



Access to Justice Family Violence Prevention

Rebecca Kudloo – President, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
Public Awareness Campaign Launch in Iqaluit

Ublukuut from Baker Lake. I wish I could be there in person with you today, to celebrate International Women’s Day and mark this important milestone - the launch of the public awareness campaign to break the silence and help end family violence in Nunavut.

I’d like to begin by honouring the lives of missing and murdered women. And by holding gratitude for the social, economic and cultural contributions of our ancestors.

Qujannamiik to Pauktuutit’s partners in this critical initiative, the Law Society of Nunavut and the Law Foundation of Ontario.

I’d also like to thank the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and the RCMP for their support.

To the members of the Advisory Committee for this initiative, Qujanamiik for bringing your knowledge, lived experiences and wisdom to this urgent work.

As the national voice for Inuit women in Canada, for over 36 years, Pauktuutit has worked to make a positive difference on the issues that matter most to Inuit women, including violence and abuse prevention.

Today, I’d like to share with you three important values that are of importance to the work Pauktuutit does to address domestic violence.

First is the importance of listening to the knowledge, advice and ideas of Inuit women who live with the intergenerational effects and trauma from relocation and the impact of residential schools, as well as a lack of safe housing, healthcare

services, access to quality education and other social and economic supports. This history - and all these are the cause of the cycle of domestic violence.

Inuit know the problems and the solutions. Our job as Inuit leaders and allies is to first listen, then act.

Our work must be informed by the wisdom of our Elders and frontline workers.

It must be motivated by the aspirations and vision Inuit have for their children and grandchildren.

And it must do justice for our youth who should be able to lead their lives - free of physical and psychological violence, in their homes and communities and beyond.

These values were reflected in the findings of the research phase for this initiative. Key findings included:

- The importance of the role of Inuit society in dealing with family violence;
- The way forward must carefully incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatugagiit; and
- The legal system and the Inuit way must build a common path to come together.

The second value Pauktuutit brings to its work is the importance of collaboration with partners and allies.

Whether its securing \$60 million for the construction and operation of five new emergency Inuit-specific shelters for women - as Pauktuutit recently did – or breaking the silence and helping to end family violence in Nunavut, complex issues cannot be solved by one person, one organization, one government or one gender.

Every person in this room today has an important role to play in helping to end family violence in Nunavut.

Further, if concrete progress is to be made, all of us must work together towards our common goal to ensure Inuit women understand their rights and reduce the physical and emotional harm from domestic violence.

As President of Pauktuutit, I led the recent campaign to secure new funding for shelters. However, I did not do this on my own. We succeeded because of the

work of my predecessors, including former Pauktuutit President, Elisapee Sheutiapik, now Nunavut's Status of Women Minister.

We also succeeded because of the support of Inuit partners like Inuit Tapiriit Kantami and the Government of Nunavut, as well as key federal cabinet ministers who listened to the voices of Inuit women and worked hard to secure this funding.

Pauktuutit is committed to continuing our collaboration with our partners and allies to reduce family violence in Nunavut and throughout Inuit Nunangat and urban centres.

The third value I'd like to highlight is that Pauktuutit undertakes its work on violence prevention with a holistic Inuit approach.

The Engaging Men and Boys Project, recently launched in partnership with the Government of Nunavut is one example of this.

This value was also reflected in the research findings for this Family Violence Prevention initiative which found, in addition to the need for safe housing for women and children, safe housing for the abuser is also key to stopping domestic violence.

In closing, the goals of this Family Violence Prevention initiative and International Women's Day will be achieved when women and men work together to end domestic violence and gender inequality.

No decision that impacts Inuit women should be made without Inuit women at the decision-making table - in our communities, regionally and nationally.

As the President of Pauktuutit, I am at some of these decision-making tables – however, there are many other tables we need to be at to ensure our voices and position is heard.

I encourage all the women, including youth, in the room today to also strive to take a seat at one of these decision-making tables. We need your voices, your intelligence and your ideas.

Finally, I look forward to participating in the coming campaign and to joining all of you in celebrating its success, next year.