



Wabanaki Women's Coalition

March 2024 Newsletter

Kwey Relatives...

Winter has been busy for Wabanaki Territory ...

In December 2023, the Wabanaki Women's Coalition hosted its 6th Annual Tribal Leadership Summit. Presenters included Chief Judge Eric Mehnert and Rebecca Winter from the Penobscot Nation Tribal Court, Melissa Martin from the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA), Clara Porter from Prevention Action Change, Francine Garland Stark from the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV), Polly Campbell from the University of New England, Joel Casey from US Attorney's Office for District of Maine, Ryan Lolar from Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Keri Kapaldo from St. Joseph's Hospital, Morgan Hawes from MIWSAC, and Mark Rucci from Penobscot County District Attorney's office. The presenters gathered with Advocates, Tribal Council Members, Tribal Chiefs, and community partners to participate and share knowledge of continuing to work for a world free from domestic violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, MMIW, and stalking that is affecting our Wabanaki communities.



Donna Brown, Executive Director, WWC and Melissa Martin, Public Policy and Legal Director, MECASA



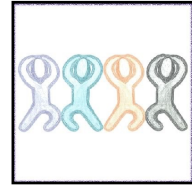
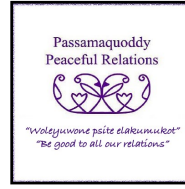
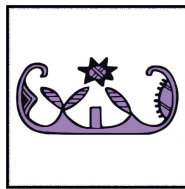
6th Annual Tribal Leadership Summit Opening Shawl Ceremony
 L to R: Tori Neptune, Director (Passamaquoddy Peaceful Relations), Alisia Morin, Advocate (Indian Township Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocacy Center), Josh Toner, Council Member (Maliseet Tribal Council), Tawoma Martinez, Advocate (Maliseet Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center), Desiree Tyrrell, Director (Indian Township Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center), Brooke Mitchell, Advocate (Penobscot Nation Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center)

January - Stalking Awareness Month



January 18th - WWC Staff and Advocates wear yellow on National Stalking Awareness Day to help bring awareness to stalking.

According to "Stalking Response Considerations When Working with Native Communities," a resource created by Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, SPARC and Red Wind Consulting, stalking is a traumatic victimization and often intersects with domestic violence, sexual violence, trafficking, kidnapping, and homicide - all of which impact Native communities at disproportionate rates. Stalking affects 42% of American Indian/Alaska Native Women and 30% of American Indian/Alaska Native Men over their lifetimes. Stalking happens in rural and urban communities, and on and off reservations. Unfortunately, there is no single psychological or behavioral profile that predicts what stalkers will or will not do. Stalkers' behaviors can escalate from more indirect ways of making contact (like phone calls or texts) to more direct contact (like delivering gifts or showing up where you are). Stalkers can be but are not limited to authority figures, family members, acquaintances, strangers, brief encounters or intimate partners. Source: www.stalkingawareness.org



Maliseet Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center

Indian Township Passamaquoddy Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center

Penobscot Nation Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center

Passamaquoddy Peaceful Relations Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center

Micmac Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center

Office: 207-532-3000

24 Hour Hotline:
207-532-6401

Office: 207-214-1917

24 Hour Hotline:
207-214-1917

Office: 207-817-7446

24 Hour Hotline:
207-631-4886

Office: 207-853-0092

24 Hour Toll Free Hotline:
1-877-853-2613

Office: 207-760-0570

24 Hour Hotline:
207-551-3639

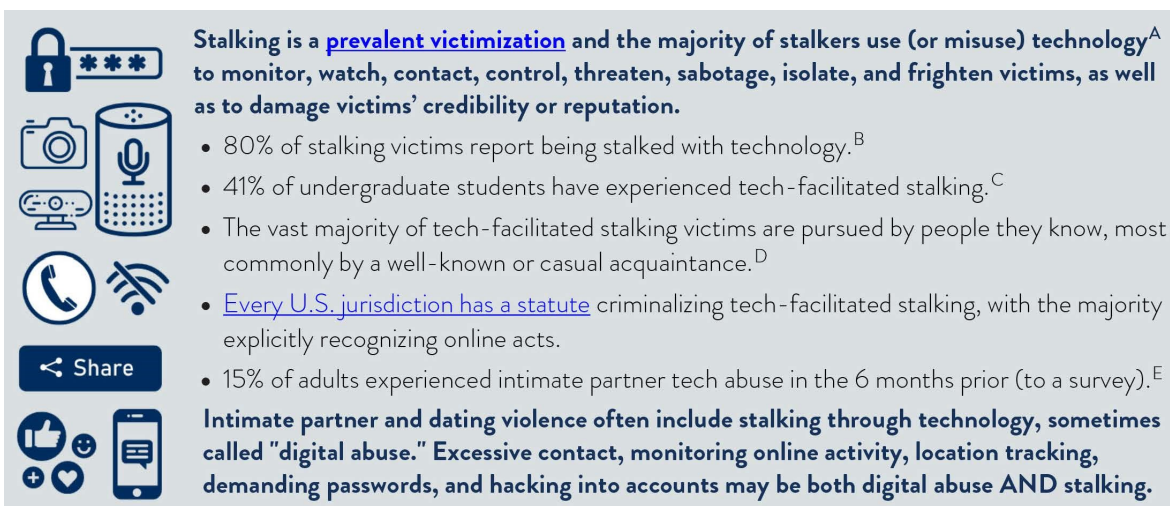
Stalking Awareness Resources for Advocates & Survivors

What Is *Stalking*? While legal definitions of stalking vary by jurisdiction, a general definition is: "a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress."

*Stalking victims may not use words like "stalking" or express fear when describing their experiences and interactions. You may hear language along the lines of "my ex won't leave me alone," "My coworker is creepy," or "my neighbor keeps harassing me." Asking about specific stalking behaviors when working with Indigenous victims can help identify which category or categories might be occurring.

The following questions can help advocates and survivors identify and explain further what the survivor might be going through:

- 1) Is the offender following you, watching you, showing up unexpectedly, or communicating with you in ways that seem obsessive or make you concerned for safety?
- 2) Has the offender repeatedly initiated unwanted contact with you (for example, repeated emails, phone calls, texts, messages, gifts, etc., including through third parties)?
- 3) Has the offender threatened you or done other things to intimidate you? What have they done that has frightened or alarmed you?
- 4) Has the offender significantly and directly interfered with your life? Have they assaulted you while stalking, harassing, or threatening you? Have they forcibly kept you from leaving or held you against your will, caused you to have a serious accident, physically assaulted your friends, (or family or pets) or seriously attacked you in other ways?



The infographic features a vertical column of icons on the left: a padlock with asterisks, a camera, a smartphone, a computer monitor, a telephone handset, a Wi-Fi symbol, a share button, and a smartphone with social media icons. To the right of these icons is a text block with a title and a list of statistics.

Stalking is a [prevalent victimization](#) and the majority of stalkers use (or misuse) technology^A to monitor, watch, contact, control, threaten, sabotage, isolate, and frighten victims, as well as to damage victims' credibility or reputation.

- 80% of stalking victims report being stalked with technology.^B
- 41% of undergraduate students have experienced tech-facilitated stalking.^C
- The vast majority of tech-facilitated stalking victims are pursued by people they know, most commonly by a well-known or casual acquaintance.^D
- [Every U.S. jurisdiction has a statute](#) criminalizing tech-facilitated stalking, with the majority explicitly recognizing online acts.
- 15% of adults experienced intimate partner tech abuse in the 6 months prior (to a survey).^E

Intimate partner and dating violence often include stalking through technology, sometimes called "digital abuse." Excessive contact, monitoring online activity, location tracking, demanding passwords, and hacking into accounts may be both digital abuse AND stalking.

Source: www.stalkingawareness.org

January - Sex Trafficking Awareness Month



January 11th, 2024 National Human Trafficking and Sex Trafficking Awareness Day. WWC Staff and Advocates wear blue in solidarity with raising awareness for survivors of Human and Sex Trafficking.

Sex Trafficking In Tribal Communities:

According to Human and Sex Trafficking: Trends and Responses Across Indian Country, National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, the FBI reports 40% of victims of sex trafficking are Native, yet Native women represent 10% or less of the general population.

* Native Americans experience the highest rates of violence of any group in the US. (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000)

* Native women have the highest rate of domestic violence and rape of any group of women. (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000 & Center for Disease 2008.)

* 82% of trafficked Native women were first trafficked when they were children. (Roe-Sepowitz and Jabola-Carolus, 2019)

Supports to Consider when Working with Survivors

The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) suggests the following recommendations, which include vital areas where work is needed to effectively respond to Native human trafficking survivors:

Housing:

Secure Permanent Supportive Housing that includes services and childcare on site; Secure Unrestricted Housing with optional services available on site as tangible solutions to the housing instability impacting survivors.

The participation of survivors in services should not be a requirement to secure safe, accessible, and affordable housing.

Services:

Cultural healing ways are accessible and available on site by tribally known and acknowledged medicine people and healers;

Expungement and other legal resources are immediately available and accessible, especially assistance with any child welfare issues affecting the survivors;

Employment and relevant education resources need to be accessible to survivors.

Many survivors are victims of torture.

Informed resources should be made available to them as a critical piece in their healing Journey.

Public Policy:

Require service providers, as part of their funding compliance, to have training and education regarding the prostitution and trafficking of Native women;

Develop an outreach campaign for education and awareness related to human trafficking in reservations and urban Native communities;

Develop a national campaign specifically for the Native Facebook audience;

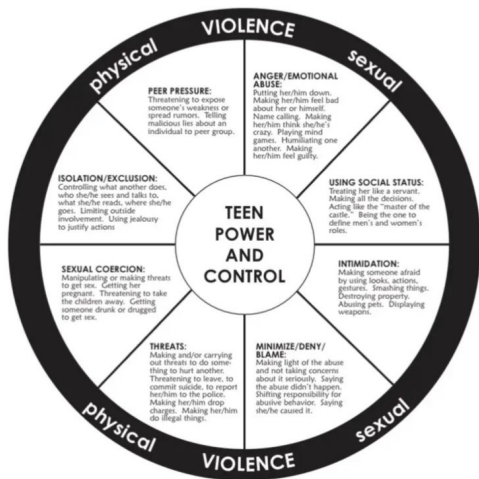
Implement the Equality Model with particular emphasis on culturally appropriate, trauma-informed services, and housing.

February - Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month



According to Loveisrespect.org, 1 in 10 high school students have experienced physical violence from a dating partner in the past year. And 1 in 3 teens will experience abuse within a relationship before they become an adult. Dating violence can include, but is not limited to emotional, physical, spiritual, and financial abuse.

TEEN POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL



Teen Dating Violence Awareness Event in Collaboration with staff from the Maliseet Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center, Mi'kmaq Nation Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy Center and Prevention Action Change

Tips for Teens and Advocates

NativeLove's Tips for Teens for a Healthy Relationship

- *Start out as just friends.
- *Hang out in groups.
- *Make your limits clear and stick to them.
- *Don't rush things.
- *Give each other space.
- * Communicate with respect.

16 Tips to Support Teens Who May be Experiencing Dating Violence:

- *Prioritize their boundaries even the ones you don't understand right away.
- *Encourage their decision-making about their body and relationships.
- *Ask open questions about their experience and needs.
- *Brainstorm solutions with them.
- *Remind them of ways they can reach you when you're not together.
- *Make physical spaces more comfortable and accessible.
- *Connect them to a health professional they trust.
- *Help them practice setting boundaries that might be helpful for them.
- *Help them balance time spent with family, friends, partners, etc.
- *Remind them of times you have witnessed their joy around others.
- *Help them connect to communities who share one or more of their identities.
- *Encourage them to tune into physical/emotional signs that they want connection or time alone.
- *Ask them what helps them feel loved and what doesn't.
- *Challenge gender expectations to help them identify what they want and need in a relationship.
- *Model respect with and around youth of all ages.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month



Wabanaki Women's Coalition Staff and Advocates from all Wabanaki Advocacy Centers gathered for our Annual Sexual Assault Institute. We are so thankful to Rebecca Balog from Mending the Sacred Hoop for learning, discussions and sharing space to talk and discuss Sexual Assault and Digital Violence, Advocate and Community Wellness & Trauma, Sexual Violence & Community/Regional Emerging Issues Response, and Advocate, Program & Community Safety Preparedness. All our relations thrive when we can come together and learn better ways to support advocates, survivors & community.

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