

National Day of remembrance **Working to end violence against women, children**

by Heather MacAdam

Members of the community are invited to come out and mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women this week.

An event will be held by the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre Thursday evening, December 6, to mark the day.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women was established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada to mark the anniversary of the murders of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal in 1989. A man walked into the school, separated the men from the women, and shot the women based solely on their gender.

As well as commemorating the 14 young women whose lives ended in an act of gender-based violence that shocked the nation, December 6 represents an opportunity for Canadians

to reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society.

Kalysa Archibald of the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre said this year's event in Antigonish will take place from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. at the Antigonish CACL.

"We do it annually, and the challenge this year was to do something that was a memorial but was more action oriented," Archibald said. "We liked the idea of having a more action-related component to the event instead of just being a memorial this year."

During the ceremony, items will be on display from the Tearmann House Purple Scarf Campaign, which enables women who have been touched by violence to express their experiences through art on purple scarves.

"We decided that this event is a good place to display the scarves that have been created by the women who have participated in that campaign."

During the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women event, there will be a welcome from the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre. Megan McGrath of the Naomi Society will introduce the 'Art from the

Heart' purple scarves, followed by guest speaker Lyndsay Anderson, residence life co-ordination at St. F.X. After the guest speaker, there will be an 'art activity,' and those in attendance can help in the production of a mural.

"All the women who show up will be welcome to contribute to the mural. It will be open to them whatever they would like to depict relating to violence and action. Our idea is that the women can come from the event feeling like they've not only commemorated the lives of the women who died at the l'École Polytechnique, but... something more proactive is coming out of that. There's actually learning and action, even if it's only action within ourselves."

The general public is invited to attend the event, both women and men.

"If anyone would like to participate in the memorial and is interested in expressing the feelings around this issue, (come to the event.)"

The annual Purple Ribbon Campaign is also currently taking place. The campaign runs each year from November 25 to December 10, to coincide with the international recognition of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.