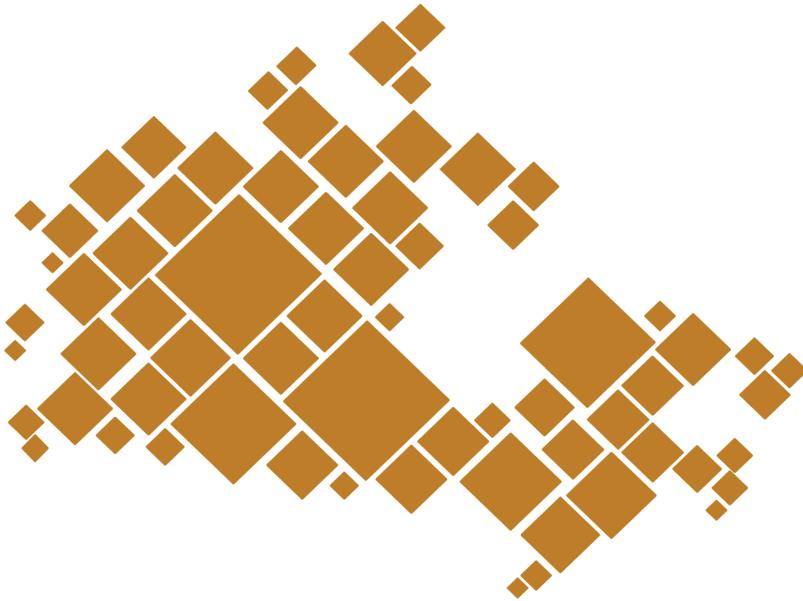




# Sparkling CONVERSATION

INTERVIEW  
WITH THE  
MOOSE HIDE  
CAMPAIGN'S  
RAVEN  
LACERTE

WRITTEN BY  
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### ➔ The Stats



Indigenous women are 3.5 times more likely to

experience violence than non-Indigenous women, and that over 4,000 Indigenous women are considered murdered or missing (2021 stats).

### ➔ The Moose



Representative of the land, and symbolizes healthy masculinity.

### ➔ The Pins



The hides and synthetic pins are a form of Indigenous medicine for a social illness. In the Moose Hide Campaign, to talk about violence is a way of spreading that medicine. (In this way, the medicine will always be free of charge; it's part of their culture.)

### ➔ 5 Conversations



Research from the campaign indicates that every pin generates five conversations about what the small brown square means.

## IN A WORLD ...

asking for voices of change, few resonate as powerfully as Raven Lacerte's. If you don't yet know Raven, she is the co-founder of the Moose Hide Campaign, an Indigenous led grassroots movement dedicated to ending violence against women and children, (her father, Paul, is also a co-founder). Raven and her team's unwavering dedication and passion have propelled this initiative to national prominence, sparking crucial conversations and catalyzing meaningful change across Canada. In this exclusive interview, she shares the profound journey behind the campaign's inception, shedding light on its mission, impact, and the enduring spirit of solidarity. It is with utmost honor that RoadSafetyBC amplifies her voice and the transformative message she champions in this interview. **Read on. >>**



**My message is**, take the pain, the trauma and the hard parts out, and put love back into those spaces."

- Raven



**First up, congratulations on winning the 2024 Emerging Leader Award! It must be incredibly gratifying to see the Moose Hide Campaign evolve from a walk in the woods with your father near the Highway of Tears, recognizing the need for action around the missing and murdered Indigenous women, to now being acknowledged as a national emerging leader with the Moose Hide Campaign in full bloom.**

*Raven Lacerte:* As you can imagine, it was such an incredible honor for me to be able to even be considered for an award from the Public Policy Forum. It's great to have the recognition, but for me it's more so like having a platform in that way to be able to share the message of the campaign and spread that medicine throughout those networks as well.

**I'm so glad you brought up the word *medicine*. Can you share about the role of medicine in your culture and how it drives the campaign?**

RL: We think of these little pins as medicine to a social illness. We need different forms of medicine and Dave Stevenson, our CEO, talks all the time about it; if you have a broken arm, the cast will not heal the arm, the arm heals itself, but the cast is the container for that healing to happen. This medicine (i.e. the pins) and the ceremony for the Moose Hide campaign day, is really that - the cast for the healing. [The pins are] also a land medicine. It came from a moment with my dad and I practicing our culture, being in good relationship with the land. That moose that gave its life to us. It was a real medicine moment for us to be in a moment together and have that little moment as the offering to Canadians to wear these little pins as that medicine.

**And do I have that right, that you and your team have handed out over 6-million pins to date?**

RL: We are past the 6-million mark now for pins. Things are moving fast and furious right now. It took us six years to reach our first million pins, and that was really just like such an organic, grassroots level kind of sharing of this medicine. But it's just going at such an exponential rate right now, even just in the month of April this year - we gave out half a million pins. It's incredible.



**Absolutely! It's truly a transformative moment, symbolizing a significant change. In a recent article, you were quoted saying, "We can change the way people think and feel about women, and especially Indigenous women." Could you expand on this idea in the context of the Moose Hide Campaign's objectives?**

RL: In our way, in carrier way, we come from a matrilineal society. Back in the day, the women were held in such high regards. There's so many cultures that really lived in that way where the women were honored as leaders, and the life givers, all of the different pieces. We've lost that for a number of different reasons along our history. And so, it's really important that we do a whole bunch of learning about those ways and then relearning a whole bunch of different ways about how to think and feel about each other. We're so disconnected from each other. There's all this, like, junk got put between us as human beings to make us feel like we're different from each other. And we need to unpack that. And that's the whole thing; this reconciliation is unpacking all those pieces and just realizing that we're all human beings that deserve that love and that safety and that respect, and just honoring our differences in a way that's not like othering each other but celebrating each other.



**You've likely been asked this question many times, but could you share about the significance of the moose in the Moose Hide Campaign?**

RL: So, the moose thing ... we spent a lot of time as a family talking about like how we could show up in this space and how what we could do like right now to make a difference, to be part of a positive solution. This moose gave its life to us [on that initial hunting trip] and came to us in this moment of inspiration, being along the Highway of Tears, of the medicine of the land. [Moose represents healthy masculinity.] Honor that healthy warrior spirit in our men, because there's a such a need for more men and boys to be part of the Moose Hide Campaign and making these commitments and making that change. And so maybe [the moose hide] could be something that they could wear. And it's also iconically Canadian. And you know, we have synthetic pins available too, so I know not everyone is comfortable to wear a piece of animal hide and it's totally all good.



**Thirteen years with the Moose Hide Campaign – I imagine this milestone is particularly meaningful for you because you initiated this movement with your father, and now you're passing it on to your daughters.**

RL: Yeah, my babies. They are just so precious. This whole thing of it being family work is so important. It was my dad and I in this moment, where for a long time we did not have that ability to pass down intergenerational cultural knowledge and practices, and we weren't allowed to practice our culture or our ceremonies and all those things. What did get passed down was lots of different forms of intergenerational trauma from residential, school, and colonization, and all those different pieces. And so, we're in this really beautiful time where we're able to pass down all of this intergenerational love and healing and culture and ceremony, and all of those pieces, for me and my dad to have that moment along the highway of tears where we're practicing our culture together. His motivation behind starting the campaign was for my daughters or for my sisters and I. He wanted to do everything he could to make sure that my sisters and I had that chance to live a life free of violence. And so [now having daughters of my own] and I got it. Then I understood it in a whole different way. I get that deep desire and urgency to make as much change as possible, like making national movement so that my daughters can be safer.

It's so beautiful to just see and know that like as a mama, I'm doing everything that I can to make sure that now my girls get that chance. It's beautiful to see the world that they get to live in now. I'm just happy.

**What's your top advice for someone wanting to either begin their reconciliation journey, or augment it through activism?**

RL: It's a hard issue to like, operate in to work in to hear the stories, to try to be like the change makers and show up in a good way. And so, making sure that wellness is at the centre of our work is so important. One of the things that we do is bring our team back home to our home community and go right to the spot where we got the first moose hide to get that first moose and we ground ourselves in ceremony in the preciousness of that moment that my dad and I had in 2011. We go back every year to ground ourselves back in that medicine so that that's our centre and our focus so that we can go out and keep spreading the good medicine and taking care of our spirits. It's really important that we don't burn ourselves out or get vicarious trauma. I know I do – I hear a lot of stories and a lot of experiences get shared with me, which for some people it's the first time they ever get a chance to share their story, ever. It's such an honor for me, but also, just like the balancing it out with that healing and the spiritual work.



**Great advice, wellness as a core focus. In my research I came across another great quote from you, “My message is take the pain, the trauma and the hard parts out and put love back into those spaces.” I’d love to hear more about this.**

RL: You know, where we hold all of our trauma is such a real physical space in our bodies, in our minds, in our spirits. And so when we enter into these like healing spaces and these conversations and action and learning and all of those different spaces where trying to like take that pain and that trauma and that hurt like out of that space. But then it would just be like an open hole. We gotta put something back in there, we wanna fill that hole with love and connection and healing and all of those pieces.

**What’s one thing you’d like to leave us with, that maybe you haven’t shared before?**

RL: One of those things that I just practice all the time and hope that other people can get the courage to also practice, is that where the magic happens is when we’re in those uncomfortable spots, like conversations and all those things and like looking inside our selves and being like, “Hey, what’s coming up for me?” Maybe it’s bringing this up, or maybe this is gonna give me the courage to talk about something that happened to me a long time ago. And so by practicing that, I hope that other people get inspired to do the same thing.

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