

## Media Advisory FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Celebrating Our Strengths Mental Illness Awareness Week October 1 – 7, 2007

Thunder Bay, ON, October 1, 2007 – Community mental health agencies, businesses and volunteers throughout the City of Thunder Bay have partnered to form the Thunder Bay Mental Health Network. This group will recognize Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 1 – 7, 2007. The Network is proud to present six events during the week in an effort to improve and create awareness of mental illness and address the persistent stigma. The events planned for the week focus on celebrating the strengths of mental health consumer/survivors, and the many talents they hold.

The local theme for Mental Illness Awareness Week is "Celebrating Our Strengths". The theme is consistent with our involvement of consumer/survivors in our planning and events. Each of the participating organizations shares the value of strength and recovery, and how learning and artistic expressions can play an important role in the recovery process. We are proud to showcase local talent and creativity in an effort to celebrate the strengths of those in our community.

Children's Centre Thunder Bay Executive Director, Tom Walters says, "It is extremely positive to see mental illness being openly discussed, while highlighting the achievements of those who have struggled or may be struggling with mental health issues. This is a great opportunity for the community to be engaged in a dialogue, learning about mental health and mental illness".

During Thunder Bay's celebration of Mental Illness Awareness Week, the Mental Health Network hopes Thunder Bay residents will learn:

- We have many talented individuals in our community that have faced mental health issues that we are proud to celebrate.
- Mental illness is a topic that can be openly discussed, and the stigma needs to be addressed.
- There are various resources for help available.

It is important to remember that mental health is an important component to our health and well-being. Those with a mental illness have many valuable gifts to share with the community, and we would like to celebrate their courage and talents throughout the week. We encourage everyone to come out and enjoy Mental Illness Awareness Week 2007.

For more information, please contact:

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Attached: Mental Illness Awareness Week Schedule