

Summit Statement from Jenna Sudds, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth

Thank you for being here today to kick off the first ever economic abuse conference in Canada. I am thrilled to have all of you here to help raise awareness about this important issue.

This is a timely topic given that we are currently in financial Literacy month, and on the twenty fifth we begin the sixteen days of activism against gender based violence, starting on international day for the elimination of violence against women.

Gender-based violence continues to be a systematic problem across Canada, one that takes a physical, psychological, and financial toll on survivors, witnesses, children, and the economy as Parliamentary secretary. Part of my mandate is to advance the national action plan, to end gender-based violence, and to understand the root causes of economic abuse is a form of gender-based violence that is often under-reported and underestimated. It affects women of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. It's often difficult to identify, and even harder to escape.

In many cases it is used to control and manipulate victims and can leave them feeling isolated, trapped, and helpless. This has only been magnified by the Covid nineteen pandemic with eighty percent of women surveyed experiencing more controlling and manipulative behavior from their current or ex partner.

Faced with this increase in abuse, combined with the financial stress caused by the pandemic. It is necessary now more than ever to spread awareness on the challenges and barriers for economic abuse, survivors and victims. As a government. This has been a priority for us since two thousand and fifteen. We have invested over one hundred and thirty million dollars to support two hundred and fifty-six projects aimed at empowering women's economic participation.

Just last week, alongside provincial and Territorial Governments Minister Ian announced the historic endorsement for the national action plan to end Gender based violence, a ten year commitment to work together towards a Canada free of gender based violence, a Canada that supports victims, survivors, and their families collectively and independently. Governments are working to support the essential work of organizations that are saving lives on the front lines, as we speak since April two thousand and twenty. The Federal Government has invested over two hundred and forty million in emergencies. Covid, nineteen funding in one thousand four hundred women's, shelters, sexual assault centres, and other organisations, including nearly one hundred and forty organizations that serve indigenous individuals. Because of this funding more than one point, three million people experiencing gender based violence had a safe place to turn to, and access critical support and services.

But there's still much work to be done.

I like to thank the Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment for their leadership on this issue, and facilitating this national collaboration to address this pressing issue to the panelists, survivors and experts, participating thank you for your work By sharing advice and real life experiences. You are empowering others and making a huge difference to everyone here today. I hope you can listen, learn, and reflect on some of the important topics being discussed, and think about how you can integrate some of these practices into your everyday lives as well. This is a space for networking and an opportunity to learn from each other, share collective knowledge and expertise, and build a more just and equitable Society for everyone.

I wish you all a productive conference, and i'm looking forward to reconnecting to hear about your progress.

