



Syilx Okanagan Nation Annual Gathering Raises Awareness About Violence and Systemic Racism Regarding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Girls Two-Spirit+ and Kin

tkwəniwt (Westbank), Syilx Territory: From October 5-6, 2022, the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) will host the 4th Annual Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ Gathering. This event supports our Nation members to come together in solidarity, share stories and experience, and take action to ensure women, girls, two-spirit plus and kin are safe in their homes and communities. For more information on the event, including on the keynote speaker, Connie Greyeyes, please [visit here](#).

ONA acknowledges that this Gathering takes place the day after a Sisters in Spirit Walk and Candlelight Vigil on October 4, 2022. This event also to honour and remember our MMIWG2S+, while also bringing awareness to the issues of the pervasive violence that Indigenous women, girls and two spirited plus and kin face on a daily basis.

“We Stand and Gather in solidarity with our communities and First Nation’s across Canada to end violence. Though there has been an increased recognition of the brutality that our women, girls and two-spirited plus and kin face, these issues only continue to proliferate. We see there has been a failure to address the systemic violence and impacts of colonization that persist to this day regardless of the MMIWG2S+ reports and action plans. Everything, from the deep trauma created by Indian Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop, to the effects of structural systemic institutional racism whether in health care systems RCMP, the various bureaucracies themselves and our own communities do result in further trauma and violence. Every citizen must take this responsibility serious enough to be aware of their own role in this and specifically to read the 231 Calls to justice outlined by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girl’s final report “Reclaiming Power and Place’,” Allan Louis, ONA Health Representative, states.

Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ have seen alarmingly high rates of life threatening violence and disproportionally are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence than non-aboriginal women. An estimated 4,000 Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBT+people have went missing or been murdered between 1980-2012, with some speculating the number could be as high as 4500 to date. Though they make only 4% of the population, these atrocities are 25% of cases in Canada, highlighting the great disparity that our people continue to struggle with every day.

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The ONA developed the You Empowered Strong (YES) Program to create a sustainable model of support to our families and community to begin to address the impact of family violence and sexual assault. It provides community awareness, education and training, as well as resources on de-normalizing violence and sexual assault as one of the key steps to create change and change behaviors. Using Syilx knowledge and strength-based practice to build the capacity of families and creating a strong peer network that support the wellbeing of the community.

For more information please contact:

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