



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.



From our Executive Director

Hello All:

It has been a REALLY long winter, but judging from the noisy v's overhead, even the geese agree that spring has now arrived. And there are many reasons to celebrate this particular month, and no excuse to stay indoors! Indigenous People's Day brings the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year and an important time to honour the rising power and persistence of Indigenous People (and review the TRC's Principles of Reconciliation).

And, PRIDE Time is here, so round up your rainbow queer gear and get out and dance (or Move Mindfully) in the streets or at one of the local venues! Perhaps, in honour of Seniors month, you'll also spend some time with one of your favourite queer elders.

We continue our work here with women experiencing control and violence from abusive partners. Our legal intern from last summer has returned to help women with documentation and research for a few months. We have added daily criminal court observation to our task list, and several of our staff are participating in a provincial family law court watch project, organized by Luke's Place and their Legal Director Pam Cross. Court observation is providing us with a lot of insight regarding the ways in which the legal system is failing women, and is one of the starting points for our upcoming legal information series about Coercive Control, gender based violence and the ways women are discredited and sometimes criminalized in the context of intimate partner violence. We hope that women who have experienced gender based violence and control will join us in person to hear these sessions in a supportive environment. We'll provide the tea and cookies, of course.

On the administrative front, the Women's Centre is just finishing a comprehensive evaluation and strategic planning exercise with the help of consultant Anne Ostrom. The final plan and impact report will be presented to our Board of Directors this week. This was a big piece of work we started in 2021, involving interviews of staff, board, volunteers, students and the women with whom we work. Now we have a solid plan with which to enter our 50th year of operation in 2023. That's right – the big 50 is coming up! Check out the section on archives to see what was happening back in the bad old days--there certainly was no PRIDE month!

Gwen O'Reilly, ED

Virtual Legal Information Series:

WOMEN CRIMINALIZED IN THE CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

For service providers and self-identified women navigating the family or criminal law systems

Part 1: Coercive Control and the Criminalization of Women Experiencing Domestic Violence

Mon, June 13th
1-3pm on zoom

[Register](#)

Part 2: Coercive Control and Intersections with Family Law

Mon, June 20th
1-3pm on zoom

[Register](#)

Part 3: Enhancing Women's Safety: Survivor-Centered Perspectives

Wed, June 22nd
1-3pm on zoom

[Register](#)

Have you survived or are you living in a controlling relationship? Join us at the Women's Centre with other women to learn from these helpful sessions in a supportive environment. Coffee/tea and light refreshments will be provided. Confirm your preference for in-person attendance when you register (you'll still receive the zoom link in case you change your mind).

Rainbow Craftivism

JUNE 9th from 3-6pm

Join us outdoors at the Women's Centre to

Rainbow Craftivism at the Women's Centre

Join us to celebrate and decorate for Pride!

Bring your knitting, crochet, collage, macramé or other project, bring a sidewalk chair, bring a lawn chair or folding chair if you have one and we will provide some chairs and supplies as needed.

Where?

Back parking lot at 73 Cumberland St. North

When?

Thursday, June 9, from 3 to 6 pm

RAIN DATE: Friday, June 10, 3 to 6 pm



Register online [here](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rainbow-craftivism-at-the-womens-centre-tickets-645554) or by phone (877) 525-5544 or (416) 530-5544



celebrate and decorate for Pride! Bring a current craft project and a camp chair, if you have one.

(Rain date: June 10th from 3-6pm)

[RSVP](#)



Good Food Box

Order from your host-site by June 6th

Pick up from your host-site on June 15th

[Learn more about the GFB](#)

The Good Food Box got Back in the Groove with Mindful Movement!

It's been a long pandemic and for many seniors, especially those living alone, this meant a lot of social isolation over the past couple of years. Since a good portion of our Good Food Box (GFB) customer base is 55 years or better, we wanted to do something fun to help folks reconnect in person, re-engage and 'get back in the groove,' so we offered five Mindful Movement dance sessions to our GFB community (host-sites, volunteers and customers) at two locations: West Thunder Community Centre and Thunder Bay 55+ Centre.

Nele Schoutetten, a certified mindful dance instructor, led us in a mindful movement practice to help us connect with our inner rhythm, flow, and dance. We were guided through conscious dance, free beat, body awareness, and breath work. We practiced listening to music with our whole body and noticing what happens when we follow our own natural movements. And we always concluded with some time to share tea, conversation, and some good food snacks--of course!

We've been amazed at the response to our Mindful Movement sessions: 74 participants (plus a waitlist) over five sessions. And five participants also signed up as new Good Food Box volunteers!

Here's some of the wonderful feedback we received:

- *My first time here. Enjoyed it very much. Great music and I felt my body moving freely. I will come again for sure. -M.P.*
- *These movements help me to think positive. -L.O.*
- *Love the movement. Not strenuous on the body. -B.W.*
- *I am becoming more confident to just do my own thing! -N.W.*

STAY TUNED: we're planning more dance sessions for seniors over the summer AND a big outdoor dance party in August!

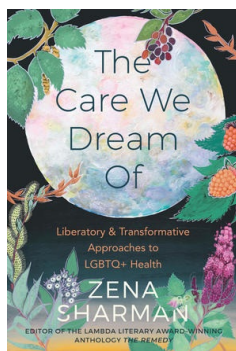
Community Events + Resources



- **PRIDE Event schedule** for Thunder Bay. **"REUNITE!"** - Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay and Thunder Pride Association create partnership for Pride Month. #YQTPRIDE2022
- **June 9th:** Kendomang Zhagodenamnon Lodge (The KZ Lodge program at Hammarskjold) is **hosting an outdoor fire ceremony** outside Thunder Bay Art Gallery at 10am. This vigil will serve as opening event for their community exhibition, *Her Story* (MMIWG).
- **June 15th:** **World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** is hosting a webinar **"Rights Don't Get Old: Let's Spark Social Change"** with experts on aging and elder abuse, politicians and community members from 1-2:30pm EST.
- **June 15th:** Free BBQ & Takeout Lunch at **55+ Centre** on River St. for seniors. Call 684-3276 to place an order and get a curbside pick up time.
- **June 17th:** **Stop Cyberbullying Day** is a global day of awareness and activities to promote diversity and inclusion on and offline. #STOPCYBERBULLYINGDAY
- **June 18th:** **Activism 101: Engaging with Politicians** with Paige Mason from 1-2:30 EST on zoom. Presented by the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC).
- **June 21st:** **National Indigenous Peoples Day.** Follow @NADTBAY on facebook to find out about events on Anemki Wajiw, FWFN.
- **Aging Without Violence (AWV):** a project by OAITH to enhance responses and advocacy efforts when supporting older women impacted by violence
- Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse: **Indigenous Older Adults**
- Best Practice Guideline: **Promoting 2SLGBTQI+ Health Equity**
- from Egale: **2SLGBTQI Dementia Networks of Support**
- **The TransFormed Project: Addressing Partner Violence from Two-Spirit, Nonbinary and Trans Perspectives** is a bilingual, community-based research and action initiative that aims to remove barriers to health care and social services for Two-Spirit, Nonbinary and Trans survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV)
- **Care Work in the Recovery Economy: Towards a Caring Economy** report by Gender and the Economy (GATE)
- FAFIA report: **The Toxic Culture of the RCMP: Misogyny, Racism, and Violence against Women in Canada's National Police Force**

Loud Women Book Club

The Loud Women Collective's monthly book club reads exclusively feminist non-fiction covering a wide range of topics,



encouraging learning, personal growth, and allyship. Thunder Bay chapter meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month in store at Goods & Co Market. The book for June is *The Care We Dream Of: Liberatory & Transformative Approaches to LGBTQ+ Health* by Zena Sharman.

[Find out more](#)

From the Feminist Archives

Rise Up! is a digital archive of feminist activism in Canada from the 1970s to the 1990s

- [Organizing for the 80s: Final Report of the 1981 Lesbian Conference](#)
- [Motherhood, Lesbianism and Child Custody \(1977\)](#)
- [Protests, Parades and Potlucks: The Lesbian Mothers Defence Fund](#)
- 30 years ago this month: [Northern Woman Journal: Vol. 14, No. 2 - June 1992](#)

Gender Based Violence: How we can help

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.



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 funding from the Investing in Women's Future Program of the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE).

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