

CANADIAN PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN AND SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS INC. (CPOMC)

(Tragically, similar to the metamorphosis of a butterfly, a life had to be lost before CPOMC could be born)

In December 2009, CPOMC was incorporated as a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to the provision of on-going, lifelong support to parents and survivors of homicide victims in Canada. CPOMC's creation was inspired by the Chair of the organization Yvonne Harvey, an Ottawa resident whose daughter Chrissy was brutally murdered at the age of 28 on Jan. 21, 2007 in St. John's Newfoundland. It was Yvonne's goal to establish CPOMC, for survivors of homicide victims, because she knows the feeling of helplessness and hopelessness one experiences when dealing with the tragedy of murder. She felt that the need for an organization such as CPOMC was paramount for victims all across Canada.



Vision: To provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims across Canada, while actively working towards eliminating the immense loss to our society caused by murder, thereby creating a safer Canada.

Mission: To provide on-going emotional support, education and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims in the aftermath of murder, while promoting public awareness and education of all Canadians.

Objectives: To offer unique support to distressed parents and other persons who have experienced the death by homicide of a son or daughter or other persons (family and friends of those who have died by homicide); provide contact with similarly bereaved parents or other persons; establish self-help groups that meet on a regular basis; provide information about the grieving process specific to survivors of homicide victims; provide information about the criminal justice system as it pertains to survivors of homicide victims; communicate with and provide information to interested professionals in the field of mental health, social work, community services, law enforcement, criminal justice, education, medicine, religion, law, funeral services, and other areas, about the problems faced by the survivors of homicide victims; educate society at large to the challenges faced by the survivors of homicide victims, and foster awareness of such challenges.

Why CPOMC is Necessary

One day people are leading a normal life and the next day they are thrust into a foreign world through no choice of their own, having to deal with police, lawyers, courts, media, parole, as well as their unrelenting grief of having lost a loved one to murder. In an instant, life as we once knew it disappears and the future becomes a struggle between moving on and hanging on. Few can ever appreciate the true impact of murder on a family, yet anyone of us could find ourselves in this position. Living in the aftermath of murder is a constant emotional and spiritual struggle.

Survivors of homicide victims go through the worst grief they will probably ever experience and are constantly being re-victimized by the inevitable bureaucracy that follows a murder, which compounds their trauma.

When someone is murdered, the family left behind embarks on an unwanted emotional rollercoaster, experiencing wave after wave of anger, guilt, blame, rage, depression and denial. Unlike other losses, this sudden and traumatic loss plunges the family head first into the middle of these emotions, which only adds to the intensity of their grief.

CPOMC Support Programs and Services

1. A website (www.cpomc.ca) to provide valuable information on CPOMC's programs and services, including survivor support information, stories to remember murdered loved ones by, as well as numerous references and additional resources.
2. Monthly, facilitated, support meetings. These meetings are designed to assist survivors of homicide victims by offering a sharing and caring forum for discussion. Generally, meetings will begin with introductions and each survivor telling of their loss. Often there will be a topic to guide discussions (e.g., the grief process, the criminal justice system, or favourite memories.) Initially meetings will be held in Ottawa; however, the goal is to have various CPOMC Chapters established across Canada.
3. A series of information kits including brochures, articles, and fact sheets have been developed covering a variety of topics such as sibling grief, victim blaming, problems commonly experienced by survivors of homicide victims etc.
4. Other outreach services including direct contact with the national office at **(613) 492-1978** to help survivors of homicide victims deal with the aftermath of murder and to provide opportunities for them to connect with other survivors across Canada.

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