



HOW CAN YOU SEEK ADVOCACY SUPPORT?

When you contact us about your birthing concerns, we will talk to you the history of birth alerts with respect to Indigenous Peoples in Canada and your rights around this.

We'll help you assess your current situation and work with you to determine your priorities and family's path forward.



 1-807-620-6233 or 1-807-344-4575
(ask for the Intake Worker)

 mlevesque@matawa.on.ca

 Matawa Training & Wellness Centre
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[Facebook.com/MatawaAwashishewiigiihiwaywiin](https://www.facebook.com/MatawaAwashishewiigiihiwaywiin)



ABOUT US

The Matawa Chiefs Council initiated the Social Services Framework in 2019. Shortly thereafter, it was gifted the name "Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin" which translates from Oji-Cree to "our children are coming home."

Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin works with families from the Matawa First Nations to support them in navigating the child welfare system through prevention, planning and goal setting using community-based, culturally appropriate and responsive care models for children with a focus on prevention and family reunification.

We work to empower families and Nations in Matawa to realize full jurisdiction and authority over our own children.

ENSURING INDIGENOUS NEWBORNS STAY WITH THEIR FAMILIES AFTER BIRTH

IS OUR PRIORITY AND YOUR RIGHT



**Matawa First Nations Management
Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin Social
Services Framework**

Date Modified: 2022-04-01

WHAT IS A BIRTH ALERT?



It is a practice in which a social or health care worker notifies the staff of a hospital if they have concerns for the safety of an expected child based on their parents' history. This can include past instances of poverty, domestic violence, drug usage, and history with child welfare.

They are typically issued without the parents' consent, and often result in apprehension and placement of the child into foster care after birth.

In June 2019, the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called for the abolishment this targeted practice against Indigenous People.

On July 14, 2020, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Women's Issues directed Ontario's Children's Aid Societies to stop issuing birth alerts by October 15, 2020. Other provinces in Canada have done the same.

WHY HAVE ADVOCACY SUPPORT?



Matawa communities stand together in wanting to ensure newborn babies are not apprehended at birth.

Navigating the child welfare system can be scary and confusing. We will help inform you of your rights and assist you in navigating the system so you can make the right choices for your family.

There is a lot of work involved when interacting with child and family services – from agency meetings and case planning, to needing legal assistance and taking programs.

Just keeping track of your progress can be overwhelming. We are here to help you through these processes.



OUR MISSION



- Children are a gift from the Creator, it is our sacred responsibility to protect, love, teach and honour them
- We will support children and families to restore family connection and unity
- We will empower our children, families, parents and communities by wrapping them in a blanket of love, care, trust and support
- We acknowledge and understand our family systems
- We are culturally-based and rooted in a historic understanding of Anishnawbe way of life