



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs acknowledges Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Special Report on Children and Youth Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Manitoba

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) wishes to acknowledge the Manitoba Advocate for Child and Youth (MACY) report titled: Every Two Hours, A Special Report on Children and Youth Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Manitoba. The report provides a “snap-shot” of all police-reported incidents of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) for the month of April 2019. A total of 1,943 IPV incidents were reported to the Police; 342 of the police reports identified that children were present during the incident in which impacted 619 children. Of the impacted children, 81 percent were Indigenous including 76 percent being First Nations.

“The overrepresentation of First Nations children impacted by IPV is rooted in a deeper systematic issue that crosses from generation to generation. Systems responses tend to focus on separating children from their families, however, we know this approach does not work for our families as it only creates additional trauma. We must address these types of issues holistically,” stated AMC Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean, Lake Manitoba First Nation.

“Through the First Nations Family Advocate Office, we have witnessed the consequences of mothers who reported a domestic violence incident. We supported a mother of five who experienced domestic violence and the minute she reported it to the police, her children were automatically apprehended by CFS. This led the mother to become homeless as her Employment and Income Assistance was reduced and her benefits were discontinued. When a mother reports domestic abuse the consequence should not be cause for further harm for their family,” stated Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate.

Recently, Statistics Canada released the report: Violent victimization and perceptions of safety among First Nations, Metis, and Inuit women and among women living in remote areas of Canada. In the report, 63% experienced either physical or sexual assault in their lifetime (since the age 15). Out of that percentage, almost two-thirds were First Nations (64%).

“If the government cares to address violence against First Nations women and the impacts on children, there needs to be reporting channels that ensure the safety of families, that protects the innocence of children and where children are not further put at risk of CFS involvement,” stated Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate.

As part of MACY’s Special Report, seven recommendations were identified, one of which is to develop a coordinated and systems-wide response that includes recommendations for implementation by the Ministers of the Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet, Minister of Justice, Deputy Ministers responsible for the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Recommendations Action Planning (MACY-RAP) Committee, Minister of Health, Ministers of Mental Health and Community Wellness, the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Status of Women Secretariat, and Manitoba Education.

“With all these recommendations from MACY to hold the province accountable, there continues to be a lack of direct consideration or input from First Nations leadership. Intergenerational trauma is a reality and until it is addressed and strategies that incorporate our own laws, teachings, and ceremonial ways, we will continue to see the violence against First Nations families,” concluded Acting Grand Chief McLean.

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.