

What is Red Dress day?

Red dress day is a day of honouring missing and murdered Indigenous people. It's a day to raise awareness and education about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, two spirited, men and boys.

Red dress day started as REDress project established by Indigenous artist Jamie Black to focus on the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada and United States in 2010.¹

The dresses are empty, so that they evoke the missing women who should be wearing them. The colour red was chosen after Jamie Black had a conversation with an Indigenous friend who shared with her "(Red) is really a calling back of the spirits of these women and allowing them a chance to be among us and have their voices heard through their family members and community."² Red also symbolizes "our lifeblood and that connection between all of us,"³ and both vitality and violence.



MMIWG

Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) refers to the human right crisis of the high and disproportionate rates of violence and number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

According to Assembly of First Nations from 2019, Indigenous women are **three times more** likely than non-Indigenous women to be victims of violence, and the average rate, between 2001 – 2014, of homicides involving Indigenous female victims was **four times higher** than that of homicides involving non-Indigenous female victims. Current public data on MMIWG oversimplifies and underrepresents the scale of the issue, yet still demonstrates a complex and pervasive pattern of violence against Indigenous women and girls who are often targeted because of their gender and Indigenous identity.

The 2014 RCMP Operational Overview notes that police recorded 1,017 incidents of Aboriginal female homicides between 1980 and 2012 and 164 missing Aboriginal female investigations dating back to 1952. There have been a number of reports indicating numbers are significantly higher.⁴

On June 3, 2019, the Final Report from the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was released. In that report, the Inquiry made 231 Calls for Justice. It also concluded

¹ <https://www.jaimeblackartist.com/exhibitions/>

² Bolen, Anne (Spring 2019). "A Place for the Taken: The REDress Project Gives a Voice to Missing Indigenous Women". National Museum of the American Indian. 20 (1). Retrieved July 29, 2019.

³ Suen, Fan-Yee (October 3, 2015). "Red dresses seek to draw attention to missing, murdered aboriginal women". CTV news. Retrieved July 23, 2019.

⁴ <https://www.afn.ca/policy-sectors/mmiwg-end-violence/>

that the acts of violence against Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse people in Canada constitutes “genocide.”

The MMIW Red Hand

A red hand over the mouth has become the symbol of a growing movement, the MMIW movement. It stands for all the missing sisters whose voices are not heard. It stands for the silence of the media and law enforcement in the midst of this crisis. It stands for the oppression and subjugation of Native women who are now rising up to say #NoMoreStolenSisters.⁵



How to help

Stay educated and up to date

- Learn about Indigenous Canadian history from the Indigenous perspective
- Read the final report from the National Inquiry
- Listen to the truths shared
- Acknowledge human and Indigenous rights violation and their impact.

Become an ally

- Continue to educate yourself and research
- Support others in every relationship and encounter you take part in.
- Support the community – Amplify the voices of BIPOC
- Be respectfully active in the community
- Actively work to break down barriers

Speak out against racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia and transphobia in the home, work, and community.

Teach and encourage others to do the same!

Where to donate:

Currently there is no sole organization in Saskatoon focused on MMIWG. Women and girls who have experience violence and who are missing or murdered were in vulnerable states. For that reason we have directed donation to local shelters.

Saskatoon Interval House

Mission Statement

To provide a short-term safe and supportive environment for women with or without children leaving abusive relationships and to work toward the elimination of all forms of abuse including physical, emotional, psychological and sexual.

To donate:

<https://saskatoonintervalhouse.org/your-donations-at-work/>

⁵ <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiw>

YWCA - Crisis shelter & Residence Emergency Shelter

The YWCA Saskatoon offers short-term emergency shelter for all women and children who are in need of a safe place to stay for up to 30 days. We have staff available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. We are inclusive, accepting, and give our clients much more than just a warm bed for the night. Our shelter welcomes clients experiencing everything from domestic abuse, homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues.

To donate:

<https://www.ywcasaskatoon.com/crisis-shelter-residence/how-you-can-help/>

Sheltersafe - online resource for women and their children seeking safety from violence and abuse.

Mission Statement

To ensure that women can seek safety when they need it. Sheltersafe.ca allows you to quickly identify a shelter in a specific geographic area along with its 24-hour emergency phone number. To ensure that women get the services they need as quickly as possible. Abused women are most at-risk of extreme violence when they are preparing to leave an abusive relationship. Women do not need to stay at a shelter to receive services, such as safety planning.

To donate:

<https://sheltersafe.ca/donate/>

More links!

KAIROS CANADA - Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls- About the MMIWG Info-Hub

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/missing-murdered-indigenous-women-girls>

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

<http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>

The Native Women's Association of Canada – MMIWG & Violence Prevention

<https://www.nwac.ca/policy-areas/mmiwg/>

The Native Women's Association of Canada - What Their Stories Tell Us: Research findings from the Sisters In Spirit initiative

<https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2010-What-Their-Stories-Tell-Us-Research-Findings-SIS-Initiative.pdf>

The Native Women's Association of Canada - MMIWG Calls for Justice

<https://nwac.ca/assets-knowledge-centre/Web-MMIWG-calls-to-justice..new.pdf>