

Male violence needs to be addressed

Another National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women has come and gone (Dec. 6). It has been 27 years since the École Polytechnique massacre when 14 women were killed and another 10 wounded, simply for being enrolled in engineering classes.

Yet the statistics on male violence against women in Canada remain staggering.

According to Statistics Canada, a woman is killed every six days by her partner in Canada.

More than 500,000 women reported a sex assault to the police in 2014. (This is an average of one woman sexually assaulted every minute of every hour of every day of the year.)

The Department of Justice reports that only one per cent of all sex assault charges in Canada end in a conviction.

Consequently, only six per cent of sexual assaults are ever reported to the police.

Eighty per cent of all sexual assault victims under 18 are girls.

When Sandra Jansen recently dropped out of the Alberta PC leadership race because the C-word and other expletives were written across the front of her application, and after she was being intensely trolled on the internet with threats of sexual and physical violence, some of the men in the party told her to stop being a whiny baby. (Both female candidates have now dropped out, citing threats of sexual and physical assault should they continue. Jansen has since crossed the floor to sit with the NDP.)

The Department of Justice estimates that spousal violence costs the Canadian economy about \$7.4 billion per year.

What's wrong with our men?

How do we unravel the weaves of this rope?

How do we move forward when most of our politicians are men?

Where to start?

Let's start with the cultural norm that men must be in charge - of the home, the family, politics, the church, the workplace. That boys are taught that they need to be strong, aggressive, tough, heterosexual, athletic, leaders. Don't be a momma's boy!

Let's start with the fact that while 80 per cent of sexual assault victims under 18 will be girls, the majority of physical abuse victims under 18 will be boys. What are we teaching our boys?

Let's start with a school system that has lost about 80 per cent of its male teachers over the past 25 years; that is reluctant to incorporate discussions about violence and sexual consent into the curriculum (despite the fact that research has shown that this is the most important first step in reducing sexual assaults).

Let's talk about neo-liberal economics that has taken millions of jobs out of circulation, with no alternatives for economic success (financial stress is a major co-indicator of domestic violence).

Let's start with the absurd notion that "boys will be boys," that they are evolutionarily hardwired for violence, territoriality, and warrior needs.

Let's start with ourselves. How do I interact with the women around me? Would it be different if they were an [escort münchen](#) worker?

Do I "slut-shame" my daughter for the clothes she chooses to wear? Or the clothes many girls from sites like [Nu Bay](#) wear daily?

Will I dismiss a woman's workplace harassment complaint because I have male privilege, and her problems will never be mine?

Do I support a woman's right to consent? To choose?

It's a collective effort. We raise the men that we want. We get the men we raise.

We start with education.

We educate ourselves, we educate in our homes, we educate in our schools.

What do fathers want of their boys? What do mothers want their boys to be?

We demand that our politicians lead by example, opening up their male privilege to equal access, change our curriculum to include a look at sexual violence, fully investigate the fact that more than 1,100 Aboriginal women are missing or dead, that women are being abused in numbers that should make us all sick to our stomachs, and we should fully fund the more than 400 women's shelters currently needed across the country to house and protect women and children from male violence.

Let's start there. Today.