

*"Building the smallest democracies at the heart of society."*  
The United Nations: The International Year of the Family, 1994

Agreement# 40063171

## The Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative



by Jane Ursel

I have worked as a policy person in government and as a researcher in the field of domestic violence since 1983 and I am very aware of the growth of programming for families affected by domestic violence in the past 25 years. We have seen a massive expansion of shelter services, counselling services, treatment programs for offenders, specialized courts and the creation of a huge body of literature on the topic of domestic violence. Service providers and women's advocates have worked hard to raise public awareness and lobby government for improved services and increased resources. Despite a quarter century of sustained efforts, the incidence of domestic homicides continues to concern us. In the past fifteen years, 1,126 Canadians have lost their life in a domestic homicide—the majority of whom are women (Statistics Canada, 2016). This means that approximately once a week there is a woman in Canada who will be murdered by an intimate partner. In response to these incidents provincial governments have had inquests, inquiries and review panels to attempt to learn how intimate partner homicides can be prevented. A number of provinces have implemented Domestic Violence Death Review Committees (DVDRC). The first Committee was formed in Ontario in 2003 and since then Manitoba, New Brunswick and Alberta have similar committees while other provinces are considering implementation. DVDRCs first began in the United States in the 1990s and in addition to developments in Canada, there are DVDRCs in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Since its inception, the Ontario DVDRC has

identified 40 common risk factors, and the chart on Page 6 indicates the ten most frequently identified. Two of the founding members of the Ontario DVDRC—Dr. Peter Jaffe of the University of Western Ontario, and Dr. Myrna Dawson of Guelph University—lead the national study *The Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative with Vulnerable Populations*. RESOLVE is a member of this national team, with all three of our Provincial offices involved. This project will collect information on risk assessment, risk management, and safety planning for four populations identified as experiencing increased vulnerability for domestic homicide. These populations consist of immigrants and refugees, Indigenous, rural and remote populations and children exposed to domestic violence. This study has a number of components that include a comprehensive literature review; a national data base of all domestic homicides that have occurred across the country; a national survey of practitioners; and in depth qualitative interviews with persons who have dealt with domestic homicides.

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## Manitoba Justice Wellness Program: Addressing the Cost of Caring



by Cheryl Fraehlich

**I**ncreased attention is being paid to the potential detrimental effects of secondary exposure to violence and trauma among a variety of professionals. Vicarious trauma can be experienced by emergency first responders such as police, firefighters and paramedics, by hospital staff, and by counsellors, therapists and child protection workers. Professionals within the criminal justice system—including judges, Crown attorneys, and victim services staff—are also at risk because of their work with cases involving violence which is sometimes extreme and/or fatal.

The concept of vicarious trauma was introduced in the 1980s, and has also been referred to as secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and trauma exposure response. This phenomenon has been described as being associated with the “cost of caring” (Figley, 1995). Although there are some conceptual differences, all of these terms describe a form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that results from exposure to a traumatic event experienced by another person and/or the stress that results from empathic engagement with trauma survivors. Justice system staff are exposed to trauma through their work in a number of ways, including hearing about the experiences of clients, reading detailed case files, and reviewing graphic evidence. Although Justice staff are resilient and have many mechanism for coping with this stress, in some cases the professional and personal lives of the individual can be negatively impacted.

In recognition of the potential impact of exposure to the violent and disturbing issues involved in some criminal cases, the Manitoba Justice Criminal Law Division *Wellness Program* was introduced in 2013. The objective of this innovative program is to provide staff with an avenue to discuss the impact of their work and to promote a balanced approach

to workplace wellness which promotes high quality work and healthy staff. Providing attention to staff well-being helps to ensure that the needs of clients, victims, and witnesses are addressed in the best way possible.

**Janelle Braun**, Acting Executive Director of Manitoba Victim Services, explains that the program started with recognition of the impact of cases involving trauma and violence on staff and the desire to provide them with needed support. Federal funding allowed for a therapist to be hired to provide assessment and therapeutic interventions

for Victim Services workers, Crown attorneys and support staff within the Criminal Law Branch. In 2017, the Wellness Program expanded to include a second therapist. Confidential debriefing sessions provide staff with an opportunity to discuss the impacts and effects of vicarious trauma and focuses on building a safe and healthy work model and maintaining

staff resilience. Therapists also provide staff with education sessions that provide information about the impact of working with trauma, the risk of experiencing vicarious trauma, recognizing related symptoms and impact, and strategies that can help prevent the occurrence of this form of response to trauma.

In some organizations, a culture of non-acceptance or denial exists—staff are discouraged from talking about the negative impact of their work and are instead expected to appear “strong” and learn to cope with the impact of exposure to trauma on their own. However, the Manitoba Justice Wellness Program is striving to incorporate healthy work practices that sustain a balanced staff team with high quality performance. This program has generated interest and inquiries from other provinces which may indicate a growing appreciation of the issue of vicarious trauma within the justice system. ❁



## Manitoba Update



by Cheryl Fraehlich

**E**ducation for children and youth is a critical component of violence prevention and building safe and healthy communities. Through its *RespectED: Violence and Abuse Prevention* program, the Canadian Red Cross has developed programs to prevent violence against children for over three decades. The Department of Education in Manitoba has recently approved two RespectED programs, *Be Safe!* and *Healthy Youth Relationships*. These programs are listed as recommended resources for teachers/educators on the Manitoba Education and Training website and are in the Manitoba Learning Resource Centre Catalogue. This endorsement speaks to the high quality of these resources.

Be Safe! is a personal safety program for children aged 5 to 9 that provides them with knowledge and skills to help them to recognize, prevent, and seek help for sexual abuse and threatening situations.

The program lessons are comprised of storytelling and engaging learning activities, and child friendly learning resources. More information about the Be Safe! program can be found at [www.redcross.ca/crc/documents/What-We-Do/Violence-Bullying-be-safe-the-new-care-kit.pdf](http://www.redcross.ca/crc/documents/What-We-Do/Violence-Bullying-be-safe-the-new-care-kit.pdf). The Red Cross Healthy Youth Relationships program provides teens with knowledge and skills to become aware of and prevent dating violence and to develop healthy relationships. The evidence-based program consists of 12 lessons that target specific grade levels. Not only is this a valuable resource for teachers, but students themselves can receive training and become certified as Youth Facilitators to co-facilitate with teachers and increase the participation and learning of their peers. An overview of the Healthy Youth Relationships program can be found at [www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention/educators/healthy-youth-dating-relationships](http://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention/educators/healthy-youth-dating-relationships). ☘

### *Introducing Our Steering Committee Member*

**R**ebecca Ulrich is the Canadian Red Cross provincial education manager for Manitoba and Nunavut. Since joining the Red Cross in 2009, she has led the implementation of the organization's national evidence-based program—Respect Education—in these regions. Rebecca, who has been a dedicated member of the RESOLVE Steering Committee since 2011, is passionate about the prevention of interpersonal violence and supporting children and youth in developing healthy, respectful, pro-social relationships. She has successfully co-lead the expansion of Respect Education throughout all schools and communities in Nunavut, in response to the suicide crisis. She has worked closely with RESOLVE to implement program evaluations in order to guide content updates and determine opportunities to improve effectiveness. This is one example of how she has incorporated program evaluation as a standard in the delivery of Respect Education in Manitoba and Nunavut.



Besides her extensive work with youth and adults in Manitoba and Nunavut, Rebecca has played a key role in developing Red Cross programming, as she has sat on the national development committee for the past five years. The Committee develops content, pilot tests programming with children and youth, and works with community partners to gather input and feedback. Engagement of youth in preventing violence has been a major focus of her career and is the focus of her current Master's thesis, where Rebecca is exploring how the Red Cross can engage Inuit youth in program development for Nunavut. Part of her work in engaging youth has also meant the successful creation of a provincial youth advisory for the Canadian Red Cross in Manitoba.

Another major campaign Rebecca has led for the Red Cross in Manitoba and Nunavut is Pink Day. The campaign, aimed at increasing the discussion about preventing bullying with youth and adults, has grown over its six years in its reach and efficacy, and would not have achieved the prominence and success that it has without her leadership and determination. ☘

## Saskatchewan Update



### *Introducing Our Steering Committee Member*

**M**y name is **Rosanne Morphy**, and I am a First Nations woman from the Tzeachten First Nation Reserve located in beautiful Chilliwack, BC. I am Coastal Salish and salmon is one of our main staples to this day. Although not raised in my home community, we maintained a strong connection with our family from there. My mother and her siblings were placed in the Port Alberni Residential School. Grandmother made a decision to place her children there when the marriage between her and my grandfather broke down. She hoped that they would have a better life and get their education there, versus being in the logging camps that she worked at to make ends meet. Unfortunately, as history has shown, this was not the case.

After high school I completed a two-year Clerk Steno II course, achieving top marks and speed in typing and shorthand. I worked in this capacity at Adult Probation in Saskatoon, left that job and eventually returned to Yorkton, SK. I was drawn to working with youth at risk but the only course available in Yorkton was for a Rehabilitation Worker (Personal Development Worker). I then moved to Saskatoon, SK, and was fortunate to have teachers who heard my passion and assisted with practicum placements in organizations that focused on youth who faced challenges everyday by virtue of their home life being unstable, parents struggling with addictions, poverty, lack of education, and lack of or too many supports in their lives.

As previously indicated, I was not raised in or around my home community, so in a search for my own identity I enrolled in the Native Studies course at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) and graduated with Honours. While a student at the U of S, the Sociology department hired two of us to assist with a research project that examined formal and informal education of First Nation Students in Saskatoon and various communities throughout Central Saskatchewan. This was an exceptional



experience, and one for which I am forever grateful.

I soon learned that one cannot learn who they are, where they come from, or the history and values by reading books; that makes you “book smart” only. As a Provider of Aboriginal Lifestyle Support worker (PALS) and as a worker with the Saskatoon Tribal Council, and being surrounded by many Elders—**Edward Baldhead**, **Laura Wesequate**, and **Simon Kytwayhat** to name

a few—who I respect and learned from, identity comes from within through a variety of ways. I was also fortunate to have clients who I also respected, and we each learned about the other’s traditions, beliefs, values, and hopes and dreams.

While working with inner city families at the Saskatoon Tribal Council, I completed my Social Work Degree in 2001. I requested practicum placements at the Saskatoon Correctional Facility and the Regional Psychiatric Centre. Both of these placements were invaluable for the experiences and opportunities, as they put my education into practice. These placements then led me to my current employment with Family Service Saskatoon in June 2001, as half-time supervisor of the Domestic Violence Court Caseworker Program and half-time Domestic Violence Court case worker (DVCCW). As Supervisor, I oversee four workers and a clerical position, and carry a full caseload. Since June 2000, I continue to work casually as a youth worker with open- and closed-custody youth in Saskatoon. More recently, I began to volunteer for the Community Advisory Committee at the Jazz and Reggae festivals. My love for most genres of music is a strong source of self-healing and soothing. In May 2016, I was honored to be one of the recipients for the first ever Saskatoon Elizabeth Fry Lady Justice Award.

I love the work that I do and the clients that I am in contact with. They and the many other individuals that I come into contact with on a daily basis teach me so much. To them, I say, “THANK YOU!” ❀

## Alberta Update

# Indigenous Healing and Trauma: Intergenerational Solutions



by Nela Cosic and Nicole Letourneau

**R**ESOLVE Alberta and Awo Taan Healing Lodge Society co-hosted the annual RESOLVE Research Day with *Indigenous Healing and Trauma: Intergenerational Solutions* as the theme on October 4 and 5, 2016, at the University of Calgary. With approximately 270 in-person attendees and 32 web-cast registrants, this event was a huge success. Attendees included service providers, researchers, community members, students, academic leaders and government officials

Our conference theme was chosen given the need to discuss the issues of violence faced by Canadian Indigenous communities, with a focus on solutions. The conference served as a means of effectively informing communities across the Prairie Provinces of programs and initiatives that successfully help Canadian First Nation people recover from a history of violence and trauma. This conference also served as a means of training the next generation of scholars and community leaders to understand the consequences of the issues this community continues to face. The event promoted health, social and economic well-being of all Albertans by engaging many community members. Thanks to our funders, most of our registrants attended this event for free.

The event began on the evening of October 4, with a traditional Indigenous blessing provided by **Dr. Reg Crowshoe**, Piikani Blackfoot Elder, and a talk by **Leonard Flett**, Director and past-Chair of Indspire (formerly the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation) on Aboriginal history in Canada. In addition, the RESOLVE awards were presented to the 2016 recipients. In Alberta, **Laura Ducharme**, Community Mobilization Officer with HomeFront in Calgary, AB, and Co-Chair of the Strengthening the Spirit Committee, received the award due to her exceptional leadership in Indigenous communities focused on eliminating violence. She provided a heartfelt speech that was well received.

October 5 began with **Dr. Amy Bombay**, Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University, who presented on the epigenetics of social adversity and intergenerational

trauma, and concluded with **Ms. Kerrie Moore**, a psychotherapist at University of Calgary Native Student Centre and Cree Elder, who presented an overview of her work with experiential therapy on intergenerational trauma and healing. We also hosted three panel presentations: *Indigenous Research and Ethics*, *Positive Community Programs and Initiatives*, and a concluding *Words of Wisdom* panel. The afternoon also featured concurrent sessions from approximately 18 speakers selected from a review of submitted abstracts. During



this time, PolicyWise for Children & Families held a workshop on *Promoting Youth Resiliency through Healthy Relationships* and live-streamed the entire event. Throughout the day various research and community agencies displayed posters, including one by RESOLVE: *Improving Domestic Violence Services*

*in the Jewish Communities across the Canadian Prairie Provinces*. Finally, we concluded the day with a traditional Indigenous round down closing (“drumming out”) ceremony.

After the event, we had a huge amount of positive feedback from many of our conference participants through evaluation forms, e-mails and in-person correspondence. A few of these comments included:

*“I learned so much, especially about oral communication and the value of stories. Well done everyone! Thank you so much! Everything ran so smoothly. Loved how it finished on time while still leaving space for stories and sharing.”*

*“Excellent, excellent, excellent. Thank you for everything you did to create a truly heartfelt, inspirational day.”*

*“It has been greatly educational and has given greater understanding of the issues which affects the daily lives of First Nation People.”*

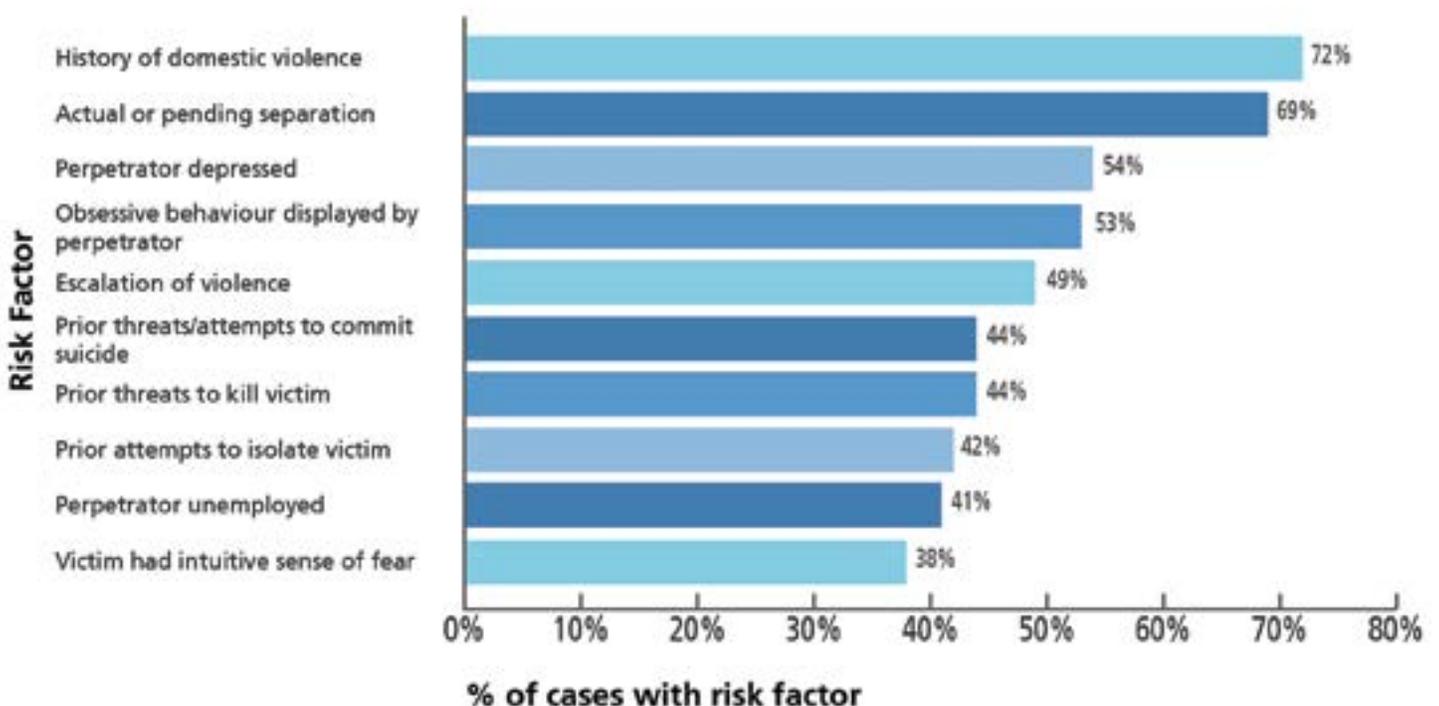
To view event webcasts please go online to <https://policywise.com/browse-resources/video-library> or [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsGVu8sdH2JDfEwqaZvqlavo4VcT7A\\_X](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLsGVu8sdH2JDfEwqaZvqlavo4VcT7A_X). ☘

*Initiative..* continued from Page 1

The interest in a national data base on domestic homicides flows from the fact that some provinces with small populations have a small number of domestic homicide cases and are unable to generate enough data for analysis nor can they generalize their findings to the whole population. However, when their cases are added to a national data set going over a decade, it is expected that common trends and factors will emerge that can be applicable to all domestic homicide cases and can help to better inform risk assessment, risk management and safety planning strategies. As a member of the Manitoba DVDRC, I am particularly interested in national data set which will be very helpful to our work.

The other study component I am very excited about is the national survey of service providers. This survey is a short online survey that should only take about ten minutes to complete. The survey is confidential and all responses will only be presented in aggregate form. We hope to hear from people in all aspects of service provision—from shelters and counselling services, to police and the courts—and I am hopeful that some of our readers will participate. At the end of this survey you will be asked if you are interested in participating in a qualitative interview by telephone or by Skype. This is your opportunity to tell us about your experience and help us develop new and more effective ways to reduce the terrible toll of domestic homicides in Canada. To learn more and to complete the survey, please go online to [https://uwo.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7UtzyiUW37vFCT3](https://uwo.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7UtzyiUW37vFCT3). ☞

### Frequency of Common Risk Factors in DVDRC Cases Reviewed (2003-2014)<sup>18</sup>



Source: Adapted from Ontario DVDRC Annual Report (2015)

## Announcements, Conferences and Events



**February 22, 2017, 3 - 4:30 PM CST - Indigenous Healing – Mind, Body, Spirit webinar** offered by the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC). Understanding the mind body spirit connection, using its power and accessing its benefits is the basis of holistic healing. The concept of mind body spirit has been rooted in the culture and traditions of Indigenous peoples for thousands of years and is central to our belief and healing systems. Our healing systems and cultural practices took advantage of the power of belief or mind over body.

Join Bonnie Duran, Associate Professor in the Department of Health Services, University of Washington School of Public Health and Director of the Center for Indigenous Health Research at the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute for this powerful webinar presentation on Indigenous Healing and how to use mindfulness as a tool of decolonizing views and empowerment. Register online at [https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6731075323137268996?utm\\_source=phplist428&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=HTML&utm\\_campaign=REGISTER%3A+Webinar-Indigenous+Healing-Mind,+Body,+Spirit](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6731075323137268996?utm_source=phplist428&utm_medium=email&utm_content=HTML&utm_campaign=REGISTER%3A+Webinar-Indigenous+Healing-Mind,+Body,+Spirit).

**March 8, 2017 - International Women's Day: #BeBoldForChange.** For more information check online at [www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/commemoration/iwd-jif/index-en.html](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/commemoration/iwd-jif/index-en.html) and [www.InternationalWomensDay.com](http://www.InternationalWomensDay.com). Check for an event near you at [www.InternationalWomensDay.com/events](http://www.InternationalWomensDay.com/events).

**April 18 – 20, 2017 - International Conference on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Systems Change** in Orlando, FL, USA. Presented by End Violence Against Women International. Our annual conferences focus on sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, human trafficking and elder abuse. We consistently bring together law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, victim advocates, judges, parole and probation officers, rape crisis workers, health care professionals, faith community members, educators, researchers and others in this three day conference highlighting promising practices and emerging issues to effectively respond to these crimes in all of our communities [www.evawintl.org/conferencedetail.aspx?confid=28](http://www.evawintl.org/conferencedetail.aspx?confid=28).

**April 20, 2017 - Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre (FGWRC) 8th Annual Fundraiser** at the Park Theatre in Winnipeg, MB. Featuring local entertainment, Silent Auction, Cash Bar and Snacks. Everyone is Welcome!

FGWRC relies on this exciting annual event to continue to provide free services including: supportive counselling, information and referrals, workshops and outreach programs. For more information/tickets phone **204-477-1123**, go online to [www.fgwrc.ca](http://www.fgwrc.ca), or Find us on Facebook!

**October 18 – 19, 2017 - Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Conference**, in London, ON. This event is hosted by the Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative with Vulnerable Populations. This conference is intended for policy makers, mental health, justice and social service professionals involved in the prevention, assessment, management, and safety planning for domestic violence and domestic homicide, particularly those who work with Indigenous, rural, remote, northern, immigrant and refugee populations, and children exposed to domestic violence. Early-bird registration is available before June 1, 2017. For more information, refer online to [www.cdhipi.ca/canadian-domestic-homicide-prevention-conference](http://www.cdhipi.ca/canadian-domestic-homicide-prevention-conference).

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## **Kiskisi Paminamatowin – A Suicide Prevention Workshop: Lessons from Pimicikmak (Cross Lake) Cree Nation**

*by Donalda Wotton*

On January 23, 2017, the University of Manitoba's College of Nursing hosted a full-day suicide prevention workshop, grounded by insights and perspectives from the Aboriginal community. "Aboriginal youth are five to six times more likely to die by suicide than their non-aboriginal counterparts," said **Elaine Mordoch**, event organizer and associate professor at the College. "As a profession, we need to understand why this is happening in the communities around us. We know there are already suicide prevention programs in place, but we also know we don't have all the answers," said Mordoch. "The best thing we can do now is listen, learn and work together."

The event, attended by University of Manitoba staff, faculty and students as well as community members, provided a full day of sharing from an Indigenous perspective. **David Muswaggon** presented the cultural context and history of Pimicikamak Nation. **Chief Cathy Merrick** shared her perspectives on dealing with the crisis and providing ongoing leadership and hope. **Elder David Blacksmith** shared his teachings on traditional cultural and spiritual views. **Morrison Ross**, a youth worker from Cross Lake, poignantly talked about what it is like to help youth deal with suicide. **Rhonda Campbell**, a nurse who has worked in the community for 20 years, described the challenges in delivering health care in First Nation communities.

Cultural safety is woven into the curriculum of colleges across the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, and events like this offer an important opportunity to reinforce the values of cultural sensitivity and health equity with our students. Over 100 people attended this workshop which was supported by the College of Nursing Endowment Fund and the Winnipeg Suicide Prevention Network. ☘

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