

## Violence, responsiveness, and safety

**TORONTO, November 28, 2023**—A [Maru Public Opinion](#) survey conducted for the Canadian Women's Foundation finds that while two-thirds (65%) of Canadians admit to knowing a woman who has faced physical, sexual, or emotionally abused, and many (42%) say they've seen ads or information about The Violence at Home Signal for Help, just a few admit they're "very confident" in their abilities to render support to any person involved in such a circumstance.

Further, the study finds that when it comes to their personal online behaviours and experiences, a majority (81%) of Canadians may be taking action to deal with online hate, harassment, and abuse, but only one-in-five (20%) strongly admit to truly feeling safe from it all. In this regard, a vast majority (88%) of Canadians believe changes need to be made so online spaces and social media are safer for everyone—and equally as many (88%) advocates that it's the responsibility of social media companies to take such steps.

### Highlights

- Two-thirds (65%) of Canadians admit to knowing a woman who has faced physical, sexual, or emotionally abused. Awareness of this plight is highest among women (69% compared to men 61%), the youngest Canadians (aged 18-34 68% versus 55+ 65%/35-54 63%), and regionally in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (74%), Alberta (73%), and British Columbia (72%), followed by Ontario (69%), Atlantic Canada (64%), and Quebec (50%). Half (49%) volunteer they know a man who has been in the same situation, and similarly for those who are either a Trans (21%) or non-binary (17%) person.
- An average of six-in-ten (61%) Canadians state they're confident in knowing what to do or say to support someone experiencing abuse—such as being physically assaulted (64%), emotionally abused (63%), or sexually assaulted (57%). Notably, just a few Canadians say they're "very confident" in their abilities to render support to someone experiencing physical (20%) or emotional/sexual (18%) abuse.
- Many (42%) Canadians reveal that they've seen ads or information about The Violence at Home Signal for Help, with those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ (59%), young Canadians (aged 18-34 52%), and women (46%) more acutely aware of it than men (37%) and those who are older (aged 35-54 39%/55+ 42%). The various channels for awareness have been ads/info about the "Signal for Help" online, (32%), in their community (12%), and in their workplace (5%). Some (4%) admit to having used or personally seen the "Signal for Help" being used.
- Generally, seven-in-ten (70%) Canadians feel safe from online hate, harassment, and abuse—however, only one-in-five (20%) strongly abide by that view, especially those who identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (10%) and women (18%), when compared to men (23%).

- When it comes to their personal online behaviours, a majority (81%) of Canadians say they take action to feel safe from online hate, harassment, and abuse. Those who identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (87%) and women (84%) are more likely than men (77%) and those in each age cohort (and averaging 81%) to act.
- A vast majority (88%) of Canadians believe changes need to be made so online spaces and social media are safer for everyone—with women (53%) holding this view more strongly than men (49%). In this regard, equally as many (88%) Canadians advocate that it's the responsibility of social media companies to keep people safe from hate, harassment, and abuse on their platforms.

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## Methodology

These are the findings from [Maru Public Opinion](#) online panel survey undertaken by its sample and data collection experts at [Maru/Blue](#) from November 1-3, 2023, among a random selection of 1,505 Canadian adults who are [Maru Voice Canada](#) panelists. The results were weighted by education, age, gender, and region (and in Quebec, language) to match the population, according to Census data. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 2.5%, 19 times out of 20. Respondents could respond in either English or French.

Collaboration on this study was provided by [Maru/Matchbox](#).

Panel and data services provider [Maru Blue](#) is deeply rooted in the Maru/HUB technology platform and offers on-demand, high-quality, highly scalable online community samples of deeply engaged, known respondents. Excerpts from this release of findings should be properly attributed, with interpretation subject to clarification or correction.

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