



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.

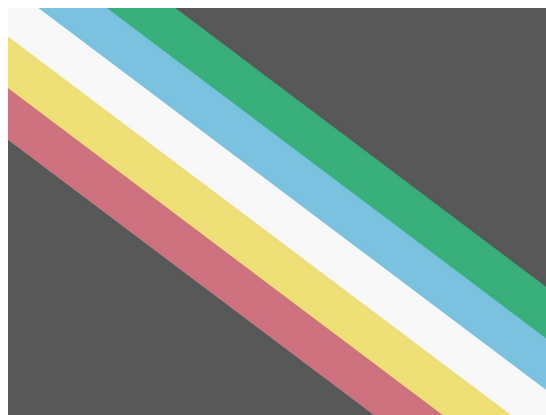


July is Disability Pride Month!

Every year in July, **Disability Pride Month** celebrates persons who experience disability, their identities and culture, and their positive contributions to society. The event aims to change the way people think about disability. It promotes all types of disability as a natural part of human diversity. This month is recognized and celebrated around the world, including in Canada, where 22% or 6.2 million Canadians live with a disability.

"Disability is not only an identity, but also a community with a diverse culture all their own to be proud of and celebrated. Disability culture is about visibility and self-value. Disability Pride Month is a time for recognizing these facts and listening to people with disabilities."

--- From Ontario's Bill 128 - **"Disability Pride Month Act, 2023"**



Disability Pride Flag

In 2019, the Disability Flag (featured above) designed by Ann Magill and revised in 2021 to this current design. Meaning behind each design element:

- **All six flag colors:** Disability spans borders between nations
- **Black background:** Mourning for victims of ableist violence and abuse
- **Diagonal Band:** Cutting across the walls and barriers that separate disabled people from society
- **Red Stripe:** Physical disabilities
- **Gold Stripe:** Neurodivergence
- **White Stripe:** Invisible and undiagnosed disabilities
- **Blue Stripe:** Psychiatric disabilities
- **Green Stripe:** Sensory disabilities

Canadian Books that Showcase Diverse Abilities

During Disability Pride Month in 2022, the CBC compiled a [list of 12 books by Canadian authors that represent diverse disability](#). The publications range from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, young adult and kids' books. A few are shared below:

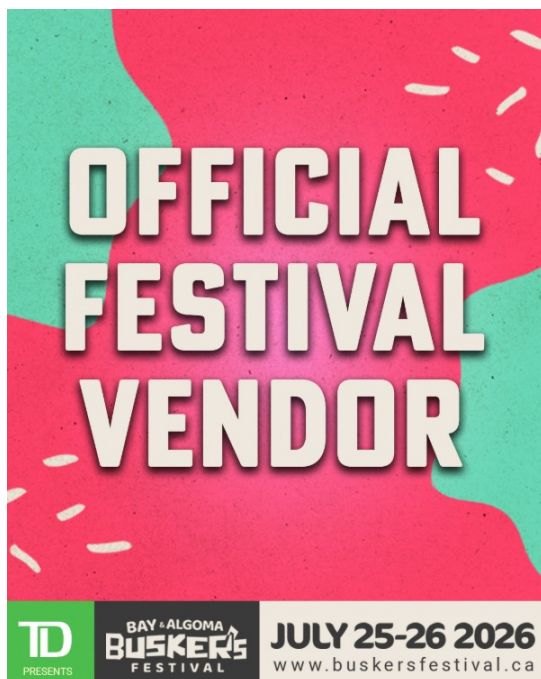
- **My Art, My World** by Rita Winkler, with Mark Winkler and Helen Winkler (memoir)
- **Care Work** by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (essays)
- **Out Into the Big Wide Lake** by Paul Harbridge, illustrated by Josée Bisailon (children's book)
- **Knot Body** by Eli Tareq El Bechelany-Lynch (poetry)
- **The Discovery of Flight** by Susan Glickman (fiction)
- **Disfigured** by Amanda Leduc (non-fiction)

Events & Programming updates from NOWC



The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre is now on Instagram! Follow us at [@nwowomenscentre](#) for resources, community events, updates from the Centre, and more!

Check out our IG page!



See you at Busker's Festival!

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre will have a booth set up on Bay Street during the **BUSKERS FESTIVAL** on July 25th.

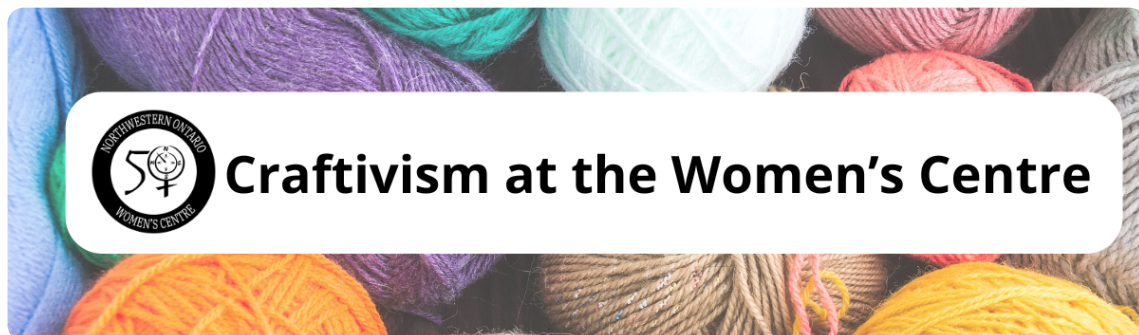
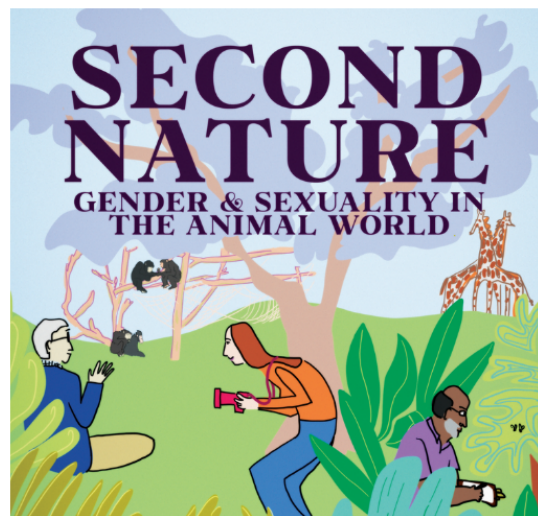
Find us across the street from our office at 278 Bay St, chat with staff and Board members, get a button, and more!

[Read more about upcoming events](#)

Screening of "Second Nature" documentary

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre will be hosting a screening of **Second Nature**, a documentary that follows trans trailblazer Dr Joan Roughgarden as she introduces audiences to some of the 1500+ animal species who engage in same-sex sexual behavior and parenting, change sex, form matriarchies, and more, learning from queer, female, BIPOC and immigrant scientists along the way

Stay tuned for details about date and time!



Join us for Button Making for Busker's Festival!

Join the NOWC on Thursday, July 23rd from
for a **Button Making Session** in preparation for
the Busker's Festival!

We will have supplies for making small 1-inch
buttons which we can hand out during the
Buskers Festival or make for yourselves!

Drop in between **1-3pm on July 23rd** for some
button making!

[Read more about upcoming events](#)



Become a NOWC Sustaining Donor

*For 2026, the NOWC has a goal of securing **10 new monthly donors!** The first ten new monthly donors will receive a beautiful pin hand-crafted by local artisan Feral Wife (featured in the photo!)*

[Become a Sustaining Donor today!](#)

Why consider becoming a monthly or sustaining donor?

By giving a small amount each month, you help create a consistent source of revenue that allows us to respond quickly to requests from women using the Centre, such as hygiene supplies, water bottles, bus passes, grocery cards, Good Food Coupons, winter gloves/hats. Monthly support also allows us to meet our increased rent expense and other costs associated with moving, plan specific programs, keep our resource centre updated, and build our LU Bursary fund.

For more information on how to set up a monthly Donation through Canada Helps or by PAD through your financial institution, visit our '[Donate](#)' page or contact Lori at admin@nowwc.org to arrange



GOOD FOOD BOX

July Orders

ORDER your GFB from your host site by **July 6th**

PICK UP from your host site on **July 15th**

Order Online

Thanks for your support!

Ahoy! **THANK YOU** to all our generous supporters during the United Way of Thunder Bay **Great Lighthouse Rescue 2026!** Over \$10,000 was raised for the Good Food Box Program through community support - AND with fund matching, we are awaiting to hear our tallied total soon!

Thank you for continuing to support our small - but mighty! - food security program

[Read more about this fundraiser here](#)



Monthly Locally Grown Fundraising Boxes

It's that time of the year again! The **Locally Grown Good Food Fundraiser Boxes** are now available!

Our Locally Grown Boxes are packed with a sampling of the best & freshest locally grown & produced goods from a number of local farms and producers.

Local fundraiser boxes are available monthly from July to December and are \$62 each. Included in the cost of the Locally Grown Fundraising Box is a \$20.00 donation.

All monthly Boxes are available starting June 18th!

2026 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 and producers, including: Morning Moon Farm, Root Cellar Gardens, Veg-e-tate Garden Market, Sleepy G Farms, Pitch Creek Farm, Bears' Bees & Honey, Brule Creek Farms, Thunder Oak Cheese Farm, Vanderwees Greenhouses, B&B Farms, Belluz Farms, and more.

Boxes available July through December
Pick up Dates - 3rd Wednesday of the month:
July 15th | August 19th | September 16th |
October 21st | November 18th | December 16th

LIMITED QUANTITIES AVAILABLE
Order online at www.goodfoodtb.org
in our 'Fundraiser' tab
For more information, email gfb@uwoweb.org

Learn more about our
Fundraisers!

Community Events & Resources

Commemorations and Days of Recognition for this month:

- July is **Disability Pride Month**
- July 12th is **Malala Day**
- July 14th is **International Non-Binary People's Day**

Community Events

- **July 5th at 2pm | Opening Reception of the 2026 Northern Ontario Juried Exhibition** at the **Thunder Bay Art Gallery**. This triannual exhibition showcases art from across Northern Ontario, bringing together artists from a wide range of lived experiences. Juried by a panel of local, regional, and provincial artists, the Juried Exhibition highlights the strength and significance of makers and artists in Northern Ontario
- **Live on the Waterfront** | Every Wednesday throughout July (15th, 22nd, & 29th), join for a free night of music with the community. Line-ups for each evening can be found [online](#)
- **July 11th–12th | Afro-Vibe Fest at Marina Park** Celebrate and share the beauty of African and Afro-diaspora cultures through music, dance, fashion, food, and artistic expression while bringing communities together. **Tickets** are on sale, event runs from 12pm-12am each day
- **July 13th @ 1:30pm | Urban Sketching Workshop** at Mary J. Black Library. In collaboration with the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, join for a free art session that offers endless inspiration for sketching. Develop a practice using the basics of linework and form-building skills. **Registration** opens June 29 @ 9:30 am
- **July 18th | Festival of India at Marina Park** Join for the annual celebration to enjoy spectacular music, east Indian Dance, drama henna Tattoo, exhibits, Yoga show and much more! A free feast is also available to all!
- **Late July (date TBD) | Film Screening "Second Nature"** at the NOWC (details above)

Resources

- Join the **Learning Network** for a free webinar on **July 14th at 1pm EST**, entitled "*Supporting Safety Together for Survivors and their Children Navigating Child Welfare*". **Register today!**
- **Luke's Place** has released a new report, "*Navigating Family Court Alone: Barriers and Gaps in Legal Representation for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Ontario*." View the full report [here](#)
- People who experience discrimination often face barriers when trying to take legal action. **CLEO's** new **Human Rights Guided Pathway** helps make the process easier. This free online tool provides step-by-step support for people who want to apply to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO).
- In the latest episode of **BUSTED**, Dr. Maria Floro and Dr. Lewis Williams discuss how climate impacts intersect with *gender, care work, Indigeneity, income inequality, displacement, and other forms of inequality*—and what it will take to build more resilient communities and economies. Listen to the **episode** today
- **Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses** reviews mainstream media reports of femicides and shares a snapshot of their research monthly. The recently shared their **May Femicide Snapshot**, additional insights can be found on their [website](#)

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 Caro at navigator@nwowc.org or by phone (807) 935-8042.

Sexual Violence Program: Supporting Survivors

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 is currently one Sexual Violence Counsellor working out of Faye Peterson offering a 20-week individual counselling program.

To access counselling for any kind of sexual violence (recent or past), you can call Faye Peterson House's 24/7 Crisis Line: (807) 345-045. **You do not need to access shelter services or report to police to access counselling.**



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

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

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



MUTUAL AID OPPORTUNITIES



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.

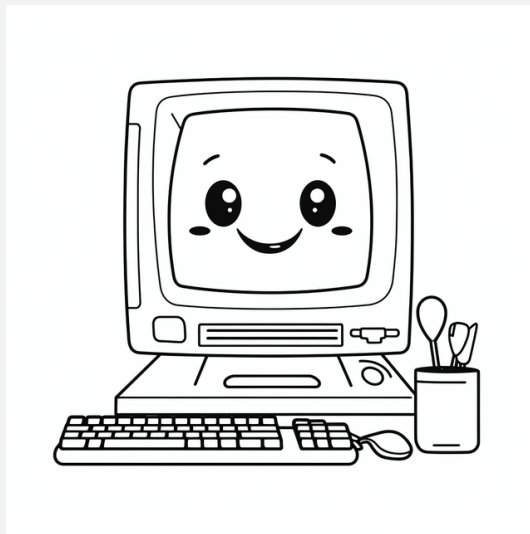
Informed by our conversations with women who visit the Centre, we share a monthly list of mutual aid items and ask our community to help us bring our new walk-in space to life through community donation requests:

- Hangers for our new clothing rack
- Packs of new underwear & new socks
- Personal hygiene/toiletries items (travel size lotion, lip chap, sunscreen, toothpaste, combs/hairbrush, hair ties, deodorant)
- Large Ziploc or other reusable bags, for carrying and storing to-go items
- Matches
- Cell phone charging cords
- Nonperishable snack & to-go items (juice boxes, soft granola bars, oatmeal, crystal light)
- Bus tickets, such as a **10 Ride Multipass**

Survivor Request for Items:

- We have a request for new or gently used dressers for a newly housed woman and family. Please email navigator@nwowc.org to coordinate donation

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 Lori to make alternate arrangements at admin@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 Caro at 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.

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, The United Way Thunder Bay, the City of Thunder Bay, the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBSSAB), and Hydro One Energizing Community Grant

Support Our Work



Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre

278 Bay Street, Suite #201, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1R8

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

www.nwowomenscentre.org



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