



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.



Our PURPLE themed Locally Grown Good Garden Box in June 2023

### From our Executive Director

I really wish I could stop talking about this, I mean, seriously, having gender-based violence on my mind for the last thirty some years is a bit much. But here we are again.

OAITH is reporting **30 femicides in the last 30 weeks** in Ontario. And the Province of Ontario has this past week rejected widespread calls to declare IPV an epidemic, this among a long list of other refusals to change critical policy and service – changes that would directly prevent more women being killed.

Last week, NOWC Staff travelled to Petawawa to meet with other women's anti violence advocates on the anniversary of the **Culleton, Kuzyk and Warmerdam Inquest** in Renfrew County. The room was full of advocates from across Ontario who, like us, every day, work with women experiencing gender-based violence. There was very little disagreement in the room about whether or not all 86 recommendations from the Renfrew Inquest were urgently necessary, especially as the femicide count went up over the course of the meeting. Hours before the actual anniversary date, late in the evening, the Province released it's response to the list. And that response was not about trying to do better, or to keep women safer.

Apparently, they forgot to read the whole definition of "epidemic"; and the Premier himself apparently did not remember that the man who murdered the three women in Renfrew County was on probation during his killing spree, because he blamed the federal government for this provincial failing. The government response implies that they believe they are doing a perfectly fine job of responding to GBV. I would not want 30 plus femicides in as many weeks on my resume, but apparently, we don't share the same values. Like the value that women and children should be entitled to live free from violence and coercion. Unlike the Province of Ontario, we will not be throwing up our hands and saying "How is this our problem?". We will keep helping women to escape and live free from violence, and pushing for the changes we know are needed to make it so. So, if you call and we don't pick up the phone on the first ring, you'll know what we are up to!

-Gwen O'Reilly

# epidemic 1 of 2 adjective

ep-i-dem-ic (e-pa-'de-mik «i»)

Synonyms of *epidemic* >

- 1 : affecting or tending to affect a disproportionately large number of individuals within a population, community, or region at the same time  
| typhoid was *epidemic*
- 2 a : excessively prevalent  
b : **CONTAGIOUS** sense 4  
| *epidemic* laughter
- 3 : characterized by very widespread growth or extent : of, relating to, or constituting an epidemic  
| the practice had reached *epidemic* proportions

The first, most symbolic *and* most significant recommendation is **to declare Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) an epidemic**. And **many municipalities** are doing just that, following the early example of Lanark County.

Further reading:

'Feels like a kick in the face': Advocates criticize Ontario government's response to Ottawa Valley triple murder coroner's inquest

Province rejects inquest's call to recognize intimate partner violence as an epidemic

'I burst into tears': Advocates angry at Ontario's intimate partner violence response

Righteous Rage

The Shadow Pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19

## Financial Literacy Sessions

In June, we hosted three lunchtime drop-in sessions called **Money Matters: an informal learning circle for women** with Heather McLeod, a local Certified Financial Planner. Heather shared stories, information and strategies, in response to what the women in attendance wanted to talk about. As a result, we talked about our relationships with money, 'good' vs. 'bad' debt, how to start investing as a beginner, why an emergency fund is important, and what to focus on when saving just isn't an option.

Do you have financial questions but don't know where to look for answers? Do you find money stuff hard to understand or talk about, especially these past few years? Would you like to meet up with some like-minded women to chat about money issues and strategies in a comfortable setting? (No need to share details about your personal finances!)

### We're doing some planning for the fall...

Is there a specific financial topic you'd like to learn more about?

If there's interest, Heather is happy to spend some time with us again. We can offer drop-in style sessions, or we could host a session on a topic that a few women would like to explore together. If you have an idea for a future session or a couple of friends who'd like a comfortable space to chat with an expert over coffee, reply to this newsletter or send an email to Stacey at [communications@nwowc.org](mailto:communications@nwowc.org) to let us know and we'll make it happen!



# GOOD FOOD BOX

Thanks to new funding from TBDSSAB's Homeless Prevention Program, we are able to add healthy, protein-rich legumes and grains to your Good Food Box! The newsletter accompanying your box includes delicious recipes with the box contents in mind.

Boxes remain \$22 each.

ORDER your July GFB from your host site by **July 10**  
PICK UP from your host site on **July 19**

## 2023 LOCALLY GROWN GOOD FOOD FUNDRAISER BOXES



Our **LOCALLY GROWN BOXES** are packed with a sampling of the best & freshest locally grown & produced goods from a number of local farms & producers, including: Sleepy G Farms, Root Cellar Gardens, Jen's Strawberries, Veg-e-zate, Beant Bees & Honey, Thunder Oak Cheese Farm, The Squash Queen, Mountain Stream Orchard, Vandeweyer Greenhouses, Pitch Creek Farm, B&B Farm, Morning Moon Farm, Bill Hunt Farms, Belluz Farms, Brule Creek Farms, Hanna Road Produce, Roots to Harvest, and more!

Boxes available July through December:  
Pick Up Dates—3rd Wed. of the month\*:  
July 26th | Thurs. August 17th | September 20th  
October 18th | November 15th | December 20th

Limited quantities available  
To purchase a box please visit  
[www.goodfoodboxth.org](http://www.goodfoodboxth.org)  
For more information e-mail: [gfb@nwocw.org](mailto:gfb@nwocw.org)

## It's Locally Grown Good Food Box Season!

To raise funds in support of our GFB program operations, the Women's Centre sells fundraiser boxes of local goods several times a year.

Boxes are \$60 each, and include a \$20 charitable donation to the Good Food Box Program. July's pick up is on the 19th at the Moose Hall on Fort William Rd.

And guess what?! You can now order our fundraiser boxes on our brand new website designed by Sociable thanks to funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation!

Place your order  
online now



Leeks in the Boat castaways from L-R: Sandy (GFB Board), Sherry (GFB Coordinator), Erika (NOWC Summer Law Student), Sherrie-Lee (NOWC Board)

## Teamwork makes the dream work!

Well, it seems that our **Leeks in the Boat** castaways stole at show last week at the United Way's **Great Lighthouse Rescue** last week! Our team name and DIY leek costumes garnered plenty of compliments and chuckles, and we were delighted to have a couple of our lovely GFB volunteers there to cheer us on

during the big event. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, we surpassed our team's \$2000 goal by raising a whopping **\$4,004 for the United Way**--one of the GFB's longtime and most supportive funders!

Here's some media coverage of the lighthouse rescue event on June 28th by TBNewsWatch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnEDFxu3ql4>

Since Gwen was away at a conference with other staff during the event, the Women's Centre crew created a promotional video so she could put a call out for donations in advance. We thought you might enjoy a peek behind-the-scenes at our in-house 'special effects team' in action:

<https://vimeo.com/user199965410/lighthouserescuebts>

There's never a dull moment at your Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre. ☺

## Community Events + Additional Resources

### EVENTS

- [date postponed]: Artist talk by FWFN artist Helen Pelletier whose first solo exhibition, *Wiigwas Manidoog Descendants*, is on view at Thunder Bay Art Gallery.
- July 11th | 12-1pm EST: **20 Great Apps for Seniors** (digital literacy webinar hosted by Seniors Tech Services)
- July 25th | 10:30am - 1:30pm EST: **Intro to Radical Reproductive Justice** with Rania El Mugammar (\$55 or PWYC)
- July 28th | 6am - 4:30pm: **Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Against Human Trafficking** at Dilico Family Care on Fort William First Nation. Register [here](#).

### NEWS + RESOURCES

- **Lila Fahlman Scholarship** deadline is July 30, 2023; accepting applications from Canadian Muslim women who are enrolled in a full-time undergraduate or certificate program at a Canadian college or university.
- **Former NHL star calls attention to 'staggering' rate of concussions for domestic violence survivors**, Moira Wyton, *CBC News*, May 27, 2023
- **Abortion is a workplace issue: How managers can support employee access to reproductive health care**, Dimoff et al., *The Conversation*, June 21, 2023
- **Bad Forecast: The Illusion of Indigenous Inclusion and Representation in Climate Adaptation Plans in Canada**. Special Report by Janna Wale, Yellowhead Institute, May 2023
- **Upholding Indigenous Economic Relationships** with Shalene Jobin (brief video interview about gender in her new book *Upholding Indigenous Economic Relationships: Nehiyawak Narratives*, UBC Press, 2023)
- **Indigeneity and Disability: The Teachings of our Ancestors and Being in Relation Towards Harmonious Outcomes** by Sandra Yellowhorse
- **Exploring The Unique Challenges LGBTQ+ Workers Face**, Adam D.K. King, *The Maple*, June 19, 2023
- **Immigration detention continues in Canada despite the end of provincial agreements**, Mussell & Evans, *The Conversation*, June 14, 2023
- **The National Housing Strategy won't end homelessness without supportive housing**, Abe Oudshoorn, *The Conversation*, June 19, 2023

### PODCASTS:

- **Busted: Myth: Women don't negotiate**  
*Many people believe women don't negotiate enough. But research shows that women just face more backlash when they do negotiate. This month's Busted podcast episode explores how women can negotiate—from work-life balance to caring for loved ones.*
- **Creating Communities of Care** This groundbreaking podcast aims to



address the barriers and gaps in care experienced by African Nova Scotian and Urban Indigenous women in Kijipuktuk (Halifax, Nova Scotia). Through powerful conversations, inspiring stories, and thought-provoking discussions, we delve into the pressing issue of gender-based violence and explore culturally-specific programming designed to empower and uplift these communities.

- **Indigenous Journalisms: Part 3** (Media Indigena Summer Series) Candis Callison joins host/producer Rick Harp and special guest Anishinaabe journalist, author and speaker Tanya Talaga to discuss the [book] excerpt 'Settler-Colonialism and Journalism.'

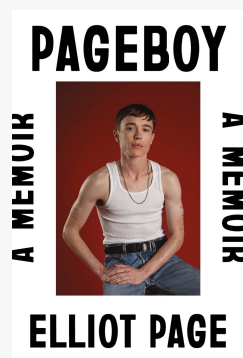


## Mutual Aid Opportunity

While we continue to advocate for changes to policies and practices that make women disproportionately vulnerable to violence and poverty, we know that access to some basic material items can still be helpful. We also recognize the importance of taking care of one another, and we know that many NOWC supporters might appreciate an opportunity to extend support to women in our community in other ways. Informed by our conversations with women who visit the Centre, these items would be especially helpful lately:

- **adult monthly bus pass**
- reusable water bottles
- new socks
- grocery or Tim Hortons gift cards
- prepaid phone cards
- mini first aid kits (or packs of Band-Aids)
- toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss
- sunscreen
- sun hats
- menstrual pads (light or regular)
- Poise pads (for incontinence)

If you'd like to donate any of these items, please drop by the Women's Centre (M-Th between 9:30am and 5pm) or get in touch with Stacey at [communications@nwowc.org](mailto:communications@nwowc.org) to make alternate arrangements.



## 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 typically meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month in store at Goods & Co Market. The book for July is **Pageboy: A Memoir** by Elliot Page. Check out the LWC for availability.

[Find out more](#)

## From the Feminist Archives

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

- **Women Unite!: An Anthology of the Canadian Women's Movement**
- 46 years ago: **Lesbian Perspective** (LOOT) – July 1977
- 33 years ago: **Diva: A Quarterly Journal of South Asian Women** – Vol. 2, Issue 3 – July 1990

# Gender Based Violence: How we can help

**Our Gender Based Violence Navigation Advocate provides support for women who are experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) physical and/or sexual violence or coercive control by a partner, family member or acquaintance. Women navigating various court systems may also access court advocacy.**

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 Violence Against Women service providers to ensure that critical information is shared
- Assisting with preparing for court
- Ensuring coordination between legal sectors (criminal, family, immigration etc.)
- Providing court accompaniment and emotional support

This service is intended to enhance the effectiveness of the existing VAW response, not duplicate or replace it. For more information or to make a referral, contact Jennifer:

Email: [navigator@nwowc.org](mailto:navigator@nwowc.org) Phone: (807) 935-8042



## 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](#)

## Contribute to the Feminist Dispatch!

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

### *Helping Women Find Their Way Since 1973!*

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

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## Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

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

(807) 345-7802 | [ed@nwowc.org](mailto:ed@nwowc.org)

[www.nwowomenscentre.org](http://www.nwowomenscentre.org)



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