



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: Mayor proclaims Feb. 11-17 Family Violence Prevention Week



Amherst Mayor David Kogon signs a proclamation declaring Feb. 11-17 as Family Violence Prevention Week in the community as Dawn Ferris, Autumn House executive director, looks on. (Town of Amherst photo)



AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Mayor David Kogon has declared Feb. 11-17 Family Violence Prevention Week in Amherst.

“Ending the silence surrounding family violence is vital,” Kogon said, as Dawn Ferris, Autumn House executive-director, looked on.

“We in Amherst promote living in a healthy community, but if you are being abused that is not a healthy situation. Anything the town can do to get people talking about family violence, that will encourage people to come forward so they can get help through organizations like Autumn House, is very important to all of the citizens of this community.”

The proclamation notes that family violence in its many forms – child abuse, spousal abuse, woman abuse, sibling abuse, elder abuse – affects all people living in Cumberland County and calls on Amherst residents to share in the responsibility of “ending the silence around family violence by addressing violence in all its forms as we all benefit from a safe community.”

Since its inception in 1989, Autumn House has helped 2,983 women, 1,097 men and 1,379 children deal with the effects of family violence.

Statistics Canada data indicates that in 2016 Nova Scotia police forces dealt with 2,462 victims of intimate partner violence. That represented an eight per cent increase over the previous year, and the vast majority of the victims – 78 per cent – were women.

A Government of Canada produced infographic indicates that 30 per cent of Canadian women experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

Those statistics, while only dealing with intimate partner violence, show why getting the word out, through events like Family Violence Prevention Week, is “really important,” Ferris said.

“The week helps us bring awareness to the problem of family violence in all its forms,” she said. “The more we can make it easier for people to talk about it, the more likelihood victims will seek help.”

Family Violence Prevention Week is being promoted by the Interagency Committee on Family and Sexualized Violence, a collaboration of the RCMP, the Amherst Police Department, the Department of Justice, the local ministerial association, Mental Health, Autumn House, New Directions, Victim Services, Maggie’s Place, Nova Scotia Community College, the Cumberland Sexual Health Centre, the Cumberland Sexual Violence Outreach Program, the Community Bystander Empowerment Project, Addition Services and Restorative Justice.

The committee has been working for more than 20 years to make people aware of the harm family violence causes as well as the resources in the community that support those impacted by family violence.



During Family Violence Prevention Week, the committee is hosting a coffee house on Feb. 13 at the Community Credit Union Business Innovation Centre on Ratchford Street from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Tickets for the event, which will feature coffee, tea, sweets and cheese cake as well as entertainment, are \$10 each.

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