



Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROVINCE REPORT ON FIRST NATION YOUTH SUICIDE SUPPORTS NAN'S CONTINUING EFFORTS TO BUILD BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin is saying a report reviewing the youth suicides in Pikangikum First Nation echoes what the leaders in the north have been working toward for years, the basic necessities of life: clean water, proper housing, good schools and mental health programs.

These were some of the recommendations made by the 215-page report titled 'The Office of the Chief Coroner's Death Review of the Youth Suicides at the Pikangikum First Nation 2006 – 2008' which is a detailed and comprehensive review of the deaths of 16 children between the ages of 10-19 as a result of suicide in the years 2006-2008.

"The report is a substantial piece of research which supports the need for stronger infrastructure in our communities," said Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin. "The basic necessities that mainstream society take for granted like clean water, sewage, schools and housing is not in place in our communities and this is the result. Our youth are frustrated, despondent and suicidal."

Some of the main recommendations of the report include: INAC should fulfill its commitment to build a new school in Pikangikum; plan for the building and upgrading of sufficient housing units; all homes built in the future are connected to water for indoor plumbing; connect the First Nation to the hydro grid; develop a community Healing Treatment Centre; develop a Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Program for children, youth and adults; and develop an antipoverty strategy for Aboriginal people.

The review began in March 2010 and involved several parties, including health care professionals, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth and child welfare providers. A total of 100 recommendations are offered to try to stem the loss of life of First Nations youth, not only in Pikangikum First Nation, but all across Ontario.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario.

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