

# For Immediate Release



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## Yellow Brick House Welcomes the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark Decision Recognizing Intimate Partner Violence as a Distinct Civil Wrong in Canadian Law.

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Yellow Brick House welcomes the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision in *Ahluwalia v. Ahluwalia*, recognizing a new tort of intimate partner violence in Canadian law. This historic ruling represents a significant step forward in acknowledging the profound and lasting harm experienced by survivors of domestic violence and abuse.

For decades, Yellow Brick House, alongside survivors, advocates and other organizations supporting survivors of gender based violence, has worked to raise awareness of the devastating realities of coercive control and intimate partner violence. These forms of abuse, which include manipulation, intimidation, isolation, financial abuse, humiliation, surveillance, and psychological violence, are too often minimized, misunderstood, or overlooked despite their devastating impact on a survivor's safety, dignity, and overall well being.

In its decision, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that **“the new tort of intimate partner violence fills a gap in the common law”** by acknowledging that coercive control and domination within intimate relationships create a distinct form of harm not adequately addressed through existing legal remedies. The Court further stated that **“it is the intimate partnership context that enables the abuser to exert control over their victim”** (*Ahluwalia v. Ahluwalia*, SCC, para. 182).

This decision affirms what survivors have long known. Intimate partner violence is not limited to physical assault. Abuse can take many forms, including psychological and emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, financial abuse, stalking, and harassment. These behaviours are used to exert power and control over another person, often leaving life altering impacts on survivors and their families.

At Yellow Brick House, we witness every day the devastating effects of intimate partner violence on women, children, and families in our communities. Survivors often face significant barriers when seeking safety and justice. This ruling sends a powerful message that their experiences are real, their harm matters, and coercive and controlling behaviours must be recognized as serious forms of abuse.

We commend the courage of survivors who continue to come forward and share their experiences, including those whose advocacy and persistence helped bring this issue before Canada's highest court. Their voices are helping shape a future where survivors are better protected, supported and heard.

While this decision represents meaningful progress, much work remains. Survivors continue to need access to safe shelter, trauma informed counselling, prevention education, legal supports, affordable housing, and coordinated community responses. Legal recognition alone cannot end intimate partner violence, but it is an important step toward increasing accountability and improving access to justice for survivors.

Yellow Brick House remains committed to supporting survivors, advocating for systemic change and raising awareness about the realities of intimate partner violence across our communities.

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### About Yellow Brick House

Since 1978, Yellow Brick House has been providing life-saving services and prevention programs to meet the diverse needs of individuals, families and communities impacted by violence. Our Vision is Freedom from violence. Equality for all. The organization is committed to providing a wide range of free and confidential support services to women and children experiencing abuse and violence and empowering them to transition to a violence free lives.

For more information about Yellow Brick House, visit [yellowbrickhouse.org](https://yellowbrickhouse.org)

Crisis and Support line: 1-800-263-3247 (call or text)

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