



**School of  
Public Policy**



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## **A different approach to preventing domestic violence- stopping it before it starts. New report from the School of Public Policy**

CALGARY- Domestic violence frequently makes headlines as we saw in January when a man killed his ex-partner outside a Calgary school. When femicide is committed, it is often accompanied by announcements of public vigils to be held for the victimized woman along with demands for an end to intimate partner violence.

Today, the School of Public Policy with authors Lana Wells, Ken Fyie, Ron Kneebone, Stephanie Montesanti, Casey Boodt, and Rebecca Davidson released a report that reveals a robust **10-year dataset** supplied by **Calgary Police Service**, that explores a trajectory of criminal behaviour and police interactions prior to an eventual charge for a criminal act involving domestic violence in 2019. Very few men in this sample were unknown to police prior to the charge in 2019.

Research into male-on-female domestic violence traditionally focuses on its after-effects, with an emphasis on how victims can keep themselves safe or on the men who have been criminally charged in such incidents. This approach puts the responsibility on the victim to try and protect herself while offering support to the perpetrator only *after* the violence has occurred to prevent recidivism. The report takes a different approach to understanding points of intervention that might prevent domestic violence from occurring in the first place.

According to the authors “Instead of focusing on incidence rates and victims of domestic violence, our research agenda narrows in on the background of perpetrators, specifically their criminal history and other contextual data over 10 years, which may be associated with a higher likelihood of a domestic violence criminal charge at a future date. We hope this new approach of examining perpetrator trajectories will lead to identifying new legislation, policies and programs that can stop male violence before it starts.”

“The Calgary Police Service is pleased to support the domestic violence research that was recently conducted by the School of Public Policy within the University of Calgary. We have previously made similar connections to criminal behaviour and domestic violence offences and have aligned our Domestic Conflict Unit risk assessment process with similar findings. It is reassuring to see the research and data support how our Service is approaching domestic violence situations within Calgary,” says Chief Constable Mark Neufeld.

This unique perspective addresses a serious and growing concern for femicide, which holds responsible not only the male perpetrators of domestic violence but also state and judicial structures that normalize and reinforce misogyny.



# School of Public Policy



The report can be found online at [www.policyschool.ca/publications/](http://www.policyschool.ca/publications/)

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