



For Immediate Release

First Nations calling on province to work on FASD prevention

SUDBURY (November 30, 2011) – Anishinabek Nation Deputy Grand Council Chief Glen Hare says that Ontario needs to step up and get serious with the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

“Although FASD costs Canada over four billion dollars annually and is the number one cause of birth defects in the world, very little is being done at the provincial or national level to prevent this complex disorder,” says Deputy Grand Chief Glen Hare. “Our organizations are working hard to provide services but the time has come for the Province of Ontario to develop a comprehensive multi-year strategy and provide permanent funding to our hardworking programs.”

This week, five Native organizations have joined forces to co-host the second Anishinabek G7, FASD: Caring for a New Generation Conference.

“Alcohol consumption during pregnancy is linked to over 60 primary disabilities,” says Hare. “We are in dire need of prevention, intervention and treatments strategies.”

“Ontario is a very child-focused province, with very few services available to individuals affected by FASD, who are over the age of six,” says Angela Recollet, Executive Director of Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre. “FASD is a lifelong disability. We need to focus upon capacity-building, improved access to specialized services, medical treatment, supportive living environments and treatment homes.”

“In order to fully address FASD, we must join together to create seamless services to respectfully and compassionately meet the needs of all people living with FASD,” says Recollet.

Over 200 frontline workers, biological parents and foster parents will be travelling in from across Canada to participate in the multi-day event.

“Our conference has been very well received and actually sold out about a month ago,” says Conference Co-chair Dan Garcia. “We have brought together some of the finest facilitators known both nationally and internationally. U.S. FASD hall of Fame Inductee Dr. Mary DeJoseph will once again be joining us. We also have David Boulding, a nationally recognized lawyer who is among those leading the work that needs to be done in the justice system to avoid putting developmentally disabled individuals behind bars.”

“We have a very hard-working committee, said Garcia. “Together, we have done some amazing work; we established a partnership with Health Sciences North and opened an FASD Diagnostic Clinic this past June. We have created a PSA, held Diagnostic training for local doctors and are currently working on the development of an accredited post-secondary program.

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.



Anishinabek

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