

Press Release: For Immediate Release

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Join Us in the Purple Chair Campaign: Every Seat Tells a Story, Every Story Matters

Nanaimo, BC - July 23, 2024 - This August, the Nanaimo Community Action Team (CAT) invites you to be part of a movement that seeks to turn the tide on the overdose crisis. We are launching the Purple Chair Campaign, a heartfelt initiative that aims to raise awareness about overdose, safe supply, harm reduction, and the urgent need to destigmatize substance use in our community.

"Every Seat Tells a Story"

Imagine walking through our city and seeing purple chairs displayed on porches and at the entrances of homes. Each chair represents a life lost to overdose, a person who struggled with substance use, and the loved ones left behind. Each chair tells a story—a story that needs to be heard, understood, and remembered.

We Need Your Help!

To bring this vision to life, we need your support. We are seeking donations of 500 chairs and purple paint to create a powerful visual tribute for International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31st at Diana Krall Plaza. This is more than just a call for chairs; it's a call to action, a call to come together as a community to honor those we've lost and to stand with those who continue to fight.

Campaign Highlights:

1. Purple Chair Installations

- Locations: Displayed on porches and at the entrances of homes throughout Nanaimo, in places that resonate with our daily lives and community spirit.
- Setup: Each chair will bear a plaque with a name, a story, or a fact about overdose, safe supply, and harm reduction.

2. Community Stories Collection

- Share Your Story: We encourage everyone to share how overdose has impacted their lives. Whether you've lost a loved one, battled substance use yourself, or simply want to express your support, your story matters. Submissions can be made via email to: nanaimocatcoordinator@gmail.com.

3. Social Media Campaign

- Daily Stories: Follow us on social media for daily stories throughout August, using hashtags like #PurpleChairCampaign, #OverdoseAwareness, and #EverySeatTellsAStory. Share these stories, spread the word, and let's create a ripple effect of awareness and empathy.
- Engage and Share: Use our hashtags to share your own stories or messages of support. Let's flood social media with voices calling for change and compassion.

Why Participate?

This campaign is about more than raising awareness; it's about building a community of support, empathy, and action. By participating, you:

- **Honor Lives:**
 - Each chair is a tribute to a life lost and a reminder of the ongoing battle against overdose.
- **Create Change:**
 - Your involvement helps break down stigma, promotes understanding, and drives the conversation about safe supply and harm reduction.
- **Show Support:**
 - Stand in solidarity with those affected by substance use, showing them that they are not alone.

Join Us for International Overdose Awareness Day

Mark your calendars for August 31st. Join us at Diana Krall Plaza from 12-3pm for a moving tribute, where 500 purple chairs will stand as symbols of lives and stories. Bring personal items, photos, or messages to place on the chairs, and participate in a vigil to honor and remember.

Together, We Can Make a Difference

The Purple Chair Campaign is a call to our humanity.

It's a chance to transform grief into action,

to let empathy drive change,

and to build a future where every story is heard,

every life is valued,

and no one is left behind.

For more information, to share your story,

or to donate chairs or paint, please contact:

Beverley Planes—The Nanaimo Community Action Team Coordinator

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Local Newspapers and Media Outlets:

- Nanaimo News Bulletin
- Nanaimo News Now
- Nanaimo Business Examiner
- Nanaimo Magazine

Radio Stations:

- 102.3 The Wave
- 106.9 The Wolf
- CHLY 101.7 FM (Community Radio)

Television Stations:

- CHEK News
- CTV Vancouver Island
- Global BC

Online News Platforms and Blogs:

- VIEA (Vancouver Island Economic Alliance)

Local Government and Organizations:

- City of Nanaimo Communications Office
- Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
- Island Health Communications

Community Groups and Social Services:

- United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island
- Nanaimo Family Life Association
- Nanaimo Community Hospice Society

Educational Institutions:

- Vancouver Island University (VIU) Communications Office