Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Ministère des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires

Ontario

Gender Equity Division

Division de l'équité entre les genres

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October 14, 2026

Dear Ms. Harvey,

On behalf of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, thank you for sharing the 2026 Business and Professional Women (BPW Ontario) Ontario Brief. I appreciate the time and effort the BPW Ontario has dedicated to advancing discussion on issues that affect women across the province.

The brief identifies a number of important areas, including but not limited to women's health screening and diagnostic services, artificial intelligence, intimate partner violence and prescription contraception. We recognize the importance of ongoing dialogue on matters that affect the health and well-being of women across Ontario. As some of these matters fall within the mandates of partner ministries, MCCSS will share the brief for their information and consideration.

Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, continue to transform many aspects of daily life and work and have the potential to disproportionately affect women and other marginalized groups. Ontario recognizes the importance of fostering innovation while ensuring that people can participate safely and confidently in the digital economy. As new technologies and cyber threats evolve, the government continues to monitor developments in this space and their potential impacts on women and other marginalized groups.

In December 2023, the Government of Ontario announced Ontario's Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence, which is a four-year action plan to better respond to gender-based violence, build safer, healthier communities, and support women's well-being and economic opportunities. Through the Action Plan's Call for Proposals (CFP), the ministry is investing approximately $98 million over three years (2024-25 to 2026-27) in 85 community projects. This includes projects such as the Sex Information & Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN), which is focused on the prevention of technology-facilitated sexual violence and on increasing the capacity of Ontario health educators to deliver effective education on this topic to youth. The government continues to monitor developments in this space and work with partners across sectors and jurisdictions to address emerging challenges and build a safer, more inclusive province.

On November 5, 2025, the Ontario Legislature adopted terminology recognizing intimate partner violence as endemic. By calling intimate partner violence endemic, the Ontario government is recognizing the significant work that remains to address its root causes and impacts. This terminology reflects recommendations made in the report and acknowledges the seriousness and prevalence of intimate partner violence in Ontario.

Additionally, the Government is removing barriers so that more women can excel as entrepreneurs and leaders, particularly in sectors where they are under-represented, like the skilled trades and STEM fields. The government is providing $11 million over two years (2025-26 and 2026-27) through the Women's Economic Leadership and Legacy Fund to advance women's leadership, retention, and promotion in high-demand sectors while fostering inclusive workplaces and supporting women from diverse backgrounds.

Thank you again for sharing BPW Ontario's perspectives and recommendations. I appreciate your organization's ongoing engagement.

Sincerely,



Taunya Paquette
Assistant Deputy Minister, Gender Equity Division
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services