

By *Kate Adams*

Domestic Violence Community Response Project
News Release

This Saturday, January 19, will mark the official launch of the Neighbours, Friends and Families Campaign in Nipissing. The campaign is designed to help neighbours, friends and families recognize signs of woman abuse and to know what action to take to help.

The Neighbours, Friends and Families (NFF) campaign is part of a provincial-wide initiative developed in partnership with the Ontario government, The Ontario Women's Directorate and the Expert Panel on Neighbours, Friends and Families, through the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children.

Locally, the campaign is coordinated by a committee made up of a variety of people, each holding a strong commitment to addressing violence against women in the Nipissing District.

Karen Hayes is not only the NFF Community Coordinator and a committee member but a former survivor of domestic violence. She has experienced first hand the isolation and knows what it feels like when family members stay away to avoid the abuser or because they are afraid to make the situation worse for the woman. "Neighbours, Friends and Families is an excellent program to equip people with the tools they need to recognize signs of women abuse and offer positive support to people they care about", says Hayes. "Often times people want to help but they don't know how. NFF replaces helplessness with action."

Everyone is welcome to join the committee along with local politicians and other community leaders for the official launch on Saturday. The event will be held at Northgate Square's Tower Court beginning at 11:00 a.m. Following a brief formal ceremony, Committee members will remain at the square until 3:00 pm to talk to the public about the NFF campaign.

The Neighbours, Friends and Families Committee would like to thank Nipissing First Nation's True Self Program and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee of Nipissing for supporting the implementation of this program.

For more information on the Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign please visit www.neighboursfriendsandfamilies.on.ca.
