

County Council declares gender-based and intimate partner violence a epidemic

Dufferin County Council has declared gender-based and intimate partner violence an epidemic, and has called on the provincial and federal governments to provide the necessary supports to municipalities to meaningfully address it.

During their meeting on Nov. 9, Warden Wade Mills and County Council proclaimed November 25, 2023 as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in Dufferin County.

"Dufferin County is committed to ensuring our residents are safe and healthy, and that everyone in our community has access to the services they need, but we cannot do that alone. County Council calls on the Province to declare gender-based and intimate partner violence an epidemic in Ontario, and for the provincial and federal governments to provide the necessary supports so that municipalities can act to keep our communities safe," said Wade Mills, Dufferin County Warden.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was designated in 1999 by the United Nations General Assembly. The date of November 25 was chosen to commemorate the lives of the Mirabal sisters from the Dominican Republic who were violently assassinated in 1960. The day pays tribute to them and urges global recognition of gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence and intimate partner violence, often referred to as domestic violence, is any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened in an intimate relationship, including emotional and/or psychological abuse or harassing behaviour.

Dufferin County joins the growing number of municipalities and regions in demanding action from all levels of government to address this growing epidemic and recommends that gender-based violence and intimate partner violence be declared an epidemic in Ontario.

The County also requests that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and all municipalities and regions in Ontario declare gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic, and that the provincial and federal governments enact the additional 85 recommendations from the Culleton, Kuzyk, and Warmerdam Inquest, which provides a roadmap to preventing intimate partner violence from escalating to femicide.

"The safety of our community and its members is of extreme importance to every Dufferin County resident, as well as to Dufferin County Council. We call on our partners at FCM, AMO and the provincial and federal governments to address the growing gender-based and intimate partner violence epidemic so that we can keep our community safe and provide services and support for victims and survivors," said Coun. Lisa Post.