

# About METRAC



**METRAC is an award-winning community-based, not-for-profit organization founded in 1984 that prevents violence against diverse women and youth.**

**[www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org)**

**METRAC (the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children) works to prevent and eliminate violence against diverse women, youth and children.** We are committed to the right of women, youth and children to live free of violence and the threat of violence. Since 1984, METRAC has built the capacity of communities to prevent and end violence through innovative public education; Safety Audits and safety initiatives; legal information and training; peer youth violence prevention; research; and policy reform.

Our work is informed by anti-oppression principles. Anti-oppression work recognizes that women, youth and children experience violence in different ways depending on factors such as their ethno-racial backgrounds, income levels, sexualities, gender identities, abilities and ages. Anti-violence measures must address the distinctive experiences of diverse individuals and communities.

METRAC uses an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach. We work in partnership with individuals, community groups, organizations and services, governments, institutions, educators, urban planners and health and legal professionals.

*“Thank you for your wonderful resources.”  
(Community worker)*

## Programs & initiatives



**The Community Safety Program** provides training, workshops and educational resources on personal and community safety. It supports implementation of METRAC’s Safety Audit Process in neighbourhoods, public spaces, campuses, institutions and workplaces. The Safety Audit is a tool to evaluate spaces from the standpoint of women and other vulnerable groups.

Recent initiatives include: participation in the Tower Renewal Project in Toronto; Safety Audit training and support of several youth-led audits across Toronto.



**ReAct (Respect in Action)** is a youth peer education program. Every year, thousands of youth, youth workers and educators are supported to challenge violence against women and youth through workshops, trainings, presentations and special projects.

Recent initiatives include: implementation of the SchoolED project to reproduce the ReAct model in Toronto schools; and the Youth Alliance Project to improve police policy and practice in addressing sexual violence against young women.

**The Community Justice Program** provides easy-to-understand, accessible legal information, workshops and training for diverse women and service providers. It examines how legislation and legal practices impact diverse women, youth and children, especially those experiencing violence. Through the Ontario Women's Justice Network website ([www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org)), women and service providers have access to easy-to-read legal information about the law's impact on women and youth experiencing violence.

Recent initiatives include: support of the Family Law Education for Women project to provide legal information and webinars on family law issues affecting women, including women experiencing violence ([www.onefamilylaw.ca](http://www.onefamilylaw.ca)).

**THRIVE, the Multicultural Women's Coalition Against Violence and Oppression**, is a coalition of diverse women advancing a movement to end violence and oppression against racialized women and their communities by: developing analyses and strategies to combat violence against racialized women and providing training, community-based research and political advocacy with and for racialized women.

Recent initiatives include: Fabricating Change, a fabric art project with women and trans communities across Toronto, launched during the 16 Days of Action Against Gender Violence.

In addition, METRAC offers **innovative public education** to reach out to communities, raise awareness and help them deal with violence. Recent initiatives include: launch of "Not Your Baby", an iPhone app to help people respond to sexual harassment; and development of "What It Is", an online and mobile game to challenge sexual violence against youth and bust sexual violence myths ([www.challengesexualviolence.org](http://www.challengesexualviolence.org)).

**May Be Me** is a campaign METRAC launched in 2011 to raise awareness and funds to prevent violence against women and youth ([www.maybemecampaign.ca](http://www.maybemecampaign.ca)). Proceeds support METRAC's work and in future years, the campaign will grow to support other violence prevention efforts in Ontario.

*"I can say that METRAC taught me how to love myself."  
(ReAct Youth Peer Facilitator)*

*"It was a wonderful session, very informative and a great learning experience."  
(Safety Audit participant)*



# Achievements

- METRAC partnered with the City of Toronto to improve by-laws for public safety. Underground garages must be lit and painted white as a result.
- We partnered with Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to conduct a Safety Audit of the system. Designated Waiting Areas (DWA) and the Request Stop Program are two of the improvements that resulted from it.
- We collaborated with other community groups to make laws better for women experiencing violence. For example, in 1993, METRAC initiated passage of criminal harassment (stalking) legislation. In 1997, we participated in legislative consultations to protect women's records in sexual assault cases.
- METRAC's ReAct program provides violence prevention workshops and trainings for thousands of youth and educators every year. ReAct's model is considered a best practice and a "blueprint" by the Government of Canada.
- Our Community Safety Audit, pioneered in 1989, was declared a "Vital Idea" by The Toronto Community Foundation in 2004. In 2008, it was deemed a best practice in the UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities Campaign (2008-2013).
- We partner with major universities and colleges across Canada to conduct comprehensive Safety Audits and improve safety for all campus space users. For instance, campus audits have been led at Queen's University, University of New Brunswick, York University and Centennial College. Better security policies and practices, sexual assault prevention services and services to support those users most vulnerable to harassment and violence have resulted from these audits.
- In a partnership with Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada, our Safety Audit has been used by girls and leaders in neighbourhoods across the country to improve their safety.
- We administer the Ontario Women's Justice Network website ([www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org)) and [www.onefamilylaw.ca](http://www.onefamilylaw.ca) to help women and youth know their rights, particularly in situations of abuse.
- METRAC launched RePlay: Finding Zoe/ReJouer: Où est Zoé? in 2007, a free online video game on healthy relationships for youth that has been played over 20,000 times. RePlay/ReJouer is winner of the Adobe Max 2009 award, Adobe-TechSoup's Show Your Impact award and Changemakers' Why Games Matter award. It has been featured at the Euphrat Museum of Art in California and the Longwood Art Gallery in New York City.
- In 2010, we launched "What It Is.", a mobile and online game that challenges sexual violence against youth. The game has been played/downloaded over 85,000 times.
- We developed Not Your Baby, an iPhone app designed to help people deal with sexual harassment. It has been featured in media such as City TV, Jezebel, Torontoist and Huffington Post Canada.

*"METRAC is a great, innovative organization."  
(Stakeholder feedback from strategic plan process)*



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Ontario Women's Justice Network: [www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org) | Family Law Education for Women: [www.onefamilylaw.ca](http://www.onefamilylaw.ca)  
Challenge Sexual Violence: [www.challengesexualviolence.org](http://www.challengesexualviolence.org) | May Be Me: [www.maybemecampaign.ca](http://www.maybemecampaign.ca)