

# CHANGEMAKER

AUGUST 2023



*“With your generous support, we are creating safe spaces for young people of ALL genders.”*



## Dear Friends and Supporters,

When news recently surfaced of a hate-motivated attack in a gender studies class at the University of Waterloo, my heart sank.

It was unsettling for people throughout Canada to hear about this act of gender-based violence in a classroom setting in 2023. It comes at a time of increased hate crimes against 2SLGBTQIA+ people, targeting of trans and non-binary people, and elevated rates of gender-based violence.

This terrible crime reinforces the urgent need for safe spaces to learn, connect, find common ground, and share experiences. And it has to start early, long before students reach university and college.

I want you to know that, with your generous support, we are creating these spaces for young people of ALL genders throughout the country.

Thanks to you, we fund programs where pre-teens and teens learn about harmful gender stereotypes and how they are linked to abuse and violence. In after-school and community settings, these programs bring young people together to address their life and mental health concerns and develop healthy communication and relationship skills that will serve

them throughout their lives. Participants learn to challenge gendered violence and sexism and discrimination. They learn that it's OK to ask for help, and where they can turn for additional support.

Ultimately, by funding these programs, you help lay a foundation for safer schools, communities, and workplaces where people in all their diversities are welcome. As young people head back to school in the coming weeks, I am so grateful for your support and the work of our grantee partners in creating these safe spaces. Keep reading to learn more about how you can support these programs through our Back to School campaign.

Thank you for doing your part and taking action in these challenging times.

Paulette Senior

President and CEO

Canadian Women's Foundation

# Maximize Your Impact on Youth Mental Health



There is a growing mental health crisis among girls and young people. More than half of youth in Canada say mental health services are not easy to access. Increased mental health crisis and demand has made services even scarcer.

Community programs funded through the Foundation provide the safe, supportive environment young people need now to build confidence, sense of belonging, healthy relationship skills, and optimism. Your donation to the Back to School Campaign ensures these programs continue to be there for girls and young people who need them.

**Good news:** H&M will match donations made during the campaign.

**The Back to School Campaign launches August 21, 2023. Go to [canadianwomen.org](https://canadianwomen.org) to learn more and donate.**

## Your gift will go directly to programs that:

- Bolster mental health, emotional well-being, and confidence
- Teach young people about healthy relationships and consent
- Provide cultural and community connection
- Offer mentorship
- Provide engagement and exploration in areas like art, STEM, sport, physical activity, and community leadership
- Provide positive, inclusive spaces where girls and gender-diverse young people can thrive

## Back to School Podcast Episodes

**Tune into our *Alright, Now What?* podcast,** featuring conversations with Dr. Taylor Meissner (August 23) and Dr. Stacey Bélanger (September 6) on topics including:

- Mental Health
- Supporting Gender Diversity
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Youth

Learn more at [canadianwomen.org/podcast](https://canadianwomen.org/podcast)





**Grantee Partner Spotlight:**

## **Girl Force and Girl Power, Women's Centre of Calgary, Alberta**

These after-school and summer camp programs create spaces for girls to build a sense of community, explore issues in their lives, foster community activism, and leadership.

*“It was amazing to see how participants felt safe to talk openly about their mental health struggles. The group requested more sessions ... to talk about challenges around bullying, online harassment, relationships with parents, and more.”*

**- Grantee Partner**

**Grantee Partner Spotlight:**

## **Connect2Protect, Boys and Girls Club of Summerside, Prince Edward Island**

This healthy relationship program, which is open to students of all genders, covers topics including personal identity, boundaries, healthy versus unhealthy relationships, assertive communication, and consent.

*“... I’ve learned how to [manage] many different kinds of situations that I would never have thought of without this program.”*

**- Participant**



*“Being out of my comfort zone, and getting to build on communication and leadership was amazing.”*

**- Participant**

# The Signal for Help's Impact Grows

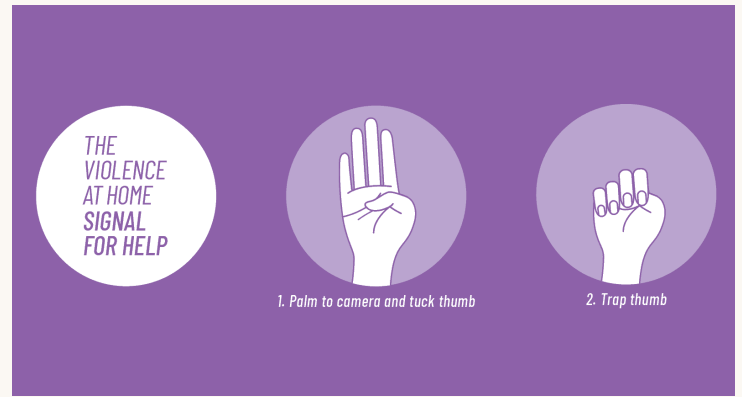
The award-winning Signal for Help has grown to become an international “SOS” for help as a life-saving tool to end gender-based violence. The Signal is a simple one-handed gesture to silently show you need help. It can be used in a video call, out of a window, or in person.

If someone in your life told you they were experiencing abuse, would you know how to help?

**Go to [signalforhelpresponder.ca](https://signalforhelpresponder.ca) and learn how to support a friend, family member, or colleague.** Sign up for the email learning journey, explore the Signal for Help podcast, or enroll in the online mini-course.

## As a learner you will:

- Develop a better understanding of gender-based violence



- Learn how you can provide judgement-free support to someone experiencing abuse
- Know where to refer someone for helpful and reliable support services in your community

Join the community of nearly 50,000 Signal for Help Responders across Canada and help shift the culture of stigma around gender-based violence to one of support.

## Recent Awards

The Signal has been recognized internationally with over 40 social change and innovation awards, most recently the 2023 Governor General's Innovation Award (below left) and the Auschwitz Pledge Foundation's 2023 Erase Indifference Challenge (below right).



**We are happy to share that the Signal for Help podcast has been listed among Apple's New and Notable podcasts, and that Air Canada will feature it among its in-flight entertainment options starting Fall 2023.**

**Go to: [canadianwomen.org/podcast](https://canadianwomen.org/podcast)**

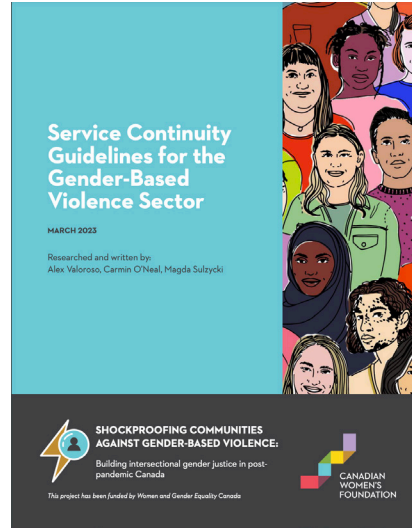


# Missing Gender in Emergency Preparedness

→ With wildfires, floods, tornadoes, and other climate events on the rise, the Foundation asks an urgent question: “Do emergency plans really protect women?” (The Hill Times, June 5, 2023).



→ We're also raising awareness that we need to remember women and gender-diverse people in emergencies and released a first-of-its-kind toolkit for gender justice organizations all over Canada. The toolkit is designed to support organizations like shelters and sexual assault centres to prepare for emergencies that affect their operations.



## Thank You for Helping Mothers and Caregivers Rise

Gender justice is long overdue for mothers and caregivers, so we're very grateful that you took part in the Mother Rising campaign by donating, sending Mother's Day tribute e-cards, and taking our survey. Together with you and our partners, we raised critical funds and highlighted key advocacy areas that will make things better for mothers and caregivers.

An extra-special thank you goes out to GreenShield Cares for matching all Mother Rising donations. GreenShield Cares' Women's Mental Health program is proud to continue offering Canadian Women's Foundation supporters two free hours of virtual therapy and a complimentary subscription to online coach-assisted therapy (iCBT).



> [Learn more about the free resources provided through GreenShield Cares](#)



**In Tribute:**

## **Philanthropist and Foundation supporter Margaret Newall**

It's with great sadness that we mark the passing of Margaret Newall (July 8, 2023), a tireless advocate for gender justice and steadfast supporter of the Foundation.

A defining moment for Margaret came when she was working as a teacher and realized that a child in her class was facing domestic violence at home. It propelled her toward action on the issue, and she later co-founded Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse (RESOLVE) and the Prairieaction Foundation, which supports research on family violence and solutions.

Through her work on violence prevention, she came to know about the Foundation. "One of my favourite things about the Foundation is their program for teenagers to help them learn what healthy relationships look like, where the partners respect each other, and neither needs to control the other," Margaret said. "To build a future where women and children can feel safe in their homes with their families: that is a worthy goal."

Margaret became a supporter in 2004, and remained actively engaged in our work to end gender-based violence and many other causes throughout her life. Her advocacy and philanthropy earned her multiple honorary degrees and awards, including membership in the Order of Canada and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

"We considered Margaret a part of our family at the Foundation," says Paulette Senior, Foundation President and CEO. "She stood with us through thick and thin, in partnership and solidarity to support women, girls and gender-diverse folks whose lives were most at risk due to gender-based violence."



***"Her commitment to not only making a difference but to transforming lives, was second to none. We will miss her dearly, but we are comforted knowing the impact she has made in the lives of countless many will last lifetimes."***

## Corporate Partner Spotlight:

# Royal LePage Shelter Foundation

Congratulations to Royal LePage Shelter Foundation (RLSF) on two major milestones! This year marks 25 years since its launch, as well as 25 years of partnership with the Canadian Women's Foundation. In that time, RLSF has raised millions to support programs that help to break the cycle of gender-based violence, and enable women and children to rebuild their lives. We are grateful for their tireless and continued commitment.

“In this, the 25th year of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, we look to our past and honour the Canadian Women's Foundation as a partner and friend through those years. Together we believe everyone has the right to a safe place to call home - free from violence. As the largest non-governmental funder of shelters in Canada, having raised and granted \$41 million to date, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, thanks to the generosity and big hearts of its agent network,



**25**  
YEARS  
SINCE 1998

will look ahead with optimism to the next 25 years. Intimate partner violence is a serious and complex social determinant of health, calling on more of us to engage so more Canadian women and children live in safety and rise to their full potential.”

- **Lisa Gibbs, Executive Director, Royal LePage Shelter Foundation**



Rachelle Gregory (left), Chair of Women and Mortgages and Senior Vice President, Originations, MERIX Financial with Laurie Clarke, Canadian Women's Foundation Board Vice Chair at the charity golf tournament.

## Corporate Partner Spotlight:

# MERIX Financial

The Women in Mortgages Charity Golf Tournament in Surrey, BC, raised over \$15,000 in support of programs that empower women's journeys out of poverty. The tournament was held by MERIX Financial and supported by lenders, mortgage brokers, and service providers from across the mortgage industry. MERIX Financial and Paradigm Quest have raised more than \$260,000 for the Foundation since 2008. We are so grateful! A special thank you to MERIX Financial's Rachelle Gregory, as well as tournament participants and volunteers for their incredible support.

## Artificial Intelligence and Gender



Paulette Senior, our President and CEO spoke about AI and Reducing Gender-Based Inequalities at the International Economic Forum of the Americas in Montreal. Listen to our [podcast episode](#) featuring clips from the event or [watch](#) the full panel discussion.

## BIPOC Women at Work, Globe and Mail Women's Collective



Andrea Gunraj, Vice President of Public Engagement at the Canadian Women's Foundation, spoke on this panel about the challenges faced by Black, Indigenous, and racialized women across leadership levels.

[> Watch](#)

## Alright, Now What? Podcast

Catch up on our recent series about key issues in women's health:



[Ovarian Cancer With Dr. Barbara Vanderhyden](#)



[Menopause With Dr. Shafeena Premji and Janet Ko](#)



[Menstrual Bleeding Disorders With Natalie Philbert and Dr. Meghan Pike](#)




[Women's Heart Health With Dr. Tara Sedlak](#)


**ALRIGHT, NOW WHAT?**


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