcement represents a total investment of more than \$7.3 million over 5 years. The funding for these projects flows from the Government's 10-year, \$100 million investment for family violence announced in February 2015.

The projects are:

- *Safe and Understood: Helping children who experience domestic violence:* This project, to be led by the Child Development Institute in Toronto, will deliver and test two programs (*Mothers in Mind* and *Caring Dads*) that promote the social,

emotional, and developmental health of young children who have been exposed to family violence.

- *Reaching out with Yoga: Trauma-informed Yoga for Women and Children in Shelters:* This project, to be led by the British Columbia Society of Transition Houses in partnership with Yoga Outreach, will deliver and test trauma-informed yoga programs in 24 women's shelters and transition houses across BC. The program will promote physical and mental health to women and children who have experienced family violence. Trauma-informed practice is based on an understanding of the impact of violence on people's lives, and focuses on respect and empowerment.
- *Mentoring Healthy Futures: Peer and Community Support for Sexually Exploited Youth:* This project, to be led by Covenant House Toronto, will deliver and test a peer support program for youth in Toronto who have experienced sexual exploitation and homelessness.
- *Building Connections: A Group Intervention for Mothers and Children Experiencing Violence in Relationships:* This project, to be led by Mothercraft, will deliver and test a program to help mothers experiencing family violence to learn about healthy relationships and the impacts of violence on their parenting and on their children's development, while building self-esteem and positive parenting strategies. This project will reach Canadians across the country, including Aboriginal mothers and children through Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities sites across Canada.
- *Knowledge Hub: Maximizing Impact by Connecting Research and Practice in Trauma-Informed Health Promotion:* This project, to be led by the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women, will connect and enhance the work of all the community-based projects funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada investment to support victims of violence from a health perspective.

In addition to these community-based projects, the Minister announced that the Government is investing \$100,000 in the creation of a global information system on violence prevention being developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). This system will pull together information on violence and its prevention at the international level to provide a global picture of the extent, nature and effects of interpersonal violence.

## Quick Facts

- The Government of Canada has taken a number of steps to help victims of violence, including a 10-year, \$100 million investment to support the health of victims of violence, announced in February 2015. This investment includes \$3 million per year dedicated funding for First Nations and Inuit communities to

enhance access to mental health counselling and to strengthen health care services for victims of violence.

- The first project funded through this investment was announced on February 20, 2015. This three year project will invest over \$4 million to develop pan-Canadian guidance and education materials that will help health professionals better support the needs of victims of violence.
- In December 2014, the Government launched "Stop Family Violence", a one-stop source of information on family violence hosted on the Public Health Agency of Canada's website as part of the federal Family Violence Initiative.
- In 2014, Canada co-sponsored a resolution at the World Health Assembly which confirmed the need to strengthen the health system response to addressing violence against women and children, and to foster collaboration across sectors.

## Quotes

"Every day across the country, women, children, youth and families are affected by family violence. The consequences can be tragic and the effects on families are long-lasting. Through the projects announced today, our Government is supporting victims of violence so they may heal and begin to rebuild their lives toward a safer, healthier future."

*The Honourable Rona Ambrose*  
*Minister of Health*

"Our Government is taking strong action to ensure that the issue of family violence receives broader public attention. Thanks to projects like these, Canadians are now talking about family violence and its effects, which will help to prevent abuse and support victims in accessing the help they need.."

*The Honourable Rona Ambrose*  
*Minister of Health*

"Thank you to the Government of Canada for their support of the Safe and Understood project. As a result of this funding, we will have the necessary resources to engage children's mental health and domestic violence service providers in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick in addressing the needs of young child victims."

*Dr. Angelique Jenney*  
*Director of Family Violence Services at Child Development Institute*

“Mothercraft applauds the federal government’s commitment to stop family violence and prevent child abuse. We know that community-based, early intervention with high risk families is the best way to mitigate the impacts of violence and abuse for children and we look forward to sharing our approaches with others across the country and contributing to the body of knowledge regarding effective best practices.”

*Michele Lupa*

*Executive Director, Mothercraft*

“We are thrilled to receive this federal support for the innovative programming to promote health strategies with young women who have been the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. By involving these young women in determining healthy group activities, we will be helping them to take control of their own futures.”

*Bruce Rivers*

*Executive Director, Covenant House*

“BC Society of Transition Houses is thrilled with the news that the Public Health Agency of Canada is supporting the “Reaching out with Yoga” project and our partnership with Yoga Outreach. We are excited by the opportunity of this five year project to extend trauma-informed support through Transition Houses to help address the health needs of women, youth and children experiencing violence.”

*Catherine Talbott*

*Executive Director, BC Society of Transition Houses*

“The Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children applauds Minister Ambrose’s commitment to preventing and ending family violence, and supporting the health of women and children living with domestic violence and child abuse. We are pleased to support the community initiatives funded in this announcement through the “The Knowledge Hub” project.”

*Linda Baker*

*Learning Director, Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children*

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