



NBFL Statement: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday December 2, 2016

MONCTON - On December 6, 1989, a gunman walked into Montreal's École Polytechnique and fatally shot 14 young women. He separated the women from the men before opening fire. As he pointed his rifle at the women, the gunman said, "You're all a bunch of feminists, I hate feminists."

Every year, on the anniversary of the shooting, Canadians remember the 14 victims, and recognize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This day is an opportunity to reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also a day on which we can consider concrete actions to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

It is estimated that half of all Canadian women will experience at least one incident of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. On any given day, over 3000 women (along with their 2500 children) are staying in an emergency shelter to escape domestic violence. In New Brunswick rates of intimate partner violence are higher than the national average.

In addition to the tragic personal costs of violence against women, workplaces are also negatively impacted. Employers lose \$77.9 million annually as a result of domestic violence. 1 in 10 women aged 18 to 24 report having experienced sexual harassment at work within the past year.

The New Brunswick Federation of Labour and our affiliates have worked hard to make workplaces safer for women by negotiating anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. Better protection and intervention for female workers who are experiencing violence or abuse at home have been put in place as well as improved employee assistance and support programs.

New Brunswick Unions are currently lobbying governments for workplace violence legislation that requires 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. While some provinces have strong legislation, we have much work to do to ensure New Brunswick workers have the same protection.

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