



YWCA
CANADA

A TURNING POINT
FOR WOMEN

UN POINT TOURNANT
POUR LES FEMMES

MEDIA RELEASE

MPs Playing Dangerous Politics with Women's Lives says YWCA Canada Calls for Honouring the Montreal Massacre and Preserving the Gun Registry

Toronto, November 4, 2009 –No greater impetus should be needed for the retention of gun control in Canada and the defeat of Bill C-391 than the looming shadow of the 20th anniversary of the 1989 murders of 14 women at L'École Polytechnique says YWCA Canada, the nation's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization.

“What is often lost in the complaints of gun owners against the registry is that on the evidence, gun control saves lives. 88% of Canadian women killed with guns are killed with a shotgun or rifle. Rifles and shotguns are the guns most often used in domestic violence and suicide,” says Paulette Senior, CEO of YWCA Canada.

Statistics prove the case. Police services in Canada check the *registry 9400 times a day*. The registry has the strong support of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police who state forcefully: “Gun laws save lives.” It's true.

- In 1991, more than 1400 Canadians were killed with guns. Now it is fewer than 800.
- The rate of murders with rifles and shotguns dropped by more than 78% from 1991 to 2007.
- Murders of women with guns plummeted from 85 in 1991 to 32 in 2004.
- Suicide rates, particularly among youth, have also declined.

“The gun registry was established in response to the killings at L'École Polytechnique. Twenty years later some MPs seem to have lost sight of that event,” says Marlene Gorman, Executive Director of YWCA Sudbury. “Right now, when police get a call about violence in the home they can check in advance whether a rifle or shotgun is present.”

“I worry about Aboriginal women, who surely must have a right to protection,” says Lyda Fuller, Executive Director of YWCA Yellowknife. “I’m asking rural and northern MPs to think about the safety of Aboriginal women and about rates of teen suicide before they vote today.”

Polls have shown that while only half of gun owners oppose the law, 77% of people living with a gun owner support it. As the nation’s largest provider of shelters for women, YWCA Canada urges decisive defeat of Bill C-391.

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For further information on YWCA Canada and its Member Associations, or to set up an interview with:

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About YWCA Canada:

YWCA Canada is the country’s oldest and largest women's multi-service organization. With 33 Member Associations operating in more than 400 districts and communities across the country, our Turning Point Programs for Women™ - which address personal safety, economic security and well-being – reach out to 1 million women and girls in nine provinces and one territory. YWCA is the largest national provider of shelter to women, serving 25,000 women, children and teen girls, including 6,000 fleeing domestic violence, each year. We are the largest provider of literacy, life skills, employment and counselling programs in the country, and the second largest provider of childcare services. YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries. For more information about YWCA Canada and our Member Associations, visit www.ywacacanada.ca.