

August 30, 2011

Innovative project reaches out to homeless, pregnant women

Edmonton... A new project in Edmonton connects with women living in the city's urban inner core. Boyle Street Community Services is the recipient of a \$900,000 grant, to be distributed over three years, to fund Streetworks' Supports for Homeless Pregnant Women project.

"The efforts of this project's committed partners will help make the community a safer place. By investing in crime prevention projects like this one today, the Government of Alberta is building the foundation for a safe and secure future," said Verlyn Olson, Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

The program, funded through Alberta's Safe Communities' three-year innovation fund, creates a team of women with street experience, as well as professional staff, to connect with pregnant, homeless women living in Edmonton's inner city core.

"I truly commend the partners of this project for recognizing the need to work together to create a support network that will effectively serve Edmonton's at-risk women. Through this partnership, we are building safer communities," said Naresh Bhardwaj, MLA for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Women targeted by the project may be exposed to risk factors such as addictions, poverty, victimization, communicable diseases, criminal activity and family violence. The project aims to reduce these factors, ultimately resulting in healthy births.

"Women who are street-involved and pregnant face multiple barriers in staying healthy throughout their pregnancy. Often survival issues have a higher priority than pregnancy issues for this group of women. This can lead to negative judgments by people who don't understand the struggles they face," said Marliss Taylor, Streetworks Project Manager. "This program will work with women where they are at, in a harm reduction context, building upon their strengths and enabling moms to meet their full potential. It has a large outreach component and will work with other agencies that provide services to this population."

The Alberta government is working to [build a better Alberta](#) by fostering economic growth, strengthening our health and education systems, investing in infrastructure, supporting safe and strong communities and ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

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