

August 30, 2011

To Whoever Wants To Listen and Help:

Pikangikum First Nation has within a period of 44 days lost 5 youth to suicide. These involved 4 (four) females aging 15, 16, 17 and 19 and 1 (one) male aging 26. First occurrence was on July 15, 2011, second on August 4, 2011, third on August 15, 2011, fourth on August 21 and the fifth on August 28, 2011.

Out of respect for the families affected, names are not being provided.

As a member of Pikangikum First Nation, I feel obligated in letting Canada and the international community to know about these tragedies. I feel strongly that no-one cares and maybe I am being ignored by thinking this way. The Government of Canada, National & Regional First Nation Leaderships and the Canadian public have to know what is happening in Pikangikum. We cannot live alone within the boundaries of our reservation and think that this is the ways life is. This is **NOT NORMAL!** I have not seem or heard any word or movement from any of our national and regional elected officials offering any condolences or offering any sort of assistance to Pikangikum and to those families directly affected.

Recently a comprehensive document/report was completed by the Office of the Chief Coroner titled "**The Office of the Chief Coroner's Death Review of Youth Suicides at the Pikangikum First Nation 2006-2008**" of this year. Recommendations to all levels of Government which includes Canada to proceed with the construction of Major capital projects, water & sewer, gridline, new school and new housing. For your information, all 400+ community homes have **NO PIPED WATER & SEWER SYSTEMS** in their homes. Our 700+ school children go to school in **temporary portages** that were constructed after the main school was destroyed by fire several years ago. Housing shortage continues to grow each year. Pikangikum immediately needs 200+ housing units to meet the demand. **I pray that these recommendations be adopted and not be shelved** as so many in the past have been.

For your information, **all government buildings and residences**, all enjoy the comforts of just turning on the tap for water and flushing its toilets while us community members have to get our water from the 4 out of 8 water-points situated throughout the community. The other four are not operational. People still get water directly from the lake as they have no means of getting water as there is no delivery service of portable water. No indoor sewer in any of the homes. And the list goes on.

In closing, I call on the Canadian Public to help Pikangikum to get the attention of those in authority to **wakeup and take notice.**

Meegwetch-Thank you.

Gordon Peters
Member of Pikangikum First Nation