

COVID-19 AND THE IMPACT ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

“As the COVID-19 pandemic deepens economic and social stress coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, gender-based violence is increasing exponentially. Many women are being forced to ‘lockdown’ at home with their abusers at the same time that services to support survivors are being disrupted or made inaccessible.” (*United Nations: Policy Brief The Impact of COVID-19 on Women* https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_women_9_april_2020.pdf)



Staying at home, isn't safe for everyone. For people experiencing gender-based violence, home is often the most dangerous place to be. Countries around the world are reporting a dramatic increase in gender-based violence and Canada is no different.

As a community, we must come together in new ways to end gender-based violence. Here are some ways **YOU** can help:

- Agencies working to end gender-based violence have cancelled many annual fundraising events. Increases in service demand and lack of financial resources are creating many barriers. Donate now to: <https://intervalhousehamilton.org/donations>
- Be More Than A Bystander – if you hear or see a woman experiencing abuse, safely intervene. Ask questions that require a “Yes” or “No” response, this may reduce the risk, if someone is listening. For example: Are you safe? Do you need help?

- Get Educated and Stay Educated – read online articles about gender-based violence so you can properly identify it. Click on this link to start your reading now: <https://canadianwomen.org/blog/covid-19-pandemic-gender-based-violence/>
- Learn more about the new [Signal for Help](#) campaign and safely promote it amongst your contacts and colleagues. The signal is a simple one-handed sign someone can use during a video call to silently show they want someone to check in with them in a safe way. It may help some people in violent homes reach out during this time of social isolation.
- The law still exists during COVID-19 and crimes against women & children are NOT exempt from justice.

BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER AND THE HAMILTON TIGER CATS

Courtney Stephen is returning to our Be More Than A Bystander program this year, and is joined by Jeremiah Masoli, Mike Filer and Chris Van Zehl. Mentoring Hamilton's youth and raising awareness are just a few supports these players are bringing to our team!



MentorAction continues their work without funding and requires your help – whether through financial donation or volunteer hours. Please contact Sue at: staylor@intervalhousehamilton.org

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