



FACT SHEET

VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

Rates of Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls:

- First Nation, Métis and Inuit women in Ontario experience domestic violence, assault, homicide and sexual exploitation at significantly greater rates than other women in the province.
- Indigenous women are approximately 3.5 times more likely to experience some form of spousal violence than non-Indigenous women.
- Approximately 75% of survivors of sexual assault in Indigenous communities are young women under the 18 years of age.
- Indigenous women make up only 1.2% of Ontario's population yet 6% of female homicide victims.
- Indigenous women and girls are three times more likely than non-Indigenous women to report having been a victim of violent crime; this higher rate of victimization was seen in stranger, acquaintance, and intimate partner violence.
- Indigenous women and girls are more likely to be killed by a stranger than non-Indigenous women; almost 17% of those charged were strangers.
- Ontario is one of the major hubs for sex trafficking in Canada. This type of sexual exploitation affects vulnerable people everywhere. Those most at risk are young women, many of them Indigenous women and girls.

Root Causes of Violence Against Indigenous Women:

- Deep-seated colonial attitudes that perpetuate racism and discrimination.
- These factors are compounded by the misogyny and sexism feeding violence against women across Ontario.
- Colonialism imposed patriarchal attitudes on traditional societies. These views disrupted Indigenous cultures that had long honoured and respected women in their balanced roles with men.
- Attempted assimilation; including the abuses of the residential school system. The schools operated in Ontario for more than 150 years. This system cut out generations of youth off from their cultures, values, families and communities. The lingering impact continues to affect families and communities today.



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in Indigenous communities are
YOUNG WOMEN UNDER THE AGE OF 18

What is the Ontario Native Women's Association Doing?

- ONWA honours the roles of Indigenous women and girls at the centre of our families and communities.
- ONWA provides culture based services for the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.
- ONWA and the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) have written a *Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Indigenous Women* in 2007.
- Executive Committee (EC) to End Violence Against Indigenous Women is a coordination body that seeks to end violence against Indigenous women through oversight and guidance to the provincial implementation of initiatives under *Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women*. ONWA along with other provincial Indigenous organizations are partners on the Executive Committee.
- ONWA has been monitoring the National Inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and has been accepted for standing as a regional organization.
- The Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) launched a public awareness video in September 2016 titled *Breaking Free, Breaking Through*.
- ONWA hosts a Sisters In Spirit vigil each October 4th to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

References:

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Native Women's Association of Canada. (2010c). What Their Stories Tell Us: Research findings from the Sisters in Spirit initiative. Ottawa: NWAC

Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women (2016). Government of Ontario.

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Head Office: 150 City Road · P.O. Box15-684 City Road · Fort William First Nation, ON P7J1J7 · Toll Free: 1-800-667-0816 · Phone: (807) 577-1492 · Fax: (807) 623-1104 · **E-mail:** onwa@onwa.ca



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