



VIOLENCE
RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL
BUILDING AN INDIGENOUS
OUR BODIES:
LAND, VIOLENCE ON
THE

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SUMMARY

“Violence on the Land, Violence on our Bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence” is a community-based research and advocacy project aimed at documenting the experiences of Indigenous women, youth, and community members whose sexual and reproductive health and rights have been affected by gas and oil development, mining, and pesticides – something known as “environmental violence”.

This initiative is a collaboration between the Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) and Women’s Earth Alliance (WEA).



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ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLENCE

Indigenous women and children bear the brunt of negative consequences of resource extraction and are suffering the detrimental, devastating, multigenerational and deadly impacts of environmental toxins and contaminants. This particular impact of environmental racism on Indigenous women and children is increasingly referred to as “environmental violence.”

Environmental violence has particular effects on the health of Indigenous, women, girls, and our generations yet unborn.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

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As the legacy of Indigenous and women of color community organizing has taught us, it's critical to recognize the interrelatedness of issues about and surrounding our bodies (i.e. domestic violence and higher rates of incarceration for women) and that we often need justice before "choice" even becomes a possibility.

It means having free, prior, and informed consent regarding all decisions made about our bodies. This includes being fully informed about the impacts of environmental violence on our bodies.

NEEDS



1 – identify and document the impacts of environmental toxins on Indigenous women and children as "environmental violence";

2 – provide community capacity-building and training linking reproductive and environmental health and human rights;

3 – while some research has shown that Indigenous women and youth are generally most "at risk" for sexual and reproductive violence, stories from Indigenous communities reveal a need for more information about the link between these types of violence and the rapid growth of environmentally harmful industries.

EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLENCE

High rates of:

- sexual, domestic, and family violence as well as exploitation in Indigenous communities where extractive industries are taking place, usually accompanied by large numbers of miners or other workers from outside.
- Missing and murdered Indigenous women and youth
- HIV and other sexually transmitted infections
- Miscarriages and birth deformities
- Effects of contamination including mercury, uranium, and other toxins that continue to affect Indigenous women's reproductive health, their children, and generations unborn

