

# National Family and Survivors Circle Inc: *The Path Forward - Reclaiming Power and Place*

Survivor-Led in Practice: Supporting Intersectional  
Experience and Leadership in the GBV Sector

Hosted by: The Learning Network, Centre for Research &  
Education on Violence Against Women & Children

Presented by:

Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, NFSC Inc Chair

February 6, 2024



**NATIONAL FAMILY AND  
SURVIVORS CIRCLE**  
Nothing About Us, Without Us

2024-02-06

Survivor-Led in Practice Virtual Forum



# About the National Family and Survivors Circle, Inc

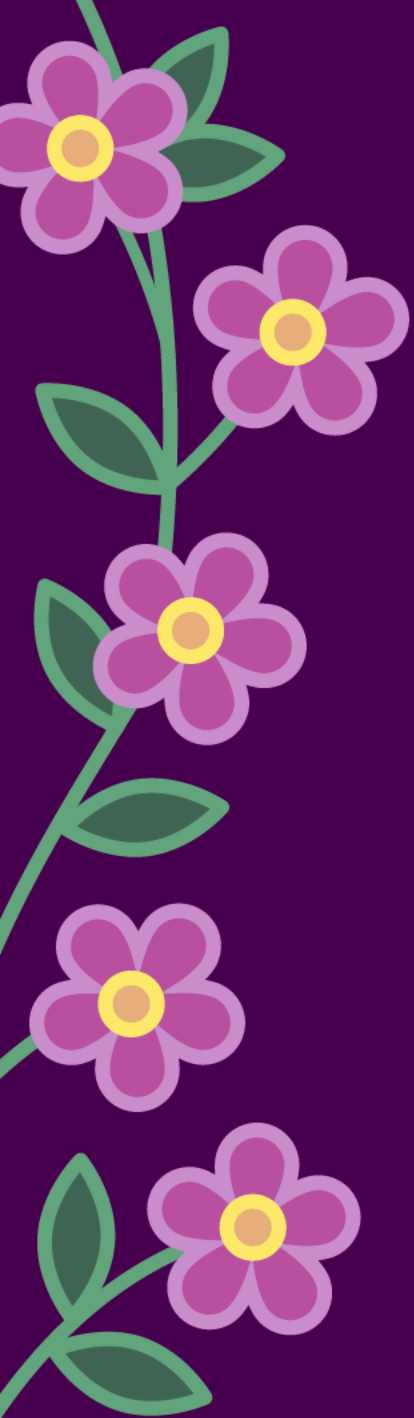
The NFSC advisory circle was established in Fall, 2020, in response to the National Inquiry's 231 Calls for Justice and seven Principles for Change. It advised in the development and implementation of the National Action Plan on MMIWG2S+.

The NFSC Inc is a non-profit, independent organization legally incorporated on April 4, 2023.

The NFSC Inc is composed of Indigenous women of diverse backgrounds, strengths, and capabilities who use their lived expertise to advocate for the engagement of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, survivors of gender-based and race-based violence, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in the development and implementation of a National Action Plan to end the genocide.

# National Family and Survivors Circle Inc

To continually advocate that all governments, agencies, institutions, and organizations, and all Canadians, who have a responsibility in ending the genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, including implementing the 231 Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry on MMIWG Final Report and the Kepek-Quebec 21 Calls for Justice of the Supplementary Report of the NI, centre families of MMIWG2S+, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and survivors of gender- and race-based violence in their work. To work with governments, agencies, institutions, and organizations, to assist in creating pathways for families and survivors to be engaged in this work, especially in the implementation of the MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan through true partnerships that are decolonizing, respectful, equitable, and rooted in cultural humility and dignified approaches.



# National Family and Survivors Circle Inc Board of Directors

1. Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, NFSC Chair/President, member of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, and resides in Winnipeg, Manitoba.
2. Tanya Debassige, NFSC Vice President, Ojibwe and Odawa from Mnidoo Mnising, Manitoulin Island in Ontario.
3. Melanie Morrison, NFSC Treasurer/Secretary, Mohawk, and resides in the Mohawk Territory of Kahnawake.
4. Ann Maje Raider, member of the Wolf clan in the unceded Kaska Territory in Southeast Yukon.
5. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Inuk, resides in Iqaluit, Nunavut.
6. Charlotte Wolfrey (Pottle), Inuk, resides in Rigolet, Nunatsiavut.

# NFSC Logo



## NATIONAL FAMILY AND SURVIVORS CIRCLE

*Nothing About Us, Without Us*

The **Blue Pathway** represents water, which connects us, sustains us, and gives new life.

The **Green Pathway** represents land, which grounds us in who we are and where we come from.

The **Purple Pathway** represents dignity and healing.

The **Red Pathway** represents the sacredness of the voices and truths of families and survivors.

The **Heart** honours and commemorates the immeasurable value of our loved ones who are missing or have been murdered.

The **Fire** represents the bringing together of our home fires in the shared responsibility and accountability for ending all forms of gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people.

The **Sunrise** represents a new horizon, a new beginning for the reclaiming of power and place.

The **White Lines** represent ice, snow, and water in all its forms. These are dominant features of the landscape in the far north for many months out of the year. They also represent the delicate and interconnected relationship between humanity and climate change.

The **13 Moons** represent the calendar cycle of opportunities for transformative change and reflection.

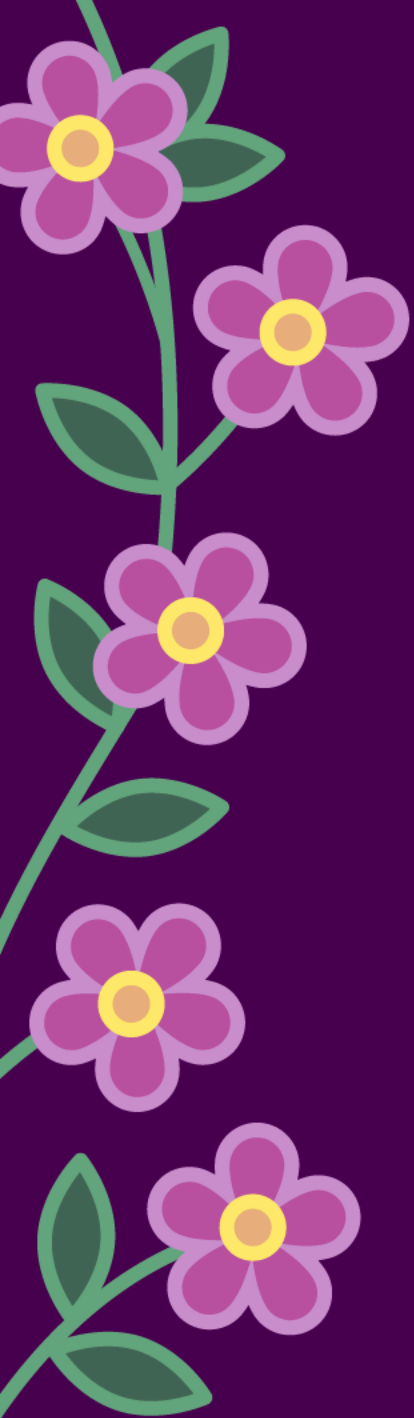


# Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (June 3, 2019)

- The Final Report is comprised of **truths** of more than 2,380 family members, survivors of violence, experts, and Knowledge Keepers shared over two years of cross-Canada public hearings and evidence gathering.
- The testimony documented in the Final Report from family members and survivors of violence spoke about **multigenerational and intergenerational trauma** and **marginalization** in the form of poverty, insecure housing or homelessness, and **barriers** to education, employment, health care, and social supports.
- Knowledge Keepers and spoke to specific **colonial and patriarchal policies** that displaced women from their traditional roles in communities and governance and diminished their status in society, leaving them vulnerable to and as targets of violence.
- “As the evidence gathered by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls demonstrates, human rights and Indigenous rights abuses committed and condoned by the Canadian state represent **genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.**”
- “These abuses and violations have resulted in the **denial of safety, security, and human dignity.** They are rooted in the causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people that generate and maintain a world within which Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are forced to **confront violence on a daily basis**, and where **perpetrators act with impunity.**”

# Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (June 3, 2019)

- “The steps to end and redress this genocide must be no less monumental than the combination of systems and actions that has worked to maintain colonial violence for generations. A permanent commitment to ending the genocide requires addressing the four pathways explored within Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.”
  - Historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma;
  - Social and economic marginalization;
  - Maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and
  - Ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.”
- “Addressing these four pathways means full compliance with all human and Indigenous rights instruments as well as the foundation that began the Final Report and that animates these Calls [for Justice]: that the daily encounters with individuals, institutions, systems, and structures that comprise security must be addressed with a new view toward the relationship.”



## NFSC Contribution to the National Action Plan: Families & Survivors must be included

“Confronting and disrupting these four pathways of trauma, social and economic marginalisation, lack of will to change, and ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and families and survivors, is crucial in creating transformative change through decolonization. The process for doing so must follow the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars to guide the effective inclusion of families and survivors, and the centering of their experience, agency, and expertise (NFSC:2021, 6).”

“Implementation of the NAP and the Calls for Justice requires the creation of new pathways within all governments, agencies, and organizations, for true partnership with families and survivors. These partnerships must be grounded in the Principles for Change and the Four Pillars of inclusion, interconnectedness, and impact, for transformative change to be accomplished (Ibid).”



# Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (June 3, 2019)

## 7 Principles for Change

**Inclusion of families and survivors.** Implementation of the Calls for Justice must include the perspective and participation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people with lived experience, including families of MMIWG and survivors of violence.

**A decolonizing approach.** This approach involves doing things differently - challenges colonial influence and makes spaces for Indigenous perspectives, involves recognition of **Indigenous right to self-governance and the unique cultures, identities, traditions, languages, institutions, and special relationship to the land.**

**A focus on substantive equality and Human and Indigenous Rights.** Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are holders of Indigenous rights, constitutional rights, and international and domestic human rights. In addition, many Indigenous Peoples in Canada are rights holders under Treaties, land claims, and settlement agreements. These Calls for Justice arise from international and domestic human rights and Indigenous rights laws. As such, **all governments** (federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments) **have legal obligations to fully implement these Calls and ensure Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people live in dignity.** “Substantive equality” is a legal principle that refers to the achievement of true equality in outcomes and is required to address historical disadvantages, intergenerational trauma, and discrimination to narrow the gap for improved overall well-being.

# Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (June 3, 2019)

## 7 Principles for Change (cont.):

**Indigenous-led solutions and services.** Services and solutions must be led by Indigenous governments, organizations, and people. This is based on self-determination and self-governance of Indigenous Peoples defined by UNDRIP articles 3 and 4 and the recognition of an inherent right that exists independent of any statute or legislation, free of colonial mindset that Indigenous leaders must ask for permission and the state gives permission, and ending exclusion of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA people, elders, and children from exercising Indigenous self-determination.

**Recognizing distinctions.** Recognition of diversity amongst First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities. The Calls for Justice must be interpreted in equitable and non-discriminatory ways, address distinct needs, and take into account factors for distinctiveness.

**Cultural safety.** Interpretation and implementation of the Calls for Justice must include the necessity for cultural safety - goes beyond the idea of cultural “appropriateness” and demands incorporation of services and processes that empower Indigenous Peoples - inclusion of language, laws, protocols, governance, spirituality, and religion.

**Trauma-informed approach.** Incorporating knowledge of trauma into all policies, procedures, and practices of solutions and services is crucial to implementation of the Calls for Justice as it is fundamental to recognizing the impacts of trauma and to respond appropriately.

# NFSC Inc - Our Messaging & Advocacy

## National Day of Action on MMIWG2S+: Holding Space for Rights Holders in Implementing the 231 Calls for Justice (Press Release Excerpt, Oct. 24, 2023)

Today, the NFSC Inc. also reminds those with obligations to implement the Calls for Justice that they must recognize and meaningfully involve Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families or MMIWG2S+, and survivors of race- and gender-based violence, as self-determining rights holders of inherent Indigenous rights and human rights.

The autonomy of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors to think, speak, and decide for themselves as rights holders based on their own worldview, beliefs, faith, lived experience, expertise, aspirations, and self-determination, with dignity, must be evident all decision-making tables when it comes to implementing the Calls for Justice and taking action to end the violence and genocide.

Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, NFSC Inc. Chair, states, “An elder once said, by being born Indigenous and female, you are born political as your rights are denied from birth. As Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families of MMIWG2S+, and survivors of gender- and race-based violence, we are born with the inherent right to be who we are and to be in spaces where decisions are being made about our lives. We honour and accept our role and responsibility in building pathways for the safety and security of generations of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people to come.”

# NFSC Inc: The Four Pillars



The National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC) developed Four Pillars to guide its work to advocate, educate, and raise awareness and inform and inspire legislative, policy, research, systems, and behavioural changes. In this context, the pillars serve as important points of reflection and analysis as the NFSC progressed in a meaningful way toward positive outcomes.

# NFSC Inc Four Pillars: Inclusion

Inclusion is measured by the full and active involvement of families of MMIWG and survivors of gender-based violence in the process of creating transformative change to Reclaim our Power and Place as Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through substantive equality, equity, and dignity.





# NFSC Inc Four Pillars: Interconnectedness



Interconnectedness is central to Indigenous worldviews. Our Inherent rights are rooted in underlying values and principles within Natural Laws of respect, reciprocity, and interconnectedness.

These principles reflect and reinforce our understanding that everyone and everything has a purpose and contribute to balance. Imbalance has negative consequences. Restoring balance is restoring this deep connection on many different levels. It results in positive outcomes.

# NFSC Inc Four Pillars: Accountability



Shared accountability to create and maintain transformative change to bring an end to all forms of gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

This also means having the will to support and carry out transformative changes at all levels and creating and establishing mechanisms to track and monitor our progress.

The NFSC Inc continues to advocate for immediate implementation of CFJ 1.7 (National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson) and for other NAP components to engage families and survivors.

# NFSC Inc Four Pillars: Impact

Creating meaningful impact at the individual, societal, legislative and policy levels to effectively build, sustain, and gain the momentum needed for transformative change.

This will require recognition of one's place within the shared responsibility and accountability of this work; commitment to building relationships that are interconnected, respectful, reciprocal, and responsive; outcomes must be felt on the ground by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families of MMIWG, and survivors of gender-based violence, if the NAP is to be successful; and measuring and monitoring impacts regularly for trends and progress.





# Contact Information

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## NFSC Links:

Website: [www.familysurvivorscircle.ca](http://www.familysurvivorscircle.ca)

Facebook: [@familysurvivorscircle](https://www.facebook.com/familysurvivorscircle)

Instagram: [@familysurvivorscircle](https://www.instagram.com/familysurvivorscircle)

Twitter: [@nfscircle](https://twitter.com/nfscircle)

## NFSC Contribution to the NAP PDF:

<https://familysurvivorscircle.ca/2021/06/02/nap-contribution/>