



Grand Council Treaty #3

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Overdose Awareness Day Statement from Gaakinawataagizod Cheyenne Vandermeer

Today, on International Overdose Awareness Day, we remember those we have lost to toxic drug poisoning and take time to consider how we can all work towards healthier, happier communities.

Communities in Treaty #3 have continually faced ongoing long-term states of emergency resulting from substance use and mental health crises. No one within our Nation has been untouched by these tragedies. Earlier this year the Chiefs-in-Assembly of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 declared a nation-wide mental health and addictions state of emergency. While it is true that our communities have some of the highest rates of opioid poisoning in the Northwestern Health Unit, every day countless people in our communities and agencies work hard to seek solutions to this devastating epidemic.

Today I ask everyone to reflect on how we can reduce the stigma surrounding drug use so those who are struggling feel safe to ask for help. Leading a healthy life takes a community and together as a Nation we can raise awareness, create support systems, and be positive forces for our families, friends, and communities.

For those currently struggling with addiction, I assure you that you are not alone in your struggles and that many people care for you and are willing to help. No one should have to go through addiction alone and only together can we all move our communities forward to a healthy future.

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