

**Never Forgotten:  
Summit on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls  
June 2, 2011, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

## **Report on Working Session Outcomes**

**Submitted to  
Nahanni Fontaine  
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of Cabinet  
Issues, Province of Manitoba**

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## Introduction

The Province of Manitoba's Never Forgotten Summit on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls, held at the Radisson Hotel in Winnipeg on June 2, 2011, brought together more than one hundred and thirty (13000) representatives of government, Aboriginal organizations and leadership, service providers, police and justice systems, community grassroots groups, women's groups and members of affected families to share information, draw on each other's expertise, and develop recommendations for Manitoba's Strategy on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls: Phase Two.

Elders Velma Orvis and Leslie Spillett opened the Summit with a pipe ceremony, which all participants were welcome to attend. Following introductory comments from Nahanni Fontaine, the Summit host and emcee, presentations began with a personal narrative from Bernice Catcheway, the mother of Jennifer Catcheway, who has been missing since June 18, 2008.

Ms. Catcheway was followed by keynote speaker Kukdookaa Terri Brown, former President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, who was among the first to call for national action to address the high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

The morning's final presentation was led by Superintendent Corrine Scott, Winnipeg Police Service and Chief Superintendent Mike Sekela, RCMP 'D' Division. They provided an overview of current law enforcement initiatives and activities undertaken in response to the high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.

The afternoon was devoted to discussion and strategy development. Participants formed twelve working groups in which they developed recommendations for Manitoba's Strategy on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls: Phase Two.

## Working Session Process

Lead facilitator Barbara Bruce of Bruce & Boivin Consulting Group introduced the facilitation to the participants. A small group facilitator was assigned to individual round tables to assist with the overall process. Participants responded to a series of questions:

1. What would a comprehensive plan to address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls look like?
2. What gaps can you identify between what exists right now and your comprehensive plan? Is there anything that's missing right now in our response or approach to this issue?
3. What actions could be taken right now to address the gaps we've identified?

Participants were encouraged to draw on their own understandings, insights and experiences, as well as information shared by Summit presenters. Each of the Summit presenters had, in fact, referred to the gaps and offered recommendations of their own.

Participants heard about terrible disparities between the typical responses to reports of a missing or disappeared Aboriginal woman or girl and the response to the same kind of report about a non-Aboriginal woman or girl. They learned that families frequently feel that their voices have not been heard and that this silencing sometimes seems to have racist overtones. A lack of public awareness makes it easy for many people to shrug this issue off as one that belongs to Aboriginal women or Aboriginal people and to pretend that it's not their problem. There are problems, too, with established procedures, such as the definition of what makes a person 'missing', which can slow down the police response. Terminology can be problematic: the term "missing" makes it seem as though there is no victim and the terms "lifestyle" or "high risk" can carry judgement.

As one presenter suggested, police, families, service providers and the general public need to find new ways to work together. It is important, in the response to this issue, to stay connected to grassroots people and groups, who have important experiential knowledge and insights that police or organizations may not. Protocols such as when a person can be deemed 'missing' must be renewed, to ensure that they do not delay or impede investigation. Effective working definitions should be standardized across police services. Policies to address systemic racism are needed to ensure that every case is treated equally and as a high priority. Police services recognize that they need to work more directly with families and develop better ways of communicating with them, including a single point of contact for families. Ultimately, this issue calls for regional, provincial and national collaboration between police services and a coordinated response.

The morning's presentations had provided a solid starting place for the working sessions. As the sessions got underway, the Group Facilitators were responsible for guiding and supporting the discussion, keeping their group moving through the questions, and taking notes that recorded the discussion. Towards the end of the discussions, group members were asked to prioritize their recommendations. When all groups had finished their work, participants reassembled and five of the groups reported their key recommendations back to the larger group.

When preparing this report, notes from each of the working groups were transcribed and then collated for analysis. During this process, any recurring themes or related comments or ideas were noted. From that initial analysis, the summary below was developed.

## Envisioning a Comprehensive Plan

The working group activities began with the question, '**What would a comprehensive plan to address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls look like?**' When responding to this question, participants were asked to imagine there were no limits or constraints on what might be included in their plan. Key components of what the various groups envisioned are summarized below.

### A. Support for Affected Families

A broad range of meaningful supports would be available to the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women or girls, including:

- **Communication and relationships:** Individuals and agencies working with families would ensure that they heard what the families had to say and would make an effort to communicate with them clearly, on an ongoing basis and in sensitive and responsive ways. This would be particularly important when a family first reports that someone missing. Once a report has been made, the affected family would be kept apprised of activities and progress relating to the investigation of their family member's disappearance or murder. Where possible, any agencies or organizations in contact with a family would assign a staff member as the family's primary point of contact. Organizations would commit to transparency and accountability in their relationships with families, and, if communication or other aspects of their relationship with a family deteriorated or broke down, the family would have access to an advocate, mediator or other individual who could work with them to repair that relationship.
- **Centralized supports and services:** Families would be able to access the most essential supports, services or resources they might need at a "one-stop-shop" or centralized location. This might include police, outreach workers, counsellors, health and wellness supports, crisis supports, and other resources.
- **Flexible, customizable supports:** When seeking supports or services, families would have a range of options and be able to connect with resources that met their real-life needs.
- **Financial resources:** A foundation, trust fund or other entity would be established so that families looking for a missing family member could access money to cover costs associated with their search (for flyers, food, travel, etc.).

## B. Immediate Response

A coordinated effort to locate a missing Aboriginal woman or girl would begin as soon as she was reported. A **First Response team** with dedicated staff and volunteers would be established **in or near every community**. A member of the team would act as the **coordinator for an affected family**, liaising between family members, the police and other agencies and ready to mediate any issues that might arise.

**Within the first hour**, the team would issue an Amber-style alert, and ensure that a photo and identifying information were distributed to all police agencies within Canada. **In the first 48 hours**, an investigator would be assigned, a media release prepared, any witnesses or suspects interviewed and all leads investigated. Throughout this process, the family would be provided with full updates, as appropriate.

The team would be **sensitive, understanding, respectful, caring and responsive** in their **interactions with families**, and address families' concerns in ways that do not further victimize them. Aboriginal people would be recruited for the teams and all members would receive training that would enhance their understanding of contemporary and historic issues affecting Aboriginal people, including the impacts of colonization.

## C. A More Effective Response

The response to reports of missing or murdered Aboriginal women and girls would become more efficient and effective. Changes would include:

- **The development and implementation of standardized protocols, policies and procedures:** All police services across Canada would adopt (with modifications to meet needs and resources of the region they serve) standardized protocols, policies and procedures that draw on the best of existing practices. These might include, for example, establishing follow-up on missing person reports as a first priority for police units, issuing an Amber-type alert and standardizing definitions of key terms and associated actions (such as ‘believed’, ‘known’ or ‘confirmed abduction’). When developing these protocols, policies and procedures, accurate research on existing practices would be undertaken to support evidence-based approaches and allocation of resources. Aboriginal organizations would be consulted when developing the protocols, policies and procedures and, as necessary, legislation would be developed to support the protocols themselves.
- **A coordinated response that engages all relevant agencies:** Policing agencies, grassroots organizations, the media and other relevant agencies and individuals would work together to respond as effectively and quickly as possible to a report of a missing person. Collectively, they would be able to reach across mandates, service areas and jurisdictional boundaries; strategically share information, expertise, resources, tools and networks; and implement a targeted response.
- **Key resources accessible through a central location:** The key services and resources that might be engaged by various stakeholders after a person is reported as missing or murdered would be available through a ‘one-stop-shop’ or other centralized location or single point of contact. This might include resources to assist with the organization of searches, crisis counselling, assessment and referrals, family supports, education and training, lobbying and advocacy. A 24-hour hotline would be set up to support investigations or interventions in cases of missing or murdered people.
- **Respectful communication and mutually empowered relationships:** Improved communication between police, families, media, government and other stakeholders would support the development of mutually empowered relationships. All parties would demonstrate sensitivity and respect in their interactions with family members. Missing or murdered Aboriginal women would be seen first as individuals (rather than just cases) and labelling or judgemental language would be avoided (for example, danger-and-harm statements would replace more judgemental ways of describing victims). Investigators would honour and draw on the experiential knowledge of family members and friends of missing persons. As part of a commitment to avoid re-victimizing victims, criminal justice activities with shift to address the demand for the sex trade and hold exploiters accountable. Over the long-term, this would involve the decriminalization of prostitution.
- **Systemic racism and cultural barriers acknowledged and addressed: Perceived inequities between the response to missing people who are Aboriginal and those who are non-Aboriginal** would be addressed and eliminated. This might include establishing culturally distinct resources (such as an Aboriginal Victims’ Services unit), as needed.
- **Collective sense of responsibility:** Police services, stakeholder groups, and the general population would see the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls as a human rights issue and support each other to take action at a collective level. Consequences of this might include the increased availability of volunteers for activities such as searches and the increased availability of resources to support training and coordination.
- **Guidance and oversight:** Stakeholder groups would establish bodies to provide guidance and oversight to activities relating to missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. These bodies would include representation from families and communities, Elders, youth, and

agencies. In addition to providing overall guidance and oversight, they would also provide a forum through which stakeholders could consult formally with the Aboriginal community on policies and procedures; policy and procedures could be reviewed and revised, as appropriate; concerns could be voiced or advocacy could take place; police and government could be held accountable; and information could be shared and expertise focused.

#### **D. Media Protocols**

Media outlets would help **educate and build awareness** on this issue and **support a focused and coordinated response**. They would **present accurate and current information in sensitive and respectful ways**. This would include the use of respectful language (for example, being mindful that the terms 'lifestyle' or 'behaviour' may seem judgemental or 'missing' may suggest a victimless crime) and images (no mug shots) and avoidance of stereotypes or sensationalized stories (particularly with respect to cultural identity or participation in the sex trade) and, in some situations, taking guidance from families on how victims might be portrayed. Resources such as a Media Charter or Media Toolkit could serve as practical how-to guides on changing language and presenting positive images of Aboriginal women, girls, people and communities.

#### **E. Education and Training Activities**

Widespread public campaigns and focused education and training activities would improve both prevention and post-incident response with respect to missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. These activities would be supported with funding and resources from government and local leadership, as well as the private or corporate sector.

An **ongoing and widespread public campaign** would be used **to get out key prevention and intervention messages**. The campaign would utilize all available media tools (including, but not restricted to, radio, television and the internet and social networking utilities) and use a broad range of communication styles to reach diverse audiences and incorporate plain language. Involving Aboriginal people in the design and delivery of the campaign and recruiting champions for the cause from stakeholder groups would help ensure that it reaches the people it targets and that its messages are delivered in meaningful ways.

Key messages might range from a simple 'Stop violence against women' through safety-focused messages (how to protect children, vulnerable individuals and families) and evocations to action ('Somebody knows!' or 'Action is everyone's responsibility'). The campaign would present a mixture of practical information, success stories, proven practices, and resource guides and links. On-the-ground activities might include community forums where practical information would be shared.

**Public campaigns** would also be used **to share practical information and to change attitudes**. Practical information on **what to do when someone goes missing** would be widely available, including how to make a missing persons report, how to connect with agencies, and protocols guiding the investigation of a case. In addition to the media campaign, this and other valuable information would be packaged in a



toolkit designed to help the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls connect with the services and resources they need.<sup>1</sup>

Other **areas for public education would include the culture, history and present-day experience of Aboriginal peoples and anti-racism, anti-oppression** (including power and privilege and the racialization or marginalization of space) **and decolonization**. These education activities would target both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people with the goals of helping to change how people see, understand their relationships with and interact with Aboriginal women and Aboriginal people; to undo the normalization of violence against Aboriginal women; and, ultimately, equalize existing power imbalances and create choice and opportunities for Aboriginal people to resume more control as individuals and communities.

**Targeted education activities** would be developed **for women and other vulnerable populations**, with the goal of providing them with tools for empowerment. **Police, justice system, human services and health sector workers** would be provided with mandatory and ongoing cultural awareness training to improve their awareness and understanding of Aboriginal peoples and cultures, contemporary issues and the positive and negative effects of colonization.

**Safety and prevention education for children and youth** would be provided **in the public school system**. This would include **practical safety-related information** that would help equip children and youth to recognize potential danger, identify ways to protect themselves, or develop safety plans. Schools would also provide **prevention-related education** in areas such as Respect for Everyone (to support the development of appropriate interactions and relationships between boys and girls) and Anti-Racism. Students, teachers and parents would be involved in these educational activities and information would be presented in non-threatening ways.

## **F. Enhanced Safety and Prevention**

Community members would work together to make their **neighbourhoods safe**. They would act as the 'eyes and ears' of their neighbourhoods, by undertaking coordinated activities in which they monitored and reported on any suspicious activity in their neighbourhoods.

**Appropriate services and supports** (including street outreach services) would be available **where and when they were needed**, open during evening and weekend hours at locations accessible to high risk or vulnerable individuals and families. These services and supports would have **adequate and multi-year funding**, so that (in addition to offering extended hours) they would be able to retain staff, which, in turn, would support workers' ability to build trusting relationships with the people and communities they serve.

**Services to support children, youth and families would be strengthened and enhanced**. Social services would work with families in more holistic ways to avoid apprehending children. Services targeting children and youth at risk (including those in shelters, in care or on the street and sexually exploited

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<sup>1</sup>Bernadette Smith, in partnership with Ka Ni Kanichihk and the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Winnipeg, is currently developing just such a resource. A draft version of *A Toolkit for Families of Missing Persons and Persons at Risk* (2011) was available for review at the Never Forgotten Summit on Missing & Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls. Reflecting the level of interest and demand for this resource, Summit participants requested well over 100 copies of the finalized toolkit.

youth) would be enhanced. These would include 24-hour drop-in centres (with beds) and crisis services, with increased access to afterhours support.

## What's Missing?

The second question explored in the working session, '**What gaps can you identify between what exists right now and your comprehensive plan?**', was designed to help participants understand change or action would need to occur before their plan could be realized. Their responses are summarized below.

- **Lack of respect for victims and their families**, as evidenced, for example, by the tendency to sensationalize the stories of missing and murdered women or to lump them all together or inadequate communication between police services or other agencies and the families of missing or murdered women or girls. At a broader level, a significant proportion of the general public appears to see this as an issue that only involves or affects Aboriginal people.
- **Inadequate resources and supports for families**, with respect to needs such as to be heard and treated sensitively and respectfully, to be assisted in their search for their missing loved one, to know what is happening with their loved one's case, or to access counselling and other forms of emotional support.
- **Inadequate response to reports of a missing or murdered Aboriginal woman or girl**, including: lack of a coordinated response; absence of national protocols; jurisdictional barriers; limited opportunities to share information, tools or best or proven practices; underutilization of technology; inadequate communication; cultural barriers and systemic racism; failure to respect, draw on or incorporate Aboriginal understandings or approaches; lack of accountability.
- **Limited access to services**, including significant gaps in services and resources in communities and rural areas outside of Winnipeg, limited hours, staffing levels and capacity at existing services (such as Mobile Crisis Units, shelters, and drop-in centres), and, to a significant degree, a lack of services designed for/by Aboriginal people and limited capacity to work effectively with Aboriginal people within existing services.
- **Shortcomings in prevention activities**, such as the need for more proactive supports, programs and actions, more efforts to engage families in prevention, lack of transition supports for people moving from rural to urban settings, need for more integration between housing, health and social services and the families and communities they serve, and the failure to effectively address poverty and other conditions that contribute to individual vulnerability.
- **Inadequate supports for women** (especially for mothers or for women who want to transition), **youth** (need 24-hour resource centres in or near their own neighbourhoods, more services for children who are not in care, and enhanced supports for children in care, as well and funding and resources to support positive development for youth), **families** (more early intervention activities that help families stay together) **and communities** (investment in infrastructure and activities that support safety).
- **Irresponsible reporting in media**, including the lack of uplifting or positive stories about Aboriginal people or communities.
- **Missed opportunities for education**, including the public school system's failure to provide adequate education or training to children and youth in areas such as: safety and prevention; the culture, history and present day experiences of Aboriginal peoples; anti-racism; and

decolonization. More safety and prevention education and training targeting women is also needed.

- **Gaps and inequities in funding**, including disparities between funding provided for mainstream and Aboriginal activities and organizations; inadequate funding for non-profits; the lack of long-term funding arrangements for non-profit organizations; and the limited availability of funding to support families in activities relating to their loss of a loved one.
- **Inadequate consequences for perpetrators**
- **Lack of guidance, feedback and accountability in the response to missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls**, including lack of accountability from police services back to families and communities; limited opportunities for feedback and communication about what is being done now; lack of trust in relationships between families and police services; and the limited involvement in this issue of many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders (in particular, male leaders).

## Recommendations to Create Change

The final question in the working session was, ‘**What actions could be taken right now to address the gaps we’ve identified?**’. Participants were asked to draft recommendations for action that were specific and ‘do-able’ and, where possible, identify the people who needed to be enlisted and the resources needed to make the recommendations work. Their key recommendations are detailed below.

### A. Support for Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls and Their Families

#### 1. Improve communication with families.

- Consult with them about what they need, including how they want to communicate with services
- Police services and other organizations appoint liaison officers who will keep families up-to-date and maintain ongoing contact with them. This will include ensuring that appropriate personnel respond to any inquiries or communications from family members.
- Provide forums and arenas in which families can gather and family members can express themselves, without being interrupted, rushed, probed or delayed.

#### 2. Offer culturally appropriate victim support programs that are easily accessible and open 24/7.

#### 3. Provide a single window through which families can access the services and supports they need.

This single window would have a national office, along with regional locations that would house localized response units with staff and volunteers and support the local implementation of a coordinated immediate response system incorporating national standardized protocols. The single window would provide families with 24-hour access to and/or information about:

- Police services (law enforcement) and other agencies
- Reporting and tips hotline
- Initiating an Amber-type alert
- Elders, other families who have had similar experiences, a trauma team to help them with healing and recovery, and other supports for emotional and spiritual wellness

- Foundations, trust funds, government departments or other agencies that will provide funding and other resources to support searches, travel and other aspects of their attempts to find their loved one, identify a perpetrator or heal from or manage the impacts of their loss.
- Who should be enlisted? A working group, with representation from the provincial and federal governments and Aboriginal leadership and organizations.

The national office of the single window would also be responsible for supporting the implementation of national standardized protocols, along with the design and delivery of relevant training and education, and developing and lobbying for legislation to support an effective coordinated response and national protocols.

- 4. Develop and distribute a toolkit that provides practical information and guidance to the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.** This should include information about how to report a missing person, how to navigate the systems they will engage with, and how to connect with and access resources.
- 5. Establish a national organization and database for families.** This organization would establish a web-based application to gather and share information (as it becomes available) on all cases of missing and murdered women and girls. In addition to this closed content, which would be available on to families, the website would also feature some open content for public education.
- 6. Establish advocacy or ombudsman services for families** that they can turn to if they are having difficulty accessing or navigating the resources and service systems they need. These services would be supported by government funding.
- 7. Establish a foundation or trust fund through which families would be able to access financial support.** Funds to establish and administer this entity would be provided by the Provincial Victims' Trust. Representatives of Aboriginal organizations, families, the Helen Betty Osborne Memorial Foundation, government and law enforcement agencies should be enlisted to join a Working Group for this project. Additionally, the national EI Act should be amended to support family members' ability to take time off work when they are searching for a loved one.

## **B. Immediate Response**

- 1. Develop and implement a First 48 Hours Action Plan for Police Services.** Immediate response teams are established to implement a 48 Hour Action Plan in response to reports of a missing Aboriginal woman or girl.
  - In the first hour following a report of a missing Aboriginal woman or girl:
    - Incident number assigned and provided to family
    - Amber-style alert issued
    - All police stations in Canada advised of missing person
    - Photo and other identifying information distributed to all police agencies in Canada
  - In the first 48 hours:
    - Investigator assigned
    - Media release prepared
    - Known witness and suspects interviewed

- All leads investigated
- The family is provided throughout with ongoing and complete updates, as appropriate.

**2. Establish position of Immediate Response Coordinator.** As part of the immediate response team, the Coordinator would be responsible for liaising with families and media, connecting information between different police forces and other involved agencies, and mediating any issues that might arise between police, families and other agencies.

### **C. A More Effective Response**

**1. Implement a coordinated response to reports of missing Aboriginal women or girls.** The response would:

- Bring together representatives of police services, other components the criminal justice system, emergency responders, health services, family and community services, and military personnel (for search activities only).
- Develop and incorporate appropriate and effective national standardized protocols and criteria for action that are consistent with the needs of Aboriginal people.
- Draw on the resources of the national office of the Single Window (as above) to support the implementation of national standardized protocols, the design and delivery of relevant training and education, and developing and lobbying for legislation to support an effective coordinated response and national protocols.
- Be supported by changes or additions to existing law (as needed) to support the response.
- Share information, expertise, tools and resources across departments, organizations, mandates, jurisdictions and regions, as needed and appropriate.
- Actively solicit information relating to specific cases, through the use of tip lines, rewards for information and witness protection supports.
- Work with communities to develop plans for coordinated community-based response to missing persons. This would complement law enforcement activities.
- Use new technology (internet, social networking, mobile communications, etc.) to support information sharing and public education
- Ensure that response teams are appropriately resourced, i.e., that they are adequately staffed to meet demand.

**2. Undertake activities to address inequities between the responses to missing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and girls.** Require all law enforcement and other personnel who work directly with families, along with key policy and decision makers, to undertake WEWAP (Working Effectively with Aboriginal People), anti-racism, anti-oppression and other appropriate training that will enhance their understanding of the issue of violence against Aboriginal women and girls. Where appropriate, introduce a Train-the-Trainer component, to support capacity for ongoing and in-house training.

**3. Use sensitive and appropriate language in relationship to missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.** This includes ensuring that terminology does not misrepresent, dishonour, judge or stigmatize victims or their families and that the meanings or definitions associated with specific terms do not restrict the response (for example, setting 'confirmed abduction' as criteria may delay action in some cases). Ensure that appropriate training is provided whenever and wherever needed.

4.

**D. Prevention Activities**

1. **Enhance programming and activities that strengthen families.** This could include activities such as the attachment program which supports bonding between parents and their children and the develop of healthy relationships within families
2. **Enhance and expand upon existing resources and supports for youth,** with a particular focus on vulnerable youth and youth at risk. This should include:
  - An independent drop-in centre for youth in need that operates 24 hours a day, year round
  - An emergency bed for every child who needs it (i.e., no child turned away)
  - Access to harm reduction-based programming (e.g., through Ndinawe)
  - Resource materials to help Aboriginal youth negotiate challenges they may face
  - Ensuring that adequate supports are available in or within reach of all communities.
3. **Enhance and expand upon existing resources and supports for women and girls.** This should include:
  - Street outreach to vulnerable women and girls
  - Criteria- free resources that provide shelter, food and other supports to women and girls, 24 hours a day, year round.
  - An emergency bed for every woman who needs it (i.e., no woman turned away)
  - Affordable housing and other effective interventions to address homelessness
  - Activities that build pride and empower Aboriginal women and girls.
4. **Enhance and expand upon existing resources and supports for sexually exploited youth and women in the sex trade.** This should include:
  - Ensuring that these individuals always have a cell phone on their person, in part to enable the use of GPS for tracking.
  - Street outreach to connect and interact with these individuals on a one-to-one basis and remind them that they are loved and valued.
5. **Allocate and/or secure adequate long-term funding (3-5 years) to support the enhancement and expansion of existing resources and supports** described above. Sources for this funding include government and the private sector. Long-term funding will enable extended hours; relationship-building; the additional staffing needed to provide comprehensive and holistic supports; and allow individuals to access supports on a long-term basis, if needed.

**E. Public Awareness and Education**

1. **Initiate a public awareness campaign that increases sensitivity to and awareness of the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.** The campaign should:
  - Help increase understanding of the cultures, history and present-day experiences (including the impacts of colonization) of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
  - Address myths, stereotypes and misconceptions about Aboriginal people and emphasize the diversity within the Aboriginal population.

- Present factual information about and practical strategies to address the sexual exploitation of youth and violence (against women and girls) in Aboriginal communities.
  - Include education on anti-racism.
  - Provide on-line and printed materials with practical information on what to do if someone is lost or missing. These should be distributed through health centres, band offices, police offices, schools, friendship centres, community centres
  - Utilize a broad range of media and venues for outreach and awareness, including print, TV, radio, internet and social media (Facebook, twitter, apps), fax campaigns, milk cartons or other products, swag, fax campaigns, hosting conferences and community events, and ads on buses, trucks, and locations along well-travelled routes.
  - Language and images used in the campaign should be respectful, non-judgemental, and capture and reflect the humanity of victims and their families.
  - Activities would be led by a working group, with representation from Aboriginal women and Aboriginal organizations.
- 2. Initiate ongoing safety and prevention education for children and youth embedded in public school curriculum and complemented by community-based programming.** This includes:
- Full range of educational activities that will empower children and youth from elementary school age through teenage to young adult years.
  - Offer information and education on topics such as personal safety; family and community safety; Aboriginal culture, history and present-day experience; traditional values (respect, love, honesty, responsibility, creation and honouring our spiritual nature); social responsibility; cultural diversity and sensitivity; anti-racism; and dating violence
  - Develop an outreach plan to engage parents in planning and implementation of activities
  - Adapt and incorporate existing tools and resources, modifying as needed to make them more culturally appropriate.
  - Develop curriculum and unit plans in each topic area and supplement teaching activities with printed materials.
  - Establish coordinated curriculum and programming for primary prevention in the schools, drawing on models such as Kids in the Know or Aboriginal Shield
  - Expand and extend secondary prevention programs (such as Lighthouse programs or community clubs) to ensure that they are available over weekends, etc.
  - Engage Aboriginal community-based organizations (Ma Mawi Chi Itata, Ka Ni Kani Chihk, MMF Child and Family Services, etc.) to help children and youth learn more about their Aboriginal identity
  - Bring in role models, mentors, and others to share experiential knowledge relating to specific topic areas.
  - Identify champions who will support activities.
  - Look to MB Education for support and organizations such as the Canadian Centre for Child Protection for expertise and development.
- 3. Provide school-based prevention programs focused on the sexual exploitation of Aboriginal youth in partnership with Aboriginal organizations.** This should include programs such as Sacred Lives (delivered by White Wolf Speaking in partnership with Ndinawe) that draws on culture to teach at-risk children and youth about warning signs for sexual exploitation and the dangers of the sex trade.

Additional investments should be made to sustain and build upon this and other existing Aboriginal-focused programs

**4. Offer education in various areas to specific target populations.** This includes:

- Education on the sexual exploitation of youth and the sex trade:
  - Target populations include all frontline workers; Aboriginal leaders; youth (mandatory in schools); women; families
  - Increase awareness in these areas and dispel myths about the sex trade
  - Develop resource kits for distribution to youth
- Aboriginal awareness for Newcomers

**5. Establish memorials to acknowledge missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.** These include: a day to honour both victims and their families (could be proclaimed by Premier and coincide with either December 6 (Women’s Memorial Day) or Mar 8 (International Women’s Day); a Walking Park; Wall of Remembrance; a trust fund for children; and scholarships for students.

**6. Support and participate in activities that focus on healing and reconciliation from the residential schools legacy.** An example of this is the Returning to Spirit Workshops and Seminars, which ask individuals to participate first in a workshop specifically for either Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people, then come together for a reconciliation workshop, followed by a series of personal growth and development seminars.

**F. Perpetrators**

**1. Protect families and other Aboriginal women and girls from (re)victimization by perpetrators:**

- Impose harsher punishments on offenders
- Establish tougher laws and tougher penalties on offenders who sexually exploit youth
- Refine the definitions used to categorize different kinds of offenders
- Address violence against men involved in the sex trade
- Offer more opportunities for treatment to offenders
- Provide lawyers and legal representation to families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women
- Enable families and communities to gain retribution in the form of money, time or work from offenders
- Make the names of offenders and the cases they have been involved in public
  - Examine provisions of privacy acts to make sure that the violent actions of offenders are not protected in the name of “protecting” victims
- Suspects should be subject to mandatory lie detector tests; checked and re-checked; monitored and limited in their movements.
- Police should be authorized to hold suspects for long than 12 hours when checking alibis or statements

**G. Aboriginal Ownership and Delivery**

**1. Aboriginal leaders need to become more involved and politically engaged in this issue.** . The campaign should:



- Help increase understanding of the cultures, history and present-day experiences (including the impacts of colonization) of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
2. **Build on existing community resources, establish an all-Aboriginal owned and operated community response.** This would provide a one-stop-shop with culturally sound services to address all identified aspects of issues relating to missing and murdered Aboriginal women, girls, boys, transgendered people, two-spirit people and their families.
  3. **Support Aboriginal agencies to provide resources for prevention, safety, shelter, and well-being and coordinate and build upon Aboriginal agencies that are already doing work to address this issue.**
    - Work with existing agencies, such as Ndinawe, Native Women’s Transition Centre, Ka Ni Kanichihk, Eagle Urban Transition Centre, Eyaa-Keen Centre, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, and White Wolf Speaking
    - Resource these agencies and activities adequately and engage them to be part of the wrap-around services provided at the one-stop-shop.
    - Establish policies, procedures and practices that draw upon the sacred teachings to enable agencies to collaborate effectively.
  4. **Provide adequate funding to Aboriginal agencies, programs and projects.** Adequate funding is:
    - Sustained over the long-term
    - Equitable to that provided to mainstream organizations
    - Sufficient to enable the agencies, programs and projects to meet the full, complex and real needs of the people and communities they serve, including the most vulnerable or marginalized populations in that group
    - Sufficient to cover the costs associated with providing options that draw on both traditional and contemporary knowledge and teachingsIf necessary, funding currently allocated to non-Aboriginal organizations for service to Aboriginal peoples should be shifted to Aboriginal-led organizations.

#### H. Shared Responsibility and Accountability

1. **Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders (in particular, men) need to become more involved and politically engaged in this issue.**
2. **Encourage men to take responsibility for and become more involved in this issue.** This should include:
  - Building awareness amongst men and mobilizing them
  - Conducting research to gain a better understanding of how to break the cycle of violence
  - Working with men who are incarcerated to break the cycle
  - Engage a respected role model (such as Adam Beach) to champion the cause
  - Establish a committee or working group to engage different male cohorts.
3. **Undertake a comprehensive investigation into the high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.** The investigation should explore events preceding their disappearance

or murder, along with their personal history and the history of their interactions with various service systems.

**4. Form a stakeholder group to implement and monitor the strategic coordinated response to this issue.** Activities undertaken by this group should include taking an inventory of and assessing the effectiveness of:

- Existing opportunities for community members to report suspicious activity or individuals or dangerous situations
- Existing programs or initiatives for stakeholders

The group should also develop a process or tool through which organizations that want to participate in the response can assess the cultural sensitivity and capacity of their own activities and organization and develop their own strategy for contributing to the response. Organizations should be required to complete this step before coming to the table.

**5. Establish a public inquiry into the Amber McFarland and Jennifer Catcheway cases.** The inquiry should be undertaken by a committee that includes representation from Aboriginal leaders, the Aboriginal Issues Committee of Cabinet, and other government departments and agencies. Work to establish the inquiry should begin immediately. Findings should inform protocols incorporated into the coordinated response.

**6. Work to ensure that all police forces in Manitoba are subject to the jurisdiction of independent civilian bodies.**

**7. Follow up on outcomes from the Never Forgotten Summit.**

- Forward report on Summit to all Ministers and senior officials in relevant government departments. Request a response to the report from Ministers.
- Advise senior government officials that they need to take action.
- Organize a second Summit for the fall of 2011, at which progress on the Strategy can be renewed.