

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto



Attn:

**The Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs
Sex Trafficking of Indigenous Peoples**

Sex trafficking is an issue that disproportionately affects Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited individuals. The intersections of colonization, inter-generational trauma, gender-based violence, resource disparity and racism render Indigenous communities uniquely vulnerable. In order to build a comprehensive understanding on sex trafficking of Indigenous peoples, it is vital to understand the historical and ongoing contexts of First Nation, Métis and Inuit lived experiences.

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (NCFST), a multi-service urban Aboriginal agency, has developed intensive, community guided, culturally grounded programming to support those at-risk, interfacing with or exiting trafficking. Through this work we have come to understand that trafficking not only impacts the victim, it impacts families and entire communities. Research should extend to include impacts on children, families and communities of those who have experienced trafficking from all sides. Further, while young women are often considered most at risk of sex trafficking, it is critical to consider the impacts of long-standing trafficking on adult women, mothers and two-spirited folks.

Indigenous peoples have long supported one another in healing from violence, including sexual violence and trafficking. Through Indigenous resilience and ingenuity a range of protective and healing strategies have been developed to ensure culturally safe community care. Indigenous groups supporting this work should be consulted throughout this study.

Relationship, respect, reciprocity and trust are guiding principles in Indigenous ways of being. Any study on issues addressing Indigenous peoples should align with these practices through reciprocal relationship building, transparency and respect of Ownership, Access, Control, Possession (OACAP) principles. Indigenous research methodologies are vital, culturally grounded ways of knowing and should, where possible, be intrinsically embedded into any Indigenous study.

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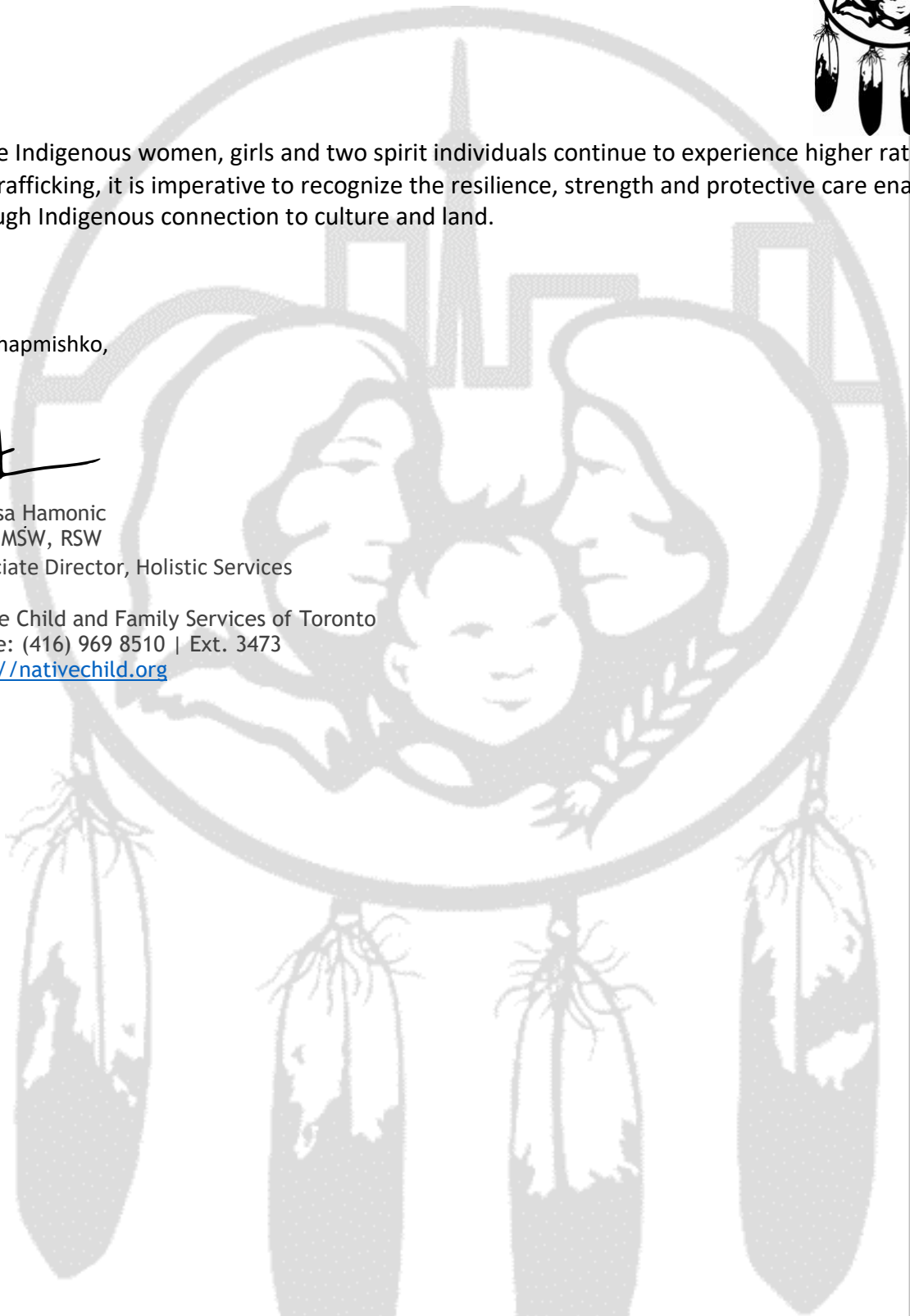


While Indigenous women, girls and two spirit individuals continue to experience higher rates of sex trafficking, it is imperative to recognize the resilience, strength and protective care enacted through Indigenous connection to culture and land.

Pishshapmishko,

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