

# Tiger-Cats join campaign to increase awareness of violence against women



By Anthony Urciuoli  
News Anchor 900 CHML

**Mon, Sep 15 - The Alberta Council Of Women's Shelters is has unveiled a new partnership with the Canadian Football League, with players advocating an "anti-violence" message.**

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats are joining the "Be More Than A Bystander" campaign with Interval House of Hamilton.



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The program is designed to increase awareness and understanding about the impact of violence against women and girls and to speak out against demeaning and inappropriate behaviour.

The Tiger-Cats faced heavy backlash from both sides of the border when the team announced the hiring of Art Briles on Aug 28 as an assistant coach. That same day the CFL intervened and Hamilton announced Briles would not be joining the team.



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s on Art Briles controversy.

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Briles, a long-time friend of current Ticats head coach June Jones, was fired in May 2016 from Baylor University. While serving as the program's football coach, an investigation discovered the school mishandled numerous sexual assault allegations against football players.

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One of the allegations resulted in a settlement with a former student who said she was a victim of gang rape. The suit claimed Baylor turned a blind eye to sexual assaults to build a strong football team under

Briles. She said she was aware of 52 incidents of rape by more than 30 football players between 2011 and 2014.

Shortly after the Briles hiring debacle in Hamilton, Nancy Smith, executive director of Hamilton's Interval House, told 900 CHML that she had invited the Tiger-Cats organization to join its "Be More Than a Bystander" mentoring action program a year prior. But only the Hamilton Bulldogs and McMaster Marauders joined.



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Now, the football organization has come around.

"The Tiger-Cats' longstanding community mission has always been promoting healthy, active, and empowered youth, none of which is possible if a child is exposed to an abusive environment," said Bob Young, caretaker of the Tiger-Cats via media release. "We're choosing to engage in 'Be More Than a Bystander' which will become one of the pillars of our organization's already extensive community outreach plan and will be led by Interval House of Hamilton who work on a daily basis with women and children who are experiencing abuse or violence."

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The program will feature Tiger-Cats players Courtney Stephen, Justin Vaughn and Terrell Davis along with Ticats Alumni, Mike Morreale. There are four main components of the team's 'Be More Than a Bystander' (BMTAB) campaign set to launch in 2018, which will be co-ordinated in ongoing consultation with Interval House of Hamilton's MentorAction:

1. Community awareness campaign: A series of public service announcements and customized content from BMTAB-trained Ticats representatives to be shared across team-controlled distribution channels throughout the 2018 season, including Ticats.ca and at Tiger-Cats home games. It will also be shared on Interval House of Hamilton and MentorAction websites.
2. 'Be More Than a Bystander' month — February 2018: This extensive, month-long awareness campaign will incorporate a number of initiatives, including school visits in the spirit of the Tiger-Cats BeFit program. BMTAB trained Ticats representatives, accompanied by a MentorAction member and trained IHOH personnel, will attend Hamilton high schools during the month to partake in an interactive educational workshop about gender-based violence with the students. The visits will include an emphasis on respectful relationships and what boys can do to safely intervene or disrupt harmful behaviours they witness.

3. 'Be More Than a Bystander' Day at Tim Hortons Field — spring 2018: In conjunction with the Hamilton District School Board, the Tiger-Cats will organize an outdoor field trip to Tim Hortons Field to engage thousands of high school students on the BMTAB message combined with a day of fun and physical activity.
4. Amplify current Tiger-Cats community programs with BMTAB elements:
5. High School Mentorship Program, presented by Coca-Cola:
  - BMTAB-trained Ticats representatives and MentorAction member and trained IHOH professional will accompany a current Ticats player at a specific practice and deliver key messaging for each school participating in the mentorship program (25 schools participating in 2017).
  - Coaches clinic, presented by Turkstra Lumber.
  - BMTAB-trained Ticats in partnership with a member of MentorAction representatives will accompany the coaches and deliver a session at the annual clinic (80 Coaches participated in 2017).

“Gender-based violence is a societal issue and we have been so proud to work with our male leaders and members of MentorAction. The inclusion of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats aligning with us on the ‘Be More Than a Bystander’ program is fantastic,” said Nancy Smith, executive director, Interval House of Hamilton. “I am so proud of our local sports celebrities and athletes through the Hamilton Bulldogs, McMaster Athletics, and now the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, in taking a stand to raise awareness of the impact of men’s violence against women and girls.”

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In 2015, the Canadian Football League instituted a violence against women policy. The policy applies to everyone who works for the CFL, from players to executives, requiring mandatory training on violence against women and the issues surrounding it on an annual basis.

The “Be More Than a Bystander” campaign was founded by the Ending Violence Association of B.C., which launched the first campaign with the B.C. Lions.

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