

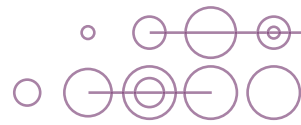
# Canada's Statement

Canada became a pathfinding country in May of 2018. As part of the Together to #EndViolence Solutions Summit series, the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions has made commitments to end violence against children and issued the Leaders Statement.

Key highlights from the Leaders statement are as follows:

- 1.** Canada is committed to eliminating child sexual exploitation. In 2019, Canada invested \$22.24 million over three years to increase prevention activities, reduce the stigma associated with reporting, enhance pursuing and investigating offenders, and deepen engagement with digital industry.
- 2.** Develop tailored solutions to populations at higher risk of experiencing violence. In 2021, Canada committed to investing over \$2.2 billion to support efforts to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit and gender diverse people.
- 3.** Taken action on the gendered dimensions of violence against children through Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence (GBV Strategy), launched in 2017 and develop a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.
- 4.** Promoting the safety of children in and around schools by ensuring that all provinces and territories in Canada have violence prevention plans in place.





## Statement from the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions on Canada's Efforts to End Violence against Children- Global Partnership to End Violence against Children Pathfinding Statement

All children have the right to grow up in a safe environment, free from violence. Whether it takes the form of maltreatment by a caregiver, bullying by peers, sex trafficking or sexual exploitation, all forms of violence can have serious and lasting impacts on children's mental and physical health, both immediately and throughout the course of their lives. Canada condemns violence against children in all its forms and is committed to continuous efforts, locally and globally, to eradicate violence against children. We recognize the survivors, advocates, and community-based organizations, who work tirelessly every day to make a difference in the lives of children and youth.

Canada's *Criminal Code* contains a number of sections directly designed to protect children against violence and sexual exploitation. This includes online behaviours that target children as victims, as well as luring a child and making sexually explicit material available to a child. Recent amendments to the federal *Divorce Act* help parents, judges and others make safe and appropriate arrangements for children in instances of family violence.

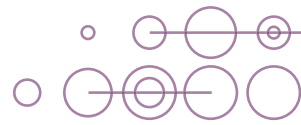
Canada opposes the use of corporal punishment. We support the development and delivery of parenting education programs and public information resources that discourage physical punishment and discipline of children and, instead, provide parents with positive parenting skills.

Furthermore, Canada is committed to eliminating child sexual exploitation. In 2019, Canada invested \$22.24 million over three years to increase prevention activities, reduce the stigma associated with reporting, enhance pursuing and investigating offenders, and deepen engagement with digital industry. This investment complements the *National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet*, created in 2004, which works with digital industry, federal partners, and others to combat online child sexual exploitation.

Canada recognizes the need to develop tailored solutions to those at higher risk of experiencing violence, particularly First Nations, Inuit and Métis, Black and other racialized children and youth, LGBTQ2+ youth, homeless and street-involved youth, and children and youth with disabilities. For example, in 2021, Canada committed to investing over \$2.2 billion to support efforts to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit and gender diverse people. The resultant 2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan, seeks to address root causes of such violence. Canada also provides funding to urban, Inuit, Métis and First Nation community based organizations to deliver programs that promote healthy child development and safe, stable, healthy relationships.

The Government of Canada has also taken action on the gendered dimensions of violence against children through *Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence* (GBV Strategy), launched in 2017. The GBV Strategy invested approximately \$220





# Canada

million over 5 years, with \$40 million per year in ongoing funding, to fill gaps in supports for diverse populations, including children and youth. Building on the GBV Strategy's foundation, work is underway to develop a National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence, which has included investing over \$600 million over five years starting in 2021 and \$539 million over five years starting in 2022.

In Canada, education is primarily the responsibility of provincial and territorial governments. To ensure the safety of children in and around schools, all provinces and territories in Canada have violence prevention plans in place.

Improved data is integral to supporting initiatives to eliminate violence against children. Canada draws on national self-reported surveys, surveys of proxy informants, and administrative data to monitor the prevalence of child maltreatment. In the past decade, Canada has accelerated its development of longstanding data collection solutions to improve monitoring and detection of changes in prevalence in child maltreatment.

To protect children globally, particularly in humanitarian settings, Canada is working with partners including United Nations organizations, the Red Cross Movement, and other non-governmental organizations to provide multi-sector assistance to children and families in need. Between 2018-2021, Canada has contributed \$236 million to support UNICEF's humanitarian activities, and in 2021, Canada provided \$94.9 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support refugees, stateless persons, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons. Activities supported through this funding include child protection services, such as addressing violence, exploitation and abuse against children and adolescents, GBV risk mitigation and prevention. Internationally, Canada has supported the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage, aimed at eliminating child, early and forced marriage in countries where rates of the practice are among the highest, with additional support provided since the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure sustained progress. Canada firmly and unequivocally denounces Female Genital Cutting/Mutilation as a human rights violation that threatens the physical and mental health and well-being of women and girls around the world. Since 1997, Canada's Criminal Code has explicitly recognized the practice as a form of aggravated assault.

Canada has made great advances towards eradicating violence against children both at home and abroad. As a Pathfinding Country, Canada is committed to continuing to accelerate our efforts. By working with partners and stakeholders from all sectors as well as by sharing knowledge and learning from other Pathfinding Countries, we can protect the rights, safety and well-being of children and youth in Canada and around the world.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health

