



BCAAFC | BC Association of
Aboriginal Friendship Centres



Statement in Solidarity with the Families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

December 2, 2022

The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) and Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) stand in deep and full solidarity with the families of Rebecca Contois, Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran, and a fourth victim who has not yet been identified. We also stand firmly with Crane River First Nation, where Rebecca was a member, and Long Plain First Nation, where Morgan and Mercedes were members, who are grieving.

We extend our sincere condolences to the women's families, and all of the families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, as well as the advocates and communities mourning in Winnipeg, Treaty No. 1 Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Ininew (Cree), Oji-Cree, Dene, and Dakota, and Homeland of the Métis Nation.

Their lives were allegedly taken by Jeremy Anthony Michael Skibicki, a resident of Winnipeg, MB and known [member of the extremist far-right](#). A review of alleged murderer Skibicki's social media presence indicates that he held violent, antisemitic, misogynistic, and white supremacist beliefs. The consistent and prolonged lack of attention by the federal and provincial governments to the ongoing violence against Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, as well as the rise of the far-right targeting marginalized communities, has resulted in horrifying consequences.

The announcement of these charges comes in the middle of the [16 Days of Activism on Gender-Based Violence](#) and as we approach December 6, the [National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women](#).

We call on federal and provincial leaders to take urgent and meaningful action on the calls for justice from the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) which, on page 85, states, "one of the things that makes this National Inquiry unique is that we are not investigating a past wrong, but one that is still ongoing and that is getting worse. Acts of violence stemming from the structures of colonization and coupled with racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia are not few and far between, but pervasive, immediate, and urgent. However, this violence is also preventable—if Canadians are willing to change."

The BCAAFC and BWSS have long advocated for culturally safe and inclusive anti-violence services for Indigenous women, Black women, immigrant/refugee women, women of colour, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Federal and provincial funding in these areas continues to inadequately address the



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disproportionate violence against Indigenous women, Black women, immigrant/refugee women, women of colour and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

We continue our work to end gender-based violence, in loving memory of these women, their families, and their communities, please join us.

Resources:

- [Colour of Violence: Race, Gender & Anti-Violence Services report](#) (November 30, 2022)
- [The Road to Safety: Indigenous Survivors in BC Speak Out against Intimate Partner Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (July 13, 2022)
- [BCAAFC: Ending Violence](#) – resources and initiatives

Women and gender diverse people experiencing gender-based violence, intimate partner, domestic or sexualized violence can receive support from BWSS by calling the 24/7 crisis line at: 604-687-1867, or toll free: 1-855-687-1868.

In solidarity,

Leslie Varley, Executive Director
BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

Angela Marie MacDougall, Executive Director
Battered Women's Support Services