



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Northern Regional Office
Suite 200 - 177 Victoria St.
Lheidli T'enneh Territory
Prince George, BC V2L 5K8
T 250.561.5425
F 250.561.5369
www.fnha.ca

Media Release

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Northern BC First Nations Youth Voice their Vision of Quality Health Care at Wellness Gathering

Youth from over 30 communities in Northern BC voiced their health and wellness priorities through the creation of three innovative public service announcements. The videos are focused on traditional medicine, mental health and primary care.

"I was blown away by the power and depth of our young people's voices. As an organization that takes its direction from our community members, we needed to hear what our youth experience, what they see for solutions and how we can support them," said Nicole Cross, Northern Regional Director for FNHA. "When people are taken seriously, and action happens as a result, there is a real sense of empowerment. I am extremely proud of the work they did."

109 youth storytellers, artists, builders and actors expressed their need to be involved in collective health on their terms, in a process they understand. The "Ancient Cultures, Modern Wellness" gathering asked youth to discuss what improvements in health care they would like to see.

"All of the youth engaged at a high level. They brought laughter and honesty and some things that are hard to talk about, but need to be said," shared Sadie Hoffman, a young Dalkelh woman from Stellat'en. The gathering was an opportunity to discuss ideas about wellness, and what works or doesn't work for youth when accessing the health care system.

In the area of improvements to primary care, youth noted: longer and more regular visits from health professionals in general and in their communities; less wait times for emergency rooms, diagnosis, treatment beds; more convenient transportation options to health facilities; additional Elder care in community; additional coverage for dental and optometry; ensure access to drinking water and health and safe housing.

In the area of mental health and substance use youth noted: taking action to break the cycle of addiction and violence; support for mental health challenges like depression, suicide and ideation, sexual, mental and physical abuse, Elder abuse and violence; additional mental health facilities and human resources in community; peer support training; address prescription drug misuse; additional mental health workshops in community with follow-up supports.

In the area of traditional practices youth want to learn about traditional medicines and how to make them from the land; participate in cultural practices; share in cultural teachings; revitalize languages, reclaim identity, participate in traditional craft-making; improve communication between Hereditary Chiefs and Chief and Council to consult with youth; and additional funding for traditional wellness, community gardens and family cultural camps.

At each of the youth gatherings, storytellers developed a script for a regional Public Service Announcement that actors performed. Watch them through the links below!

NORTHWEST

TITLE: Don't Put Our Health On Hold

View this 56 second PSA on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz89HvtPeLw&feature=youtu.be>

NORTH CENTRAL

TITLE: Do You See the Difference?

View this 42 second PSA on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zftVwqkaFUE&feature=youtu.be>

NORTHEAST

TITLE: I Am Healthy When...

View this 72 second PSA on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1jggkuje4&feature=youtu.be>

COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED

NORTHWEST

Dease River
Gingolx
Gitga'at
Gitsegukla
Gitwangak
Haisla
Iskut
Kitselas
Laxgalts'ap
Lax Kw'alaams
Morisetown
Old Massett
Telegraph Creek

NORTH CENTRAL

Kwadacha
Lake Babine
Nadleh Whuten
Nazko
Saik'uz
Skin Tyee
Stella'ten
Takla Lake
Wet'suwet'en
Yekooche

NORTHEAST

Daylu Dena
Blueberry River
Doig River
Fort Nelson
McLeod Lake
Saulteau
Tsaa Tse K'Nai
West Moberly

Media Contact:

First Nations Health Authority
604-831-4898
media@fnha.ca