

# Media Involvement in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Girls (MMIWG) Epidemic

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Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls are not considered 'newsworthy' victims to mainstream media and new outlets.

## INTRODUCTION

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) epidemic was created to raise awareness about the high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls. Media coverage for MMIWG survivors in United States and Canada remains lacking, as mainstream reporting is almost non-existent for Indigenous women and girls.

## METHOD

- Peer reviewed research articles were collected through academic websites.
- Academic websites utilized include Google Scholar, PsycINFO, and PsycARTICLES.
- Keywords to identify these articles include: \*MMIWG, \*social media and MMIWG, \*MMIWG and white women, \*MMIWG media coverage, \*MMIWG social movement, \*media representation of Native Americans, \*missing white girl syndrome.

## RESULTS

- 19 articles were identified.
- The articles found during literature search generally focused on the media coverage disparities between non-Hispanic White women/girls and Indigenous women/girls.
- MMIWG activists have brought attention to the movement by creating social media platforms that encourage Indigenous women and girls as well as their families to speak out against this crisis.

## DISCUSSION

- Through social media, MMIWG activists have successfully brought attention and recognition to the movement.
- Twitter hashtags, such as #MMIW, #MMIWG, and #inquiry, has made it possible for Indigenous people to share their stories and honor MMIWG (Moeke-Pickering et al., 2018).
- Currently, mainstream media and news outlets are still not covering MMIWG cases. They are prioritizing more 'newsworthy' cases, which are predominantly non-Hispanic White women.



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- 506 MMIWG cases were identified across 71 selected urban cities
- 128 were cases of missing Indigenous women
- 280 were cases of murdered Indigenous women
- 98 were cases with an "unknown status"
- 29 The median age of MMIWG victims



Urban Indian Health Institute

#MMIW

5,712

The number of known incidents of missing & murdered Native American and Alaskan Native women of 2016. Only 116 cases were logged into the DOJ database.

67%

The number of cases between 2005-2009 that U.S. attorneys declined to prosecute of native community matters involving sexual abuse.

96%

On some reservations, the number of sexual violence against Native women committed by non-natives.

Sources: National Institute of Justice, Urban Indian Health Institute



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