

Violence against women costs Canada \$4.2 billion a year

"I now know that I'm very strong within."

I'm a survivor, no matter what. No one is going to bring me back down again because I know I can get through it. I can get through anything.

Maureen, a survivor of violence, said this after participating in an Outward Bound Women of Courage program.

The human rights issue of violence against women has attracted much more attention in recent years and communities are finding a voice to speak out and take action.

Strides are being made to stop violence against women in our society, but there is so much more that must be done.

A Canadian

report, commissioned by Health Canada,

said sexual and physical abuse of females costs Canada \$4.2 billion a year, including \$408 million in medical costs.

Statistics Canada said 51 per cent of women in Canada have experienced violence in their adult lives.

HEALTH

At least one-in-10 high school students have experienced violence in a dating relationship.

We must all get involved to help stop violence against women.

It is said that to break the silence, one must scream. We've been working up to that, from

hushed whispers in school hallways to the hum of encouraged discussion, and now, energy and initiative crack the mirrors of violence with their roar.

Here is what you can do:

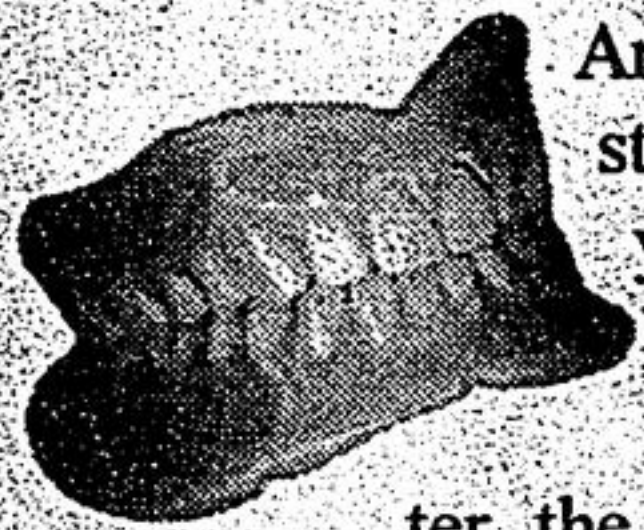
- Listen and believe when people talk about violence. Help them find appropriate help.
- Talk about the issue with your family.
- Post-emergency and service numbers.

- Donate money to violence prevention or recovery programs.
- Volunteer at a sexual assault centre, shelter or anti-violence program.
- Write to your political representatives asking them what they plan to do to help.
- Speak out against sexism, racism and all other forms of violence.

This article was submitted by The Body Shop.

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