

NEWSROOM

Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat, Education Sector, Families Sector, Government Operations Sector, Health Sector, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region, Kootenay Rockies Region, Northern B.C. Region, Provincewide, Thompson / Okanagan Region, Vancouver Coast & Mountains Region, Vancouver Island / Coast Region

Campaign helps change attitudes and prevent violence

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VANCOUVER - Whether in the classroom, in the stadium, on TV or online, the Be More Than a Bystander message is spreading to young people throughout the province who are learning what they can do to break the silence on violence against women and girls.

This year, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is providing a further \$160,000 to support the award-winning Be More Than a Bystander campaign, a partnership between the BC Lions Football Club and the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC). Funding and support has also been provided by the Government of Canada, Encana Corporation, the BC Federation of Labour, the BC Government and Service Employees' Union, the BC Association of Broadcasters, Global BC, RED FM, and the cities of Surrey and Vancouver.

Be More Than a Bystander addresses violence against women and girls by providing tools and practical ideas about how to communicate that violence is not acceptable. The campaign has included school presentations and workshops led by BC Lions players at more than 60 B.C. secondary schools, a conference for amateur football coaches to help them talk with their players about gender violence and respectful relationships, and a targeted advertising and public awareness campaign across B.C.

EVA BC and the BC Lions have also produced a Be More Than a Bystander film, which has been distributed to more than 200 anti-violence programs throughout B.C., to all B.C. secondary schools and is being broadcast through Shaw Video On Demand and Telus Optik TV On Demand.

In the film, BC Lions players share personal stories about how they engage with the issues of violence and harassment, both through personal reflections and in their interactions with youth in schools and events throughout the province. This is combined with analysis from anti-violence experts and community advocates who offer a broad perspective for understanding why violence against women affects everyone. Clips from the film, as well as eight new Bystander videos that focus on practical advice about speaking up against abuse and disrespect, are available on EVA BC's YouTube channel.

EVA BC spearheaded the Be More Than a Bystander partnership with the BC Lions, MCFD, Status of Women in Canada and Encana Corporation in July 2011. As a founding partner, MCFD has now provided a total of \$640,000 in support.

Quotes:

Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Children and Family Development -

"This government has made it a priority to address the issue of domestic violence throughout the province. Our support for programs like Be More Than a Bystander is an important complement to the work we are doing through our Provincial Domestic Violence Plan to raise awareness and take action on the issue of violence against women and girls."

Peter McKay, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada -

“Our government is firmly committed to reducing violence against women and girls, and to holding perpetrators accountable for their acts. This is precisely why we continue to provide significant resources for local organizations who are dedicated to ending violence and supporting victims. It is also why we have strengthened sentencing for serious crimes such as sexual assault and kidnapping, and have tabled legislation like the Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act which will crack down on the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. We will keep moving forward with our comprehensive justice agenda which is working to keep our streets and communities safe, while putting the rights of victims first.”

Tracy Porteous, executive director, Ending Violence Association of British Columbia -

“We are incredibly proud of the Be More Than a Bystander program and extremely appreciative to receive this critical, momentum building support. Throughout the first three years we have reached over 44,000 youth, in person across the province and many more via social and other media. We know that connecting with the next generation, to create the ‘new normal’, that is, speaking up against abuse, is central to creating a world that does not tolerate violence against women and girls.”

Dennis Skulsky, BC Lions president and chief executive officer -

“Violence against women continues to be an issue that requires our voice and our undivided attention. The BC Lions Football Club is proud and humbled to renew its support of the Be More Than a Bystander initiative. With the combined efforts of the Government of Canada, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Ending Violence Association of BC, Encana Corporation and the BC Federation of Labour we can truly make a difference in the lives of British Columbians.”

Richard Dunn, vice-president, Government Relations for Encana -

“Encana is very proud to partner with the BC Lions and the Ending Violence Association in the Be More Than a Bystander program, which is doing incredible work to break the silence on violence against women. As a founding partner, we have been involved since the outset and have seen first-hand the positive impact the program has had throughout the province, including the communities where we operate.”

Jim Sinclair, president of the BC Federation of Labour -

“We all need to do our part to address the very serious social issue of domestic and sexual violence against women. Be More Than a Bystander plays an important role in educating young people in B.C. on this topic. The B.C. Federation of Labour is happy to be working with the Ending Violence Association of BC and the BC Lions on this important issue.”

Quick Facts:

- April 13-19, 2014, is Prevention of Violence Against Women Week in B.C.
- It is estimated that every year in Canada, 800,000 children witness a woman being abused.
- There are approximately 60,000 sexual and physical assaults committed against women in B.C. each year.
- The B.C. government commits more than \$70 million per year in prevention and intervention services and programs to help families involved in domestic violence and other crimes.
- Government supports female victims of violence through more than 400 victim-service and violence-against-women counselling and outreach programs and 100 transition-house programs.
- The Provincial Domestic Violence Plan, co-ordinated through the Provincial Domestic Violence Office in consultation with the public and anti-violence stakeholders, is a three-year, \$5.5-million plan to make B.C. a safer place for women, children and anyone who has been affected by domestic violence.
- The plan includes the creation of additional domestic violence units, programs for Aboriginal families, direct services for perpetrators, and improved access to services and social housing for survivors in rural and remote communities. It also includes

an Aboriginal response and specific approaches to address the unique needs of immigrant and refugee women and women with disabilities.

- The Provincial Office of Domestic Violence was created in March 2012 as the permanent lead for the B.C. government, focussed on strengthening the services and supports available for children, women and families affected by domestic violence.
- EVA BC is a registered provincial charity, whose mandate is to provide support and training for more than 240 programs across B.C. that work with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Learn More:

To learn more about Be More Than a Bystander, visit: <http://endingviolence.org/prevention-programs/be-more-than-a-bystander/>
(<http://endingviolence.org/prevention-programs/be-more-than-a-bystander/>)

To watch Be More Than a Bystander videos and film clips, visit: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs3LiiUL_7XRbzJazKUnmFoskQoZla7qa (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLs3LiiUL_7XRbzJazKUnmFoskQoZla7qa)

To read the Provincial Domestic Violence Plan and learn more about the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence, visit: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/podv/index.htm (<http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/podv/index.htm>)

For help and information in multiple languages call VictimLink BC FREE at 1 800 563-0808 in absolute confidence, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. VictimLink BC is TTY accessible. Call 604 875-0885; to call collect, dial the Telus Relay Service at 711.

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