



**FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.**  
**QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **QNW denounces the lack of resources for Programs Against Violence highlighted by the Auditor General's Report on Youth Protection**

**Kahnawake, May 9, 2008** - Wednesday May 7th, the Auditor General, Sheila Fraser, published a report that denounces the Federal programs for First Nations child and family services. This report reveals not only the underfunding of services, but also the existence of a discriminatory bias that Aboriginal families are undergoing whereby an alarming rate of children are apprehended to be placed in non-Aboriginal families. In Monday's, May 5<sup>th</sup> newspaper *La Presse*, we learn that the quasi-total amount allocated by Ottawa for child care and family services are directed to child placements. "Crumbs" are allocated to prevention.

While the roots of violence are to be sought in centuries of colonization and discriminatory policies, the government keeps under-funding prevention programs, preferring to focus on solutions that lead to assimilation and the destruction of Aboriginal cultures.

For many years, Quebec Native Women, as well as numerous other Aboriginal organizations, have been working on violence prevention within Aboriginal communities and urban areas. While the contemporary challenges of violence, alcohol and drug addictions in the reserves are often pointed out by the media, the time has come to focus on the prevention work that is conducted by the various Aboriginal social services and provide adequate financial support to front line services.

**Wednesday, May 14th**, Quebec Native Women, with the Joint Working Group on the Well-Being of our Nations, launch the **Awareness Campaign against Family Violence**. Funded by the Quebec government, the Campaign will take place during 2008 and 2009. It will provide tools and resources to the communities to fight against family violence. With a video and a training toolkit, family violence will be tackled in all communities and Aboriginal Women's Shelters. The campaign aims at raising awareness among Chiefs, communities and social workers and at mobilizing our Nations against family violence.

QNW and the Joint Working Group draw on a strong and vibrant community spokeswoman, **Sheila Swasson**. In 2006, Sheila Swasson rode her bike across Canada with *Aboriginal Women on the Move* to mobilize public opinion on family violence. Sheila Swasson is Vice-President of Quebec Native Women.

The event will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm at: **Hôtel-musée des Premières Nations**, Salle Wendake, 5, Place de la Rencontre « Ekionkiestha », Wendake, near Québec city.

#### **Our organizations:**

Founded in 1974, **Quebec Native Women Inc. (QNW)**, a non-profit organization, represents women from the First Nations in Quebec and Aboriginal women living in urban areas. QNW advocates on behalf of the Rights of Aboriginal women and their families.

The **Joint Working Group on the Well-Being of our Nations** ensures an active participation of all partners involved in violence issues and the sensitization of Aboriginal communities to promote non-violence through their organization or association. Its mission is to work collaboratively in order to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness of First Nations, their families and the Aboriginal communities of Quebec.

#### **For more info, please contact:**

Aurélien Arnaud, Communications Officer  
(514) 239-0088

[aarnaud@faq-qnw.org](mailto:aarnaud@faq-qnw.org)

<http://www.faq-qnw.org>