

Dear community,

We reach out today to acknowledge and extend our condolences regarding the continued violence perpetuated by those in power against Indigenous peoples on their unceded and unsurrendered territory that many of us call "Canada". Our hearts are with those communities who have been directly impacted by this harm, as well as the broader Indigenous communities across our country that face daily discrimination and the violence that the ongoing colonial project continues to inflict on them.

We reflect on the anger and sadness felt by many due to the publicized deaths of Chantel Moore, who was shot during a "wellness check" in New Brunswick, and Bill Ward, chief of Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation in New Brunswick, who was tasered and shot by New Brunswick RCMP. We also reflect on the over 1,000 missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people whose names we may never know and who have been failed time and time again by the Canadian justice system.

June is National Indigenous History Month in Canada; yet, instead of celebrating, Indigenous folks mourned the continued losses of life in their communities. This violence is not new, but instead ingrained in the fabric of a country built on injustice and genocide. We must work to learn the dark history of the land we walk on, unlearn what we have been taught to believe about those different than ourselves, and stand up for those who are continuously silenced and not given space to speak.

As Peel Region is a diverse place that is home to Indigenous people who are subject to this violence, we must put in the work to address these inequities. As a Collaborative that is focused on 2SLGBTQ+ communities, we must also recognize the ways in which queer and trans spaces often center white voices and how colonialism aimed in part to wipe out nations that not only accepted but celebrated gender and sexual diversity, uplifting Two-Spirit folks for their unique perspective and wisdom.

We will continue to work with folks like those at The Indigenous Network so that we find ways to improve our services for all people within the 2SLGBTQ+ community in Peel. We will also continue to uplift Indigenous voices at our events and the ongoing efforts we participate in in the community.

We invite you to join us in this continued exercise of learning and unlearning.

In Solidarity,

Associated Youth Services of Peel

Indus Community Services

Peel CAS

CMHA Peel Dufferin

Interim Place

Punjabi Community Health Services

East Mississauga Community Health Centre

Moyo Health and Community Services

WellFort Community Health Services

Services and Housing in the Province

Volunteer MBC