

Ontario Taking Action to Better Protect Indigenous Women

New Indigenous Women's Advisory Council to Include Leaders and Experts in Violence Prevention

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Toronto, ON — The Ontario government is establishing a new Indigenous Women's Advisory Council that will provide culturally-relevant advice on violence prevention. The Council will help confront and eliminate the root causes of violence so that Indigenous women and girls today, and for generations to come, will be able to live their lives feeling safe and secure. Today's announcement is being made on the first day of National Indigenous History Month in Canada.

The Council will be co-chaired by Jill Dunlop, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, and a future member of the Council. It will focus on serious issues like human trafficking, child, youth and family healing and well-being, and Ontario's response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

"The high rate of violence against Indigenous women and girls is unacceptable and must be addressed as quickly as possible," said Jill Dunlop, Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, "Indigenous women deserve to feel safe and secure. By establishing this Council, we can actively work in partnership with Indigenous leaders and community partners to deal with violence in a culturally-relevant way."

Ontario will benefit from the expertise of approximately 11 First Nations, Métis, Inuit and LGBTQ2S leaders and experts in violence prevention who will make up the Council, which will meet twice annually. An Elder/Traditional Knowledge Keeper will also be invited to guide and support the Council.

"I'm proud that today, on the first day of National Indigenous History Month, our province is taking important steps to address the systemic causes that put Indigenous women and girls at a disproportionate risk of violence," said Greg Rickford, Minister of Indigenous Affairs, "Indigenous women, communities and organizations have been working tirelessly to address these issues, and the knowledge and expertise of the Council will be instrumental in ensuring our province's continued response is effective and collaborative."

Currently, there is no dedicated provincial forum for Indigenous women and LGBTQ2S leaders and experts to engage on violence prevention issues. The Council will be key to ensuring Indigenous women's voices guide Ontario's priorities on a range of critical issues.

QUICK FACTS

- Indigenous women in Canada between the ages of 15-24 are over three times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women.
- Indigenous women in Canada are two-and-a-half times more likely to experience spousal violence.

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