

SOARING EAGLE TEPACHIMOWIN

Photo Credit- <http://www.firstpeople.us>

RISING ABOVE ABUSE COUNSELLING AGENCY

Issue 2 December 2011

Rising Above Holds Youth Conference

A familiar cry from First Nations leaders across Canada: “We need to address the issues of our youth?”

Programs related to youth are increasingly receiving priority attention in First Nations communities. Many have elected a Youth Chief and Council to address these issues. Such is Waskaganish, of the James Bay Cree in Quebec where the Youth Council supported a Rising Above youth conference in their community.

Local conference coordinator, David Cheechoo, a long-time respected church leader in Waskaganish who works with the youth ministry at Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship, presented the idea of a Rising Above youth conference to the Youth Chief. As members of Rising Above, he and his wife Greta have a desire to see Rising Above move in the direction of reaching First Nations youth with their inner healing ministry. Correspondingly, in recent years Rising Above has made it a strategic outcome to reach youth. The youth conference was one of the initiatives to that end.

Daren George, Event Manager for Rising Above, admitted he faced many challenges in facilitating his first Rising Above youth conference but he felt a strong sense of God’s presence. A highlight for him was to see God’s hand touching each youth who shared their Testimony in front of the whole conference.

A young woman who was counselled at the conference, shared in Cree what her life was like after being sexually abused but is now finding freedom and is able to make better choices. The change started when she decided to find help through counselling. She testified that having the Lord in her life has helped change a lot of things.

A team of counsellors remained in the community for two days to provide aftercare for those impacted by the conference. Liz Beardy reports, “I was deeply touched by my counselling sessions as hearts were in such need of care and support.” One youth was stirred in one of the sessions as the presentation triggered deep emotions. The youth sought out one of the Rising Above counsellors on hand and shared her pain. During the counselling session she experienced a breakthrough and left a changed person.

The weekend concluded with a multi-generational community service. Over 200 people from all the churches in Waskaganish came together to support the event and worship as one. It was truly uplifting! Then to see the leadership from all of the churches come forward and pray for the newly elected Chief and the council was a moving experience. Praise God for the great things He is doing in that community.



The team of speakers and counsellors: Daren George, Rick & Linda Martin (My People International), Liz Beardy, Howard Jolly, Mervin Cheechoo.



Residential School Conference, Split Lake, MB

Community sponsors Christian response to healing.

Rising Above facilitators Selma Poulin, Howard Jolly and Mervin Cheechoo addressed a group of residential school survivors and their families at a community organized and funded conference. After presenting on the history and impact of residential schools, they challenged the participants to repent of the sinful responses to their pain- hurting themselves and others– and turn to God for true healing. They then invited participants to experience freedom by releasing forgiveness. Many of the participants responded to the message and four individuals made first time decisions to follow God. The facilitators were on hand for individual counselling during the three days. As a follow up to the event, local community event coordinator, Laverne Spence, began a bible study with the participants. He was very pleased with the outcome of the conference and desires to see Rising Above come back to the community to continue follow up.

ISHAAWIN Counselling Centre



A single mother of three recently called the office desperate for somewhere to turn to find help. Having just experienced a major family crisis, she felt she had to leave her home community and move to Thunder Bay. Before making the move she cried to God to show her somewhere to turn for help in Thunder Bay. God directed her to Ishaawin. Liz Beardy, met with the family late in the evening. They talked and cried together as Liz gave them spiritual comfort and counsel. They left the office that evening in a

healthier state and the mother was so grateful for Ishaawin.

This story is not an isolated incident. Counsellor Liz Beardy recounts numerous similar situations where people contact Ishaawin desperate for help not knowing where else to turn.

Ishaawin is committed to offering counselling regardless of one's ability to pay. Most of the clients who come cannot contribute and so Ishaawin provides a much needed ministry.

Since opening in January as a ministry division of Rising Above, God has been providing enough financial resources to keep the doors open. The vision for Ishaawin goes beyond providing Christian counselling to that of leadership development and training in the field of emotional and spiritual care giving. To realize the vision, we are trusting God for the necessary human and financial resources. To

move forward, a Director and an Office Manager/Program Assistant are needed along with the finances to support them. Individuals interested in the positions are invited to contact Rising Above.



Waswanipi Regional Conference

A Rising Above team travelled to Waswanipi, Quebec, a James Bay Cree community, where they facilitated a conference on healing from sexual abuse and residential school experience. The team faced many challenges before and during the conference which they came to understand as spiritual opposition. They were informed that a Satanist group was praying against the conference. Further evidence of that came one night when several youth wanting to attend were confronted by a dark hooded figure forbidding them to enter. Despite this opposition, many spiritual victories were seen at the conference. One such victory involved a mother and daughter. Just a week prior the daughter had attempted suicide but the mother found her hanging and cut her down in time. The family came to the conference looking for support and prayer. After the team prayed with them the daughter accepted Jesus into her life and the mother recommitted her life to Jesus. Praise God!! Following the conference the team stayed an extra day to provide counselling for the attendees.

What's New With Rising Above

Executive Director

Terry Martin announced to the board in June of his intention to resign as Executive Director effective September 1 and take on a new role as Director of Operations. He felt it was in the best interests of the organization and himself that Rising Above installs an Aboriginal to promote the ministry, expand the base of support, and cast the vision for the future. He will retain the duties of managing the day to day operations, which he feels is his area of giftedness. The board has granted him a sabbatical in the summer and expresses their gratitude for his years of service as Executive Director.

In his place, the board appointed Daren George. In his four year tenure on the board and year and a half on staff, Daren has demonstrated a commitment and passion for Rising Above.

Board Members

Martin Bear, Malliseet, and his wife Susan are from St. Mary's First Nation, Fredericton, NB. He currently owns and operates Bear Construction Ltd and is very active in their local church.

David Cheechoo, Cree, and his wife Greta live in Waskaganish, QC. David is gifted administratively and currently is the church Administrator for the Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship.

Chairperson of the Board

The board extends to former Chair, Larry Wilson, their gratitude for his leadership of the board during his five year tenure. Larry's board experience has been invaluable in the transition to a governance board. His successor, Selma Poulin, brings a passion for Rising Above as demonstrated by her commitment and involvement on the board and as a conference speaker for years.

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RISING ABOVE ABUSE COUNSELING AGENCY

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VISION STATEMENT

To see aboriginal people empowered by the Spirit to experience life, identity and purpose in Christ as God the Father intended.

MISSION STATEMENT

Rising Above exists to bring healing to our land by **educating, equipping and empowering** aboriginal people to address their pain and rise above it.

Members of the Board:

Mervin Cheechoo, Pres., Cree

Selma Poulin, Chair, Oji-Cree

Larry Wilson, Cree

Martin Bear, Maliseet

David Cheechoo, Cree





A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Imitating Christ's Humility

¹ Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. ⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:1-5.



As I enter into the role of Executive Director I pray that I can lead with the attitude of imitating Christ's humility and that we in Rising Above will continue to reach the hurting with this same attitude.

For those who don't know me, let me tell you a piece of my story. Since early in my childhood I have always had a burden to help my First Nation people especially our youth. Seeing the heart wounds on a daily bases in our Native communities, I always wondered how to help. In my own life I experienced many different abuses such as sexual abuse so I understand the effects and impact this has on a person's life. It affected me in my childhood, teen years into my young adult years until I found myself at the lowest time of my life contemplating suicide. I knew of God in my head but not in my heart. I called out to Him for help. That was where my journey of healing started and lead to eventually giving my all to Him as my Lord and Savior over 20 years ago. Throughout my journey, I have always felt a calling to go into full time ministry. However, triggers from the abuses of my past were still there that affected me personally and my family. Needing some answers, the Lord opened a door for my wife and I to go a Rising Above conference in Prince George in 2005. This conference impacted us so much that I felt the conference was needed in our community. In 2006 I led a planning team in hosting the Moricetown Rising Above conference. After that event I was called to the Board of Directors of Rising Above where I served for five years. All that time I still felt the call to full time ministry. In 2010 I answered that call to serve with Rising Above as Event Manager. Leaving my secure job of 31 years as a saw filer for a faith supported ministry position was a leap of faith. However, I knew that this was where the Lord wanted me.

Now entering a new phase in ministry as the Executive Director, I feel there is much we can do to enhance the ministry. Along with our conferences and workshops, another vital part of our ministry is our follow up plan: *From Hurting to Helping*. Partnering with other likeminded ministries, the vision is to see broken people healed, trained and mentored to become confident, competent ministers of Christ helping others heal. The outcome is multiplication of ministry- empowering First Nations to lead ministries reaching their own people and other nations with the healing Gospel of Christ. Our partners in this endeavor include: Northern Youth Programs, Youth With A Mission, My People International, Promise Keepers Canada, Family Life Canada.

Rising Above conferences have been reaching out to the hurting going on 20 years. Much healing has happened since then but wounds of the heart still happen. Wounds of the past generations still haunt many of our people but we are facing an ever growing present need for healing in our youth. Over 50% of the First Na-

tions population is under the age of 25. First Nations communities are screaming for help to deal with youth issues. We want answer that cry for help. With several Youth conferences under our belt we want to continue to learn from what we have done. At present we are putting together a task force comprised of youth and youth workers to explore ways Rising Above can address the issues of our youth effectively.

As we carry out our mission, please pray with me that all we do or say in Rising Above will be Spirit led, bringing honor and glory to His name. Would you partner with us by supporting this mission financially? As a faith-based ministry, we rely on God and his people to supply our needs. At present our general operating funds are at a place that is concerning for future endeavors. Prayerfully consider giving a generous year end gift or becoming a monthly financial partner. Detach and return the response form provided below. God can use your gift, whatever the amount, to multiply His work in our land.

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:1-3

Brother in Christ,



Daren George<<<
Executive Director

YES, I/we will partner with Rising above.

Detach and return with your gift



I want to give an individual gift of \$ _____ I want to give a monthly gift of: \$ _____

Designate my gift as follows \$ _____ General Fund \$ _____ Ishaawin Counselling Centre (Payable to Rising Above)

\$ _____ Staff Support for _____

I prefer to use my chequing account and have enclosed a void cheque to have my donation deducted on the 15th day of each month.

Both signatures required for joint account

Signature

Signature

Donations will be acknowledged with a single year-end tax receipt for total giving in that year. You may change your automatic donations at any time by notifying our office. Instructions received after the 10th of the month will be effective the following month.

DONATE ONLINE www.risingabove.ca Rising Above uses CanadaHelps for online processing of credit card payments. CanadaHelps is a registered charity that processes secure, online donations on behalf of registered charitable organizations. Within minutes of making a donation, you will receive an official electronic tax receipt emailed to you. Your credit card will be charged by CanadaHelps not Rising Above.

Canadian Donors: Gifts will be receipted for tax purposes. Receipts are issued annually unless otherwise requested. Make cheques payable to: RISING ABOVE.
U.S. Donors: For income tax purposes, please send your cheque to, and payable to, The D.M. Stearns Missionary Fund, P.O. Box 1578, North Wales, PA., 19454. To comply with the IRS, your donation should be accompanied by a separate note: "I recommend that the proceeds be granted by the Fund to #346 - Rising Above Abuse Counselling Agency for General Fund" **Please do not write Rising Above on the face of the cheque. D.M. Stearns is only able to process cheques.**

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