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## News release

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### **Report examines Anishinaabeg governance and family law**

Nogojiwanong (Peterborough, ON) - The Nijkiwendidaa Anishnaabekwewag Services Circle (NASC) is pleased to release a new report that shines light on Anishinaabeg kinship-centred governance and family law. The report aims to help Anishinaabeg and other Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members and service providers have a greater understanding of how to work with and empower families and children in a way that honours and respects Anishinaabeg laws.

The report, called *NAWENDIWIN: The art of being related - Anishinaabeg Kinship-centred Governance and Family law (Nawendiwin)*, is the result of two years of research undertaken in partnership with the Indigenous Law Research Unit (ILRU) based at the University of Victoria. The ILRU is an academic research unit dedicated to revitalizing Indigenous law. It partners with Indigenous communities and organizations seeking to re-articulate their laws to address contemporary issues they face today.

For NASC, a non-profit organization that offers counselling and healing services for Indigenous women and their families, the research is a ground-breaking resource for better understanding how to connect Anishinaabeg laws in the organization's approach to developing supports for its client base.

"This report is an incredible collection of findings based on traditional stories, interviews with elders and knowledge keepers, and focus groups with community members that helps us better understand the interconnectedness of Anishinaabeg kinship-centred governance," says Erin Hayward, Speaker of the Council of Directors from NASC.

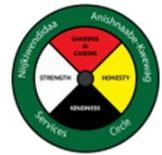
The report focuses on five parts:

- The fundamental pillars of Anishinaabeg law;
- The characteristics of legitimate decision-making in an Anishinaabeg legal order;
- Kobinasowin (the art of raising children) as an overarching and foundational obligation;
- What Anishinaabeg people may expect from others (their legal rights) in kinship-centred decision-making and associated processes; and
- The principles and strategies that guide Anishinaabeg legal responses to vulnerability, conflict, and harm within families.

*We acknowledge and respect the history and legal traditions of the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose lands the Indigenous Law Research Unit stands, and those of the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose relationships with the land continue today.*



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“Despite years of colonization, Anishinaabeg families and communities have held onto the laws about what it means to raise and nurture healthy families as well as the laws that govern responses to changes, conflicts, or breakdowns in families,” says Tara Williamson, the Project Lead on *Nawendiwin* and the Co-Research Director of the ILRU. “This is valuable information both for Anishinaabeg and settler communities alike, to deepen an understanding of Anishinaabeg laws and practices, and their relevance today.”

The report and accompanying Casebook can be found on the ILRU website at:

[https://ilru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Nawendiwin\\_Report.pdf](https://ilru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Nawendiwin_Report.pdf)

[https://ilru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Nawendiwin\\_Casebook.pdf](https://ilru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Nawendiwin_Casebook.pdf)

The Niijkiwendidaa Anishnaabekwewag Services Circle aims not only to support its clients, but it also aims to affect change within the larger community and society as a whole, by validating and holding up the values and teachings of Anishnaabeg. This report is one way the NASC hopes to connect with the greater community to share knowledge about Anishinaabeg law.

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