



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Violence Prevention in the Region of Peel

Family Services of Peel (FSP) was established in 1971 as a non-profit, charitable, multi-service organization offering family and community support services in the Region of Peel. From its inception, FSP has provided support for victims of violence and abuse. These services include one-to-one counselling, therapy groups, education and support services for children, men, women, seniors and their families.<sup>i</sup>

Under the auspices of Family Services of Peel, the Peel Institute on Violence Prevention (PIVP) serves as a community-based research institution, dedicated to presenting new knowledge in the area of violence prevention. PIVP was established in 2013 and is an interdisciplinary and collaborative initiative among agencies in the Region of Peel. The Institute focuses on interpersonal violence, including both domestic violence and sexual assault, and works to achieve equity in services for men and women survivors of violence.

Family Services of Peel and the Peel Institute on Violence Prevention (FSP-PIVP) believe in a world where people of all genders have their rights equally respected and protected.<sup>ii</sup> FSP-PIVP stands for the eradication of violence through prevention and provides leadership, excellence and innovation in the goals to root out violence and injustice, help transform unequal power relationships between people of different genders, and end the discrimination and violence that people face simply because of their gender. No one person should face violence or discrimination because of who they are.<sup>iii</sup>

Through collaboration and partnership, equality between men and women is essential to social justice. Equity must be viewed as a human right. Through accessibility to services and inclusion, FSP-PIVP encourages the advancement of women and the achievement of equality between men and women. In order to empower women, the full diversity of women's situations needs to be recognized.<sup>iv</sup> FSP-PIVP works with women, not as a single identity, but according to their social position (race, class, ethnicity, education, religion).

Sexual and domestic violence impacts all communities. Yet due to structural inequities from historic and present day policies, practices, and norms, inequities in rates of sexual and domestic violence exist by age, sex, race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other factors. Communities that face higher rates of sexual and domestic violence often also face inequities in other forms of violence and trauma. Multiple forms of violence and systemic inequities contribute to high levels of community trauma.

In the 2014 report entitled, *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*, it was noted that 4% of the population in the provinces with a current or former spouse or common-law partner self-reported having experienced physical or sexual abuse by their partner sometime in the preceding five years.<sup>v</sup>

In the Region of Peel, there is an inadequate amount of data on the prevalence of interpersonal violence. Statistics Canada data revealed that in Ontario in the year 2014, there were a total of 909 female residents in shelters who were escaping abusive spousal relationships. According to data released by Peel Police, in 2014 there was a total of 54,216 calls for service and 2,912 of those calls were regarding domestic, family disputes/disturbances, which equals to 4.6% of the calls.<sup>vi</sup>

The partnership between Family Services of Peel and the Peel Institute on Violence Prevention is a robust relationship between social services and academia. In Canada, the social service agencies are valued for providing services, but they do not engage in knowledge production and reflection. PIVP is a community-based research institute that serves as a mechanism and an infrastructure for knowledge production, based significantly in practicum. FSP-PIVP can become a forum for global comparisons, identification of common themes, commonalities, and differences.

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<sup>i</sup> Family Services of Peel. Welcome brochure

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/womens-human-rights> access August 23 2016

<sup>iii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm#concern> access August 16 2016

<sup>v</sup> Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (2016). *Family Violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2014*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canada.

<sup>vi</sup> Peel Police. (2014). *Divisional boundaries and population statistics*.

