



*MEDIA RELEASE*

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**Wednesday, December 18, 2024**

## **MACKENZIE MOONIAS' FAMILY 'LEFT IN THE DARK' AS THE ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HER DEATH IS MARKED**

**THUNDER BAY, ON** – Today, the family of Mackenzie Moonias held a vigil at Marina Park to mark the one-year anniversary of her death. The family continues to be devastated by the loss of Mackenzie, a 14-year-old who went missing and was later found dead under mysterious circumstances on December 18, 2023. Her mother, Vanessa Sakanee issued this statement:

*“It’s been one-year since Mackenzie’s death and still, there are no answers and there is no closure. Despite this being an active and ongoing investigation, it doesn’t feel that way—we haven’t received so much as a courtesy update from the Thunder Bay Police Services (TBPS) since December 23, 2023. This not how grieving families should be treated, it feels like we are being double-victimized. At the time of her death, our family provided valuable information on who she was with and other connected incidents that happened at the same time (and in the same area), and still, we do not know the circumstances surrounding her death. Our family will not give up on strongly seeking answers. My daughter deserves no less.”*

In October 2024, the [Inspectorate of Policing](#) – a new provincial oversight body tasked with ensuring police in the province comply with the law – announced it would be investigating the Thunder Bay Police Service over complaints about the way it conducts death investigations. Two months later, the [Assembly of First Nations](#) called on the federal government to launch a national inquiry into systemic racism in policing.

**- 30 -**

**For more information, please contact** Charnel Anderson, Communications Generalist – Matawa First Nations at (807) 621-9405 or by email at [canderson@matawa.on.ca](mailto:canderson@matawa.on.ca).