



NO MORE STOLEN SISTERS

CAMPAIGN GUIDE

Supporting Indigenous-led local activism to end violence against First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women, girls, and two-spirit people

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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HONOURING GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

Bridget Tolley, from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation in Quebec, beaded the eagle earrings featured on this guide's cover. Bridget's mother, Gladys Tolley, was struck and killed by a police officer's vehicle on October 5, 2001. Ever since, Bridget has advocated for police to be held accountable for her death. She runs Families of Sisters in Spirit, a volunteer-run, grassroots initiative supporting the loved ones of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people across Canada. Since 2006, Bridget has been instrumental in organizing a vigil every October 4 on Parliament Hill, bringing together loved ones to honour their stolen mothers, aunties, sisters, and daughters.

Bridget is one of the grassroots Indigenous advocates at the heart of the movement to end violence against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, and two-spirit people in Canada. Her guidance to activists who want to support this movement is woven throughout this guide. Amnesty International honours Bridget's two decades of activism and remains committed to walking with Bridget on the path to justice. Here is what Bridget had to say about her beadwork and its role in her activism:

I've been beading for a long, long time since I was a little girl. My parents had separated when I was a baby, when I was one or two years old. I went to live with my dad and his grandmother (Kokomis) Christine. Kokomis Christine, that's what she did her entire life – sew and bead. She showed us at a very young age. Back 55 years ago, I started beading headbands with a feather. That's what people liked then. Then it was other things like earrings and slippers and mitts. Eventually I made my own mukluks.

Kokomis Christine taught us. She said we would never be stuck for food or anything if we knew how to sew or bead and that stuck with me my whole life. I stopped beading for 30 years. As I grew up, I really struggled to cope with my dad's suicide which happened when I was 11. I partied a lot, had kids very young, and had no money. It was just a very hard time, including losing my mom, Gladys, 20 years ago. Her death is what led me to stop drinking and doing drugs. But the grief and pain at having lost her in such a violent way with no justice or accountability has taken a toll on my health and wellbeing. This long healing journey is what led me back to beading. It was like riding a bike. You don't forget. And I still do it today.

My daughter and granddaughter have their own Facebook pages to sell their art and are continuing Kokomis Christine's legacy of sewing and beading to keep us going. That's what Kokomis Christine said and it's true. Any time I'm stuck I can pick up beads or a piece of leather and make whatever I want and sell them. Lots of time, I give them away as well.

I bead and I think about all our Stolen Sisters. I can just picture all of them wearing these earrings when I make them. A lot of my time, the money that I make goes towards doing stuff for missing and murdered women. The earrings are something to make our women and kin feel good.

I know the earrings are native and it makes me feel good. I like to bead feathers or eagles. Stuff like that is very important to me. I love eagles. I know they are protectors of us. It gives me my own healing. I am going to teach beading to my great grand-daughter, Ava. This is what my Kokomis Christine wanted. I know she would be very proud of all of us in our family who are continuing. From Kokomis Christine to my great-granddaughter - that's seven generations! Seven generations of Algonquin women and girls holding onto our traditions and celebrating who we are as First Nations. This makes me proud.

A lot of feelings go into my beading. You need a lot of patience because those beads are so tiny. It's so beautiful to see the creation you make after the earring is done. I know I had a lot of patience when I was a young girl and I think that's why I'm still here today doing what I do for our Stolen Sisters, because I learned to have that patience and to keep moving forward no matter what. It takes time to do this beading. Even one earring takes a couple hours, sometimes longer. There's a lot of love. When we make these earrings, we put in a love of love. It's all from the heart.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the No More Stolen Sisters campaign guide created by [Amnesty International Canada](#) for our supporters in Canada.

Amnesty International is a global movement of over 10 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest, or religion and are funded mainly through our membership and public donations.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and other human rights standards.

The National Office of Amnesty International Canada is located on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people, whose presence on this land dates back to time immemorial. We acknowledge the historical and ongoing oppression of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people on this territory and across Canada, which has led to the human rights crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people. We honour and recognize the courageous activism of grassroots Indigenous activists who tirelessly advocate for an end to the violence. We are committed to amplifying the voices of and supporting these activists as we fulfill our organization's vision of ensuring that everyone, everywhere, can live in safety and dignity with their rights protected.

This guide aims to:

1. Empower Amnesty International Canada supporters to build and strengthen local partnerships with grassroots Indigenous activists;
2. Support efforts led by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people; and
3. Press local, provincial, and territorial governments to take concrete action now to end the violence.

We encourage you to read this guide, discuss it with other Amnesty International activists, and create your learning and action to deepen your knowledge, partnerships with others and re-create your activism in our virtual world.

You are not alone in this work. If you would like to discuss your activism approach, share your brilliant success stories, or ask questions, please contact Amnesty International Canada staff at stolensisters@amnesty.ca.

VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS, AND TWO-SPIRIT PEOPLE IN CANADA

A HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS

Indigenous women and girls in Canada—both on reserve or in urban areas, regardless of age or socio-economic status—are [at least three times more likely to experience violence](#) and [at least six times more likely to be murdered](#) than non-Indigenous women and girls in Canada. Statistics on the rates of violence against two-spirit people are not available, but [LGBTQ2S people in Canada are more likely to experience violence](#) than heterosexual, cisgender people. This violence is a human rights crisis, and it must stop.

The rates of violence are so high because racist and sexist stereotypes lead perpetrators to believe they can get away with acts of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people. The many legacies of colonialism increase the risk that Indigenous women and girls will experience violence—from impoverishment to the lasting psychological and social harm from residential schools to the disempowerment of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people in their own communities by colonial legislation. Decades of government and law enforcement inaction to end the violence deepened the crisis.

No one knows exactly how many Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people have experienced violence, gone missing, or been murdered, because officials have not consistently kept count. According to a [report released by the RCMP in May 2015](#)—the first official federal effort to determine how many Indigenous women and girls have gone missing or been murdered—1,017 Indigenous women and girls went missing or were murdered from 1980-2012. Due to policy and government reporting gaps, officials have acknowledged the actual number may be far higher.

ACTION TO END THE VIOLENCE

For over three decades, grassroots Indigenous women activists have marched in the streets, walked across Canada, held vigils, and taken other actions to draw attention to the scope and scale of the violence and call on governments to take action.

On February 14, 2021, Indigenous women in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood of Vancouver, BC, held the [30th annual February 14 Women's Memorial March](#) to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and call for justice. Since 2006, Bridget Tolley of Families of Sisters in Spirit has organized an annual vigil on Parliament Hill. Since 2008 [Gladys Radek of Tears 4 Justice](#) has held seven walks in various parts of Canada honouring her missing niece, Tamara Chipman, and others who have gone missing or been murdered. In the absence of government statistics on how many women were going missing and being murdered, for years, the Native Women's Association of Canada maintained the [Sisters in Spirit database](#) of publicly available information, recording 582 murders and disappearances.

For decades, Indigenous women across Canada have sounded the alarm bell about the violence. A single vigil on Parliament Hill grew to a movement with hundreds of vigils held in communities across Canada and worldwide every October 4. Advocacy by Indigenous women in the DTES about the failure of police to investigate the disappearances of Indigenous women in the neighbourhood led to the [Missing Women Commission of Inquiry](#), which released its final report in 2013, acknowledged the failure to protect Indigenous women, and made a series of recommendations to government and law enforcement.

The 2014 [murder of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine](#) in Winnipeg, MB, created a level of mainstream media coverage not seen before and is often seen as a turning point in public awareness of and support for government action to end the violence.

For years, the call for action was loud and clear: the violence needed to stop, survivors needed to be supported, and a national inquiry was needed to hear the truths of survivors and family members who had lost loved ones. An inquiry could uncover and address systemic racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia, and a national action plan could prevent and end the violence once and for all.

Successive federal governments failed to support the call for a national inquiry. Finally, in 2015, the [federal government committed to launching the National Inquiry](#) into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The National Inquiry began its work in 2016 and submitted its [final report](#) to the federal government on June 3, 2019. The day the final report was released, the federal government committed to creating a national action plan to implement the report's 231 Calls for Justice.

On June 3, 2020, the federal announced that the COVID-19 pandemic had [delayed the national action plan](#). In December 2020, the federal government announced that [work was underway to create the plan](#), led by the MMIWG National Action Plan Core Working Group. Also in December 2020, the [Yukon became the first province or territory to create an action plan](#) to address the violence. It is anticipated that provincial and territorial action plans will be incorporated into the national action plan. Little information is publicly available about when the final plan will be adopted or how grassroots advocates, many of whom were involved in the National Inquiry, can provide direction and recommendations.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ENGAGEMENT

For two decades, Amnesty International Canada has followed the lead of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women and two-spirit advocates in creating public awareness and pressing governments to address the staggeringly high rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people. Much of this activism has targeted the federal government.

In 2004, Amnesty International released [Stolen Sisters](#), a report that called the violence a national human rights crisis demanding national and international attention and action. The report was a tool for grassroots activists to use, drawing together human rights analysis while sharing the stories of nine Indigenous women who had gone missing or been murdered. In 2009, the [No More Stolen Sisters](#) follow-up report was released, focusing on the need for comprehensive government action to end the violence.

Amnesty International's research and activism have always been in close partnership with grassroots Indigenous women advocates and representative organizations. We have spotlighted the activism of changemakers like [Connie Greyeyes](#), [Darlene Okemaysim-Sicotte](#), [Dr. Cindy Blackstock](#), and organizations like the [Native Youth Sexual Health Network](#).

Activists we have partnered with shared the connection between resource development projects like dams, mines, and oil and gas installations and violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people in their communities. Recognizing the need to research these intersections to support advocacy in this area, Amnesty International began a study in northeast BC with Connie Greyeyes, and in 2016 released [Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Gender, Indigenous Rights, and Energy Development in Northeast British Columbia, Canada](#).

Amnesty International echoed the call of partners to launch a national inquiry, and [we joined together with Indigenous women activists](#) to ensure that the inquiry was structured in a way that would truly make a difference in ending the violence.

When the National Inquiry launched in 2016, Amnesty International sought and was granted intervenor status, meaning that we, alongside other organizations, attended hearings, cross-examined witnesses, and made [oral](#) and [written](#) submissions to the National Inquiry. Amnesty International was also a witness to the National Inquiry and testified on the findings of the [Out of Sight, Out of Mind](#) report. This testimony comprised much of the section on gender and resource development in the National Inquiry's final report.

Amnesty International [welcomed the National Inquiry's final report](#). Since its release, we have encouraged supporters to [read and incorporate the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice](#) into their own lives, and we have continued to advocate for a comprehensive national action plan.

The federal government has called upon provincial and territorial governments to develop action plans to end the violence, which will feed into the broader national action plan. The National Inquiry's final report calls for all levels of government to develop action plans. Amnesty International now wants to support your activism at the local, provincial, and territory levels to make these action plans are strong, well resourced, led by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, and will truly make a difference to end the violence.

TAKING ACTION!

LEARN

Whether you are new to the issue of violence against Inuit, Métis, and First Nations women, girls, and two-spirit people, or whether you are someone who has lost a loved one to violence and are deeply connected to this human rights issue, resources are available to strengthen our knowledge and understanding through stories, reports, film, and other mediums. Here is a brief list of some of the many resources available to support your ongoing learning journey.

NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

1. [Executive Summary](#)
2. Final Report ([Part A](#), [Part B](#))
3. [Calls for Justice](#)
4. In particular, read the [eight Calls for Justice for every person in Canada](#)
5. [Their Voices Will Guide Us: Student and Youth Engagement Guide](#)

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORTS

1. [Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada \(Executive Summary, Full Report\)](#)
2. [No More Stolen Sisters: The Need for a Comprehensive Response to Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada](#)
3. [Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Gender, Indigenous Rights, and Energy Development in Northeast British Columbia, Canada](#)

OTHER REPORTS

1. [Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+ People \(Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak\)](#)
2. [Addressing Gendered Violence against Inuit Women: A review of police practices in Inuit Nunangat \(Pauktuutit\)](#)
3. [Strategic Plan for Inuit Violence Prevention and Healing \(Pauktuutit\)](#)
4. [Red Women Rising: Indigenous Women Survivors in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside \(Downtown Eastside Women's Centre\)](#)
5. [Reports by the Ontario Native Women's Association](#)
6. [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal: Towards a Meaningful Collaboration between the SPVM and Indigenous Communities \(Quebec Native Women\)](#)

BOOKS

1. [The Break](#), by Katherena Vermette (fiction, with accompanying discussion guide)
2. [In My Own Moccasins: A Memoir of Resilience](#), by Helen Knott (memoir)
3. [Morningstar: A Warrior's Spirit](#), by Morningstar Mercredi (memoir)
4. [Stolen Sisters: An Inquiry into Femicide in Canada](#), by Emmanuelle Walter (non-fiction)
5. [Highway of Tears: A True Story of Racism, Indifference, and the Pursuit of Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), by Jessica McDiarmid (non-fiction)

YOUTH AND STUDENT RESOURCES

1. [Their Voices Will Guide Us: Student and Youth Engagement Guide](#) (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls)
2. [Native Youth Sexual Health Network](#)
4. [Decolonization Toolkit and Facilitators Guide](#) (VIDEA)

FILMS

1. [National Film Board of Canada documentaries](#)
2. [KAIROS list of films and documentaries](#)
3. [Peace River Rising](#), CBC documentary short

PODCASTS

1. [Missing and Murdered](#), by Connie Walker
2. [Taken, the Podcast](#), by APTN

WEBPAGES

1. [Amnesty International \(No More Stolen Sisters\)](#)
2. [Amnesty International \(Out of Sight, Out of Mind\)](#)
3. [Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada](#)
4. [Les Femmes Michif Otipimisiwak](#)
5. [Native Women's Association of Canada](#)

FACEBOOK

1. [Families of Sisters in Spirit](#)
2. [Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada](#)
3. [Les Femmes Michif Otipimisiwak](#)
4. [Native Women's Association of Canada](#)

NETWORK

HOW TO IDENTIFY WHO IS ACTIVELY CAMPAIGNING IN YOUR AREA

Find out who are the movers and shakers in Indigenous anti-violence activism in your area.

1. **Learn more about where you live.** [Whose territory do you live on?](#) Are other Indigenous peoples living in this area? For example, Ottawa is located on unceded Algonquin territory and has sizable Inuit and Métis communities.
2. **Find activists online.** For example, if you are located in Saskatoon, try searching for “MMIWG + Saskatoon + activist,” and you will find a [media article](#) that mentions Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik, a coalition led by Indigenous women. The article includes a link to [Iskwewuk’s Facebook group](#), where you can send a message to contact the coalition. Many grassroots activists use Facebook pages and groups as their primary way to communicate with other activists.
3. **Find activists by searching local media.** For example, if you live in Halifax and search for “MMIWG” in the [Chronicle Herald](#), you will find articles including a piece about the Jane Paul Resource Centre for Indigenous Women and the Nova Scotia Native Women’s Association.
4. **Identify Sisters in Spirit vigil organizers.** For example, if you are located in Prince George, BC and search online for “Sisters in Spirit Vigil Prince George,” you will find a [media article](#) about a vigil organized by the College of New Caledonia, and can reach out to them to try to identify the organizers.
5. **Connect with youth and student organizers.** Many student and campus clubs organize Sisters in Spirit vigils and are involved in other activism to help end the violence. Reach out to groups on your campus who are already engaging in this work. For example, in 2019 at [Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, BC](#), a vigil was organized at the Shq’aphut, an on-campus gathering place for Indigenous students. In 2015, the [Amnesty International campus group at York University](#) in Toronto, ON, held a month-long event with tabling and other events on campus every week.
6. **Contact Indigenous womens’ organizations,** Friendship Centres, band offices, and Indigenous community and service organizations who are actively working on this issue in your area.
7. **Contact national Indigenous womens’ organizations.** If you are unable to identify local activists, reach out to national Indigenous organizations to see if they might be able to refer you to activists in your area: [Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak](#), [Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada](#), and the [Native Women’s Association of Canada](#).
8. **Contact provincial/territorial Indigenous womens’ organizations.** Where possible, you may also be able to connect with organizations or coalitions active at the regional or provincial/territorial level. For example: [BC](#), [northern Manitoba](#), [ON](#), [QC](#), and [NS](#).

HOW TO CONNECT WITH GRASSROOTS ADVOCATES

Connect with and strengthen relationships with Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people leading activism in your community, region, province, or territory.

- 1. Get informed.** Search online to learn about the patterns of violence in your area, families who have been impacted by violence, and activism to help end the violence. Learn about the Indigenous peoples living in your area, their histories, cultures, and cultural protocols you need to know to engage with activists in a good way. Be responsible for your own learning. Do not expect grassroots activists to educate you.
- 2. Be clear on what you can contribute.** Be clear on what skills you have to offer and what time commitment you can make. Be open and flexible. For example, if you offer your web design skills and they are not needed, but activists say they do need people to clean up garbage and recycling after a vigil: commit to clean-up duty. Be mindful of what time you can contribute. A great deal of grassroots organizing happens on evenings and weekends. If you are not available evenings and weekends, see if there are other ways to help out in the time you do have available.
- 3. Reach out.** After you have done your background research, reach out to activists via phone, Facebook, or email. Reach out to people in a way that will not take much of their time. Have a short, simple, clear message. You want to support their activism to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people, outline your skills and availability, express your flexibility and willingness to help out in ways that go beyond this skill set, and ask if there is something you can do to support their work. Approach every communication with compassion, kindness, respect, humility, and an open heart.

Guidance from Bridget Tolley on reaching out to people who have lost a loved one to the violence

Contact family members and ask them what help they need. All family members are at a different place in searching for loved ones. There's some like me that are decades old and some that are just starting fresh. A lot of people don't know what to do with the information they find on the web. You don't have time to read the web when someone you love is missing.

Ask families, contact grassroots organizations, whoever is doing the work in the community. The grassroots organizations are doing the work. Contact youth. We need youth to take over this movement. I don't want my grandchildren to be fighting this in another 20-30 years. We have been fighting this for so long.

Meet people where they are at. Nothing about us without us.

- 4. Connect with loved ones of the missing and murdered.** Some of the most active campaigners to end the violence are loved ones of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people.

Every family member will be in a different place in their healing journey. Some may be actively engaged in search operations to find a loved one. Others will be seeking justice for their loved ones. Yet others may be advocating to end the violence so that no one else has to endure the pain they have.

When you contact a family member, be simple and straightforward—who you are, why you have reached out, and how you can support their efforts. If you do not get a response, that is okay too. There are other acts of solidarity you can take. Do not push; you may not be needed at that time, in that way. It is important to remember that building good relationships takes time, to build the trust that colonization has destroyed. Families may not be interested in hearing from you. If you do receive a response, let people who have lost someone guide you.

Supporting family members also includes sending a social media message to let them know you are thinking about them if you have a personal relationship, sharing missing person posters, and contributing to and sharing online fundraising campaigns.

- 5. Be patient and be prepared for a no.** Grassroots activists are usually very busy people! For a variety of reasons, it may some time to receive a response. Be patient. After a couple of weeks, you may wish to reach out again. If you do not hear back, leave it be and see if there might be someone else you could connect with. Be prepared that, for a variety of reasons, your kind offer of support may be turned down. Be ok with that and move on.

Bridget Tolley's message to activists in the Ottawa area who want to support the work of Families of Sisters in Spirit

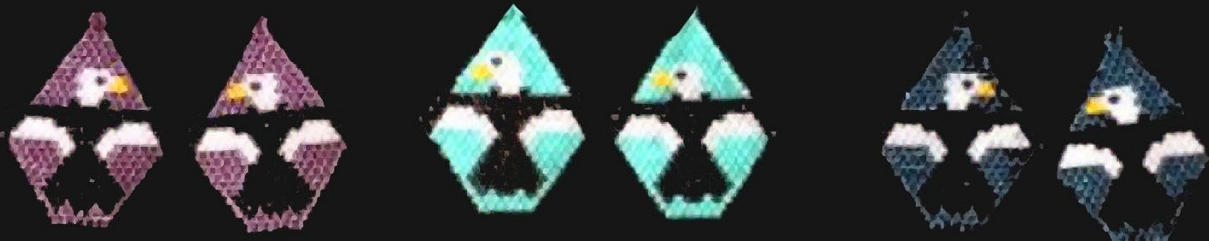
We're still here! We never accepted government funding. We accept donations. We help as many as we can. We can't help everybody, but we help as many as we can with what we have.

There's always little things we need help with. We haven't updated our website in ages. Whatever help people can provide is great. The important thing is to ask people what help they need.

I just do my little Facebook page and Twitter and emails. I don't do all that stuff to update websites. There's a lot of other people in my boat who don't know much about the internet to make a page for their loved ones, or posting to them, or making a missing persons poster, etc. Often people just send me a picture with the little information they have and I try to do my best to make a poster.

Share your skills and ask what help is needed. Everybody is in different places. I know it's hard, but this is the best way to do it. It's the families that need the help so it's very important to ask the families what they need.

6. **Be anti-racist, always act with full consent, and do no harm.** These principles are at the core of all Amnesty International's work. In every action you take, make sure to have the full consent of everyone involved. Know that consent can be revoked at any time. For example, get consent before using a person's photo in your advocacy, and credit both the photographer and the photo subject. Do not assume you are working on behalf of someone else; Indigenous peoples advocate for themselves and know best what is needed. Be aware that even well-intentioned actions can cause harm. Learn about anti-Indigenous racism in Canada, how it manifests, and how you can take steps in every interaction to be explicitly anti-racist.
7. **Recognize the interconnectedness of issues.** Ending violence against Métis, Inuit, and First Nations women, girls, and two-spirit people is connected to Indigenous sovereignty, transforming the child welfare system, food and water security, adequate housing, over-policing, and many other issues. By supporting grassroots activists and organizations working to address a range of Indigenous rights issues, you are supporting an end to the violence. The [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) provides some insight into the interconnectedness of Indigenous lives, experiences, and human rights.
8. **Strengthen connections in our virtual world.** You may already be connected with local activists and are struggling to maintain relationships in our virtual world. You may be challenged by trying to create new relationships without in-person meetings to build trust and connection. We are all living through a challenging time and craving connection. Send a note to people you already know to let them know you are thinking about them. Have tea via video chat with someone you are building a relationship with. Do what you can to bridge the physical distance and strengthen your relationships with activists.
9. **Meet people where they are at.** What each activist brings to their advocacy is shaped by their lived experience. Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people are leading activism to end the violence. Recognize and honour their leadership and follow their guidance. Open your heart and mind and be willing to unlearn and re-learn.
10. **Nothing about us without us.** Work to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people must be led by those with lived experience and expertise. If you don't have lived experience, your role is to be an ally if you are accepted as one and follow the lead of people with lived experience. A phrase from the disability rights movement which can be applied to all areas of activism is "nothing about us without us."



HOW TO BE A GOOD ALLY

Do not assume you are an ally because you want to be one. You must first be accepted and recognized as such by the people you build relationships with. Here are some excellent resources about how to be a strong ally to end oppression and create equality through campaigning to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people.

1. [10 ways to be a genuine ally to Indigenous communities](#) (Amnesty International)
2. [7 Tips on Building Relationships with Indigenous Peoples](#) (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc)
3. [How to be an informed Aboriginal ally](#) (TalentEgg)
4. [Ally Bill of Responsibilities](#) (Dr. Lynn Gehl)
5. [Indigenous Ally Toolkit](#) (Montreal Indigenous Community Network)
6. [Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World: A well-being workbook for youth activists](#) (Amnesty International)

Support and self-care

Advocating to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit women involves working closely with people who have experienced trauma and extreme loss. It involves actively listening to stories of extreme violence. It may re-surfaced thoughts and feelings about traumas you have experienced.

Pay attention to how your body, mind, and spirit are feeling. Seek support when you need it, whether from a trusted person or a trained mental health professional. Practice self-care in ways that work for you.

Here are some resources specifically designed for activists:

- » [Trauma and Violence and Self-Care](#) (Brock University)
- » [Mental Health and Self-Care for Activists](#) (Canadian Mental Health Association)
- » [Activist Self Care and Wellbeing](#) (Amnesty International Australia)
- » [Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World: A well-being workbook for youth activists](#) (Amnesty International)



ACT

What actions can you take to help end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people?

- 1. Support loved ones of the missing and murdered.** Support family members and loved ones of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit in meeting their evolving and self-identified needs, whether that is helping to distribute missing person signs or support logistical preparations for a vigil.
- 2. Support advocacy initiatives led by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit activists.** This could be an honouring or commemoration project, a fundraiser, a call for policy or legal reform, an October 4 Sisters in Spirit vigil, or whatever actions and campaigns grassroots activists have prioritized.
- 3. Call on your local government to develop an action plan.** The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called on all levels of government to take action to prevent and address the violence. Call on local government officials to create an action plan to outline and create accountability and implement measures to end the violence in their areas of jurisdiction. Some communities in Canada, including [Saskatoon, SK](#), have already begun creating action plans.

Tips for local government advocacy

- » As always, follow the lead of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit activists.
- » Ensure that local government officials have read the National Inquiry's Final Report and 231 Calls for Justice.
- » Encourage your local government to commit to developing an action plan.
- » Call on your local government to co-create its plan with Indigenous women, girl, and two-spirit activists. This could be done by creating a circle of knowledge keepers or committee comprised of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit activists that can guide the creation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the plan.
- » Support the development of a clear timeline and process to create the action plan, with opportunities for public outreach and engagement.
- » Suggest that local officials reach out to other municipalities and to provincial and territorial federations of municipalities, to solicit examples and best practices from other communities which have developed actions plans, and to challenge other communities to join them in creating an action plan.
- » Recognize that there is no one size fits all model for action plans. Action plans should be tailored to the needs identified by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people in the community.
- » Support calls for multi-year funding to implement the plan.
- » Consider what advocacy tactics might be helpful to raise awareness of the need for a local action plan, and secure the commitment from officials to create a plan (i.e. meetings with municipal councillors, raise the issue at a municipal council meeting, op ed in a local publication, press release, social media campaign, creative stunt).

4. **Call on your provincial or territorial government to develop an action plan.**
The [federal government](#) is actively seeking strong engagement from provinces and territories to guide and shape the national action plan. Call on provincial and territorial officials to follow the lead of the [Yukon](#), the first and only jurisdiction as of February 2021, to create an action plan.
5. **Regularly check Amnesty International's [Stolen Sisters webpage](#),** where news, updates, and actions will be posted.

Tips for provincial/ territorial government advocacy

- » As always, follow the lead of Indigenous women, girl, and two-spirit activists.
- » Ensure that local government officials have read the National Inquiry's Final Report and 231 Calls for Justice.
- » Ask provincial/territorial government to make the timeline and process to create their action plan publicly available.
- » Press for details on how their plan will be co-created with Indigenous women, girl, and two-spirit activists, and whose voices are (or are not) being included in the development of the plan.
- » Encourage the creation of a circle of knowledge keepers or committee comprised of Indigenous women, girl, and two-spirit activists that can guide the creation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the plan.
- » Call for opportunities for the public to contribute to the action planning process through open engagement sessions led by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people.
- » Encourage provincials to press their federal counterparts to be transparent on the timeline and process to create the national action plan, and for strong involvement from grassroots activists from all parts of Canada in creating the plan.
- » Support calls for multi-year funding to implement the plan.
- » Consider what advocacy tactics might be helpful to raise awareness of the need for a provincial/territorial action plan, and secure the commitment from officials to create a plan in a transparent way co-created with Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people (i.e. meetings with elected officials, op ed, press release, social media campaign, creative stunt).

MONITOR

After every action or event, take time to reflect and evaluate not only the results of your advocacy, but the entire activism process. What was the experience of grassroots advocates working with you and other Amnesty International supporters? What can be done to strengthen this relationship moving forward?

Learn more about [Indigenous approaches to monitoring and evaluation](#) and explore with partners how to incorporate them into your activism.

SHARE

You are not alone! Amnesty International supporters across Canada are engaged in activism to help end violence against Inuit, First Nations, and Métis women, girls, and two-spirit people. Please share your insights, experiences, challenges, and successes to inspire each other and support our collective learning.

1. **Blog.** Would you like to write a [blog](#) for Amnesty International's website? The blog could be an interview with an activist in your area spotlighting their work. It could share an activism success story. If you are interested in writing a piece to be featured in the blog, contact stolensisters@amnesty.ca.
2. **Advocacy community.** Want to pose questions, share resources, connect with other activists, and keep everyone updated on your activism? Join the [No More Stolen Sisters closed Facebook group](#), an online community for Amnesty International supporters to connect and deepen their activism together.

