

Minute for Reconciliation - Moose Hide Campaign Day

Thursday, May 14 is Moose Hide Campaign Day. A day of ceremony where all Canadians are called to join together to take a stand against violence towards women, children and all those along the gender continuum.

Violence against women and children remains an unacceptable reality. Half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16. More than 6,000 women and children are housed in emergency shelters each night across Canada, seeking refuge from abuse. But violence is preventable. Efforts to address the crisis of domestic violence have historically been led by women and women's organizations. The Moose Hide Campaign is inspired by the belief that men and boys also need to take action to end violence and develop a culture of healthy masculinity.

The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys who are standing up against violence towards women and children. Wearing the moose hide pin signifies your commitment to honour, respect and protect the women and children in your life and speak out against gender-based and domestic violence.

The inspiration for the campaign came to co-founders Paul Lacerte and his daughter Raven in 2011 during a moose hunt on their traditional Carrier territory along the Highway of Tears in Northern BC – where so many women have gone missing or been murdered. Since then, annual gatherings and ceremonial fasts have taken place and more than two million squares of moose hide have been distributed in thousands of participating communities, schools, and organizations across the country.

Here in Saskatchewan, we have one of the highest rates of domestic violence and domestic homicide in Canada. The first Domestic Violence Death Review was conducted in 2016, and the final resulting report was released in 2018. The review was used to develop initiatives to address domestic violence in the province, including funding for second stage housing, the development of Family Intervention Rapid Support Teams, Clare's Law, a 10-day work leave for survivors, expanded interpersonal supports at the 211-crisis line, and a public awareness campaign called Face the Issue.

Face the Issue is an awareness campaign that helps people understand what they can do to stand up against interpersonal violence and abuse. The aim of the campaign is to educate the public and inspire conversations and actions that will help reduce violence and abuse in Saskatchewan. There is free online training available for supporting a loved one experiencing interpersonal violence. Search online for Face the Issue to learn more.

The late Senator Murray Sinclair, Chief Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said this, “The Moose Hide Campaign provides a sacred space to contribute in our nation’s healing journey. It is a movement that calls upon people to speak up, take action, educate and support each other.”

This information was compiled by Regina Native Outreach Ministry, a ministry within the United Church of Canada. If you would like more information, please email reginanativeoutreachministry@gmail.com.