



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.

### It's official - Election Day is April 28, 2025

Here are a few words from Gwen O'Reilly, Executive Director of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre:

*So, we're going to the polls. Again. I have included excerpts from this press release from WomanACT, a Toronto Based Feminist organization. They say it all better than I can:*

"On Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, a federal snap election was officially called, with Canadians set to go to the polls on April 28, 2025. Since the announcement, all official political parties have begun outlining their policy priorities. This follows the **dissolution of the dedicated Ministry for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)**, with its portfolio shifted under the Ministry of Canadian Culture and Identity, Parks Canada, and the Quebec Lieutenant."

- Snap Election Called: **WomanACT Calls for Strong Commitments to Gender Equity and Violence Prevention**

*(ironically, a measure taken while high profile Canadian feminist advocates were together at the United Nations Women's Rights Summit)*

WomanACT ... priorities *(which NOWC wholeheartedly supports)* include:

- Investment in affordable and safe housing options for women and gender-diverse people.
- Strengthen systems collaboration focused on prevention, particularly for Indigenous and rural communities.
- Enhancing investments into the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence

Follow our NOWC blog for more resources!

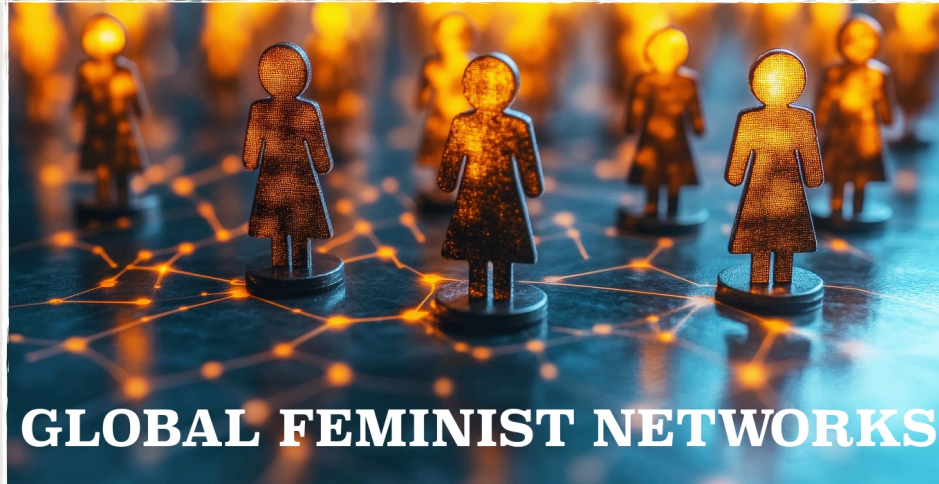
**Here are resources to consider ahead of the election:**

- Check to ensure [you are registered to vote](#) and learn other key dates and voter information ahead of April 28th
- [Demand Better Today](#) is an upcoming campaign from [Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights](#) powered by women's rights organizations from across the country. [Sign up](#) to their email to get notified when the campaign is live!
- [Your Vote Matters!](#) is toolkit created by [National Association of Women and the Law](#) to ensure that voters have the information they need in order to cast their ballot in the election.
- [WomanACT](#) has [called for](#) a strong commitment to gender equity and violence prevention from an incoming party. See their [online resources](#) on survivor engagement, research and policy, and education
- [Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada](#) has created an [election toolkit](#) to help understands what his federal election means for abortion rights and access in Canada
- [Egale Canada](#) has launched [Vote with Pride](#) ahead of the upcoming federal election. Vote with Pride aims to increase awareness about the ways in which election issues are 2SLGBTQI issues.
- The [Basic Income Youth Collective](#) is calling on everyone to vote for a future that is economically just. Check out resources and information on their [campaign page](#) that encourages folks to be informed about where candidates and parties truly stand on essential income supports

## Community Events & Updates



# FEMINISMS AT THE LAKEHEAD 2025



## GLOBAL FEMINIST NETWORKS

### When & Where

**Wednesday, April 9th, 2025**

**Faculty Lounge Lakehead University**

Doors open at 8:30 a.m. for Coffee, Tea and Muffins

Presentations from 9 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Vegetarian and Non-vegetarian food options will be available

### Registration Required

To **register** or if you have  
**questions**

Email:

**[rkimani@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:rkimani@lakeheadu.ca)**

### Keynote Speakers

#### Visiting Speaker

**Suman Mondal**

Queer activist at McMaster University whose work revolves around the social, political, and legal implications of LGBTQIA+ Indians in progressive regions of India. Recipient of the Lambda Scholarship Foundation Award & the prestigious Hooker Fellowship.

#### Regional/Local Speaker

**Dr. Eleanor Gittens**

Professor, human rights activist, & Co-editor of the *Canadian Framework for Collaborative Police Response on Sexual Violence*

#### National Speaker

**Dr. El Jones**

Poet, journalist, author, and abolitionist activist; Author of *Live from the Afrikan Resistance*, and *Abolitionist Intimacies*; Co-host of the radio show *Black Power Hour*.

Drumming, Dance & Craftivisms

### Orillia and Beyond

All are welcome! We'll send  
you a **Zoom link** upon  
registration



## Feminisms at the Lakehead

**Wednesday, April 9th | 8:30am - 4pm @ Lakehead University**

The Department of Gender and Women's Studies in collaboration with Lakehead University's Gender Equity Centre presents the annual **Feminisms at the Lakehead!**

This event is being held at the Thunder Bay Lakehead campus in the Faculty Lounge (UC 1029G / directly under the Residence Cafeteria). Virtual attendance is also available! **Registration is**



## Congratulations to CBC Reads winner, Ma-Nee Chacaby!

Local elder, author, activist **Ma-Nee Chacaby's** book *A Two-Spirit Journey*, championed by Shayla Stonechild, was declared the winner of **CBC Canada Reads 2025!**



## Events & Programming updates from NWOC



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# CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS



## NOWC Board: CALL FOR MEMBERS

**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

To request an information package or any additional questions, please contact Lori at [admin@nwowc.org](mailto:admin@nwowc.org) or by phone at 807-935-8043

See full post on the NOWC website



**CHECK BACK NEXT MONTH FOR MORE CRAFTIVISM NEWS!**

### IWD Dance Fundraiser

A big THANK YOU to Sharon & Dame Más Dance for choosing the Women's Centre to receive the \$300 proceeds from the Fiesta de Mujeres Dance Fundraiser on International Women's Day!

If you've been looking to add dance to your life, check out Dame Mas Dance!



**GOOD  
FOOD  
BOX**

### April Orders

Order your GFB from your host site by **April 7th**  
PICK UP from your host site on **April 16th**

Order online today!

## Thank you for filling up your gas tank in support of the GFB!

A HUGE THANK YOU to K&A Variety and everyone who filled up during the Penny-A-Litre Days 🚰

Over \$4,000 was raised in support of the Good Food Box Program 🥕🥔



### Do you grow flowers, or looking to begin growing?

We are selling packets of seeds in partnership with Root Cellar Gardens! All proceeds support the GFB Program!

If you are interested in more organic seeds and vegetable offerings, check out [Root Cellar Gardens!](#)

[Order your SEEDS today](#)

## Community Events & Resources

**APRIL 2 | [World Autism Awareness Day](#)**

**APRIL 7 | [World Health Day \(theme: health of mothers and babies\)](#)**

**APRIL 9 | [International Day of Pink \(Anti-homophobia + Anti-transphobia\)](#)**

**APRIL 22 | [World Earth Day](#)**

**APRIL 27 - 30 | [National Volunteer Week \(theme: Volunteers make waves\)](#)**

### EVENTS

- **April 7th | [“Eat your Backyard” Talk 6 – 7:30pm at Mary J Black Public Library](#)** Join speakers from Superior Seed Producers for an evening of garden-related discussion. This month will focus on companion planting, planting for pollinators, and how to get the most out of your space. No registration required!
- **April 8th | [Strengthening our response to Human Trafficking: A Community Conversation 9am – 4pm @ the DaVinci Centre](#)** Organized by the Youth & Family Support Program at the City of Thunder Bay, join this informative event designed to strengthen the capacity of service providers in combating human trafficking. Limited tickets remaining, register today
- **April 9th | [Feminisms at the Lakehead](#)** (see details & poster above!)
- **April 22nd | [World Earth Day](#)**: check out the [Earth Day Action Plan](#) for activities and learn more about collective action

## RESOURCES

- [Where to Get Food in Thunder Bay: A List of Programs and Services](#) (updated)
- [Independent Living Resource Centre](#) (ILRC) has launched a Community Lending Library of free rentals of air-purifying equipment to help make public events safer and more accessible. See their [full poster](#) for details!
- New resources from CLEO focused on [understanding a payday loan](#) and [understanding CPP benefits after divorce or death](#)
- [“You are a Flower”](#): a Comic created by [Vincy Lim](#) in collaboration with the [Learning Network](#). It explores themes of self-expression, healing, and resilience through a unique art style inspired by zine culture. The comic invites readers to reflect on their own experiences and find strength in sharing their stories. Read more [here](#)
- Roxane Gay revisits her feminist essay, "Bad Feminist" a decade later in a new work, [Towards a New “Bad” Feminist Canon: Why Feminism Remains Essential](#)

## Gender Based Violence: 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 at [navigator@nwowc.org](mailto:navigator@nwowc.org) or by phone (807) 935-8042.

## Sexual Violence Program: Supporting Survivors



## Sexual Violence Program

Our Sexual Violence Program supports self-identified women aged 16+ who have experienced any form of sexual violence in person or online: sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, stalking or sex trafficking.

We aim to provide survivors with:

- a space to be heard, believed, and supported
- legal and systems advocacy, when appropriate
- free supportive counselling and other resources to rebuild their lives from the negative impacts of sexual violence

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

SVP supports available at no cost:

- 24/7 crisis line: (807) 345-0450
- 10-week support groups
- Accompaniments (hospital, police, court), where appropriate
- Advocacy
- Referrals
- Public education
- 20-week individual counselling offered at two locations:
  - Faye Peterson House (807) 345-0450
  - Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (807) 620-9156

Our SVP is designed to serve the diverse experiences of members of our communities, including, but not limited to, Indigenous/Metis/Inuit, 2-Spirited, non-binary, LGBTQ, Black/racialized, disabled, sex workers, and sex trafficking survivors.



For more details about all of our programs and services, please visit:

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



In partnership with:  
Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

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



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To help meet the needs of survivors since the Thunder Bay Sexual Abuse Centre closed, Faye Peterson House has developed a Sexual Violence Program. There are three Sexual Violence Counsellors offering a 20-week individual counselling program. Two counsellors are based at the shelter, and one is based here at the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre where there is now a private counselling room for this purpose.

If you're interested in counselling at the Women's Centre location or the Support Group meetings, you can reach Stacey Hare Hodgins (BA, HBSW, MA, RSW) directly at (807) 620-9156 or [sharehodgins@fayepeterson.org](mailto:sharehodgins@fayepeterson.org).

To access counselling for any kind of sexual violence (recent or past), you can call Faye Peterson House's 24/7 Crisis Line: (807) 345-0450. You do not need to reside at the shelter to access support from Faye Peterson House.

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## Mutual Aid Opportunity

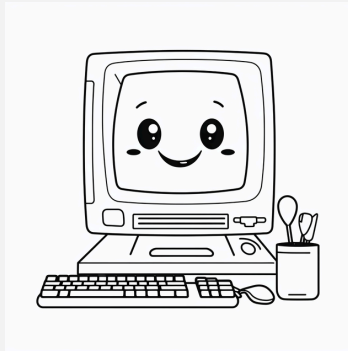




While we continue to advocate for changes to policies and practices that make women disproportionately vulnerable to violence and poverty, we know that access to some basic material items can still be helpful. We also recognize the importance of taking care of one another, and we know that many NOWC 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:

- Bus tickets, such as a **10 Ride Multipass**
- new socks
- Fresh Co. or Tim Hortons gift cards
- mini first aid kits (or packs of Band-Aids)
- toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, lip balm
- 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 Steph to make alternate arrangements: [communications@nwowc.org](mailto:communications@nwowc.org).



### Computer Resources Available

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

- Printing forms
- Job Interviews
- Virtual Legal Clinic
- Lawyer's Appointments
- Virtual Court Matters

To book an appointment, please contact Jennifer at 935-8042 or [navigator@nwowc.org](mailto:navigator@nwowc.org)

### 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 [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.

[AAGBV](#) [Advocacy](#) [Good Food Box](#) [Public Education](#) [What's New](#)



## Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

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



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