



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

POSITION PAPER ON

**YOUTH VIOLENCE and the
*YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT***

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Position Paper on
Youth Violence and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is the largest national organization of women in Canada with more than 102,000 members represented in every province and territory and in the military.

The League commends the federal government for the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* as updated in April 2003. This Act leaves the door open for provincial initiatives that focus on assisting young offenders to develop an understanding of how their offences/crimes impact the community, the victims and themselves. The League further commends the federal government for promoting a justice system for young persons that is separate from that of adults.

The League acknowledges that the Act is substantially weighted toward rehabilitation, as suggested in the original position paper on this subject adopted by national council at the 74th annual national convention in August 1994. The League has always supported the federal government in initiatives that lead to acceptance and responsibility, forgiveness, reconciliation, reform and reintegration of young offenders.

Several provinces do not have the financial means to put the most vital aspects of the Act into place. Therefore, the League recommends that the federal government provide the necessary financial support for full implementation of the Act.

The League further calls upon the federal government to monitor provincial utilization of the Act and to ensure that culturally sensitive treatment programs are mandatory in every province.