

capabilities of the aggressor and complicates self-defense of the victim and requires intervention by the state and society.

In my opinion, the state, in the form of executive bodies, should take appropriate measures to counter domestic violence and ensure peaceful coexistence in society.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: PREVENTING AND COMBATING

Violence against women, in particular domestic violence, is a complex problem. There may be many different contributing factors, at the individual, relationship, social and cultural levels.

Article 4 of the United Nations Declaration sets that states should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligation with respect to its elimination. States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women.

In Costa Rica, a special committee has been formed with high-level authorities to help prevent the murder of women in intimate relationships. The institutions directly involved with this goal have signed a protocol to be applied in cases of high risk to the lives or integrity of women. The Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Justice (responsible for jails), the Costa Rican public health system, the judicial system, the public services and the National Institute for Women all have agreed to follow this protocol. In all instances where a threat has been made or identified, a risk evaluation has to be made each time these agencies deal with a situation of violence against women in order to trigger special measures when they identify high risk. A common database is used to collect information from all agencies, such that protective measures are recorded, shared and tracked, as well as violations of the orders, or other acts and factors that may tend to increase the risk of homicide.

Several countries (including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, India, Peru, the Philippines and Uruguay) have taken the approach of setting up women's units or police stations staffed by women to improve the ability of the police to respond to the unique needs of women victims. In most cases, much of the work undertaken by these special units relates to violence against women, specifically domestic violence. Anecdotal reports suggest that many of these

initiatives have been favorably received by women as they are commonly viewed as being receptive and supportive to women victims.

Women police units have also helped to raise the profile of women in policing and attracted more women to the profession once they see visible signs of women making equal contributions to community safety, crime prevention and crime response.

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BULLYING PREVENTION AND COUNTERACTION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

Bullying has got progressively high profile nowadays as people have come to understand how deeply it can hurt children and how tragic the aftereffects can sometimes happen. Bullying is defined as deliberate, repeated aggressive behavior with negative intent used by a child to keep power over another child.

Bullying is a power fight that is difficult to resolve without the aid of an adult. Mainly it requires only a few minutes of interference to stop, especially if adults act immediately and steadily. Being among the countries that struggle against bullying, Canada has succeeded in working out a helpful pattern to fight against it. Its top successful bullying intervention programs include these features: intervened at three levels (the whole school population, students who just begin to bully or be bullied and students with serious bullying or victimization behaviors); involved parents and the larger community in the initiative.

It should be said, that involving the broader community may enhance the effectiveness of whole school interventions. Engagement of *multiple* mediators such as community members and organizations promotes success. Moreover, *including students in program development and delivery may significantly increase the students' sense of commitment to initiative.*

What really matters in bullying prevention and counteraction nowadays according to Canadian researches is *providing age-related materials*: all elements of the intervention should be age-appropriate, easily understood by and relevant to the students.

The last but not the least way towards bullying prevention and counteraction lies in *creating a gender-specific approach*. This takes the fact that anti-bullying initiatives can differ between boys and girls. Therefore,