



## Dec. 6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women

Every year, the Hospital Employees' Union joins with other labour, community, social justice and equality organizations in remembering what happened on December 6, 1989 when 14 women were gunned down at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal – murdered simply because they were women.

The December 6 tragedy spurred new organizing efforts to end violence against women and led to the creation of the National Gun Registry, which has now been eliminated despite the protest of tens of thousands of Canadians.

While we have made some progress on women's equality over the years, gender discrimination, including violence against women is still a major problem – and it hurts all of us.

Here are some numbers to think about:

- Murder is the number one killer of women in the workplace.
- On any given day in Canada, more than 3,000 women (along with their 2,500 children) are living in an emergency shelter to escape domestic violence.
- Violence against women in Canada costs us over \$4 billion each year.
- As of March 2010, the Native Women's Association of Canada documented 582 cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, mostly from the past 30 years.

Earlier this month, delegates to HEU's 28<sup>th</sup> biennial convention recognized that much remains to be done to end violence against women and resoundingly passed a resolution to continue pressing for a national inquiry into the cases of missing and murdered women in Canada.

Here are some ideas of what you can do to help eliminate violence against women:

- Get involved in local events commemorating December 6, including those sponsored by women's groups, universities, and other community coalition partners.
- Raise awareness about violence against women in your workplaces, homes and communities.
- Join coalitions that are working toward ending violence against women.
- Push for strong anti-harassment and anti-violence policies in your workplace and in collective agreements.

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- Support campaigns of organizations striving to raise awareness of the alarmingly high rates of violence against Aboriginal women and girls, including the Native Women's Association of Canada ([nwac.ca](http://nwac.ca)), Amnesty International Stolen Sisters ([amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)), KAIROS ([kairoscanada.org](http://kairoscanada.org)) and the Feminist Alliance for International Action ([fafia-afai.org](http://fafia-afai.org)).
- Check out the White Ribbon Campaign, founded 20 years ago by activists like Jack Layton. It's an international effort by men and boys working to end violence against women and girls ([whiteribbon.ca](http://whiteribbon.ca)).

This year, let's strengthen our resolve and take action to end violence against women and girls for good.

*December 4, 2012*