

Why Address Sexual Violence Through Your Work?

Everyone from survivors of violence and front line workers to governments and leaders, need a better understanding of how social service systems work, so we can:

- Identify where problems emerge for survivors so we can look together at how to make change
- Develop deeper respect for peoples' complex realities, experiences, emotions, thoughts and spirit in our systems
- Improve systems so they consider the whole picture of how violence impacts extended family and community members

Friendship Centres in Ontario

Friendship Centres are community spaces that provide culturally appropriate activities, programs and services for Indigenous people of all ages.

Contact or visit your local Friendship Centre:

- Sign up for a program or activity
- Seek support
- Find out what's happening in your community
- Volunteer

For more information on this campaign, go to OFIFC.org or Kanawayhitowin.ca

1-800-772-9291



OFIFC

Ontario Federation of
Indigenous Friendship Centres

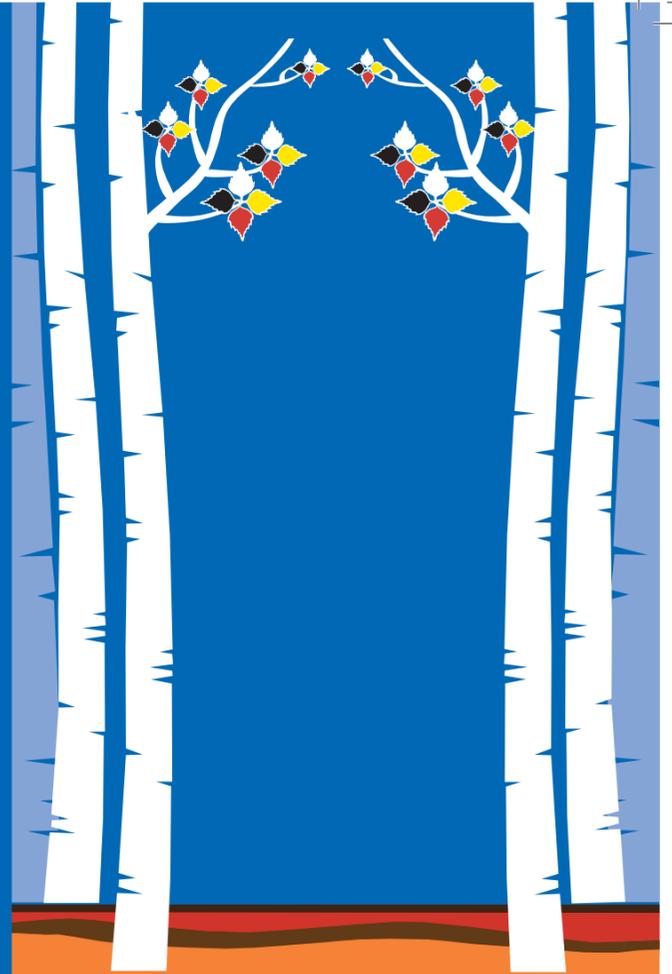


This Project has received financial support from the Government of Ontario, Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy.

Funded by:



Through the Ontario Women's Directorate



Sexual Violence

Addressing it Through Your Work

Tracking Institutional Processes (T.I.P.)

Honour Life,
End Violence

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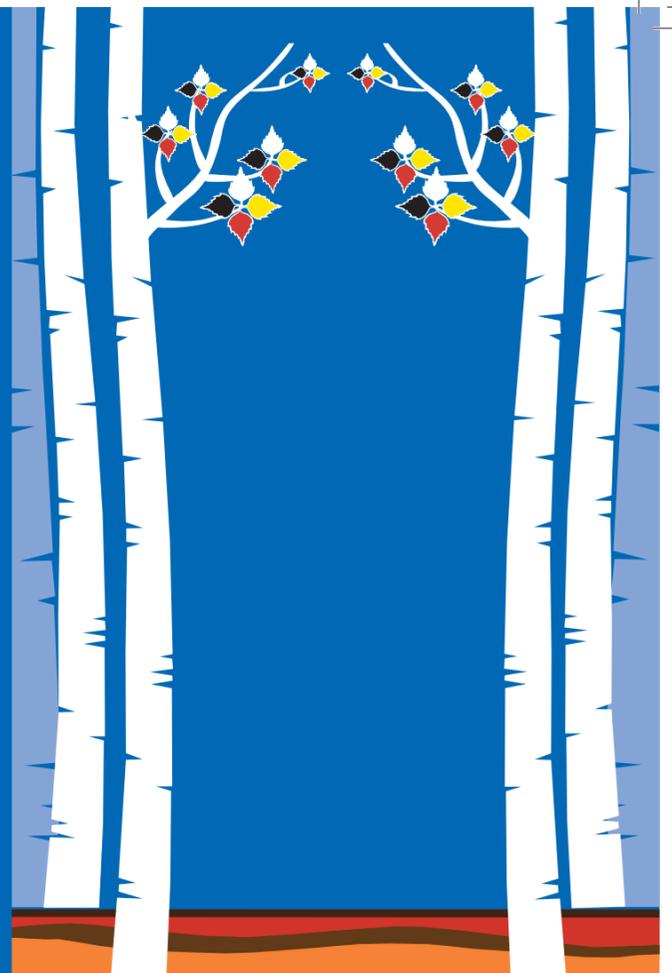


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Take Action, Show You Care

Institutional Limitations

Indigenous people often encounter systems that fail to meet wholistic needs. An Indigenous woman who experiences sexual violence and other abuse is in danger of “falling through the cracks” even after she decides to tell others about her experience.

It is possible that institutions can not make space for Indigenous people’s experience, and therefore sexual violence can fall through the cracks by not being reported.

Once reported, experiences of sexual violence are shaped to fit into legal concepts and government processes that too often do not relate to complex reality. Front line workers are limited by their working language and may follow a prescribed response that has little to do with people’s real needs.

Institutions like governments, police, social and community service agencies aim to help people – but they are limited in how they can add address Indigenous people’s needs. Institutions tend to focus on problems in their own terms, without engaging in wholistic approaches and without the flexibility to deal with complex situations. This makes it harder to have an inner connection with people. Contrary to Indigenous worldviews and teachings that promote relationships, this kind of institutional response does not build trust to develop relationships.

As Indigenous people are increasingly visible in Ontario, institutions designed to provide help and services to victims of sexual violence will need to overcome institutional limitations.

Tracking Institutional Processes (TIP)

TIP is a method developed with Indigenous communities to explore how institutions affect Indigenous women who have experienced sexual violence.

TIP tracks and identifies what systems do at all levels, looking at what Indigenous women go through when their experience of sexual violence brings them into contact with institutions like hospitals, shelters, courts, schools, and so on.

The method looks carefully at the language, concepts, categories and documents used to guide the process along the way.

Listening To Survivors

TIP starts and ends in the experiences of Indigenous survivors of sexual violence. We learn from survivors and talk with them to see where they get drawn into institutions. Survivors show us what to look at; for example: how intake processes define the experience; how Indigenous cultural supports are missing; or, how to understand a victim’s relationship with their family and community.

Mapping How Services Work

We can map institutional processes as they happen in people’s work, building a detailed, step-by-step understanding and a ‘big picture’ by exploring specific work processes.

We are all affected every day by high-level documents and actions we never see. Our systems are set out in political and government processes that define how people or agencies act, and what is done, said and written down. TIP helps us see how certain sequences of action, documents and timeframes are set out at high levels and where there is a “disconnect” from people’s local realities.

It’s About Honesty, Not Blame

We need to understand people and systems with honesty and kindness, core values built into Indigenous constitutions. There is no “blame.”

TIP is about talking with people and learning from them, to better understand systems in relation to people’s real needs. Individual social workers or people in government roles are also defined by systems. Workers show us what processes we need to look at and what processes are in place to understand how the system works. TIP is not “against the system.”

TIP helps us understand where and how things don’t work, to enable us to improve relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous social service sectors and reduce harm in Indigenous communities.

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