

Washington State Native American Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault- WomenSpirit Coalition

WomenSpirit Coalition Mission Statement:

Eliminating Violence Against Native Women and Promoting the Well-Being of Native Families and Communities.

WomenSpirit Coalition (WSC) is a private, non- profit (501 c 3) charitable organization, founded in 2002, located in the Olympia WA.

WSC is one of (approx.) 20 Tribal Coalitions nationwide that provides a voice for Native women, their families, and communities suffering from epidemic rates of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. WSC is founded, staffed, governed by Native women.

Since 2002, the primary goal of the organization has been to support AI/AN programs and their Staff in the work they do to eliminate violence against Native people on their homelands. WomenSpirit works with 29 Federally Recognized Tribes, in the State of Washington. WomenSpirit Coalition's scope of work and primary services include provision of technical assistance, consultation, and training to Tribal Programs and to participate in agenda -setting and standards- setting for our people on ways to eliminate violence and support healthy communities. For example, we provide assistance with domestic violence and sexual assault program development, offer CTAS proposal review, develop and promote culturally- based violence prevention and intervention practices, and assist in development of Social Justice Advocacy models specific to Tribal communities. WSC provides training and consultation on a local, state and national level.

WomenSpirit promotes a policy of global parity, social justice advocacy, and restoration for Native women and their families. WomenSpirit Coalition convenes the Regional WSC Networking meetings and the Tribal Law and Justice Advisory Committee (LJAC) that promotes the voices of Native survivors and Advocates in setting Public Policy that impacts all our communities.

Native American and Alaskan Native women experience the highest rate of violence of any other racial or ethnic group in the United States. A report released by the Department of Justice, American Indians and Crime, found that Native American women suffer violent crime at a rate three and a half times greater than the national average.¹

Native American and Alaskan Native women are more than 2.5 times more likely to be raped or sexually assaulted than women in the United States in general.

Native women have highest rate of multiple rapes and assaults, too. National researchers estimate that this number is actually much higher than has been captured by statistics; according to the Department of Justice over 70% of sexual assaults are never reported. Eighty-six per cent of reports by Native survivors report that the perpetrators are non-Native.²

¹ U.S. Department of Justice. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Id. (pg. 131), 1999.

² Steven W. Perry, U.S. Department of Justice, NCJ 203097, A Bureau of Justice Statistics Statistical profile. 1992-2002; *American Indians and Crime*, 2004.