



**WOMEN'S
SHELTERS
CANADA**

Shelters and
Transition Houses
United to End Violence
Against Women

Ending Violence Against Women Federal Election 2019: Questions for Candidates

Violence against women (VAW) is at epidemic proportions in Canada and around the world. In 2018, one woman or girl was killed in Canada every 2.5 days. **More than half were murdered by a current or former intimate partner. Indigenous women continue to be six times more likely to be killed than non-Indigenous women.** On any given day, there are over 3,000 women and 3,000 children who have found safety in one of Canada's shelters. Shelters work tirelessly to ensure that women and children do not become statistics on femicide lists.

Earlier this year, Women's Shelters Canada (WSC) released [*More Than a Bed: A National Profile of VAW Shelters and Transition Houses*](#), a report that found that VAW shelters are providing expanding services to a diverse group of women and children without comparable funding increases. In fact, 64% do not receive an annual cost of living increase from their main government funder. **One in five had not received a funding increase in ten years or more.**

The affordable housing crisis across the country has exacerbated the situation for women and children fleeing violence. More and more women and children are turned away from shelters that are already operating at – and sometimes over – capacity. WSC helped advocate to ensure that domestic violence survivors were a priority in the National Housing Strategy. **We need to ensure that all commitments made under the National Housing Strategy will be fulfilled.**

Since February 2015, WSC, along with 20+ national and regional collaborators, has been advocating for a [National Action Plan \(NAP\) on Violence Against Women](#). The United Nations had called on all countries to implement a NAP on VAW by 2015. During the 2015 federal election campaign, we called on all parties to include the development and implementation of a NAP on VAW in their party platform. **Fast forward to 2019, Canada remains without a NAP on VAW.**

In June 2017, the Government of Canada announced its Strategy to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence. While this is a step towards a NAP, it differs in that it only deals with federal institutions. **Canada needs a NAP on VAW to ensure that women in all areas of the country have access to comparable levels of services and protection.** A NAP would ensure a shared understanding of the root causes of VAW as well as coordinated and effective efforts across the federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal levels.

Violence against women is an equity issue. It is both a cause and consequence of women's inequality. To effectively address the issue, long-term systems change accompanied by a shift in attitudinal norms is needed. The 2019 Canadian federal election is the time for your voice to be heard.

Questions for Candidates in Your Riding:

1. What will you do to help end violence against women? Do you know how often a woman is killed by a current or former intimate partner in Canada?
2. Do you support a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women? Why or why not?
3. The commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called on all political leaders to implement the Calls for Justice and to "develop and implement a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and LGBTQ and two-spirit people." How is your party planning to respond to this call?
4. How do you feel the National Housing Strategy supports women fleeing violence? Is your party committed to following through on implementing the full strategy?