

2026 Advocacy snapshot: Canada

Overview of findings:



(global average: 52.6/100)

Point of recognition: Canada ranks 5th globally and secured the highest score among the 11 countries in the Americas & Caribbean region.

Explore Canada's full results in the 2026 Out of the Shadows Index at: outoftheshadows.global/canada

"Canada's scores demonstrate substantial progress, but also highlight a significant gap between legal and policy protections and the support available to survivors. The next phase of Canada's response should prioritize survivor participation that enables transparency, accountability, and consistent access to trauma-informed care across jurisdictions."

- Ally Zlata, Survivor leader

Calls to action

**brave
movement.**

- **Establish a government-supported National Survivor Council.**
- **Increase overall budget transparency**, by publishing annual, disaggregated public reporting on government spending related to preventing and responding to sexual violence against children.
- **Update the National Action Plan** with clear responsibilities, costings, timelines, and an implementation framework
- **Strengthen prevention and safeguarding efforts specifically for online sexual exploitation and grooming** of children and adolescents.
- **Ratify key international legal instruments** that strengthen protections for children.
- **Require training for physicians and healthcare providers** on identifying and responding to sexual violence against children.

Governance and accountability

68.1/100 (1st in the region)

Area of progress: Canada received full points for having a **national action plan** addressing child safety online, establishing **child engagement mechanisms in national policy making**, and maintaining **national data collection** on the prevalence of violence against children.

Opportunity for change:

Canada has not yet established a government-supported **National Survivor Council** to ensure survivor-led input into planning and policymaking related to sexual violence against children.

Prevention

70/100 (Tied for 2nd in the region)

Area of progress: Canada received full points for providing a nationwide 24/7 **child helpline** and comprehensive **life-skills-based sexuality education**.

Opportunity for change:

Canada could strengthen prevention efforts by establishing **legislation requiring training for healthcare providers** who work directly with children on identifying and responding to sexual violence.

Tip: Your country made pledges at the First Global Ministerial to End Violence Against Children in 2024. Use the Index findings to show your government where more action is needed to deliver on those pledges. Explore pledges at endviolenceagainstchildrenconference.org

Healing

50/100 (10th in the region)

Area of progress: Canada received full points for having **compensation programs** in place for survivors of sexual violence.

Opportunity for change:

Canada could strengthen survivor support by expanding **access to medical care** and **integrated victim and survivor services** to rural, northern, and Indigenous communities and by ensuring access to government-funded **legal aid** for survivors involved in criminal proceedings.

Justice

79.4/100 (1st in the region)

Area of progress: Canada received full points for **criminalizing both contact and non-contact forms of sexual violence** against children, **intra-familial child sexual abuse**, and sexual acts against children if the perpetrator is in a **position of trust, authority, or influence**.

Canada has also eliminated **statutes of limitations** and developed **specialized law enforcement mechanisms** to respond in a child-sensitive manner to cases of violence.

Opportunity for change:

Canada could strengthen its legal framework by introducing a **clear definition of online grooming** and **prohibiting corporal punishment of children in all settings**.

Explore our digital advocacy tools to support your advocacy efforts at outoftheshadows.global/en/advocacy-tools

About the Out of the Shadows Index:

The Out of the Shadows Index is the global benchmark of national governments' efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and adolescents. The Index is researched and developed by Economist Enterprise, with advocacy and engagement efforts led by Together for Girls. Learn more at outoftheshadows.global.