



LCIHCS NEWS

Updates from Lanark County's Only Anti-Violence Organization



As spring blooms across Lanark County, we remain rooted in purpose. Our work to end intimate partner violence (IPV) continues—through education, outreach, and a growing wave of advocacy that is being felt across the province and beyond.

We have continued pushing for the passage of Bill 173, which calls on the Province of Ontario to formally declare IPV an epidemic. While the bill passed second reading with all-party support, we are still waiting on the provincial government to take decisive action. Momentum must not be lost. Already, over 100 municipalities across Ontario—representing the majority of the province's population—have made the declaration. It's time for the province to follow suit.

We've also taken our advocacy to the national stage. Ahead of the recent federal election, we joined a coalition of frontline agencies, advocates, and activists in writing to each of Canada's federal party leaders. We asked them to go beyond law-and-order responses and commit to meaningful change—by declaring IPV an epidemic, establishing a gender-based violence commissioner, and funding long-term, sustainable solutions. Some parties responded with strong commitments. Others did not respond at all.

With 182 women and girls killed by violence in Canada in 2024, including ongoing rates of femicide, coercive control, and systemic abuse, the stakes are higher than ever. Ending gender-based violence is not a partisan issue, but if we care about safety and security, it absolutely must be a political priority. Because this is a crisis that affects people in every community, across every region of our country, and every political stripe. We believe that all political leaders should agree: everyone in Canada deserves to live with safety and dignity. We can and we must do better to make that vision a reality.

We will continue to raise our voices, amplify survivors, and demand real action. Because everyone deserves to live in safety, and with dignity. And because change will only come when we all stand together to demand it.

See It. Name It. Change It! Goes International

In January, Brianne Luckasavitch and Erin Lee traveled to Mexico on behalf of Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIHCS) to continue important work following our 2023 hosting mission.

During the trip, they toured local shelters, met with colleagues, and shared insights on addressing gender-based violence, with a particular focus on stalking. While the systems in Mexico are different, the goals are the same: safety, justice, and the eradication of violence against women and children.

One inspiring highlight: under the leadership of Dr. Rosa María Salazar, Mexico will be adapting our See It. Name It. Change It. campaign! The initiative, which empowers individuals to recognize, address, and transform gender-based violence in their communities, is being translated into Spanish and customized to fit local traditions. Because of this and the expansion into Ottawa, the program is now available in English, Spanish and French.

Originally launched in Lanark County, See It. Name It. Change It. has now expanded into Ottawa and Mexico—with more to come! We are proud to see this homegrown movement making a difference beyond our borders. Shared learning truly is the best learning—united, we are stronger.



Building Hope: Thank You to the RONA Foundation



We are thrilled to announce that Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIHCS) has been selected to receive a grant through the RONA Foundation's Build From the Heart program!

This generous support means so much to our organization. As the only domestic violence shelter in Lanark County, we serve over 550 women and 100 children each year, providing essential services, safety, and hope. This grant gives us a rare and vital opportunity: to invest directly in the physical infrastructure of our agency—something absolutely critical to the work we do.

At LCIHCS, safety is our top priority. Our four properties must offer more than comfort—they must offer security. Maintaining this standard requires continuous upkeep and specialized features, including reinforced doors and windows, bullet- and fire-resistant glass, and extensive security systems. These critical elements are essential to protecting survivors as they rebuild their lives.

Thanks to the support of the RONA Foundation, we can now complete vital upgrades to both our shelter and thrift store, strengthening security, improving accessibility, and ensuring our spaces remain safe, welcoming, and equipped to meet the complex needs of the people we serve.

It's important to note that while this grant supports critical building improvements, our programs, crisis support, outreach, and services continue to rely on community donations. Together, these elements create the comprehensive care survivors need—and together, we can make safety possible.

To the RONA Foundation: thank you. Your belief in our mission helps protect lives, restore dignity, and offer new beginnings. We are truly honoured to have your support.

Would Basic Income End Intimate Partner Violence?

In April, our Executive Director, Erin Lee, joined advocate Rob Rainer, Senator Kim Pate, and survivor for a public panel on the intersection of Basic Income and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The event, co-hosted by the Lanark Basic Income Network and LCIHCS, explored how economic security could become a powerful tool in preventing gender-based violence.



In a recent interview with Lynda D'aoust on 88.1 myFM, Erin shared this critical insight: “Upwards of 87% of victims of violence that access our programs and crisis line will indicate that they have suffered economic hardship or financial abuse.”

Financial abuse is one of the most common—and most effective—tools of control in abusive relationships. Survivors often stay in unsafe situations because they lack the resources to leave or fear they won't be able to support themselves or their children.

While Basic Income is not a cure-all, Erin and others on the panel emphasized that it could be a vital part of the solution. By providing a predictable financial safety net, Basic Income can reduce vulnerability, increase options for survivors, and create pathways out of abuse. It offers stability during one of the most destabilizing times in a person's life and helps shift the balance of power back toward survivors. As noted during the discussion, Basic Income won't end IPV or GBV on its own—but it's a foundational support that can strengthen a wider network of services and protections.

Ending violence requires systemic change. Housing, healthcare, justice reform, and social services all play a role—but when we address the economic barriers that trap people in cycles of abuse, we come one step closer to creating safer communities for everyone.

Empowering Change: Coaching Boys Into Men

Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIHCS) is proud to announce that we are now part of the Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) initiative!

CBIM is an evidence-based program that empowers high school coaches to mentor young male athletes on building healthy relationships, practicing mental wellness, and understanding that violence never equals strength. Through 12 weekly sessions, coaches guide athletes in developing respect, empathy, leadership—and the courage to stand up against violence.

Athletic coaches hold a unique influence in the lives of young men, often serving as mentors both on and off the field. By integrating conversations about respect, integrity, and fair play into everyday practices, CBIM helps young athletes recognize, name, and change harmful behaviors before they take root.

LCIHCS is currently working with schools in the Upper Canada District School Board to implement CBIM locally, building on a global movement that has already reached youth across the United States, East Africa, Australia, and India.

Ending gender-based violence isn't just a women's issue—it's a community issue. By reaching young men early and inspiring leadership rooted in respect, we are creating safer teams, schools, and communities.

Men as Allies: Taking Action to End Intimate Partner Violence

At Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIHCS), we know that ending Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) requires the commitment of everyone—and that includes men. IPV is not just a women’s issue; it is a societal crisis that impacts entire communities. While women, gender-diverse individuals, and children are disproportionately affected, the responsibility to end violence should not rest solely on their shoulders.

Too often, women are expected to educate and lead the fight against violence. But true allyship means men stepping up—educating themselves, challenging harmful narratives, and becoming active participants in creating safer, healthier communities.

How You Can Be an Ally:

- Start conversations. Talk openly about gender-based violence with your family, friends, and colleagues.
- Educate yourself. Learn about the rates of femicide and violence in your own community and the unique barriers faced by Indigenous, racialized, disabled, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.
- Attend events. Show up to marches, rallies, and awareness campaigns supporting anti-violence initiatives.
- Support anti-violence organizations. Host a fundraiser, become a monthly donor, or amplify important campaigns like See It. Name It. Change It.
- Challenge harmful narratives. Speak up when you hear victim-blaming language, sexist jokes, or dismissive comments about violence.
- Volunteer your time. Offer practical support—such as helping at events or assisting with transportation and logistics.
- Organize donation drives. Collect essentials like old cell phones, hygiene products, or clothing for survivors rebuilding their lives.
- Make your support visible. Participate in campaigns like the Moose Hide Campaign or publicly declare your stance against gender-based violence.

Men’s Involvement Matters.

Over time, the role of men in anti-violence work has evolved—from standing in support at the sidelines to marching alongside survivors. Today, we encourage and welcome men to actively participate in all of our events (with the exception of Violet Femmes, a women-only fundraiser where men often support as volunteers).

It’s important to recognize: while men are statistically more likely to be perpetrators of gender-based violence, it is equally true that not all men are abusers. The more men who stand up, speak out, and act, the stronger and safer our communities become.

The Time to Act Is Now.

Ending IPV is not just about supporting survivors—it’s about changing the systems and norms that allow violence to persist. It’s about building a future where everyone can live free from fear. If you consider yourself an ally, we invite you to step up today. Educate yourself. Take action. Make your voice heard. Your involvement isn’t just appreciated—it’s necessary.



We Stand With Survivors:

May is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

May is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and Lanark County Interval House and Community Support is proud to once again partner with The Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County to bring the We Stand With Survivors campaign to our community.

Now in its seventh year, the campaign began as a response to survivor-led research in Renfrew County, which identified a critical need for more visible, public support for survivors of sexual violence. Since then, We Stand With Survivors has grown into a powerful national movement, with communities across almost every province and territory participating.

For the fourth year in Lanark County, we've displayed our banner along the OVRT trail near the Almonte Library, where it will remain throughout May. This banner is more than just a message—it's a symbol of solidarity. A reminder to survivors that they are not alone. That they are seen, supported, and believed.



LCIHCS Board Co-Chair Linsey Sherman-Zekulin, Mississippi Mills Mayor Christa Lowry, and Mississippi Mills Councillor-Ramsay Ward Bev Holmes joined LCIHCS Staff for the hanging of the banner

Celebrating Partnerships: Local Media

In the fall, at our Annual General Meeting, we were thrilled to announce a special way to honour their incredible contributions. As part of our new Healing Garden, coming next spring, we will dedicate chamomile to the local media. This medicinal plant represents calm and introspection—qualities that align with their work. Just as chamomile tea nurtures the body from within, our local media takes care of the inside stories of our community and ensures they are heard with empathy and validation.

As part of this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, Lanark County Interval House is proud to honour some of our most valued community partners: our local media.

We are so fortunate to work alongside journalists and media outlets who truly exemplify what it means to be allies in advocacy. From sharing agency updates to amplifying survivor voices and educating the public, they've been vital in raising awareness about gender-based violence. They even highlighted the term femicide over two and a half years before it gained traction in Ottawa and national media.

Our local media doesn't just tell stories—they connect with them. They live here, among the people we serve, and their commitment to our mission reflects their care for this community. The women and families we support are their neighbours, colleagues, and friends.



L: Members of the local media MyFM's Bob Perrault, Inside Ottawa Valley's Tara Gesner, and YourTV Smiths Falls' Kathy Botham are presented with certificates by Erin Lee at our 2024 Annual General Meeting. R: A closer look at the certificate media were presented with.

Tools, Trades & Strength: An IWD Event to Remember



Our friends at RONA Carleton Place teamed up with Rachelle Tessier of Project Pine Designs to host a special *Tool Info Tour*—a hands-on event designed to empower women and showcase careers and confidence in the trades.

The event included live demos, expert advice, and the chance to test out tools in a supportive, welcoming environment.

The event raised over \$360 to support LCIHCS! We're so grateful to Project Pine and RONA Carleton Place for hosting this amazing event and for making space where women can build skills, confidence, and community.

As Good As New Store Sees a Small Price Increase

As of March 11, As Good As New, our volunteer-run thrift store in Carleton Place, has implemented its first price adjustment since 2017. While many items remain unchanged, select pieces—like adult winter coats—have seen modest increases of a dollar or two to reflect rising costs of keeping our shelter and programs running.

This thoughtful update ensures our prices remain accessible while helping sustain our essential programs. With government funding covering just 60% of our budget, the thrift store remains our largest and most consistent source of support.



Talking Consent & Boundaries at Local Schools

This spring, Lanark County Interval House and Community Support has been out in the community speaking with students across the county about the importance of consent, setting boundaries, and healthy relationships.

We've had the opportunity to engage with Grade 7 and 8 students at St. John's Catholic High School, students at Carleton Place High School during their Party Smart event, and students at Almonte District High School as part of our ongoing youth outreach.

These conversations are essential. Talking to young people about consent early on helps lay the foundation for healthy, respectful relationships and challenges harmful behaviours before they start. By equipping youth with knowledge and tools, we're empowering them to make informed choices and support a culture of respect and safety.

We're grateful to the schools and students who welcomed us and continue to be part of the movement toward a safer, more respectful future for all.



 Lanark County
INTERVAL HOUSE
and Community Support

And Sometimes They Kill You: A Powerful Evening with Pamela Cross

As part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, we were proud to host an evening in celebration of the book launch of Pamela Cross, a respected lawyer, activist, and author.

Her new book, *And Sometimes They Kill You: Confronting the Epidemic of Intimate Partner Violence*, asks a critical question: Why have we failed to respond effectively to intimate partner violence—a social problem that affects millions of women and children?

Drawing on over three decades of experience working with survivors, frontline workers, and the systems meant to protect them, Pamela Cross offers a compelling and accessible exploration of intimate partner violence in Canada. The book untangles the issue, lays bare the barriers to meaningful change, and—most importantly—offers practical, hopeful solutions for how each of us can contribute to building safer communities.

This event was more than a book launch—it was a call to action. Cross’s message was clear: eliminating gender-based violence will require an all-of-society, revolutionary response rooted in justice, compassion, and real change.

Pamela Cross is also known for her powerful role as a key witness and expert in the CKW inquest into the 2015 femicide of three women in Renfrew County—an event that deeply shaped the national conversation on femicide and the failure of systems to protect victims.



Honouring Long-Time Volunteer, Lynda Moulton

In December, we marked a heartfelt milestone as we celebrate Lynda Moulton’s retirement after over 22 years of dedicated volunteer service with us.

Lynda’s kindness, commitment, and countless contributions have left an indelible mark on our agency, and we are so grateful for everything she has given over the years.

Thank you, Lynda, for your unwavering support and for being such an integral part of our journey. You will be greatly missed, and we wish you all the best—and plenty of well-deserved relaxation—in this next chapter!

Upcoming Events

June 6	Second Annual Golf Fore Change Golf Tournament Tickets available at canadahelps.org .
Sept. 18	Take Back the Night 6 p.m. in the park next to Carleton Place Town Hall
Nov. 7	Violet Femmes Tickets available on our website

Thank You to our Donors & Community Partners!

We live in such a generous community and are always blown away by the wonderful support we receive! We would like to thank all of our wonderful donors - we couldn't do what we do without your support.



L: Janet Beath hosted a paint night fundraiser in April 2025. Middle: Mme. Burton’s Grade 3-4 class at Caldwell Street Public School collected 185 pairs of kids’ pajamas for us! R: Jeff Julian, Des Jardins Insurance Agent, makes one of his regular donations of large amounts of non perishable items to our shelter & Perseverance Pantry.

Visit our website for more event information!


www.lcih.org

 
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Stay Connected!