



Access to Justice Family Violence Prevention

Nalini Vaddapalli – CEO, Law Society of Nunavut

Public Awareness Campaign Launch in Iqaluit

Thank you again John for re-affirming the Law Society's commitment to continuing to work with all of our partners and stakeholders. As you have heard from everyone here today, we will continue to collaborate and work towards ending the cycle of family violence in Nunavut.

This past year and a half has been quite the journey. I've had the privilege to work and meet so many wonderful and dedicated individuals.

Core to this project was the Advisory Committee. Reflecting the importance of addressing abuse and family violence holistically, the Committee represents a wide-range of organizations, both government, non-government, legal and non-legal.

A heartfelt thank you to each of the members and their organizations. They have invested time and effort and joined many conversations. The wealth of knowledge and expertise shared by these individuals ensured that the project was carried out in a relevant, appropriate and sensitive manner.

Please allow me the opportunity to acknowledge our Committee members:

- YWCA Agvvik Society – Executive Director Sherri Robertson; and former Executive Director Caroline Anawak
- Our youth representative and Nunavut Law Program Student Tagalik Eccles
- Until Feb, 2020, we welcomed from the University of Alberta, Adjunct Professor Priscilla Ferrazzi
- From Maliiganik Tukisiinakvik Legal Services, Family Law Lawyer Nancy Hellyer; I would also like thank my colleagues from the Nunavut Bar for joining us today

- Representing Qiqiktani Inuit Association, Hagar Idlout-Sudlovenick, Director of Social Policy
- Justice of the Peace Nicole Sikma

From the Government of Nunavut:

- Department of Justice:
 - Jessica Young, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety
 - Christine Aye, Acting Director - Community Justice
 - Donna Olsen-Hakongak, Acting Manager - Community Justice
 - Natalie Salguero, Senior Policy Analyst
 - Rita Strickland, Former Assistant Deputy Minister. Public Safety
- Department of Family Services, Margaret Wormell, Family Violence Specialist
- Department of Health, Margaret Piercy, Health Promotion Specialist

I've gained a strong sense of belief that looking at this room today, our conversations and many back and forth emails have turned into actions.

Each of the organizations represented by the Advisory Committee play a significant role in addressing abuse and family violence in Nunavut -from offering counselling programs and services, safe places for women and children to turn to, legal support and drafting/amending policies that work.

The collaborative approach to this project has given us a unique roadmap to explore ways to break the silos and work better together. How could we not?

Some of the recommendations arising from the data collection speak to the role of the RCMP. Thank you to our officers for standing together with us today. Chief Superintendent Jones, please pass on our recognition to Cpl. Jamie Savikataaq who was one of the first stakeholder the Law Society and Pauktuutit met back in June 2019 as we were just commencing the research phase.

As a demonstration of our commitment to strengthen our collaborative approach and to continue these important conversations that are leading to real and tangible actions:

I encourage you to meet some of the Government of Nunavut's service providers in the lobby after this event. They are here today to share information and support resources related to abuse and family violence.

The YWCA Agvvik Society has also provided information on their project Makigiarniq: *Empowering Inuit Women For Stronger Communities* set to launch this spring. This project will help empower Inuit women to take on leadership roles in finding solutions to address gender-based violence both in their communities and throughout Nunavut. Leading up to the spring launch, there will be community-based activities in Iqaluit and Pangnirtung to continue advocating for Inuit women leadership.

I also invite you to visit the photo exhibition opening hosted by Qulliq Nunavut Status of Women Council this evening at the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum. Each year the Council celebrates Nunavut women, children, and families. This year's theme is "Home is Family" to highlight the importance of healthy families in our territory.

Our colleagues from the Department of Family Services are also on the same journey to raise awareness on International Women's day.

Information contained in a poster and postcard have been shipped to community-based family wellness offices across the territory. A follow-up will occur with the regional offices, via email, at which point the digital copy of the postcard, with links will also be made available.

These materials are also available today.

The Law Society and Pauktutit are delighted that the Department of Justice has now made available the Family Abuse Intervention Act toll free number as part our public awareness materials.

Before the official launch, please allow me to acknowledge Board members and volunteers who are joining us from the Kamatsiaqtut Nunavut Helpline today. Kamatsiaqtut means 'thoughtful people who care'; this important service started by volunteers in Iqaluit in 1990. Today they continue to provide a high-quality service 24/7 for people who are in distress or crisis.

John and the rest of our Executive members will no doubt join me in applauding their dedication and commitment, all on a volunteer basis. The Law Society will continue to choose the Help Line as its organization of choice when it honors its own law society volunteer members.

And now for the official launch of the Access to Justice for Family Violence Prevention in Nunavut Public Awareness Campaign!

Led by Inuit societal values, this awareness campaign has been designed with guidance from the Advisory Committee to empower Nunavummiut to:

1. Recognize abusive situations (whether for themselves or someone they know or as a citizen passing by and “not sure what to do”; “I did want to help but was not sure how” – these are legitimate feelings); and
2. Increase public understanding about the Family Abuse Intervention Act and other available options including legal options.

Multiple innovative components will be used to share the information, including events, such as the launch here today and the one happening in Cambridge Bay later today led by our colleagues from Justice. And posters, podcasts (to be share with communities), plain language resources, community visits, and a dedicated project Facebook page that also officially launches today! I encourage you to check it out, like it, share it, and watch for ongoing updates throughout the year.

We are also working on developing a short film capturing the stories of four women and their empowerment journey with abuse and family violence. Their stories speak of strength in survival – the short film is a testament to these remarkable women. We are hoping their powerful and raw stories will inspire someone who may be in an abusive situation and encourage them to reach out and get the support and help they need.

I would like to share with you a clip from this film.

(trailer of short film on 3 survivors)

Our profound gratitude to the women with lived experience who found the strength and courage to stand up and share their stories for both the film and as part of our research.

Thank you for standing with us today. Each and every one of us in this room today plays a role in empowering Nunavummiut in knowing the signs including sharing informing with someone so they can take that courageous step and know they will be supported.

We must continue our efforts to keep working together so that no one has to be left in the dark, in fear of violence and abuse.

Please continue to join us.