



News Release

February 9, 2015

MAKE THE RIGHTS OF FIRST NATION CHILDREN FIRST IN YOUR HEART

Celebrate **Have a Heart Day** by supporting First Nations children to grow up safely at home, get a good education and be healthy and proud of their cultures.

Have a Heart Day is about caring Canadians working together to ensure First Nations children do not have to fight for the services that all other Canadians enjoy and that they have the necessary tools to allow them feel proud of their culture and heritage.

On February 10th in support of **Have a Heart Day**, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and youth from schools across the National Capital region will join together on Parliament Hill to show their support for equitable culturally-based services that will help them to succeed.

Citizens can help by sending a Valentine's Day card or letter supporting the initiative to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and/or their local MP, or by spreading the word through social media.

In Eastern Ontario, the Enyonkwa'nikonhriyohake' (Good Minds) Program of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte are recognizing the day by inviting the public to sign letters of support up until February 12th at the Tyendinaga Community Well-Being Centre located at 50 Meadow Drive, on the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory.

Commenting on the **Have a Heart Day** initiative, Mark Kartusch, Executive Director of Highland Shores Children's Aid said, "Only by raising awareness around the issues and challenges faced by children and families within aboriginal communities can we begin to effect change. We encourage everyone to send a message of support around this initiative to our political leaders so that one day every one of our citizens will enjoy equal opportunities."

To learn more about how you can get involved in **Have a Heart Day**, to send an e-Valentine, or print and sign a valentine, visit the website www.fncaringsociety.com and click on Have a Heart Day. You can also stop by the Tyendinaga Community Well-Being Centre to lend your signature to a letter of support.

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For additional information about signing a letter of support for Have a Heart Day contact:

Tracey Gazley (First Nation Child & Youth Wellness Worker), 613-967-0122, Ext. 175.

For additional information about Highland Shores Children's Aid contact:

Bonnie Perrigard, Communications Coordinator, 613-962-9291, ext. 2202.