

To: Status of Women Committee

Violence in the homes of so many have been normalized in Canada and it needs to be addressed! As a survivor of a failed system which labels us as a "high Conflict" case, tells us to stay calm, be patient and act respectful to the other parent is both highly unrealistic and destructive. We are told to stay calm, while the person that you love (ed) or have children with, is hurting you or worse your children. Stay calm while someone is holding their hand pinned against your neck and you are struggling to breathe. When your children beg you to leave, and you have nowhere to go. When you are literally stuck in a home of hate, rage and anger all the time and whom do we have to turn too? We are to leave with no money in our bank accounts, nothing but the clothing on our backs, we are unable to flee to safety unless we have serious repercussions.

Children are forced into an unsafe and unprotected situation despite the facts, documentation and cold hard proof of the abuse. We are silenced by the courts or Department of Community services. Our children are given now rights while the abusive parent is given all the rights. But we have told our children that we stand up to bullies, we wear the pink shirts on anti-bully day. But as a child you have no voice, you cannot be heard, you have no rights to your healthier life against that abuser. You must still push your child to go to their house, get in their cars and if not, you will face the consequences. Some professionals and judges just dismiss the situations that is in front of them because they believe two parents are better than one. Or that our voices don't matter, and we need to push these children no matter what into dangerous, unsafe and sometimes deadly scenarios that could have been avoided.

Many professionals, judges included are not educated and/or trained in domestic violence. Custody and Access assessments need to be better mandated. With proper in depth and ongoing education, training in DV and coercive control for all professionals in the field and it needs to be mandated not just optional.

Laws need to be removed and/or addressed for professionals destroying families and, in many cases, resulting in death of women and children.

Keira Law Bill C-233 needs to be passed in Canada mandating DV and coercive control education and training for ALL family court judges and officials alike. There needs to be criminal convictions implemented in custody disputes and especially in the cases that are labelled High Conflict. These abusive parents need to be held accountable for their actions.

We need to have a legislation that helps empower the victims, strengthen law enforcement, improve statutes to close the loopholes and correct injustices. Provide protection, services, and justice for all victims of Violence. We need to create and implement DV and coercive control definitions of psychological patterners of mental, emotional, physical, financial, legal, sexual and all the other forms of abuse to become quantified in punishable and enforceable steps by the courts. This needs to be a mandate to be taught in schools, universities and all programs surrounding family courts/law.

We need to work towards a goal of pro child safety, pro safe parent, pro ethical family court professionals who cares about the well being of the children and actively stand up to protect the ones that needs it the most.

I am a safe parent with 2 children. We are the survivors you heard about and still dealing with ongoing DV and coercive control. This is now 5 years after leaving an abusive situation which has been labelled as a high conflict custody battle. I am have spent well over \$100,000 in legal fees to date with still no end in sight. I'm financially drained as well as emotional and mentally exhausted. I was constantly watching my children be put in harms way, crying because they were being forced to unsupervised visits until our abuser finally snapped for the last time in 2020. Now my children refuse to even talk to the other parent. My children and myself have PTSD, and I am labelled as the bad parent because my children who are now teenagers refuse to any type of relationship with their bully. The one thing we teach our children to stand up too since they were babies.

Children and the safe parent need to have a voice, we need to be heard, we need protection, and we deserve to have so much more than being labelled. We need you to be our voices and hear our so many cries for help! This may be our chance for survival.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for taking the time to read my and so many other letters, be our voice! PLEASE!

Sincerely

A desperate Mother