



# BC Lions give youth empowering talk about sexual violence

‘Be more than a Bystander’ campaign comes to Nakusp

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Nakusp Secondary School students were treated to a visit from a couple of CFL players Wednesday during their morning assembly. Matt Bucknor and Jeremiah Johnson from the BC Lions were in Nakusp to talk about an important topic: ending men’s violence against women.

A joint effort between Ending Violence Association BC and the BC Lions, “Be More Than a Bystander” is aimed at empowering youth to recognize and prevent sexual violence.

Bucknor and Johnson began by speaking about their personal reasons for participating in the series, which is delivered throughout B.C. secondary schools.

“One in three women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime. I love my mom, my wife, and my daughter. My goal is to not let them go through this. We want that number to go down,” Johnson said.

Using compassion and humour, they delivered a compelling multimedia show. Video clips, personal stories and a slide show provided statistics, prevention tips, and information to help youth identify the various forms of abuse. A role play portrayed how to intervene if they were to become concerned about a stranger or someone they know being harassed or assaulted.

Teens were given a frank explanation of how substance intoxication may affect consent. Although a serious topic, Johnson lightened the mood when using the example of a boy and a girl being drunk at a bush party, relevant to teens in a rural area when he admitted he didn't know what that was because he “grew up in the city.”

Carlee Hughes, Arrow & Slokan Lakes Community Services STV Outreach Coordinator, has been requesting inclusion in the series for several years and her efforts were finally rewarded. Hughes said, “I was really honoured that they chose to come to Nakusp, and I feel so grateful for these athletes making ending violence a priority. I also felt really excited to be able to [host] such positive role models for our young men.”

Principal Peter Gajda was also pleased to be able to host the workshop, “Pro athletes sharing, [students] recognize that it is an important thing and I think that it's great for kids to get a different perspective than just hearing it from the same people all the time.”