



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 24, 2008

Contact: Karen Alexander or Stephanie Tissot
Living Positive Resource Centre
250-862-2437 or 1-800-616-2437

12th Annual Okanagan Family AIDS Walk to raise funds for North Okanagan organizations

Vernon – The 12th Annual Okanagan Family AIDS Walk presented by Interior Savings will take place at Waterfront Park in Kelowna on Sunday, September 21st, but some of the funds raised from that event will come back to the North Okanagan to support worthwhile initiatives here at home.

The Okanagan Family AIDS Walk is organized by Living Positive Resource Centre, Okanagan (LPRC) and Okanagan Aboriginal AIDS Society (OAAS) in Kelowna. LPRC is the agency responsible for HIV, AIDS and hepatitis support, prevention education and awareness events throughout in the Okanagan Valley. OAAS provides HIV, AIDS and hepatitis education and prevention services to the Aboriginal communities throughout the 7 member bands of the Okanagan Nation Alliance. In the communities of the North Okanagan, the open access support and outreach work is handled by North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society. All funds raised by the NOYFSS team are directed back to the North Okanagan to provide outreach and support services here. Jan Shumay, NOYFSS Director of Community Based Services, says, "We began this partnership with the Okanagan Family AIDS Walk about three years ago, which sees all of the funds that we raise here in the North Okanagan stay right here for crucial support programming. It is a great partnership, because it gives people the opportunity to support the work we do here in the North Okanagan, and know that they are helping individuals and families right here at home."

The North Okanagan Hospice Society will also benefit from Okanagan Family AIDS Walk fundraising over the next three years. Living Positive has pledged to raise \$30,000 to support the "Grow the Dream" Campaign, which will expand Hospice House from six to twelve beds. Daryle Roberts, Living Positive Executive Director, says, "When we heard about the expansion plans for Hospice House, we knew we had to be a part of this initiative. The reality of the work we do is that until a cure for AIDS is found, our clients are going to need to access hospice care. We have a long-standing relationship with North Okanagan Hospice Society, and the amazing work they do is so very necessary for our community. This allows us to be part of an initiative where our clients and other local residents can end their days with dignity." Said Brenda Thorlakson, Executive Director of North Okanagan Hospice Society, "We are excited about Living Positive's commitment to quality end-of-life care in the North Okanagan. We truly appreciate their support for this worthwhile initiative in our community."

This year's walk will be under the distinguished patronage of the Honourable Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and is chaired by Maxine DeHart, a Kelowna hotelier and newspaper columnist who received the 2008 United Way Award of Distinction, and the 2002 Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. The Walk is presented by Interior Savings Credit Union.



North Okanagan Youth &
Family Services Society



-30-

#101-266 Lawrence Ave.
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 2L3 – Phone: 250-862-2437 – Fax: 250-868-8662
Website: www.livingpositive.ca