



REGROUPEMENT
DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ
AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

RESPECTING OUR ELDERS: THE REGROUPEMENT DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC MARKS WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Wendake, June 15, 2012 - The Regroupement de centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) is participating in *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day* to bring attention to the issue of Aboriginal elder abuse.

The Quebec Native Friendship Centres recognize the important support provided by elders through their knowledge and experience, as well as through the pivotal role they play in ensuring the vitality and well-being of their families, communities and nations. They are the persons to whom our generations turn as the Elders of traditional knowledge, wisdom; they are the promise of the continuity of our culture.

Thanks to the *New Horizons for Seniors* program, the RCAAQ will be able to continue with its actions to improve elders' quality of life under its project entitled *Respecting Our Elders*. This project will improve access to coherent and credible information about Aboriginal elder abuse and will help strengthen the key role played by elders, particularly through training and information on elders' rights and responsibilities.

Dominique T8aminik Rankin, who serves as a senator for the National Association of Friendship Centres and as the RCAAQ elder, welcomes this initiative. He notes that "*the teaching and transmission of our elders' knowledge has always been for me the very foundation of our beliefs and culture. Future generations need a circle of healthy and happy elders! May they continue to hold a special place at the centre of our lives, where their wisdom and knowledge can be transmitted within the same spirit of respect that has always accompanied our intergenerational dialogue.*"

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day gives us the opportunity to stress the need of such a project for the Quebec Native Friendship Centre Movement and to support our communities by strengthening our elders in terms of their empowerment and rights.

By 2015, the project *Respecting Our Elders* will be in place in all Aboriginal communities that are home to Native Friendship Centres and will be carrying out its activities with a number of important partners including Quebec's Commission des droits de la personne et de la jeunesse.

For the past 35 years now, the RCAAQ has been working to defend the rights and interests of urban Aboriginal people, as well as to support the Native Friendship Centres in carrying out their missions to improve the quality of life in the urban Aboriginal communities, promote culture and foster mutual understanding among peoples. For more information about the RCAAQ, please visit our website at: www.rcaaq.info.

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