



LIARD ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SOCIETY

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For immediate release –

KASKA WOMEN DENOUNCE VIOLENCE

Recent events in our community have focused attention on the unconscionable level of violence against women and girls. Kaska women in our community do not feel safe. We as indigenous women are outraged by the extreme level of violence and the failures of the legal system to keep girls and women safe.

Liard Aboriginal Women's Society is hosting an Anti-Violence Vigil and Solidarity March. The Vigil will take place on Thursday June 18 at 2:00pm at the Wye Lake Cabin; everyone is welcome to attend.

Community members marching in solidarity to end violence will gather at Tag's on Tuesday, June 23 at 1:00pm; we will march to Watson Lake Foods and back to TAGS. Attendees are encouraged to observe public health protocols and maintain physical distancing requirements.

Violence against women has increased significantly since the pandemic necessitated sheltering in place. These restrictions, combined with reduced access to immediate services and supports for victims of violence, have had a big impact for victims. "The vigil and march are about solidarity for victims and letting them know that we, as a community are here for support," said Ann Maje Raider, Executive Director of Liard Aboriginal Women's Society.

The circuit court schedule in the territory causes delays in hearings and trials for violent offenders, often leading to them being released back into the community – even where there are previous outstanding charges against them. Offenders released on bail usually contact victim or act out violently against them, even when there is a restraining order or peace bond in place.

"Too many women and girls become less safe when they report violence, not safer. This must be changed," said Margaret Charlie, Kaska Advocate.

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