

# Transformative Calls for Change

## **We've undertaken this project at a time of significant attention to GBV, IPV, child safety, and corresponding systemic responses.**

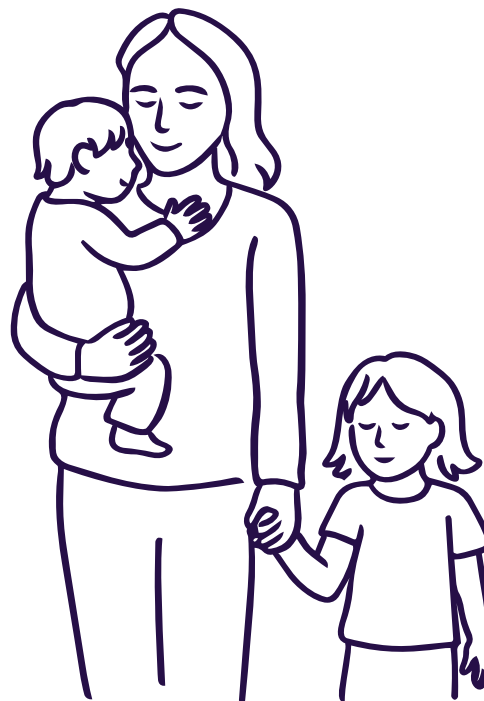
Recent systemic reviews have analyzed the harms and gaps in these systems, offered important recommendations, and highlighted long-standing systemic failures. However, these insights are not new: decades of reports have issued recommendations that have largely not been implemented.

This project has taken a different approach. Based on the insights of community experts, it invites a broadening of focus to critically question the foundations of entire systems. From this vantage point, it is difficult to miss how contemporary policing and family policing responses to gender-based violence were never meant to respond to violence in a way that supports families as a whole. They are not only ineffective but are also crucial drivers of harm.

Reports often focus on systemic reform to reduce barriers to reporting through education or awareness-raising, or to build trust between communities and these systems. Instead, we have heard from community experts that people do not want to engage with these systems at all. As experts emphasized, existing responses to violence continue colonial practices of family separation and uphold systems of power that are not only patriarchal but also deeply classist, racist, heteronormative, and ableist.

Throughout this project, community experts have called for bold shifts—away from *family policing* and towards *family well-being*. At each site of intersection between family policing and gender-based violence, they named transformative changes that could redirect our collective resources towards community-based, wholistic supports that families choose for themselves and that are unattached to systems of surveillance and punishment.

Experts' calls for change are powerful invitations for all of us who identify as "changemakers" or "helpers"—whether we are family members, neighbours, educators, service providers, advocates, community leaders, policy-makers, or legislators—to push for system transformation today.



# 1

## Support community-rooted care and honour self-determination

**Friends, neighbours, educators, collectives, community leaders, and organizations can:**

### Support transformative learning for all

- Normalize conversations about power and harm in families and relationships.
- Teach and learn about cycles of harm to break them.
- Reject simplistic categories of “victim” and “perpetrator.”

### Build collective responsibility

- Create collective approaches to support and respond to gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence in our communities.
- Share skills and resources so that communities, families, and peers feel equipped to support their relationships, including with survivors and people that cause harm, and can support in holding institutions that create more violence and harm accountable.

### Build skills and knowledge to support survivors of GBV’s self-determination

- Learn, practice and implement the skills to support survivors determining what safety looks like to them and support them to make that a reality.

# 2

## Resource community-based services

**Funders, governments, legislators, and agencies can:**

### Resource upstream, wholistic supports for family well-being

- Address basic needs so that all families can thrive.
- Fund wholistic, family-centered, culturally safe and trauma- and violence-informed models.
- Fund relational, peer-based models, and connections to community, land, and culture.

### Increase access to inclusive community-based anti-violence services for those who have experienced harm and those who have harmed

- Fund accessible anti-violence services that meet the needs of marginalized survivors.
- Fund non-carceral anti-violence and healing supports beyond the gendered victim/perpetrator binary and engage people who have caused harm.

**Service providers and advocates can:**

### Prioritize self-determination

- Service providers can support survivors in who are accessing supports by implementing informed choice models and helping survivors make informed choices.

### 3

## Move towards supporting over reporting

**Friends, neighbours, educators, collectives, community leaders, organizations, advocates and service providers can:**

**Uphold a commitment and practice to support and not report**

- Connect survivors and families with their chosen supports.
- Support through informed choice, goal-setting, and accompaniment to minimize harms and maximize access to benefits.

**Build helpers' capacities to support**

- Develop resources and skill development opportunities to build helpers' capacities to support.

**Service providers, advocates, governments, legislators, funders, and agencies can:**

**Advocate to end mandatory reporting**

- Lobby for legislation to be revised and repeal mandatory reporting laws, in BC this includes Section 13 and 14 of the *CFCSA*.

### 4

## Minimize family policing harms and maximize support

**Friends, neighbours, educators, collectives, community leaders, organizations, service providers and advocates can:**

**Take an advocate stance during investigations.**

- Accompany families to witness interactions and push for accountability during investigations.
- Provide ongoing support to meet parenting goals.
- Advocate to minimize harms and “hoops,” and maximize supports.

**Governments, legislators, funders, and agencies can:**

**Strengthen rights-based and accountability approaches**

- Ensure all families have access to well-paid and trained advocates.
- Improve transparency, oversight, and rights-based mechanisms to hold systems accountable.

### 5

## Implement multi-system advocacy supports and transformative alternatives to existing legal systems

**Governments, legislators, funders and agencies can:**

**Implement multi-system navigation and advocacy supports.**

- Fund childcare, translation and system navigators who work across systems.

**Implement systemic changes to address discrimination, gaps, and contradictions.**

- Review and revise laws that impact families and ensure consistency to be family-centred across all jurisdictions.
- Ensure all actors in the legal systems (criminal, family, child protection) are trained in cultural safety, trauma-and violence-informed practice and on the impact of stereotypes around GBV.

**Enable meaningful access to Indigenous, transformative and restorative justice options.**

- Provide adequate and stable funding to justice alternatives to address the harms of GBV.

## 6

### Support well-being and connection to minimize harms of separation

**Friends, neighbours, educators, collectives, community leaders, organizations, service providers and advocates can:**

**Support the well-being of parents, children, and families – even during separation.**

- Support parents' goals and well-being before, during and after removal of children.
- Support the well-being children and youth before, during and after removal into government custody.
- Advocate with children, youth, parents, extended family and community to ensure their rights to access to maintain a relationship are upheld.
- Support family members to connect and heal when separated and if reunification occurs.

**Governments, legislators, funders and agencies can:**

**Ensure resources are available for families to maintain their relationships.**

- Provide adequate and sustainable funding to support community to facilitate ongoing connections.

**Implement advocacy supports if access is being denied or negatively impacted.**

- Ensure there are timely mechanisms to address concerns around maintaining access and connection for families.

At each site of intersecting harm, community organizations, Nations, and advocates are already re-envisioning and restoring family safety and well-being through transformative practices of advocacy and support. Their actions reflect creativity, commitment, and integrity despite the precarity and turmoil caused by insufficient resources. Their practices are rooted in a holistic grasp of violence as flowing from harmful conditions that impact whole families—not just children. Taken together, these wise practices offer a powerful re-envisioning of child and family safety that can be mobilized to end the colonial harms of family separation.