

Women's Abuse Prevention Month recognized locally

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Family Transition Place (FTP) is raising awareness and committing to help end gender-based violence as they recognize November as Women's Abuse Prevention Month.

"Gender-based violence, and violence against women continues to be a real concern," said Brennan Solecky, manager of agency operations at FTP. "Where we can be involved in generating awareness for its occurrence, generating awareness for how we can collectively stop it, and support those individuals that are experiencing it, is why we mark Women's Abuse Prevention Month each year."

As part of Women's Abuse Prevention Month (WAPM), Family Transition Place is running the annual Wrapped in Courage campaign. Started in 2013, the campaign aims to have the local community show support against gender-based violence by wearing the colour purple.

"The campaign sells women's scarves, bracelets, ties, and pet bandanas that are all consistent with messages of hope. In purchasing those items, or wearing purple you're indicating your support to those people that could be experiencing gender-based violence," explained Solecky.

She noted that gender-based violence can often be misconstrued to only be in romantic relationships, when in actuality it is much broader and can include co-workers, acquaintances, strangers, and family.

One aspect of awareness the prevention month and Family Transition Place are looking at this year is the concerning increase in femicide cases, the act of a man killing a woman because they are female, from 2019 to 2020.

According to the Canadian Women's Foundation, a 160 women and girls were killed by violence in 2020, almost doubling the previous documented numbers in 2019.

Speaking about Family Transitions Place's support services in 2020, Solesky said they received over 3,400 calls to their crisis line, which can be called by anyone.

"The pandemic has been disproportionality affecting a lot of individuals, but definitely it exacerbated the fact that those women that were experiencing unhealthy relationships certainly were limited in the support they could access."

Family Transition Place will also be recognizing International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Nov. 25) on Nov. 24 with the raising of the 'End Gender-Based Violence' flag at Orangeville Town Hall at 2 p.m.

The local organization will also be holding their 2021 Hope Project Fundraiser, in partnership with Theatre Orangeville on Nov. 25. This year's theme for the event is 'The Time is Now', encouraging the urgent need to end gender-based violence and violence against women. The event will include a video giving a first-hand look at the support FTP is providing, a live Q&A with staff, a silent auction, and a catered delivered meal. To register for the event go to www.familytransitionplace.ca.

Various educational and awareness focused information on Women's Abuse Prevention Month can be found throughout November of Family Transition Place's social media accounts.