



## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM Day 11 – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Of all groups in the United States, Indigenous women face the highest rates of violence. According to data collected by the US Department of Justice, in some US communities the murder rates of Indigenous women are 10 times the national average. The same report reveals that Indigenous women are almost three times as likely to experience rape or sexual assault compared to other women.

Worldwide, there are over 126 million missing women. A large percentage of these women and girls are indigenous. These statistics are not just numbers. The statistics represent real people; they are people's sisters, mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and friends. They are Hanna Harris, Loretta Saunders, Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, Shirley Soosay, Phebe Oregon, Kimberly Iron, Selena Not Afraid, Sabrina Rosette, Olivia Lone Bear, Ashly Loring Heavyrunner, .....and tens of thousands more.

### VIOLENCE AND MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN

When found deceased, Native American women's bodies are 135% more likely to be unidentified than the bodies of women of other racial or ethnic groups in the U.S.



55% of Indigenous Women have been physically abused by their intimate partners.

56% of Indigenous Women experience sexual violence.

48% of Indigenous Women have been stalked in their lifetime.

Murder is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for Indigenous Women.

We all need to become allies to stop this violence. However, being a genuine ally involves a lot of self-reflection, education and listening. It means knowing we are often coming into this space from a position of power and privilege. Privilege that we have gained through unjust systems that marginalize the groups with which we seek to advocate.

It's not enough to show up in solidarity and speak out against the unjust system; we have to do what is within our power to dismantle the system and differentiate ourselves from the opponents of these groups. We have to change our own behaviors and consider our own internal biases and judgments. We must be mindful that we are not contributing to the continuance of the system. We can contact government officials and demand funding for improved reporting and immediate action. We can also host community projects that raise awareness, such as REDress Project, Walking with Our Sisters, or Faceless Dolls and then use the awareness to take action.

Are you up to the challenge?