

# Looking Out For Each Other

A Project Update – April 2019

## LOFEO HELPLINE: SPECIAL EDITION

### 1-833-MMI-FIND, A New Provincial Helpline Providing Support to Indigenous Families When Loved Ones Go Missing



**Looking Out For Each Other Helpline**

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Families in Need of Direction

Support & Services When a Loved One Goes Missing

The MMI-FIND helpline provides 24/7 navigation and referral services to families and friends of missing persons in New Brunswick. A collaboration between NBAPC and Gignoo Transition House, experienced crisis-intervention workers provide information and supports to help mobilize helping services in a timely manner. Our research supports the helpline through the creation of tools and resources as well as by providing specialized training.

### The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council/ News Update April 1, 2019

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC), in partnership with Gignoo Transition House, proudly

announces the establishment of a provincial helpline for the families and communities of missing Aboriginal people in New Brunswick. This initiative is part of the community driven project *Looking Out For Each Other: Assisting Aboriginal families and communities when an Aboriginal woman goes missing*, led by NBAPC.

The helpline will serve as a support, information and referral service system to help families navigate the various resources that may be required when a loved one goes missing or has been missing. “The National Inquiry made all of Canada aware of the systemic racism that exists in policy and services throughout Canada,” says Interim President & Chief, Amanda LeBlanc. “We have been highlighting the discrimination for nearly 50 years and with the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women that is now being brought to the forefront – we noticed very early on that the East Coast was being left out of the conversation, which is where *Looking Out For Each Other* originated.”

One of the gaps identified early on was the lack of culturally appropriate resources for families when a loved one goes missing or is at risk of going missing. The helpline was created out of necessity after listening to the stories of those who participated in sharing circles. Questions like when to call the police, how and when to get legal support, if they need help dealing with media, access to cultural healing etc. could be assisted with through the helpline.

The *Looking Out For Each Other* project is driven by a team of community partners, including Gignoo Transition House. “We bring 25 years of experience in providing support to Indigenous women in this project. Indigenous women have always been leaders in our communities, and this project is a



good example” says Barb Martin, President. “This was a perfect fit for us to host this helpline, to be able to further support our families and continue to build positive relationships.”

Gignoo Transition House, a 24/7 safe house for Indigenous women and their children, will be housing the helpline. The staff have been trained to provide sustainable province-wide resource support for families in need when their loved ones go missing.

The number for the helpline is 1-833-MMI-FIND, which stands for *Missing and Murdered Indigenous- Families In Need of Direction*. This 24/7 helpline is the first of its kind in the Maritimes and is now live.

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## HELPLINE NEWS COVERAGE

### Indigenous Helpline Launches To Help Families When Someone Disappears

**CBC News**  
Jordan Gill  
April 2, 2019

A New Brunswick helpline has been set up for families and friends of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

The helpline was launched by the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council and will be staffed by Gignoo Transition House, an Indigenous safe house based in Fredericton.

Jula Hughes, a law professor at the University of New Brunswick, said the goal was to create something to help families deal with the police at the time someone disappears and with the news media and the justice system.

"How do you assist somebody making that police call? How do you help them prepare for it? How do you help people prepare for the media onslaught that will invariably come about when something becomes, you know, a bad outcome," said Hughes.

The helpline is part of the larger "Looking Out For Each Other" campaign in Atlantic Canada and Quebec.

Hughes said Indigenous communities have already been doing much of the work helping families of missing and murdered women, and the structure of the helpline came out of consultation with Indigenous organizations.

Amanda LeBlanc, the president of the New Brunswick council, said the catalyst for the helpline was the fear that Atlantic Canada would be ignored during the MMIW crisis.

"Because our numbers are so low compared to the bigger city centres, they think it doesn't happen," said LeBlanc.

"Homelessness for example. People don't see it the way they see it on the streets of Winnipeg, Toronto, Vancouver, but it is very prevalent here. It just looks a lot different. It's no different with ... incidents with missing Indigenous women."

### Dispelling myths

LeBlanc said Gignoo is key to the operation of the helpline.

"It's work they're already doing in the community now," said LeBlanc.

"They're helping women and children. They're already trained in how to receive calls similar to this."

LeBlanc said the helpline will inform people about what it needed during a missing persons case, provide legal information and



dispel myths, such as the myth that you can only report someone missing after 24 hours.

The helpline number is 1-833-MMI-FIND and operates 24 hours a day.

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## HELPLINE NEWS COVERAGE

### Helpline Launched For Missing Indigenous People In New Brunswick

**The Wave**  
Danielle McCreddie  
April 3, 2019

A new helpline has been launched for the family and friends of missing Indigenous people in the province.

The 24/7 phone line will give them advice on how to navigate police, media and justice systems in an effort to find their loved ones, as well as provide healing services.

It's the first of its kind in Eastern Canada, and one of only few in the country. It's especially unique in the variety of services it will offer.

Along with police navigation services for making an initial missing persons report, there will also be trained lawyers and law students providing legal advice, and a partnership with media organizations. The number for the helpline is 1-833-MMI-FIND, which stands for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Families in Need of Direction.

Amanda LeBlanc, interim president and Chief of the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, says Gignoo Transition

House for Indigenous women and families in Fredericton will be manning the lines. She says working with Gignoo is "a perfect match."

"We have Native councils who have been doing like this for nearly 50 years, Gignoo is over 25 years experiences themselves doing this, so in the Indigenous communities we have this knowledge already so it's just a matter of gathering it," she said in an interview.

"It's an Eastern Canada project, so this is actually just a pilot. So we're starting here in New Brunswick, it's close to home and it's easy, but the intention is that this is something that would be held in each of the provinces," said LeBlanc.

LeBlanc says the phone line is part of a larger project to improve outcomes for missing Indigenous peoples in Eastern Canada called "Looking Out For Each Other."

In Canada, Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to be missing or murdered than any other women. According to the Status of Women Canada, Indigenous women and girls in Canada are disproportionately affected by all forms of violence.

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council approached UNB Law professor Jula Hughes in 2015 for help on the project. The initiative combines university-based research, Indigenous self-governance organizations, social justice efforts, and justice system reform.

Hughes says a wide-spread myth she hopes the project will dispel about missing persons cases is that you must wait 24 hours before filing a report.

“Any police chief in the country will tell you that’s just not true,” she said.

She says reporting missing persons sooner rather than later means a better outcome, especially for those who live off-reserve, where police may not be tracking cases as vigilantly.

“A large part of the helpline’s purpose is to help people just figure their way through that and gather up their courage and have the right information so they call early.”

## Helpline Brochure



**Where You Can Access Other Support**

**Fredericton Legal Advice Clinic**

Fredericton Legal Advice Clinic (FLAC) is a project partner, its lawyers and students have been trained to assist families and friends of a missing Indigenous person. There are clinics every week or two, one clinic is at St. Mary's Kchikhusis Centre in Stephan Horsman's Office. Clinic dates are at [https://www.facebook.com/frederictonlegaladviceclinic2015/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/frederictonlegaladviceclinic2015/?ref=br_rs)

**New Brunswick Victim Services**

Elsipogtog First Nations 523-4747  
Fredericton 453-2768  
Campbellton 789-2388  
Bathurst 547-2924  
Caraquet 726-2417  
Edmundston 735-2543  
Grand Falls 463-7706  
Miramichi 627-4065  
Moncton 856-2875  
Saint John 658-3742  
St. Stephen 466-7414  
Tracadie-Sheila 394-3690  
Woodstock 325-4422

**DON'T WAIT 24 HOURS!**

- Don't wait to act
- Report a missing person immediately!
- There is no 24 hour waiting period!
- The 24 hour rule is a myth!

**Looking Out For Each Other (LOFEO)**

**1-833-MMI-FIND**  
**1-833-664-3463**

**HELP LINE**

This Help-Line is part of the Looking Out for Each Other project managed by the New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council.

To learn more:  
<https://nbapc.org/programs-and-services/lofeo/>

**LOFEO Helpline**

Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Families in Need of  
Direction

**1-833-MMI-FIND**  
**(1-833-664-3463)**

 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada 

 **Status of Women Canada**  **Condition féminine Canada**

# Helpline Brochure

## What is the Helpline and When Can You Call?

This is a 24 hour - 7 day a week Helpline

- This is a new service.
- The helpline is for the families and communities of missing Aboriginal people in New Brunswick.
- The helpline will serve as a support, information and referral service system to help families navigate the various resources that may be required when a loved one goes missing.

## Who Provides the Helpline and Who Operates it?

Looking Out for Each Other, New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, and Gignoo Transition House

- New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC) is leading a community-driven project called Looking Out for Each Other (LOFEO): Assisting Aboriginal Families and Communities When an Aboriginal Woman Goes Missing.
- The main goal of the project is to empower Aboriginal organizations to provide well supported services to families and friends of missing people.
- NBAPC partnered with Gignoo Transition House to establish a helpline for the families and communities of missing people in NB.

## How Can We Help?

### Supports for families

- Assistance when Contacting the Police
- Connection to Free Legal Advice/Services
- Referrals for Specialized Supports
- Information on Resources and Services that are Available

### Community-based services

- Emergency Shelters
- Health Services
- Cultural Supports

  
Social Sciences and Humanities  
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 Status of Women Canada     Condition féminine Canada