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Tikinagan

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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

We Dress Purple to Show We're Here to Help Families

Ontario – October 27, 2021: Every October Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies across the province raise awareness about the important role that individuals and communities play in supporting vulnerable children, youth, and families. This includes every adult's legal duty to call their local Children's Aid Society or Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agency if they have a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or youth. It also includes the responsibility to check their bias before making a report. Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, ability, poverty, and sexual orientation can lead to overreporting.

Dress Purple Day offers an opportunity to encourage everyone to speak up for every child and youth's right to safety and well-being in all spaces. Not just physical safety and well-being—children and youth have the right to have their intersectional identity, which includes culture, race, sexual orientation, and gender identity, protected and supported in all spaces.

We use this day to raise awareness that Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies are community organizations that are part of the circle of care that supports the well-being of children, youth, and families. At Tikinagan, we refer to this circle as the Wee-chee-way-win Circle.

The Wee-chee-way-win Circle may include the child's parents and siblings, extended family members, the First Nation Chief and Council, Elders, the school principal and teachers, workers from other community resources, Foster Parents and other caregivers, and Tikinagan workers and supervisors. Although each has a different role in the Circle, the success of a child's emotional security depends on teamwork. By working together in mutual cooperation and respect, a circle of healing will surround the child. The Wee-chee-way-win Circle is an integral element of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin.

Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, which means "Everyone working together to raise our children," is the Tikinagan service model and works to keep families together, maintain our culture and respects the inherent authority of First Nations to care for our own children. Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin is rooted in our traditional customs of caring for children. In our culture, children are regarded as sacred gifts from the Creator, not only to the family but also to the larger community of extended family members. Everyone shares in the responsibility of protecting and caring for that child.

On Dress Purple Day, we celebrate the community that cares for families and share the message that help is available and no one is alone.

Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin
Everyone Working Together
to Raise Our Children

We are calling on everyone to wear something purple on October 27 to show children, youth, and families that they are here to help!

Show your support on social media by posting your purple pictures with the hashtags #IDressPurpleBecause and #IDressPurple

For more information, contact Marlene Green by email at MarleneG@tikinagan.org or by phone at (807) 358-3855.

For over 35 years, Tikinagan Child and Family Services has been serving our 30 First Nations in Northwestern Ontario. The Creator entrusted First Nations with the sacred responsibility of protecting our children and developing strong families and healthy communities.