



International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers

For Immediate Release – December 8, 2008

Calgary, AB – On Wednesday, December 17th AIDS Calgary and our *Shift* program marks the International Day to End Violence against Sex Workers. The day commemorates the hate crimes, violence and discrimination that sex workers face, and urges the public to respect the basic human rights of sex workers.

Roseline Carter, *Shift* Program Coordinator, “wants to use December 17th to call attention to the frequent violence that sex workers face in Calgary. The fact that men, women, and transgendered/sexual people are too afraid to report the violence they face is alarming” comments Carter. “Violence often goes unreported because a sex worker may fear prosecution, discrimination, stigmatizing, or further mistreatment.” Carter notes that “sex workers are still human beings and should be afforded the same basic human rights as anyone else. Being a sex worker does not remove someone’s right to say NO. Violence is still violence.”

Sex work includes people working outdoors on the street as well as indoor workers (i.e. escorts, exotic dancers, adult film entertainers, or those offering services in massage parlors). Violence includes physical assaults (including murder, rape, robbery, assault, harassment, verbal, physical and sexual abuse) towards sex trade workers from their customers, and the general public.

AIDS Calgary and Shift will be marking December 17th with a March on Stephen’s Avenue Mall at 5:00pm. The March will be followed by a public forum featuring Dr. Scharie Tacver, Dr. Leslie Tutty and Susan Scott

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AIDS Calgary is a local not-for-profit AIDS service organization that offers support services to individuals who are at-risk for, infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and provides prevention and education throughout the Calgary region. For more information, please contact AIDS Calgary at (403) 508-2500 or online at www.aidscalgary.org.

The Shift program provides support services for people in the sex trade. Utilizing a harm reduction and rights based approach, Shift works with adults involved in the sex trade to assist in improving quality of life and reaching individualized goals.

For more information, please contact:

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