

MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHWEST GATHERING BRINGS LEADERS TOGETHER TO INCREASE SAFETY FOR ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND YOUTH

Terrace – Aboriginal leaders and leaders in the anti-violence sector will be gathering together this week in Terrace at a regional symposium aimed at increasing the safety of Aboriginal women and youth in the Northwest.

Well over one hundred people are expected to attend the 2-day gathering on March 17 and 18 at Northwest Community College's Waap Galts'ap (Community House) that will focus on enhancing knowledge about violence against women intervention and prevention, increasing coordination between Aboriginal and anti-violence service providers and safety focused strategic planning. Participants will include regional First Nations leadership, band health and social services, urban Aboriginal services, anti-violence services and others involved in responding to violence against women across the region.

Presentations and workshops will address topics ranging from "Justice and Healing on the Highway of Tears" to "Aboriginal Men Ending Violence". Gathering moderator and presenter, Mavis Erickson of Prince George, said she is happy this event is taking place as it is the first of its kind in the region. "Far too many Aboriginal women and all women for that matter are suffering from violence and we must take steps to stop the violence," says Mavis Erickson.

Ending Violence Association of BC Executive Director, Tracy Porteous, says, "...the number of women being killed across BC is a very serious concern and for every act of violence resulting in death there are also countless other assaults and sexual assaults that are reported, and there are thousands that go unreported. Let's get together to break the silence and end violence."

Event organizers have assembled an impressive host of presenters from the region and other parts of BC and Canada. The Gathering is being organized by the Ending Violence Association of BC in partnership with the Northwest Community College. Funding is being provided by the Department of Justice Canada and the Province of BC.

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