



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

feminist DISPATCH

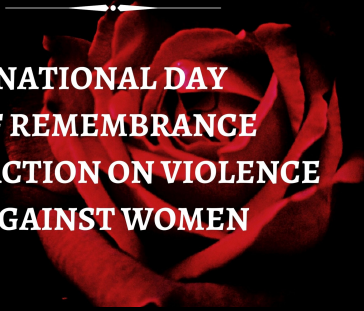
The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre is a non-profit, community-based feminist organization in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

We work with self-identified women to increase their access to knowledge, skills and resources so they can make informed choices.

December 6, 1989 | Montreal Massacre

WE REMEMBER

NATIONAL DAY
OF REMEMBRANCE
AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN



From our Executive Director

December 6th, 1989. I remember the day when 14 young women engineering students were murdered by Marc Lépine because he thought of them as feminists. The Women's Centre had held its annual meeting that very night. We sat in our tiny feminist enclave discussing the dry administrative details of non-profit governance, unaware of the traumatic event unfolding in Montreal. There were no cell phones, texts or twitter then--none of us would hear the events of the day until we returned home and turned on the radio or TV. That event and its fallout both galvanized and vilified feminists and anti-violence activists for years afterward. What followed was a stark reminder of how invested the powers that be are in denying the obvious: gender-based and colonial violence is a structural, societal problem. (You can read a first hand account of this in Joan Baril's article "[The Centre of the Backlash](#).")

We still hold vigils to remember those 14 women and the significance of gender-based and racialized violence, but the details have faded, and for many younger people are no longer in living memory. The aftermath of the Montreal Massacre, as it was dubbed at the time, took the form of a vitriolic argument between women's groups and the status quo. Was Lépine motivated by misogyny or by mental illness? Was it hatred of women, or simply a random act of unpreventable violence? Now that we hold thousands of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in our collective memory, that argument seems so naive.

The basic facts remain: Marc Lépine murdered 14 women in 1989 because they were women. A white supremacist, Jeremy Skibicki murdered four Indigenous women in 2022 because they were Indigenous women: Rebecca Contois, Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran, and "Buffalo Woman" (who has not yet been identified). While no one seems to be denying the connection between Skibicki's belief system and his devastating actions, our legal system will still treat these crimes as individual, isolated events – and not as structural problems that we could solve by ending poverty, white supremacy, colonialism and sexism.

There was a feminist slogan after the 1989 murders: "First mourn; then work for change." Many took that to heart, holding vigils, building memorials and then organizing around gun control, men's awareness of violence against women, government policy on GBV and women's services. But still this violence persists, and many would argue it is increasing. What hasn't

changed? Lack of accountability for perpetrators, however you see that. Erosion of our social safety net. No political will to address the structural foundations of colonialism, racism, sexism, poverty.

The problem is patriarchal, colonial, imperialist and intersectional. Who is better equipped to understand this unequal distribution of power stuff than feminists and women's activists? Many powerful men were brought to task by the Me Too movement. What would happen if we all put our energy and resources directly behind creating safety for Indigenous women and others vulnerabilized by their genders? The new slogan should be "First mourn, then *demand* change."

- [ONWA Outraged by Winnipeg Murders and Violence that Continues to Plague Indigenous Women Nationally](#)
- [Letter of Solidarity \(TBDCCEWA - Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre is a Member\)](#)
- [Joint Solidarity Statement / Déclaration conjointe de solidarité \(OCASI\)](#)
- [Joint Statement in solidarity with Indigenous families mourning the murder of four Indigenous women \(Action Canada et al\)](#)
- [Joint Statement on the Release of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence \(advocates who developed a Roadmap for the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence\)](#)

Gwen O'Reilly, ED

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Memorial Vigil

December 6th | 7pm | OPSEU Membership Centre, 326 Memorial Avenue
Everyone welcome. Light refreshments. Donations for Women's Shelters are also welcomed.



**We Are
HIRING
Event Coordinator**

We're seeking an Event Coordinator to plan and arrange our 50th Anniversary Celebration. The ideal candidate will be familiar with the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, our mission and values.

This is a contract position from January 9 to May 12, 2023.

How to Apply

Please submit your cover letter and resumé by **December 9** to:
50th Anniversary Committee, Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre
admin@nwowc.org | 73 Cumberland St. N, Suite 101, Thunder Bay P7A 4L8

[View full job description](#)



NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE
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CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS



Since 1973, the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre has worked to improve women's safety and access to justice. We've launched programs to address economic inequality, food insecurity, and gender-based violence, while empowering women to share creative strategies with one another and be their own best advocates.

We work with self-identified women to increase their access to knowledge, skills, and resources so they can make informed and strategic choices around a variety of issues: poverty, child welfare, family and criminal law, immigration, sexual harassment, human rights and more.

We work to increase public understanding of issues that affect women such as violence, poverty, sexism, racism, sexual orientation, access to justice and human rights through presentations and information clinics. We also actively advocate for systemic change in public policies that negatively impact women in our community.

We work and live on the traditional land of the Anishinabek People, and the territory of Fort William First Nation—signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. We recognize that this and other territories and their people have been circumscribed and harmed by systematic forces of colonialism. This violence was first perpetrated by European settlers and continues to be perpetrated by our governments, institutions, and individuals. The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre remains committed to addressing these past and present wrongs by working to end racist and misogynist violence, and by building allyship and working in solidarity with Indigenous organizations and people.

nwowomenscentre.org

Our small but mighty feminist non-profit is seeking self-identified women to sit on our volunteer Board of Directors, the strategic heart of our organization:

- ✓ We encourage applications from women who have been subjected to intersecting oppressions or who see their lived experiences/realities reflected in our advocacy work
- ✓ Fundraising, special events planning, finance, legal, or human resources experience an asset
- ✓ No previous Board experience necessary

REQUEST AN INFO PACKAGE

admin@nwowc.org 935-8043



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Canada

Ontario



Holiday Crafting

DEC 17th | NOON to 4PM

Join us in making greeting cards for the holidays or any occasion. Materials provided, but feel free to bring your own embellishments too!

Register

Good Food Box



Order from your host-site by Dec. 12th
Pick up from your host-site on Dec. 21st

Locally Grown Good Food Fundraiser Boxes:

(last one of the year!)

Order from the Women's Centre by Dec. 14th

Pick up at the Moose Hall on Dec. 21st

Available July - December for \$60/box (\$20 tax receipt). Limited quantities! Email GFB@nwowc.org to reserve your Locally Grown Good Food Fundraiser Box today! Find details [here](#).

[Learn more about the GFB](#)



This holiday season, please consider a donation to the Thunder Bay Good Food Box program.

The Good Food Box aims to improve access to fresh healthy fruits & veggies by making fresh healthy low cost boxes of produce available in over 30 locations across our city and throughout the region. Unfortunately, the cost of fresh fruit and vegetables is up (12.9% increase for fruits & 11.8% for vegetables) and many folks in our community are finding it increasingly difficult to afford their monthly Box. To ensure our customers maintain access to affordable fresh produce, we offer Good Food Coupons (GFCs) to those who need subsidy. This also helps to maintain their engagement in the program. (*Source: cbc.ca/news/health/food-prices-canada-health-impacts)

For donations over \$25 you will receive a charitable receipt plus a set of 5 holiday gift cards. Cards will be available for pick up December 8th.

With these funds we can continue to administer the Good Food Box program, as well as provide much needed coupons to our customers to help subsidize the cost of their monthly Good Food Box.



Fresh Fruits and Vegetables should be accessible to all!

To order a set of cards, to make a donation or for more information, please contact the GFB office at:
tel: (807) 345-7819 or e-mail: gfb@nwowc.org

For 64% of our customers one Good Food Box represents half to all of their monthly fruit and vegetable intake.

86% of customers surveyed reported their children eat more fruit and vegetables because of the GFB.

"The Good Food Box helps me stretch my food dollars & provide better for my family"
-statistics and quote from GFB customer survey

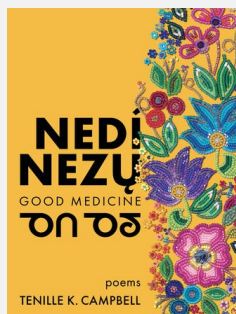


Community Events + Additional Resources

- December 6th, 2-3pm (ET): **Feel empowered to make a difference with Draw the Line** (Online Workshop): This National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women let's talk about safe and effective bystander intervention. 'Draw the Line' is a bystander intervention campaign developed by the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC). Register [here](#).
- December 8th, 7:30-8:30pm (ET): **Gender-Based Violence Prevention Education in School Communities** is developed in partnership with Egale Canada, Ontario Coalition for Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC), White Ribbon Canada and Ophea, and open to elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educators, administrators,

staff, and school community partners. Register for this online panel discussion [here](#).

- December 13th, 1-2:30pm (ET): **Living with Coercive Control: Youth Perspectives**. VAW Learning Network webinar. Register [here](#).
- Find our **16 DAYS of ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE** campaign (Nov 25 - Dec 10) on our website: [What's New](#), and our facebook page: [@nwowc](#).
- **Call for Submissions: ONWA's Strong Hands Stop Violence Poetry Book**. Deadline is December 31st. Submission form is [here](#).
- **Lila Fahlman Scholarships for Canadian Muslim Women** enrolled in a full-time undergraduate or certificate programs at a Canadian college or university. Learn more about donating or applying [here](#).
- Film: *Marker of Change: The Story of the Women's Monument* (1998). Directed by Moira Simpson.
- Podcast: *Alright, Now What?* Episode: [Girls, Rape Culture and Colonialism](#).
- [Banned in the U.S., not approved for breastfeeding — why are so many moms taking this drug?](#) (CBC, December 6)
- [Future World: Talking to Slow Factory about battling Instagram and 'pastel-washing.'](#) An interview with Lebanese designer and activist Céline Semaan.
- [New anti-poverty initiative focuses on lived experiences to help shape policy](#) (*The Conversation*, October 30)
- [How Idle No More transformed Canada](#) (*CBC Radio*, November 26)
- [How hiring more women IT experts improves cybersecurity risk management](#) (*The Conversation*, December 5)



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 December is *nedi nezu (Good Medicine)* by Tenille K. Campbell.

[Find out more](#)

From the Feminist Archives

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

- 33 years ago: [The Montreal Massacre - December 6, 1989](#)
- 45 years ago: [Northern Woman Journal - Vol. 4, No. 1 - December 1977](#)

**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](#)

CALL
FOR
SUBMISSIONS

To contribute a photo of your original artwork, a short piece of writing, a resource or a link to a community event that aligns with our [mission](#), please get in touch! All newsletter-related inquiries and submissions can be directed to Stacey at communications@nwowc.org.



And here's Bruley when he was a holiday pup, serenely contemplating life.

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, Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), and the Canadian Women's Foundation.

Support Our Work

AAGB
V

Advocac
y

Good Food
Box

Public
Education

What's
New



Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

73 Cumberland St. N., Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4L8

(807) 345-7802 | ed@nwowc.org

www.nwowomenscentre.org



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