

For immediate release

Ottawa November, 12th, 2002. In Love and In Danger: Area schools tackling violence issues

Approximately 300 high school students from 44 high schools in the Ottawa-Carleton area will be attending workshops aimed at preventing violence and abusive relationships on Friday November 15th from 9:00am to 3:30pm at St. Paul's University, 223 Main St.

This interactive conference will focus on violence in the family. Teams of students from each school will develop and take away an innovative anti-violence project tailored to their school and school culture. Up to 50 000 students could be reached and could participate to help to end violence in the community as a result of these schools projects.

“It is important for youth to be able to recognize the signs of abuse and violence so they can pursue healthy relationships and/or seek help in the community when they encounter problems” said Timothy Simboli, Executive Director of Family Services à la famille Ottawa(FSFO). According to The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, approximately 3 to 5 children in every school classroom have witnessed their mothers being assaulted. Between 16% and 35% of women surveyed said they had experienced at least one physical assault by a male dating partner.

“Each year, students who have participated have said that they feel it is important to have projects like these and so they have recruited other students to accomplish their mission to end violence. This is the third year of the project and we continue to see and hear from students who are willing to work on this project” said Patricia Yaternick, Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board Social Worker. Nanci Burns, Social Worker from the Ottawa Carleton District School Board noted that “ The youth really take ownership of their projects and are proud of their accomplishments. The kids do this on a voluntary basis and this reflects the importance of these issues to youth themselves.”

This is a partnership between Family Services à la famille Ottawa, the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and the Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board and is in its third successful year. The Conference will be held at St. Paul's University, 223 Main St. on Friday November 15th 2002 from 9am to 3:30pm.

For additional information or media inquiries:

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