



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE
EMPOWERING WOMEN BY PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT TO EXPLORE THEIR NEEDS

feminist DISPATCH

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre is a non-profit, community-based feminist organization in Thunder Bay, Ontario. We work with self-identified women to increase their access to knowledge, skills and resources so they can make informed choices.



Welcome to our inaugural newsletter!

Consider the Feminist Dispatch our effort to keep you in the Women's Centre loop! We'll give program updates, highlight feminist initiatives, and share links (in pink) to relevant resources. We also welcome [submissions](#) of resources and original writing/artwork that aligns in some way with [our work](#).

May is a month of multitudes: [Asian Heritage Month](#), [Elizabeth Fry Week](#), [Mental Health Week](#), [Mother's Day](#), [Red Dress Day](#), and [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#). These national commemorations and public awareness campaigns highlight some of the complex and interrelated issues that impact women's lives.

But during these weeks designated to recognize the failure of our legal and other institutional systems ability to respond to sexist, racist violence, we see evidence that it is happening everywhere, for the same [patriarchal reasons](#). We see infuriating headlines like "US Supreme Court drafts a ruling to overturn Roe v Wade," wonder if we're living in a Margaret Atwood novel, and worry about [maternal health outcomes](#). We see the ongoing impacts of state control and criminalization of women who are survivors of violence in Canada, in Thunder Bay, every day. Our institutional systems, such as criminal and family courts, repeatedly reinforce the surveillance, subjugation and criminalization of women who are mothers and/or survivors of gender based violence while disregarding basic safety concerns for women.

So what can we do? We can listen to the ones most affected and amplify their voices, celebrate and care for ourselves and each other, limit our news consumption, make space for [rage](#) and [writing](#), [make art together](#), share resources and create new ones, and/or participate in systemic advocacy efforts. Here at the Women's Centre, we will keep doing our best to help women navigate violence, poverty and systemic discrimination every day.

One of the most vital ways we sustain ourselves is by building communities of resistance, places where we know we are not alone. --bell hooks



Artwork created during The Art of Resistance Conference (2019)

"Sometimes people ask us whether we still need Sexual Assault Awareness Month. 'Aren't people already aware?' Yes... and no. People know about sexual assault. But many do not understand the ways in which our systems fail survivors." (@AnovaFuture)

Educational Resources:

- Peace by Piece podcast episode [The 21st Piece: Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#)
- [Sexual Violence and COVID-19 Infographic](#)
- [Issue 17: Intimate Partner Sexual Violence](#)
- [Recognizing and Responding to the Commonly Misunderstood Reactions to Sexual Assault: Exploring a New Online Curriculum](#)
- [Roots and Resilience: Exploring Healing Centred Engagement and Pleasure with Black Survivors of Sexual Violence](#)
- Check out the [campaigns](#) on our project site: [Analysis to Action on Gender Based Violence](#)

24/7 Crisis Support:

- [Assaulted Women's Helpline](#): 1-866-863-0511
- [Beendigen Anishinabe Women's Crisis Home & Family Healing Agency](#): 807-622-1121 or 1-888-200-9997 or Talk4Healing Help Line: 1-855-554-4325
- [Faye Peterson House](#): 807-345-0450 or 1-800-465-6971
- [Sexual Abuse Centre Thunder Bay](#): 807-344-4502 or 1-866-311-5927

Health Services:

[Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre](#) (medical care/consultation for survivors by specially-trained nurses at TBRHSC): 807-684-6751

Gender Based Violence Advocacy: How we can help survivors

Navigation Advocacy

The GBV Navigation Advocate provides support for women experiencing or at risk of experiencing physical and/or sexual violence or coercive control by a partner, family member or acquaintance. We can help by:

- Ensuring that women who are experiencing or at high risk of gender-based violence have access to ongoing and appropriate support and referrals
- Coordinating with VAW service providers to ensure that critical information is shared

For more information or to make a referral, contact Jennifer at navigator@nwowc.org or (807) 935-8042.

Court Advocacy

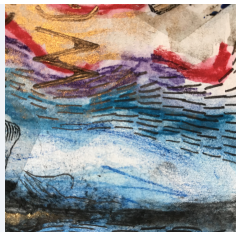
The Gender Based Violence Court Advocate works directly with self-identified women who are navigating various court systems. We can help by:

- Assisting with preparing for court
- Ensuring coordination between various legal sectors (criminal, family, immigration etc.)
- Providing court accompaniment and emotional support

For more information or to make a referral, contact Emma at gbvcourt@nwowc.org or (807) 935-8599.

Craftivism: Mixed Media Collage

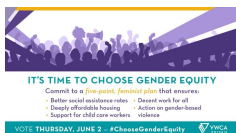
May 11 | 12-3pm



Artwork: N. Moskwa

Make Pre-Election Postcards using Mixed Media Collage with Natalie Hotson. Join us online from your own home or in person at the Women's Centre. We will provide resources on election issues and **Mindful Makers Collective** will provide art kits for those who need them.

[Find out more](#)



Provincial Election 2022

Voting Day: Tuesday, June 2

- YWCA Ontario launched a provincial election campaign **#ChooseGenderEquity** urging candidates to commit to a *five-point, feminist plan*, and produced the **YWCA Ontario Provincial Election Guide 2022**.
- AODA compliant **Elections Ontario App** provides information about when, where, how to vote, and a scannable version of your voter information card.



Good Food Box: Mother's Day Garden + Plant Market

May 8 | 10am - 4pm

We're selling plant babies at the **Mother's Day garden + plant market** at Goods & Co. to raise funds for the Good Food Box. Come see us before we sell out!

[Learn more about the Good Food Box](#)

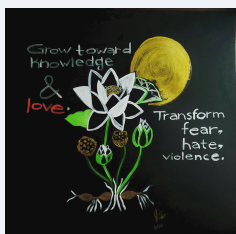


Example of previous year's box

Good Food Box: Good Garden Box Annual Spring Fundraiser

This year's theme is HERBS! Boxes are \$60 (tax receipts issued for \$20 donation portion) and will be ready for pick up in early June. Quantities are limited--reserve yours by contacting the Good Food Box at gfb@nwowc.org.

[Find out more](#)



Artwork: jayal chung

Celebrating Asian Heritage

- **Quarantine Qapsule (QQ)** is a digital archive of the Asian Canadian experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Project 1907**, a grassroots group of Asian women, aims to elevate Asian voices that are underrepresented and undervalued in mainstream political, social and cultural discourse.
- **Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice** works with Chinese-speaking seniors to ensure equitable access to medical support, housing, income, food security, and government services. ([@yarrowsociety](#))
- Yum-cha dai-ga - (let's have tea/dim-sum together) a podcast by **jayal chung** about family, community, love, future generations. Listen on **Anchor** or **Spotify**.



Community Events + Resources

- **National Elizabeth Fry Week:** Learn more about the [Elizabeth Fry Society of NWO](#)
- **Mental Health Awareness Week:** [Eight Agencies Tackle Urgent Mental Health Needs](#) by offering FREE counselling and support across Thunder Bay and District at [various locations](#).
- **Tomorrow Without Violence** - May 14: A group for children, teens and moms who have experienced intimate partner violence.
- **Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC):** Find [Position Papers and resources](#) about current issues related to reproductive rights in Canada. They're hosting a workshop called [Activism 101: Engaging with Politicians](#) in June.
- **Steps to Justice** has a new [letter-writing tool](#) to help people complain to a business about a product or service they bought.

From the Feminist Archives

[Rise Up!](#) is a digital archive of feminist activism in Canada from the 1970s to the 1990s

- [Spring 1970: The Abortion Caravan](#)
- [CARAL – Abortion in Law and History Pamphlet](#)
- [Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics \(OCAC\)](#)



Computer Space Available

Women can access a computer or video conferencing in a private space at the Women's Centre for:

- Counselling or Healthcare Appointments
- Job Interviews
- Virtual Legal Clinic
- Lawyer's Appointments
- Virtual Court Matters

[Find out more](#)

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre relies on government funding and private donations to continue our work. We gratefully acknowledge the support of volunteers, donors, and the Investing in Women's Future Program of the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

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