



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

PLEASE POST

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women

December 6 is National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. On this day we remember and mourn the loss of 14 women, murdered at Montréal's École Polytechnique, murdered because they were women – CLC

That was in 1989. In 2010, the work to end violence against women and girls continues, and labour organizations, community groups, and many, many individuals across the country are continuing to pressure all governments to properly address this issue.

The Hospital Employees' Union commemorates December 6 annually and this year the union is encouraging all locals and our members to get involved in the Canadian Labour Congress' *Make Women's Lives Count* campaign.

The CLC has issued the following message. Please read it and take on some of the initiatives suggested such as speaking out against violence, harassment and bullying on-the-job, ensuring that employers are living up to their obligations to ensure that you have a safe workplace, and having your local financially support a women's shelter, transition house or anti-violence program in your community.

From the Canadian Labour Congress <www.canadianlabour.ca/14actions>:

We remember the 14 lives lost. And there are other numbers to remember:

- Every minute of every day, a woman or child is being sexually assaulted in Canada
- Homicide is the number 1 killer of women in the workplace
- Homicide of women by firearm has shrunk since gun control – from 74 in 1989 to 33 in 2006
- 582 missing and murdered Aboriginal women (and counting)
- Women with disabilities are 1.5 to 10 times as likely to be abused as non-disabled women, depending on whether they live in the community or in institutions.
- Each week, 1 to 2 women are murdered by a current or former partner
- Up to 360,000 children in Canada are exposed to domestic violence every year
- Physical and sexual abuse costs Canada over \$4 billion each year

It is easy to feel hopeless in the face of such stark statistics. However, even the smallest actions by an individual in his or her workplace can make a difference. December 6 is the day when we make the lives of these women – of all women and children touched by violence – count.

...more



We make a difference when we speak out against bullying, harassment and discrimination of any kind.

We make a difference when unions raise the issue of violence at the bargaining table, or advocate for effective workplace violence legislation.

We make a difference when we raise strong, compassionate children.

We make a difference when we fight for women's equality and economic security.

This year, the Canadian Labour Congress challenges workers to *Make Women's Lives Count* by taking action in memory of the 14 women murdered on December 6.

Here are 14 actions you can take to make your workplace safe and to help end violence against women:

1. Learn to recognize the signs of violence.
2. Don't remain silent. If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.
3. Speak out against harassment, bullying and violence in your workplace.
4. Get training in violence prevention.
5. Be an ally to women and organizations who are working to end all forms of gender violence.

Work with your union to:

1. Make sure your employer keeps information on shelters and supports for women experiencing violence readily available.
2. Negotiate a workplace violence prevention program which includes psychological harassment into your collective agreement.
3. Review your workplace violence program every December 6.
4. If you live in a jurisdiction with Workplace Violence legislation, make sure your employer is in compliance. If you don't, advocate for legislation requiring employers to develop policies and programs to help prevent workplace violence and harassment, as well as take precautions to protect workers from domestic violence in the workplace.

Have the courage to look inward and work to:

1. Question your own attitudes and actions and work towards changing them.
2. Recognize and speak out against racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination.
3. Raise non-violent children. Help them find non-violent ways of resolving conflict. Lead by example.
4. Help the girls in your life develop confidence and strong self-esteem.
5. Encourage people who commit violence to seek counselling and support.

Take action now by downloading the *Make Women's Lives Count* poster and brochure and share your stories of action and remembrance on Facebook or Twitter (using the hashtag #6dec).

December 6, 2010