



**The Grade 9 Health curriculum, which includes specific learning outcomes that focus on relationship choices, provides an exceptional opportunity to look at the dynamics of family violence and violence against women.**

Prior to the 1970s, there was no name for the violence that women and children were experiencing in the home. Violence against women was treated as a joke – male MPs laughed when “wife battering” was mentioned in the House of Commons in 1982.

Up until 1983, there was no law that recognized marital rape – a man was presumed to have some right of property over his wife’s body. What happened in the home was considered a private family matter.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Canadian feminists and their allies worked hard to provide services to abused women and children, to raise awareness about how violence is used to control others less powerful, and to create the social and political reforms necessary to ensure greater equality between men and women.

Greater equality has been achieved for many in Canada today; however, violence is still being used to control others. Especially vulnerable are historically disempowered groups such as newcomers to Canada and Aboriginal Canadians.

### Who’s Got the Power?

In Lesson One of *Choices for Positive Youth Relationships*, the section on Identify the Abuse (page 41), students are asked to identify power imbalances in our society. As part of this brainstorming exercise, ask students to identify some of the historical factors that have contributed to the roots of violence in Aboriginal communities. (Included in this list could be colonialism, racism, isolation, and residential schools.)

The **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** follows up on work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the historic trauma of residential schools and their ongoing impact. The site includes resources for educators. Visit <http://nctr.ca>.


The **National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls** highlights ways in which Indigenous women in Canada continue to be more vulnerable to racialized and sexualized violence. Visit <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>.

The section on Relationship Choices, page 64 of the Grade 9 Health Curriculum Guide focuses on societal conditions and beliefs that encourage violence. Below are some suggestions that might help students identify some of the social conditions and beliefs that encourage violence in today’s world.

### The Montreal Massacre


In 1989, not everyone was happy that women had greater equality and more opportunity. One man felt it was so unfair that women were allowed to go to engineering school when he had been refused, that he went on a murderous rampage at the school. He shot and killed 14 young women. This incident is known as the Montreal Massacre and is commemorated each December 6 during the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

### Creating Commemorative Art


The Montreal Massacre has inspired many musicians, poets, writers, painters, sculptors, and filmmakers over the years.  ***The slideshow “Background: Purple Ribbon Campaign” provides images of some monuments and commemorations of the Montreal Massacre.***


Have students do research in the library or over the Internet of the many pieces of commemorative art inspired by the Montreal Massacre. Have students create their own poem or artwork commemorating victims of violence or celebrating healthy relationships.

### Taking Action

The Purple Ribbon Campaign provides an ideal opportunity for students to “help a friend” (p. 107, *Choices for Positive Youth Relationships*) by helping to raise awareness about violence.  ***The slideshow “Ways Youth Can Help” is a good starting point for ideas for action.***

### Assessing Relationship Choices

Are the relationships you are in healthy or unhealthy?  ***The slideshow “What is a healthy relationship?” lists features of healthy relationships and warning signs of abuse.*** It can be used as a checklist for students to consider their relationships.

 ***The slideshow “Power and Control v. Equality” also focuses on what to look for in unhealthy v. healthy relationships.***



### **The Grade 7 Social Studies curriculum, with its focus on empowerment, provides an exceptional opportunity to look at the dynamics of family violence and violence against women.**

The social reform movements that sprang from the late 19th and 20th centuries and led to agitation for health reform, prison reform, improved living and working conditions, and more rights and opportunities for women, are continuous with action for social and political reform and for social change related to violence today.

In 1900 a woman was under the complete legal authority of her father or her husband. She had no legal rights after marriage. She could not own property, sign legal documents, or make binding decisions about her children. An Act to confer the Electoral Franchise upon Canadian women was passed, effective January 1, 1919, but it wasn't until 1929 that women were considered "persons" under the law and eligible to serve in the Senate. Women on PEI were eligible to vote in 1922. The continued vulnerability of historically disempowered groups such as newcomers to Canada and Aboriginal Canadians comes clear in examinations of violence, as well.

### **Slow Change**

Consider the problem of "Slow Change" highlighted on page 253, which states that "Women who were recent immigrants or from minority groups continued to be the most disempowered. They face the same discrimination as other women, plus discrimination because of their backgrounds."

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation follows up on work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the historic trauma of residential schools and their ongoing impact. The site includes resources for teachers. Visit <http://nctr.ca>.

The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls highlights ways in which Aboriginal women in Canada continue to be more vulnerable to racialized and sexualized violence against women. Visit <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>.

### **Questions to Supplement the Textbook**

In the textbook *Changing Your World: Investigating Empowerment*, Chapter 13 on Women and

Social Reform (pp. 241–57) focuses on how and why women worked to become more politically empowered at the beginning of the 20th century, towards a goal of equal voting rights.


Below are some questions and suggestions that might help students compare and contrast the social reforms of the first 20 years of the 20th century and the more than 20 years since 1989.


The Women's Christian Temperance Union, The Toronto Women's Literary Club, Women's Institutes, and other organizations were important to the social reform movement for women's voting rights. Students might wish to explore questions like these:

1. What organizations have been active in pressing for changes that eliminate family violence?
2. What methods and tools have individuals and organizations used to raise awareness or bring about change?
3. What changes have come about?
4. How can we tell if these changes are making a difference or not?

### **What Students Can Do**

The Purple Ribbon Campaign provides an ideal outlet for students to apply ideas of "active citizenship" (p. 256) or to "Take Action on an Issue" (p. 257) with their own activities.

 ***The "Ways Youth Can Help End Violence" slideshow created by the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention (PAC) is a good starting point for discussion.***

 ***The slideshow "How to Support Survivors" has ideas for individual, community, and collective action, beginning with choosing the right language to talk to survivors about their experience.***

### **Neighbours, Friends, and Family**

The PEI Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention released an excellent resource in 2011. The brochure "Neighbours, Friends, and Families: You Can Help Prevent and Respond to Abuse in Your Community" is available from the Premier's Action Committee here: [stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca](http://stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca).

Direct download: [http://gov.pe.ca/photos/original/FVNB\\_2011.pdf](http://gov.pe.ca/photos/original/FVNB_2011.pdf)



**The Family Life curricula, with their focus on the development of the student's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, psychological, moral, and spiritual capacities, provides an excellent opportunity for teachers to consider this year's theme of stepping up to prevent violence against women.**

The Family Life curricula can play a vital role by providing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to students so they can be better prepared to critically examine the pressures that influence their lives and the lives of others.

The Family Life curricula's aims and goals are to build positive attitudes and skills necessary for self-growth and healthy relationships and to develop an appreciation of each person's uniqueness as a human being and as a person of dignity and inestimable value and to promote respect for self and others, including tolerance of differing cultural heritages, family styles, and values systems.

**The PEI Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention has developed a Family Violence Statement that is a good resource to discuss violence against women and children and "family violence."**

*Family violence affects, or will affect, all people in Prince Edward Island. Family violence is connected to abuse of power and control, and to injustice based on sex, race, age, class, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. Individual history, family history, and current circumstances play a role in family violence.*

*Family violence is known by many names: child maltreatment, child abuse, incest, child exposure to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, spousal violence, woman abuse, domestic violence, sibling abuse, parent abuse, elder abuse, and abuse of older adults.*

*Family violence can affect anyone, from any demographic: cultural, national and ethnic origin, socio-economic status, education, gender, age and physical or mental ability.*

**See slideshow resources "What is a healthy relationship?" and "Power and Control v. Equality" for lists of features of healthy and unhealthy relationships allow students to assess the relationships they are in and understand signs of abuse.**

*Family violence can take many forms: harassment, verbal abuse, threats, financial abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, neglect, damage to property, injury to pets, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and homicide.*

*Family violence can happen between: current and former intimate partners (married and unmarried couples, including same-sex couples, and dating partners); a legal guardian or parent and child; blood, marriage or adoptive relatives; and a live-in caregiver and care recipient.*

*Family violence hurts. It can cause physical and psychological harm. Family violence violates the victim's rights and freedoms. Family violence harms the healthy development of children and youth.*

*Family violence is a public health issue, a criminal justice issue, and a human rights issue. To address family violence, all of us in Prince Edward Island must work together and share our resources.*

**From: <http://stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca/>**

### **Some questions to consider:**

- What assumptions does this statement make about family? How do you define your family?
- What kinds of violence against women does this statement include? What kinds of violence against women does it exclude?
- What do you think about including dating relationships in a statement about family violence? Why is it important or not important to include dating violence in a statement like this one?
- What does this family violence statement tell you about healthy relationships?
- How do gender roles play out in your family? What do you like and not like about the gender roles in your home?
- What are some of the gender roles you see in your school and your community? Do you see differences in how girls and boys act in relationships?







## Grade 8 Social Studies: Canadian Identity

The Grade 8 Social Studies curriculum outcomes related to **Canadian Identity** provide an opportunity to talk about women's rights, human rights, and Aboriginal rights to contextualize violence and missing and murdered Indigenous women.

### 8.4.1 Take age-appropriate actions that demonstrate the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (local, national, global)

Within this SCO, students will examine the concept of citizenship (rights and responsibilities) and the legal documents that exist to ensure these rights -- the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Students can apply sections of the documents to the theme of the Purple Ribbon Campaign.

## Grade 9 Social Studies – Interdependence: Atlantic Canada in the Global Community

This curriculum is now implemented with the integration of Aboriginal content within the scope of the SCOs to include Residential School legacies that have had intergenerational impacts and other contemporary issues related to Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

### 9.5.1 Investigate the significance of the international human rights movement in Canada and the global community

5.1.4 describe some of the human rights violations that have occurred within Canada involving Aboriginal peoples

5.1.5 examine past and present human rights issues involving Canada's Aboriginal peoples through the lenses of sustainability: societal, economic and political

Excerpt from Grade 9 social studies curriculum document:

*Indigenous women are going missing and being murdered at a much higher rate than other women in Canada – a rate so high it constitutes nothing less than a national human rights crisis. A report released by the RCMP in May 2014 states that 1, 017 Indigenous women and girls were murdered from 1980-2012. Because of gaps in police and government reporting, the actual numbers may be much higher. (Amnesty International <http://www.amnesty.ca/our-work/campaigns/no-more-stolen-sisters>)*

### 9.5.2 Analyse the relationship between universal human rights (including those within Canada) and globalization

5.2.3 explain how globalization has created both positive and negative reactions to universal human rights issues

5.2.4 examine the role of globalization in both historical and current issues related to Aboriginal people of Canada

### 9.5.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the advances and challenges related to universal human rights including those within Canada

5.3.1 identify factors that contributed to advances in universal human rights

5.3.2 describe challenges that have impeded advances in universal human rights

5.3.3 examine the moral and ethical implication related to globalization and universal human rights

5.3.4 examine advances and challenges related to Canada's legacy of residential schools and the treatment of Aboriginal peoples within Canada

This quote is from the Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum:

*Violations of human rights are not always something that occur "somewhere far away." It is important for students to understand that there can be, and there are, human rights violations within our own country. For example, the right to be safe and secure is a current issue within Canadian borders. Human trafficking, illegal or inhumane treatment of immigrants or LGBTQ persons, and the disappearance and murders of over 1000 indigenous girls and women over the past several years are proof that Canada is not immune to these violations. This outcome provides an opportunity to explore and contextualize contemporary perspectives and beliefs around universal human rights.*

### Resources for Grades 8 & 9 could include

- **PEI Human Rights Commission** booklets such as "They're Your Rights to Know." <http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/YRTK.pdf>
- **Community Legal Information (CLI) PEI** Legal Information for Youth <https://www.legalinfopei.ca/en/youth>
- **Treaties** that apply to this territory from the Mi'kmaq Resource Centre at the University of Cape Breton: <https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-affairs/unamaki-college/mikmaq-resource-centre/>
- The **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** follows up on work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and includes resources for teachers. <http://nctr.ca>
- Reclaiming Power and Place: The **Final Report of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>
- Information about the **United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** from a Canadian feminist perspective: <http://fafia-afai.org/en/womens-rights/cedaw/>