



CRCF Illuminates Research **No. 3**

Intimate partner violence perpetration services: The forgotten intervention to reduce risk of intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 shut-down.

**Dr. Katherine Maurer
PhD, LMSW**

Assistant Professor,
School of Social Work,
McGill University
Member, Centre for Research
on Children and Families
Associate Member Department of
Pediatrics, Divisions of General
Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine



What is the social issue?

- Data from crisis centers and police forces across Canada show an increase in reported intimate partner violence (IPV) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- IPV is defined as threat of, attempted, or enacted physical or sexual violence and emotional/psychological abuse inflicted by a current or ex-spouse, current or former dating partner, or date.
- Provincial and federal governments in Canada offered pandemic-related supplemental funding for community services for female victims of heterosexual IPV.
- Current responses to IPV are limited in scope by their focus on:
 - Tertiary interventions, once IPV has occurred, with limited attention to prevention.
 - In contrast, a public health three-tiered model of intervention to reduce IPV prioritizes universal prevention, early detection interventions, in addition to tertiary interventions once IPV has occurred.
 - Near exclusive focus on violence against cisgender heterosexual women.



Rates of LGBTQ2S+ IPV are commensurate with or even higher than for heterosexual couples, as is bidirectional violence (when both partners perpetrate violence).

At particularly high risk of victimization, especially for physical IPV, are BIPOC and QTBIPOC women, and people living with disabilities.

What are we doing?

Our study explores the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on existing IPV perpetrator services in the province of Québec, one of the early hotspots of COVID-19 outbreaks and extended shelter-in-place measures in Canada. Our study includes two components:

- Surveys and interviews with staff from IPV perpetrator services organizations
- Surveys and interviews with service users of IPV perpetrator services organizations

The findings from our research will contribute to primary, secondary, and tertiary responses to IPV perpetration in Québec by:

- **IMPROVING ACCESS** to information on the expanse of services available.
- **IDENTIFYING SERVICES** available for traditionally underserved groups in IPV perpetration (BIPOC, QTBIPOC, and people living with disabilities).
- **HIGHLIGHTING BARRIERS** to providing and accessing IPV perpetrator services before and during the pandemic.
- **ASCERTAINING RESOURCES** both existing and needed by service providers to meet increasing demand for IPV perpetrator services.

In 2021, the Québec government pledged funding to support services for men who have perpetrated IPV. Our findings will contribute to the efforts to increase tertiary responses as well as encourage primary and secondary interventions to prevent IPV through the public dissemination of a report on existing services in Québec. Our preliminary results suggest that the number of people requesting services has grown steadily during the pandemic. Yet, the transition to providing services remotely, via Zoom or telephone, has posed a significant barrier to access for service users. The need for awareness of IPV perpetrator services and expanding access to services is more urgent than ever if we are going to achieve our collective goal of preventing violence from ever occurring between intimate partners.

Dr. Maurer practiced as a trauma therapist and clinical social worker working in mental health services, particularly with people experiencing/exposed to family violence and those experiencing homelessness. Dr. Maurer's research centers the impact of systemic oppression and social reproduction of inequality on individual, institutional, and social access to and quality of services. Her research examines the effects of family violence, including violence within couples, for youth and adults with a focus on stress reactivity, self-regulation, and adaptive resilience. Dr. Maurer has received funding from the FRQSC, SSHRC, CIHR, CFREF/McGill Healthy Brains Healthy Lives, Centre for Research on Children and Families, McConnell Foundation, and Old Brewery Mission.

Dr. Katherine Maurer

Research Team



Maybel Gelly, BSW

Katy Konyk, MSW

Mert Kimyaci, BSW

Yanina Chukhovich, MSW

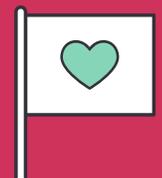


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