

Family Violence & Family Law Brief

Addressing Poverty
& Family Violence in
Family Law Proceedings

Issue #17 | *September 2022*



Muriel McQueen
Fergusson Centre for
Family Violence Research



ALLIANCE OF CANADIAN
RESEARCH CENTRES
ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

This Brief was prepared by the Atlantic Research Team of the *Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence in Family Law Proceedings* project and the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (MMFC) on behalf of the Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on Gender-Based Violence.

The MMFC is based at the Faculty of Arts, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq, and Peskotomuhkati peoples.

Suggested Citation

O'Regan, Karla & Brennan, Kelly. (2022). Addressing Poverty & Family Violence in Family Law Proceedings. *Family Violence & Family Law Brief (17)*. Fredericton, NB: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. ISBN: 978-1-7778342-2-7

Design

Natalia Hidalgo, Communications Coordinator at the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children

Translation

Text in Context Translation

www.textincontext.ca

Share Your Feedback on This Brief

Use the following link to share feedback about this Brief or suggestions about future resources:

https://uwo.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2lfCtXWjCrFdHrE.

Join us

Email us if you would like to receive information about future resources and webinars:

crevawc@uwo.ca for national activities and FVRC@unb.ca for activities in the Atlantic region.

Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Public Health Agency of Canada.



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada



Muriel McQueen
Fergusson Centre for
Family Violence Research

ABOUT THIS PROJECT:

Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence

Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence is a project aimed at addressing the many challenges that survivors of family violence experience within the family court system. Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the project has established five regional Communities of Practice (CoP) through the [Alliance of Canadian Research Centres on Gender-based Violence](#). The **Atlantic Family Violence & Family Law Community of Practice** is coordinated in collaboration with the [Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research](#). The Atlantic CoP members come from a wide variety of sectors, including family law lawyers, mediators, criminal law practitioners, social workers, family violence and transition house counsellors, addictions and mental health nursing, and several community organizations, including the Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS NB), and the Elizabeth Fry Society. To learn more about the Atlantic CoP and its activities, visit: <https://fvfl-vfdf.ca/>

“In this Brief”

<i>Defining Poverty in Canada</i>	4
Measures of Poverty	5
Disproportionate Poverty	6
Poverty within a Pandemic	6
<i>The Intersections of Poverty & Family Violence</i>	7
Bad conditions made worse	7
Signs of Financial Abuse	8
<i>Poverty & Access to Justice Barriers for Family Violence Survivors in Family Court</i>	9
Unrepresented Litigants	9
Ontario Family Law Rights of Appearance Program	9
Delayed Proceedings	10
Financial Resources	11
Rural Communities	12
<i>Helping Family Violence Survivors Living in Poverty</i>	13
Exclusive Possession of the Home Order	13
First Nations Exclusive Occupation Order	13
Relocation without Notice	14
Early Lease Termination	14
Emergency Intervention & Civil Protection Orders	15
New Brunswick <i>Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act</i>	15
Webinar Highlights	16
Contact Us	17
References	18

Defining Poverty in Canada

The 2021 report of Canada’s National Advisory Council on Poverty (NACP) showed that 1 in 10 Canadians live in poverty (NACP, 2021). This figure is based on Canada’s **official poverty line**, a measure established in 2018 with the adoption of the *Poverty Reduction Act*. It considers “the costs of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living” (Employment & Social Development Canada, 2018). This market-based (or “market basket”) measure (MBM) of poverty considers several goods and services, including the price of clothing and footwear, personal care items, transportation, nutritious food, shelter, telephone services, school supplies, reading, and recreation expenses. Because the cost of these items varies across Canada, so, too, does the poverty line. The NACP’s first report, for instance, profiled Cold Lake, Alberta as having the country’s highest poverty line, set at \$40,777 for a family of four, and Blainville, Québec as having the lowest, set at \$32,871 for a family of four (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018, p. 69). These amounts are nearly cut in half for an individual living alone, where the poverty line varies from \$20,289 (in Cold Lake, AB) to \$16,436 (in Blainville, PQ) (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018, p. 70).

Critics of the MBM point to its outdated assessment of the needs of modern life (such as the cost of internet connectivity) and the inequity of calculating expenses for single individuals as merely a percentage (50%) of those for a family. As one expert report on the MBM’s initial legislation put it: “It is not possible for a single individual to consume half a car or rent a 1.25 bedroom apartment at half the cost of the average 2 or 3 bedroom apartment” (Wolfson, 2018, p. 4). The MBM is also not easily applied to the circumstances of families living in northern communities or in configurations that differ from the MBM’s “family of one male and one female adult aged 25-49 and two children – a girl aged 9 and a boy aged 13” (Djidel et al., 2019, p. 4).

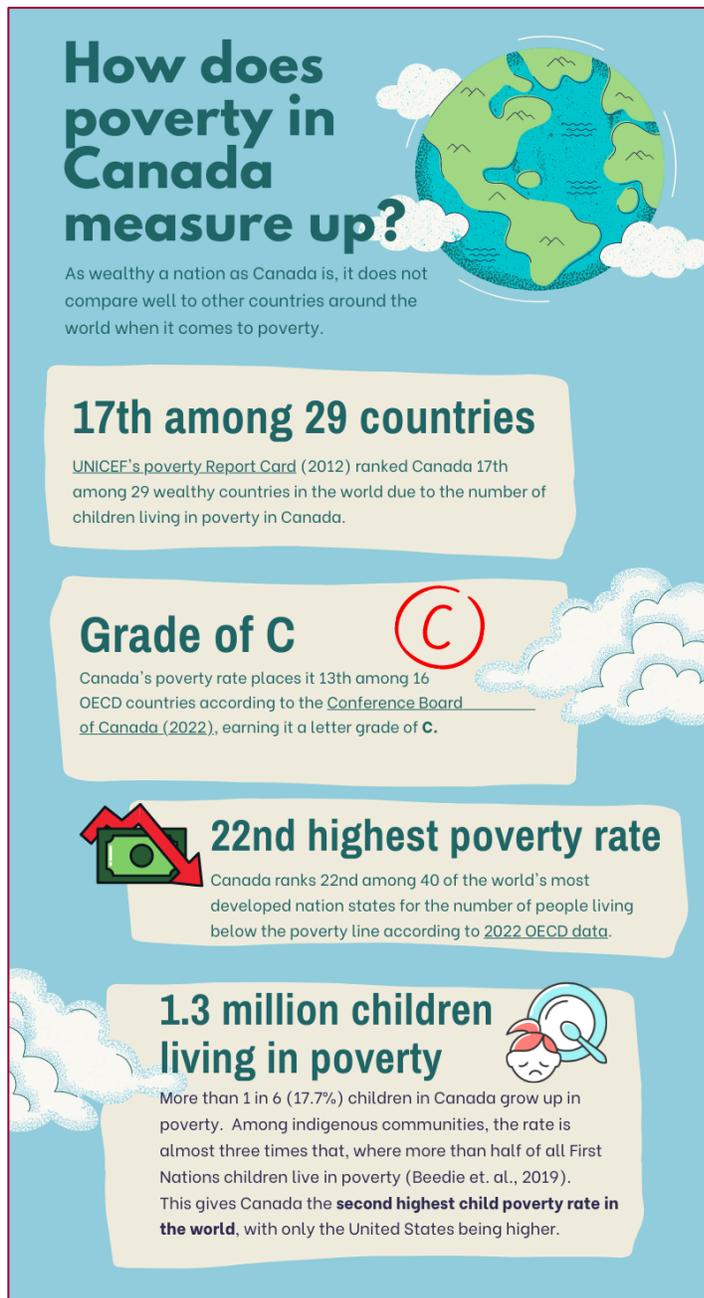
What's in Canada's Market Basket Measure of Poverty?

5 TYPES OF BASIC NEEDS

- 1 FOOD**
The cost of a nutritious diet as defined in Health Canada's [Nutritious Food Basket](#).
- 2 CLOTHING**
The clothing & footwear required by a family of two adults & two children.
- 3 SHELTER**
The average cost of 2 or 3 bedroom rental units including heat, water, electricity and appliances.
- 4 TRANSIT**
Transportation costs based on using public transit (where available) or the cost of a modest vehicle (where public transit is N/A).
- 5 HOUSEHOLD NEEDS**
Personal care & home products, furniture, phone service, reading, recreation, & school supplies.

Measures of Poverty

The MBM is an *absolute* measure of poverty because it determines how much disposable household income is needed to purchase a specific basket of goods and services. Many anti-poverty advocates and scholars maintain that *relative* measures of poverty provide a far more accurate picture of life below the poverty line. The **Low Income Measure (LIM)** defines poverty in relation to the national median household income. Where a family's or person's income is *less than half* of this national median amount, they are considered "low income." The LIM provides a useful measure for international comparisons of poverty and a lens through which issues of social exclusion are more visible. **Deep poverty** refers to income at 50% or less of the LIM.



How does poverty in Canada measure up?

As wealthy a nation as Canada is, it does not compare well to other countries around the world when it comes to poverty.

17th among 29 countries
UNICEF's [poverty Report Card](#) (2012) ranked Canada 17th among 29 wealthy countries in the world due to the number of children living in poverty in Canada.

Grade of C 
Canada's poverty rate places it 13th among 16 OECD countries according to the [Conference Board of Canada](#) (2022), earning it a letter grade of **C**.

 **22nd highest poverty rate**
Canada ranks 22nd among 40 of the world's most developed nation states for the number of people living below the poverty line according to [2022 OECD data](#).

1.3 million children living in poverty 
More than 1 in 6 (17.7%) children in Canada grow up in poverty. Among indigenous communities, the rate is almost three times that, where more than half of all First Nations children live in poverty (Beedie et. al., 2019). This gives Canada the **second highest child poverty rate in the world**, with only the United States being higher.

The **Low Income Cut-off (LICO)** is another relative measure of poverty. It is based on an income threshold below which a family is spending 20% *more* of its income on basic necessities than the average family (Statistics Canada, 2016). Canada's LICO threshold was defined using 1992 expenditure data and examines LICOs before and after tax for 7 different family sizes in 5 different communities. This provides a picture of how the cost of living is experienced differently across the country (Homeless Hub, 2022). For example, in 2020, the LICO for a single individual living in a rural area was \$14,431. This rises to \$22,060 if the person lives in a community with a population of 500,000 or more (Statistics Canada, 2022). Recent data shows more than 15% of Canadians live below the LICO. The LICO is sometimes referred to as a "basic needs" measure of poverty because of its focus on food, shelter, and clothing. Anti-poverty advocates argue, however, that full participation in socio-economic life requires more than basic necessities. Internet connectivity and access to arts and cultural events, adequate transportation, health care, education, job opportunities, and the ability to afford recreation and leisure activities are essential to human life (World Vision, 2021).

Disproportionate Poverty

National data shows a downward trend in the number of Canadians living in poverty. In 2020, 6.4% of Canadians were found to be living below the official poverty line, down from 10.3% in 2019 (Statistics Canada, 2022). While this is promising, the National Advisory Council on Poverty (NACP) cautioned that “the overall number conceals some of the deep inequities that exist for low-income Canadians,” specifically “Black Canadians, racialized Canadians, immigrants, refugees, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQ individuals [who] all face higher rates of poverty” (NACP, 2021). These groups also face additional systemic challenges to overcoming poverty, including racism and discrimination and have higher representation rates in the child welfare and criminal justice systems (NACP, 2021, Table 4.1). Importantly, territories and reserves (where more than half of all status First Nations children live in poverty) are excluded from the calculation of Canada’s official poverty line – something the federal government has been called on to change by anti-poverty advocates (Beedie et al., 2019).

Poverty within a Pandemic

Over 3.7 million Canadians were living in poverty before the COVID-19 pandemic (NACP, 2021). Prior to this, Canada’s poverty rate was on the decline (Zhang, 2021). The number of Canadians living in poverty has likely increased since the start of the pandemic because of several factors, including decreased job security that flowed from public health closures: “Between March 2020 and April 2021, business closures disproportionately affected low-wage workers and women, particularly young women” (NACP, 2021, p. 55). The pandemic has also affected the housing market, resulting in a crisis in affordable housing in Canada and beyond. “[E]conomic fears were widespread” during the pandemic, “with sweeping stay-at-home restrictions, extensive lay-offs and furloughs, retail business failures, and most importantly, surging deaths due to the virus across the globe” (Balasubramanian, 2021). People opted to keep cash on hand, but as vaccination rates and “reopening” measures increased, so, too, did consumer spending, boosting the homebuying market. The resulting housing crisis increases consumer debt, poor credit, and homelessness as millions of Canadians struggle to find housing that costs 30% or less of their income (Wood, 2021).

Alongside its new, unique challenges, COVID-19 worsened conditions that were already bad for those living in poverty. As one participant in the NACP’s 2021 report on poverty characterized it: **“COVID-19 shifted inequality into overdrive”** (NACP, 2021, p. 54). An even darker side of the pandemic has been its impact on family violence, prompting the United Nations to describe rates of violence against women and girls during COVID-19 as a “shadow pandemic” (UN, n.d.). Fueled by financial stress, forced isolation, job loss, shelter closures and decreased supports, violence in the home is on the rise (NACP, 2021, p. 51).

We are hearing some pretty disturbing stories about what kids have gone through in this lockdown. How moms and dads who are survivors have really struggled to protect their kids, and some of the safety plans they had in place prior were about keeping the kids away. You know, staying with grandma, having day-care, safety at school, safety plans with teachers or clergy, and “the village” as the safety plan, just evaporated overnight (as cited in Risser et al, 2022 at p. 3).

The Intersections of Poverty and Family Violence

The connection between poverty and family violence is not a newly observed phenomenon. Child welfare and protection laws emerged in the United States amidst the heightened levels of child abuse, neglect, and abandonment that followed the country's Great Depression (Hattery & Smith, 2012). Examinations of data from the more recent "Great Recession" had similar results, finding rapid increases in unemployment rates correlated with increases in reported violence and abusive behaviour by men (Schneider et al., 2016). The study also included controlling behaviours and the use of isolation tactics in its measurement of reported abuse, such as preventing the victim from going to work or school and withholding access to money (Schneider et al., 2016, p. 478). These acts of financial coercion and control prevent many survivors from leaving abusive homes, while plunging those that do into a cycle of poverty.

"[P]overty is often a pipeline into violence, family violence, the criminal justice system and homelessness. Participants spoke of a cycle of poverty where the monitoring of people living in poverty, enhanced scrutiny, stress, violence, criminalization, institutionalization, and an inability to gain employment lead to more poverty. Often this poverty is intergenerational. (NACP, 2021, p. 78).

The COVID-19 pandemic provides even stronger evidence of the exacerbating effect of poverty on family violence risk factors. The pandemic's lockdown measures caused financial stress that has been described by experts as "unprecedented" and was predicted to "disproportionately impact victims and survivors of domestic violence in the long-term" (Piquero et al., 2021, p. 7). Indeed,

the social conditions created by COVID-19 and the heightened vulnerabilities experienced by populations who are already facing systemic disadvantages has been cited as a "perfect storm" for family violence (Usher et al., 2020). Several risk factors have been heightened by "forcing vulnerable family members to spend longer periods of time in close confines and under circumstances of greater social and economic stress" notes one study, which when "combined with less access to outside help, reprieve, and normative controls – [is] likely to instigate or worsen... family violence" (Spiranovic et al., 2021, p. 6). Some experts have also cautioned that lockdown measures and other social restrictions resulting from the pandemic "provide not only opportunity, but possibly a perceived degree of legitimacy to perpetrators exercising greater control through enforcing social isolation, instilling fear of contagion, and increasing surveillance" (Spiranovic et al., 2021, p. 6).

Bad conditions made worse

The pandemic worsened several other social conditions. It heightened global food insecurity, decreased employer-sponsored insurance coverage for children, and created a shortage of childcare options, leading to a rapid rise in unemployment among caregivers (who remain predominantly women). These changes left far more people at home, where domestic violence victims were exposed to more frequent and severe instances of abuse.

Sadly, poverty is not a new problem for family violence survivors, nor one unique to the pandemic. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, 1 in 4 homeless women cited intimate partner violence (IPV) as a primary reason they experienced homelessness (Gilroy et al., 2016). This aligns with family violence research which has found financial insecurity to be an abusive tactic of control used by

IPV perpetrators to “intentionally destroy their victim’s economic stability by stealing their money, forcing them to leave their jobs or school, destroying their credit, or damaging their rental unit to the point they are evicted” (Gilroy et al., 2016, p. 87). Survivors are therefore forced to return to abusive homes or face homelessness.

Economic instability has also been found to trigger fears of increased state surveillance or child welfare intervention for survivors struggling to live independently away from an abusive home. This is a particular concern during child custody proceedings and poses a serious barrier for survivors living in Indigenous communities, where leaving the abuser can mean leaving the community. This has serious financial implications for survivors whose home expenses are subsidized by band councils. Leaving an abusive relationship may not be an affordable option when it also means having to relocate off-reserve. The same fears have been cited by immigrant and refugee IPV survivors who are “more likely to be isolated because of their role within the family, the cultural understanding of that role, the distance and access to family supports, and language barriers” (Holtmann and Rickards, 2018, p. 295).

“[Parents] could be working at the fast-food restaurants, grocery stores, bus drivers. If they call off – they can't pay rent. If they don't have childcare – we're going to have neglect concerns that kids are being left home alone. If they call off of work – they're gonna get fired and they're not going to be able to make their rent (as cited in Risser et al, 2022 at p. 5).

The intersections of poverty and family violence are not only evident in low-income families but also in affluent ones as well. Family violence, including financial abuse, is highly under-reported and under studied among the wealthy because people are not “accustomed to associating risk or helplessness with privileged populations” (Doizois & GermAnn, 2017, p. 2). In many cases, the abuser has full control of the family’s financial resources and therefore survivors of financial abuse within affluent communities can suffer the same dilemma as that faced by survivors from low-income families of risking financial insecurity and homelessness in order to leave an abusive home (Doizois & GermAnn, 2017). This shows how widespread the risk factors associated with poverty and family violence are. Survivors across the financial spectrum face some of the same barriers to escaping violence and to accessing support.

Signs of Financial Abuse

Survivor may:

- Have restricted or no access to bank accounts
- Be provided a highly monitored “allowance”
- Be punished for overspending
- Have poor credit rating and/or maxed credit cards due to abuser’s spending.

Abuser may:

- Have sole access to mortgage accounts
- Act to create financial dependency (e.g. sabotage spouse’s career)
- Use financial resources to coerce children in custody/access negotiations

(Doizois & GermAnn, 2017, p. 11).

Poverty & Access to Justice Barriers for Family Violence Survivors in Family Court

Poverty increases several family violence risk factors while obstructing exit routes and pathways to healing. One of the ways this is most visible is when survivors of family violence are navigating the family court system without adequate representation or support. Research has identified several access to justice barriers that pose specific challenges for family violence survivors, such as legal costs, delays, the complexity of the proceedings, and difficulties obtaining representation, needs-specific services, and access to legal information. Survivors have also reported pressures to settle family disputes and struggles to see agreements and orders enforced (Koshan et al., 2020). Research has also found that these obstacles deter many survivors from seeking legal action in the first instance, and those who do, face an uphill battle, particularly if self-represented where advocacy “in courts, tribunals, and ADR processes is particularly onerous for victims of domestic violence” (Koshan et al., 2020, p. 4). While some supports exist, they may not be accessible to those who need them the most.

Unrepresented Litigants

Parties who appear in court without legal counsel are often referred to as “self-represented,” suggesting a choice was made to refuse legal representation. Yet, for many family violence survivors, self-representation was the only available option (Boyd & Bertrand, 2016). This has given rise to the term “unrepresented litigants” to describe those with no choice but to self-represent.

Ontario Family Law Rights of Appearance Program

In January 2022, the Law Society of Ontario (LSO), the Superior Court of Justice, and the Ontario Court of Justice launched the Family Law Rights of Appearance Pilot Project (the “Pilot Project”) to improve access to justice for family legal services. The Pilot Project allows lawyer licensing candidates, like articling students, to appear on certain family law matters without advanced permission from the courts (Jerome, 2022). The licensing candidates can now appear on a wide range of matters, such as: first appearances, case conferences, appearances to settle disputed orders, contested adjournments, and several motions (LSO, n.d.). The Pilot Program is part of the Law Society’s Family Law Action Plan, which includes a proposed model for implementing a **Family Legal Services Provider (FLSP)** license which would allow trained paralegals to provide legal services in family law. Read more about these initiatives in the [FLSP 2020 Consultation Paper](#).

These programs aim to make legal counsel more affordable, thus decreasing the number of self-represented parties. Licensing candidates, while not free, are available at a lower hourly rate than licensed counsel and these reduced rates can have a substantial impact on the overall legal bill clients face. If successful, this pilot program could become permanent in Ontario, and guide approaches in other jurisdictions.

Recent data suggests that more than half of the appearances in family court are made without legal representation – a figure that rises to 80% in large, urban centres, such as Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary (Macfarlane, 2021). The percentage of cases with unrepresented litigants in family law proceedings that also involve allegations of family violence is equally as high. A 2020 report from Australia on unrepresented parties in family court proceedings found allegations of family violence in more than 80% of all cases (Wangmann et al., 2020). Unrepresented litigants pose a particular concern in cases of family violence, where safety planning can be crucially affected by power imbalances and continuing trauma. The risk of coercion for unrepresented survivors is heightened, resulting in settlements or negotiation positions that can be adverse to survivors’ interests or do not adequately reflect their views (Birnbaum et al., 2012). A majority of Ontario lawyers surveyed in 2018 believed that domestic violence victims do not get adequate representation when the matter is settled (Birnbaum et al., 2018).

These litigants “are impacted by their self-representation, as well as histories of family violence, in numerous ways. [T]hey are often unaware of the heavy emphasis on paperwork and negotiation in family law cases, and they are unprepared to complete paperwork, or negotiate, in ways that effectively support their case. Intersecting with the lack of knowledge is the impact of family violence: ability to complete paperwork and negotiate is also affected by experiences of violence and resulting trauma, and perceptions of safety” (Wangmann et al., 2020).

Unrepresented litigants themselves report struggling to make their way through the legal system and obtain just outcomes. They are unfamiliar with relevant legislation, the rules of the court, the laws of evidence and procedure, and what is a realistic outcome to seek (Boyd & Bertrand, 2016). Distinguishing between “legal advice” and “legal information” is a common difficulty for unrepresented litigants who report feeling overwhelmingly hopeless, like the odds are stacked against them, and they experience extreme stress while working through the court system (Wangmann et al.,

2020; Macfarlane & Sullivan, 2021). Providing plain language documents that explain complex legal concepts and steps in family law proceedings would be beneficial to helping unrepresented litigants increase their likelihood for success in the legal process (Boyd & Bertrand, 2016).

Delayed Proceedings

Parties working with unrepresented litigants often find their roles stretched to include assistance in navigating the court system. In matters involving the Office of the Children’s Lawyer (OCL), for example, OCL representatives report that they are leaned on as a mediator between unrepresented parents when their role is really to represent the child in the case (Birnbaum et al., 2018). It is therefore not surprising that the majority of Ontario lawyers surveyed in the study said that OCL cases take about 66% more time to resolve when one party is unrepresented (Birnbaum et al., 2018). Judges also step up to explain the process, share available resources, necessary forms, determine the rights and claims of unrepresented parties, and address administrative matters, such as weaning out irrelevant documents or encouraging the parties to cooperate on evidence production (Birnbaum et al., 2018).

All of these measures increase the length of the proceedings, as does the low rate of settlement in family violence cases. A majority of lawyers surveyed (in Ontario) believed that IPV victims do not get adequate representation when the matter is settled, and therefore settlement is less likely when the parties are unrepresented (Boyd & Bertrand, 2016). This draws out the litigation process for survivors, leaving them retraumatized, under immense stress, and vulnerable to their abusive partner's ongoing coercive control.

"I had to wait over a year after he assaulted me to get to court – enough time for my ex to bully and scare me back into silence"
(as cited in Campagnola, 2021, p. 16).

Financial Resources

A national study conducted in 2013 on unrepresented litigants in three Canadian provinces (AB, BC, and ON) found that 53% of participants had begun proceedings represented by counsel but had exhausted their financial resources (or Legal Aid period) and subsequently lost their lawyers (Macfarlane, 2013). This figure rose to over 68% with data from 2019-2021 (Macfarlane & Sullivan, 2021). These findings are consistent with research studies in several countries around the world (Canada, United States, Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand) that all identify a lack of financial resources as the leading cause of unrepresented litigants before the courts (Macfarlane, 2021).

Legal Aid is a collaboratively-funded project between the federal and provincial governments to provide legal services to those who cannot afford them. In all Atlantic jurisdictions, parties in family court proceedings can make use of duty counsel – a lawyer hired to work out of the provincial courthouse and offer information and assistance to unrepresented parties. Recent data collected by the Department of Justice reveals that legal aid services are in high demand for family court proceedings, with 43% of all applications for legal aid in 2019-2020 (in a civil matter) related to family law (43%), followed by child protection (23%). The cost of legal aid delivery services is also on the rise, with more than \$975 million dollars in federal and provincial funding having been spent on legal aid programs in 2020 (Department of Justice Canada, 2021).

"I went to two service providers but you're still graded according to what you make – and I didn't have access to the money. There was no free help"
(as cited in Dozois & GermAnn, 2017, p. 21).

The key qualification for receiving legal aid services is financial eligibility and not every applicant will qualify. In several jurisdictions, income earned by a spouse or common law partner who resides in the household is included in the eligibility calculation

(Giesbrecht et al., 2022). For IPV survivors who have not yet left the abusive relationship, the inclusion of the abuser's income can result in the survivor's ineligibility for legal aid services. Even where this calculation excludes spousal income, survivors subject to financial abuse may not have access to the funds that appear "on paper."

Although family violence victimizes people from all socio-economic backgrounds, survivors from affluent homes are often deemed ineligible for legal aid services and are provided with little to no opportunity to learn about income-assistance programs. In a 2017 study of IPV survivors from high-income families and neighbourhoods in Calgary, several participants reported that they had never even considered seeking out legal aid services because of their perceived socio-economic

status. Among those that did, several participants reported experiencing discrimination and a lack of empathy from service providers (Dozois & GermAnn, 2017).

“[T]he fact is, upscale abused wives are treated differently from other women. Their complaints may be taken lightly – after all, these women do have roofs over their heads and usually pretty nice ones at that. It is not uncommon for a policeman encountering an expensively dressed woman in her well-appointed home to assume that she has the resources to take care of herself – even though her husband may control all of the credit cards and bank accounts and may have brainwashed her into believing that she and their children would not survive in the world without him” (Dozois & GermAnn, 2017, p. 22).

Rural Communities

Research has found rates of both poverty and family violence to be higher in rural communities than in urban neighbourhoods. Data from Statistics Canada in 2019 shows the rate of family violence to be two times higher among rural populations, while other studies have found the rural IPV rate to be as much as *three times* the rate reported in urban centers (Conroy, 2021; Youngson et al., 2021). Poverty is especially persistent in rural regions and three of the four Atlantic provinces have a higher rate of poverty (using the MBM) than the national average (Saulnier & Plante, 2021). Research has also found rural towns and villages to be home to a higher percentage of older adults and young children – two populations at heightened risk of family violence. Sadly, this is also supported by Statistics Canada’s recent data, where the rate of family violence against children and youth increased in every province and territory (except PEI) in 2019 (Conroy, 2021). Two of the three highest increases in the country were reported in the Atlantic Canadian region, with Newfoundland and Labrador having the country’s highest increase (+46%) and New Brunswick (+11%) reporting the third highest increase in rates of family violence against children and youth (Conroy, 2021).

Poverty creates several challenges unique to family violence survivors living in rural communities. In a study of older women experiencing IPV in rural regions of the Maritime provinces, survivors reported several problems

“Distance is an issue. Not just for me to come here [to the First Nation] but also for victims to go to the courthouse. It’s a little over a hundred, well, it’s two-hundred and sixty-two kilometers return time” (Legal Aid service provider, as cited in Wisniewski et al., 2019, p. 127).

accessing legal information and services, as well as difficulties with transportation and privacy (Weeks et al., 2016). While the close-knit nature of rural communities can sometimes foster informal support systems for survivors, it can also deter survivors from seeking more formal help in a town where “everyone knows everyone.” As one survivor describes it: “I think a lot of ladies probably have that fear that if they go to one [emergency shelter] that is in their community, just how safe would they be there?” (Weeks et al., 2016, p. 51). For many others, the isolation of rural living makes it harder to reach out for help and to recognize the need to do so.

“It’s sort of like you were cut off from the world. I mean, there I am. I can’t drive. I have no finances. I feel like shit. I don’t think I’m worth anything anyway... It was more that I couldn’t reach out to them than it was them not being there for me” (as cited in Weeks et al., 2016, p. 54).

Helping family violence survivors living in poverty

There are several legal routes that can provide assistance to family violence survivors experiencing poverty and/or financial abuse.

Exclusive Possession of the Home Order

An exclusive possession of the home order provides the applicant with the right to stay in the family home, while ordering others living there to leave. This order can be issued under several different pieces of family law legislation. In the Atlantic region, the *Family Law Acts* of New Brunswick (s 21(2)(d)), Prince Edward Island (s 25(1)), and Newfoundland & Labrador (s 15(1)) each provide for an exclusive possession of the home order. In Nova Scotia, it can be ordered under the *Matrimonial Property Act* (s 11(1)). in s. [21\(2\)\(d\)](#), as does s. 25(1) of NB's *Family Law Act* ([SNB 2020, c 23, s 21\(2\)\(d\)](#)). Exclusive possession orders can be a powerful tool for addressing housing and safety concerns that too often obstruct avenues of escape and support for IPV survivors. Providing secure housing for IPV survivors and their children is also a key component to helping them rebuild their lives (Van Berkum & Oudshoorn, 2015). Housing security means survivors and their children do not need to resort to shelters or couch surfing to leave an abusive situation.

The criteria used by the courts to assess exclusive possession applications vary by jurisdiction, however, key considerations include the best interests of the child and protection from family violence (Neilson, 2020). Conducting a safety evaluation of the home is an essential first step. Remaining in the home can sometimes *increase* the risk of violence to survivors and their children when the home itself is not safe (e.g. new locks) and there is inadequate community support, including police and protection services (Nielsen, 2020). This can pose particular challenges for survivors living in rural communities where exclusive possession orders may do little but provoke the perpetrator to further violence.

Another important consideration of exclusive possession orders is their application to Indigenous people living on reserve lands. Courts have limited authority to grant orders with respect to reserve lands and exclusive possession orders are not addressed in the *Indian Act*. This legislative gap was addressed by the federal government in 2013 with the passing of the *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interest or Rights Act* (FHRMIRA).

First Nations Exclusive Occupation Orders

The FHRMIRA was enacted in an effort to provide people living on reserves with the same family law protections afforded to other Canadians. Designed to operate as a set of provisional rules, the FHRMIRA applies only until a First Nation establishes its own laws related to the use, occupation and possession of family homes on its reserves, and the division of property on reserve land (Koshan et al., 2021). As of February 2022, seventeen First Nations have enacted their own laws under FHRMIRA and another forty First Nations have established independent family and marital property laws (Government of Canada, 2022). If the First Nation does not have existing matrimonial real property laws, the FHRMIRA provides the ability to seek an exclusive occupation order for on-reserve family homes that is available for both spouses and common law partners (FHRMIRA, SC 2013, c 20 s 4(a)).

Relocation without Notice

When one parent in a divorce proceeding wants to move to a different jurisdiction, the *Divorce Act* requires that the other parent be provided with notice of the relocation, including the moving date and the address of the new place of residence. For those fleeing situations of violence, having to notify the abuser of the survivor's new location frustrates the purpose of relocating and can expose the family to further risk of violence (Wood, 2015; Neilson, 2019). Bill C-78 resulted in amendments to the *Divorce Act* which provide a necessary exemption to the general notice rules surrounding relocation orders for IPV survivors and their children. The *Divorce Act* also provides the same exception to notice requirements for changes in a place of residence where there is a risk of family violence (s 16.8(3)). Both of these orders can also be made *ex parte*, i.e. without the presence of the other party.

These amendments were upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada in its first examination of a relocation order under the revised *Divorce Act* in March, 2022. Upholding the trial judge's decision to allow a woman to move with her two young children 10 hours away from the father's residence, the Supreme Court remarked on the critical role that findings of family violence must play in the best interests of the child analysis. Observing how difficult IPV allegations can be to prove, the court noted that "proof of *even one incident* may raise safety concerns for the victim or may overlap with and enhance the significance of other factors, such as the need for limited contact or support" (*Barendregt v Grebliunas*, 2022 SCC 22, para. 144). Importantly, the court also took note of the role that these safety concerns can play in relocation, ruling that "family violence may be a reason for the relocation and given the grave implications that any form of family violence poses for the positive development of children, this is an important factor in mobility cases" (para. 147).

Read more about this Supreme Court case in the Family Violence & Family Law Alliance Case Bulletin on the [project website](#).

Early lease termination for IPV survivors

Financial obligations arising from rental accommodation have been cited as "the biggest legal problem that victims of domestic violence appear to face in obtaining and maintaining" housing (Gander & Johansson, 2014, p. 4). The costs associated with moving and setting up a new home, including securing first and last month's rent and/or security deposit funds, can be difficult for survivors of financial abuse and other forms of family violence to find, particularly those who do not have access to bank accounts or credit cards. The financial penalties or threats of legal action for breaking a lease early are often enough to deter a survivor from leaving an abusive home, and landlords more often pursue the survivor (rather than the abuser) for overdue rent and damages, detrimentally affecting the survivor's tenancy record, credit rating, and future accommodation options (Homeless Hub, 2022). Changes to residential tenancy legislation in several provinces are aimed at addressing these issues, including waiving (or shortening) notice periods for early termination and removing financial penalties for tenants leaving family violence. Under most of the amended legislation, tenants need only supply a notice of termination and supporting documentation that the tenant is experiencing family violence. Several documents can satisfy this requirement. The amended *Residential Tenancies Acts* of New Brunswick, for example, provides for several forms of IPV documentation, including: an emergency intervention order, a court order

(e.g. peace bond under s 810(3) of *Criminal Code*) or an affidavit from a peace officer, victim services or outreach worker, a member of a regulated health profession, a tenant's (or their child's) educator, or a First Nations Chief or Elder (*General Regulation*, NB Reg 82-218).

Emergency Intervention & Civil Protection Orders

A number of protection orders are available under provincial family law statutes. To protect the IPV survivor's safety, the court can order the abuser to keep a certain physical distance from the survivor, to stop contacting or communicating with the survivor, to refrain from visiting certain places, to cease harassing, threatening, or violent behaviour, or to exit the marital home. Research on civil protection orders does suggest that they can reduce violence towards family violence survivors who have come forward; however, because they cannot guarantee that the abuser will abide by the order, civil protection orders must be accompanied by other safety measures to limit the abuser's ability to breach the order and/or increase violence in retaliation (Benitez et al., 2010). Collaboration with and support from local law enforcement, landlords and building security, and social services agencies is critical to ensuring the safety of survivors.

Distinct from civil protection orders are emergency intervention orders, issued under provincial domestic violence legislation. While protection orders last for as long as the court specifies, emergency intervention orders are for 90 days (or less) and offer interim solutions that can be invaluable to IPV survivors without financial resources as they do not require legal assistance or long, complex application processes. Survivors do not need to go to a judge to seek emergency orders, for example. Instead, survivors can request them from several points of contact, including: police officers, victim services or transition house workers, second stage housing staff, domestic violence outreach workers, and government social workers. Within hours of an application for an emergency order being made, a telephone hearing with an adjudicative officer is held *without notice* to the respondent. The adjudicative officer has a 24-hour period to consider and grant (or deny) the application. If granted, the order takes effect immediately, and will be served to the respondent by a police officer or deputy sheriff. Most jurisdictions allow the order to be renewed once, giving it effect for a maximum of 180 days.

New Brunswick *Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act* (2018)

New Brunswick enacted the [*Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act*](#) in 2018 to provide short-term remedies to IPV survivors “and increase their safety while they seek more permanent solutions” (Government of New Brunswick, 2018). It provides for emergency intervention orders which can prevent an abuser from communicating with a survivor or going near specified places (e.g. family home or survivor's workplace). These orders can also provide survivors with exclusive occupation of a residence and child custody, on a temporary basis. NB's legislation allows for several other conditions, including emergency orders that will:

- direct a peace officer to accompany a survivor to a residence and supervise the removal of personal belongings;
- direct a peace officer to remove the abuser from a residence and/or seize any weapons
- restrain the abuser from terminating utilities for the residence and from taking or damaging any property;
- prohibit the publication of a survivor's name, address or identifying information

Webinar Highlights

The Nexus of Poverty & Domestic Violence in Family Law (March 16, 2022)

Speakers: Madame Justice Boudreau-Dumas, Chantal Landry & Lindsay Manuel

More than 3.7 million Canadians live in poverty.

More than 100 000 people in New Brunswick live in poverty.

Poverty is NOT a choice. Poverty is a result of unfortunate circumstances. Poverty is a result of trauma.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children.

As Poverty rate along with food and economic insecurity rise, so too does incidents of domestic violence and IPV.



Barriers Created by Poverty

Those living in poverty face barriers day after day that prevent them from leaving poverty. No **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** leaves IPV survivors and their children with no reasonable alternatives to car living or couch surfing if they were to leave the abuser. Seeking **EMPLOYMENT** has costs before employment that can be insurmountable for people living in poverty: childcare during interviews, transportation to interviews, interview clothes, childcare during the workday. Persons with disabilities, indigenous people, minorities all face **DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING** preventing them from being properly considered for employment opportunities. Unchecked bias associates **MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION ISSUES** as *causing* poverty or homelessness when in reality, mental health and addiction issues are *coping* mechanisms with the trauma survivors were subjected to that led them to experiencing poverty and/or homelessness.



Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Act (IPVIA)

The IPVIA provides legal routes quickly available for those without easy access to counsel. An IPV survivor, can apply for an order seeking temporary exclusive occupation of the family residence, temporary exclusive possession and use of the property, prohibiting the abuser from shutting off basic utilities, prohibiting the destruction of property, seizure of weapons, removing the abuser from the property, and provisions requiring the abuser to stop further acts of IPV. The applicant can obtain the emergency *ex parte* order within 24 hours. The applicant applies by telephone by contacting a regulated service provider (i.e. police officers, victim services programs, transition homes, etc.) to facilitate the application for them. There is **NO FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY** requirements. The order can be in place for up to 180 days, in which time the IPV survivor can seek assistance through Legal Aid NB, if eligible, for a more permanent solution.

SUPPORTS FOR IPV SURVIVORS



Domestic Violence Outreach Programs improves women's access to community services and service providers, provides help and information to women in need as well as increases DV awareness.



Second Stage Housing offers safe and affordable housing for IPV survivors and their children.



Transition Houses provide shelter for up to 30 days, crisis intervention and referral services for IPV survivors and their children.



Social Assistance, Affordable Housing, and Household Setup offer financial assistance towards basic needs.



Support Services for Victims of Abuse provides an up to date list of crisis line number, free shelters and transition homes, outreach services, and second stage housing.



Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick is a great first step to learning about resources, and provides information on safety planning, emergency intervention orders, as well as useful services.

Watch the full Webinar at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWEO5bJ3Ngw&t>

Contact Us

To learn more about the *Supporting the Health and Well-being of Survivors of Family Violence in Family Law Proceedings* project, go to <https://alliancevaw.ca> or our partnered research centres:

Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research in partnership with St. Thomas University



Muriel McQueen
Fergusson Centre for
Family Violence Research

<https://unb.ca/mmfc/>

Dr. Catherine Holtmann ([website](#))

Dr. Karla O'Regan ([website](#))

The Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women



Western

Centre for Research & Education on
Violence Against Women & Children

<https://learningtoendabuse.ca>

Dr. Peter Jaffe ([website](#))

Dr. Katreena Scott ([website](#))

The Freda Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children



The FREDA Centre
for Research on Violence
Against Women and Children

<https://www.fredacentre.com>

Dr. Margaret Jackson ([website](#))

Recherches Appliquées et Interdisciplinaires sur les Violences intimes, familiales et structurelles in partnership with Université du Québec à Montréal



UQÀM

<https://www.raiv.ulaval.ca/en>

Dr. Geneviève Lessard

Dr. Dominique Bernier ([website](#))

RESOLVE: Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse



<https://umanitoba.ca/resolve>

Dr. Kendra Nixon ([website](#))

References

Balasubramanian, S. (2021, April 27). The Covid-19 pandemic has fueled a crisis in the housing market. *Forbes Magazine (Online)*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/saibala/2021/04/27/the-covid-19-pandemic-has-fueled-a-crisis-in-the-housing-market/?sh=66e211cd5928>

Barendregt v Grebliunas, 2022 SCC 22.

Beedie, N., MacDonald, D. & Wilson, D. (2019, July 8). *Towards Justice: Tackling Indigenous Child Poverty in Canada*. Upstream and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. <https://policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/towards-justice>

Benitez, C.T., McNeil, D.E., & Binder, R.L. (2010). Do Protection Orders Protect? *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 38(3), 376-385.

Birnbaum, R., Bala, N., & Bertrand, L.D. (2012). The Rise of Self-Representation in Canada's Family Courts: The Complex Picture Revealed in Surveys of Judges, Lawyers and Litigants. *Canadian Bar Review*, 91(1), 67-95. <https://canlii.ca/t/28h4>

Birnbaum, R., Saini, M., & Bala, N. (2018). Growing Concerns about the Impact of Self-Representation in Family court: Views of Ontario Judges, Children's Lawyers and Clinicians. *Canadian Family Law Quarterly*, 37(2), 121-137.

Boyd, J-P.E., & Bertrand, L.D. (2016) Comparing the Views of Judges and Lawyers Practicing in Alberta and in the Rest of Canada on Selected Issues in Family Law: Parenting, Self-representing Litigants and Mediation. Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family. <https://canlii.ca/t/2865>

Campagnola, B. (2021). Understanding the Experiences of Self Represented Litigants in Nova Scotia. Access to Justice and Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia. <https://nsrlpe.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Understanding-the-Experiences-of-Self-Represented-Litigants-in-Nova-Scotia.pdf>

Conroy, S. (2021). Spousal violence in Canada, 2019. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00016-eng.htm>

Department of Justice Canada. (2021). Legal Aid in Canada 2019-20. Ottawa: Government of Canada. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/aid-aide/1920/index.html>

Djidjel, S., Burton, G., Heisz, A., Larn, K., & McDermott, S. (2019). Towards an update of the Market Basket. Catalogue no. 75F0002M. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2019013-eng.htm>

Dozois, E., & GermAnn K. (2017). No One Deserves to be Abused: An Inquiry to Inform the Development of Supports for Affluent Survivors. *Sagesse*. <https://www.sagesse.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Women-of-Affluence-Final-Report-2018.pdf>

Employment and Social Development Canada. (2018). *Opportunity for All – Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html>.

Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interest or Rights Act, SC 2013, c 20.

Gander, L. & Johannson, R. (2014). *The Hidden Homeless: Residential Tenancies Issues of Victims of Domestic Violence*. Legal Resource Centre of Alberta. <https://www.cplea.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/FINAL-Report-The-Hidden-Homeless.2014Jun05.pdf>

Giesbrecht, C.J., Kikulwe, D., Watkinson, A.M., Sato, C.L., Este, D.C., & Falihi, A. (2022). Supporting newcomer women who experience intimate partner violence and their children: Insights from service providers. *Affilia: Feminist Inquiry in Social Work*, 0(0), 1-22. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/08861099221099318>

Gilroy, H., McFarlane, J., Maddoux, J., & Sullivan, C. (2016). Homelessness, Housing Instability, Intimate Partner Violence, Mental Health, and Functioning: A Multi-year Cohort Study of IPV Survivors and Their Children. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 25(2), 86-94, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10530789.2016.1245258>

Government of Canada. (2022, March 2). *Matrimonial real property on reserve*. Indigenous Services Canada. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100032553/1581773144281>

Government of New Brunswick. (2018, May 1). New protection measures available for victims of intimate partner violence. Justice and Public Safety. https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/public-safety/news/news_release.2018.05.0476.html

Hattery, A. & Smith, E. (2012). *The Social Dynamics of Family Violence*. Westview Press.

Holtmann, C. & Rickards, T. (2018). Domestic/intimate partner violence in the lives of immigrant women: a New Brunswick response. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 109 294-302. <https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-018-0056-3>

Homeless Hub. (2022). Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/>

Koshan, J., Mosher, J.E., & Wieggers, W.A. (2021). Domestic Violence and Access to Justice: A Mapping of Relevant Laws, Policies and Justice System Components Across Canada. Canadian Legal Information Institute, 2020 CanLIIDocs 3160. <https://canlii.ca/t/szxl>

Koshan, J., Mosher, J.E., & Wieggers, W.A. (May 11, 2020). The Costs of Justice in Domestic Violence Cases: Mapping Canadian Law and Policy. In Farrow, T. & Jacobs, L. (eds), *The Justice Crisis: The Cost and Value of Accessing Law* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2020).

Law Society of Ontario. (n.d.). Rights of Appearance. <https://lso.ca/becoming-licensed/lawyer-licensing-process/rights-of-appearance>

Macfarlane, J. (2021, June 15). Self-Represented litigants and family violence: Making a difficult experience even worse [Webinar]. Western University Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzeEHejjwkl&t>

Macfarlane, J. (2013). *The National Self-Represented Litigants Project: Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Self-Represented Litigants, Final Report*. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/lawpub/85>

Macfarlane, J., & Sullivan, C. (2021). Tracking the Trends of the Self-Represented Litigant Phenomenon: Data from the National Self-Represented Litigants Project, 2019 – 2021. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/lawnsrlppubs/12>

National Advisory Council on Poverty. (2021). *Understanding Systems: the 2021 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty*. Employment and Social Development Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/programs/poverty-reduction/national-advisory-council/reports/2021-annual/advisory-council-poverty-2021-annual.pdf>

Neilson, L.C. (2020). Responding to Domestic Violence in Family Law: Civil Protection & Child Protection Cases (2e). Canadian Legal Information Institute, 2017 CanLIIDocs 2.

Neilson, L.C. (2019, March 20). Brief on Bill C-78: An Act to amend the Divorce Act, The Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act and the Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Prepared for the Senate of Canada Background Reading. <https://unbscholar.lib.unb.ca/islandora/object/unbscholar%3A9739>

OECD (2022), Poverty rate (indicator). doi: 10.1787/0fe1315d-en (Accessed on 29 June 2022)

Piquero, A. R., Jennings, W. G., Jemison, E., Kaukinen, C., & Knaul., F. M. (2021). Domestic Violence During the COVID-19 Pandemic – Evidence from a Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 74. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2021.101806>

Risser, L., Berger, R.P., Renov, V., Aboiye, F., Duplessis, V., Henderson, C., Randell, K.A., Miller, E., & Ragavan, M.I. (2022). Supporting Children Experiencing Family Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic: IPV and CSV Provider Perspectives. *Academic Pediatrics*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2022.03.011>.

Saulnier, C. and Plante, C. (2021). *The Cost of Poverty in the Atlantic Provinces*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. <https://policyalternatives.ca/AtlanticPovertyCosts>

Schneider, D., Harknett, K., & McLanahan, S. (2016). Intimate Partner Violence in the Great Recession. *Demography*, 53(2), 471-505. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24757065>

Spiranovic, C., Hudsom, N., Winter, R., Stanford, S., Norris, K., Bartkowiak-Theron, I., & Cashman, K. (2021). Navigating Risk and Protective Factors for Family Violence During and After the COVID-19 ‘Perfect Storm’. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 33(1), 5-18, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10345329.2020.1849933>

Statistics Canada. (2022). Table 11-10-0135-01 Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. <https://doi.org/10.25318/1110013501-eng>

Statistics Canada. (2016). Low Income Lines: What are they and how they are created. *Income Research Paper Series, 75F0002M*. Income Statistics Division. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2016002-eng.htm>

- United Nations. (n.d.). The shadow pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>
- Usher, K., Jones, C.B., Bhullar, N., Durkin, J., Gyamfi, N., Fatema, S.R., & Jackson, D. (2021). COVID-19 and family violence: Is this a perfect storm? *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 30, 1022-1032, <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12876>
- Van Berkum, A., & Oudshoorn, A. (2015). Best Practice Guideline for Ending Women’s and Girl’s Homelessness. Women’s Community House. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/best-practice-guideline-ending-women’s-and-girl’s-homelessness>
- Wangmann, J., Booth, T., & Kaye, M. (2020). “No straight lines”: Self-represented litigants in family law proceedings involving allegations about family violence. (Research report, 24/2020). Sydney: ANROWS. <https://www.anrows.org.au/publication/no-straight-lines-self-represented-litigants-in-family-law-proceedings-involving-allegations-about-family-violence/>
- Weeks, L.E., Macquarrie, C. Begley, L, Gill, C. & Leblanc, K.D. (2016). Strengthening resources for midlife and older rural women who experience intimate partner violence. *Journal of Women & Aging*, 28(1), 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08952841.2014.950500>
- Wisniewski, A., Arsenault, R. & Paquet, M. (2019). Justice system response to intimate partner violence in rural New Brunswick. *Canadian Social Work*, 20(2), 120-134.
- Wolfson, M.C. (2018, December 21). Experts Panel on Income Security of The Council on Aging of Ottawa – Bill C-87, Updating the MBM and the Role of Statistics Canada. Council of Aging of Ottawa. <https://coaottawa.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/Wolfson-C-87-Updaing-the-MBM-and-StatsCan-15DEC2018.pdf>
- Wood, C. (2021, December 08). Affordable Housing Crisis in Canada. Loans Canada. <https://loanscanada.ca/money/affordable-housing-crisis-in-canada/>
- Wood, T. (2015). Relocation Law and Survivors of Domestic Violence. *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*, 22(2), 263-280.
- World Vision. (2021, May 20). What is Poverty? It’s not as simple as you think. <https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/child-sponsorship/what-is-poverty>.
- Youngson, N., Saxton, M., Jaffe, P.G. et al. Challenges in Risk Assessment with Rural Domestic Violence Victims: Implications for Practice. *J Fam Viol* 36, 537–550 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-021-00248-7>
- Zhang, X. (2021). Low-income persistence in Canada and the provinces. Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 75F0002M. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2021004-eng.htm>