

## **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based The Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara takes action!**

### **Press Release – Welland, Ontario, November 25 2022**

Today, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, kicks off 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence. Around the world, women are still victims of violence because they are women. Gender-based or sex-based violence is an act of violence because of a person's gender, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender.

This year's news about gender-based violence proves the relevance and necessity of an awareness period like the 16 Days of Activism.

*The past few years have been eventful. Our organization has seen an increase in demand for services and support since the pandemic. During the 16 Days of Activism, we are taking the opportunity to raise awareness about gender-based violence which can affect anyone because of their sex, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender. To raise awareness in our Niagara and Hamilton regions, we will be holding a number of face-to-face and virtual events over the next few days, such as the Campaign launch, public and service provider awareness workshops, the December 6th vigil, and the launch of the Youth Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking, to name a few, said Loubna Moric, Acting Director of the Gender-Based Violence Program.*

*Last week, the federal Liberal government finally released its National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. While we welcome this critical initiative in the fight against violence against women, there are several areas of the plan that we question. In particular, we are critical of the exclusion of Francophone women in minority language settings and the lack of a framework for action by the provinces and territories. The Francophone community faces marginalization in various forms and barriers to accessing quality services in French. The language barrier and lack of information available in French negatively impacts awareness and empowerment efforts. Talking about traumatic experiences in a fluent language is therefore an essential part of a survivor's healing and recovery process, said Loubna.*

*Gender-based violence is real, but it is also misunderstood, especially since we often think of violence as just physical. Domestic violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, sexist jokes and even sexual assault are minimized, and victims are often blamed for the actions of the perpetrators. Women in our region can contact us for personalized virtual or face-to-face services, whether it's for information, therapeutic support or practical assistance, continues Loubna.*

The 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women begin on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and end on December 10, International Human Rights Day. It also includes December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. *Everyone has a role to play in ending violence against women. First and foremost, it is important for the public to become aware, mobilize and support women affected by violence. We can all take action in the fight against gender-based violence. Join us and together we will put an end to violence! Let's all be allies, concludes Loubna Moric.*

The mandate and mission of the Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara is to provide health, social and community services in French to improve the health and quality of life of the French-speaking population of the greater Hamilton and Niagara area. Its main activities are: primary and community health care; newcomer services; adult and children's mental health services; gender-based violence and children at risk of violence programs; youth anti-trafficking program; and health promotion and wellness services.

For more information:

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