



Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

AHOUSAHT
DITIDAHT
ʔIIHATIS / ČIINAXINT
HESQUIAHT
HUPACASATH

HUU-AY-AHT
KA:YU:K'T'H'/CHE:K:TLES7ET'H'
MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT
NUCHATLAHT
TLA-O-QUI-AHT

TOQUAHT
TSESHAHT
UCHUCKLESAT
YUUT.UʔI.ʔATH

P.O. BOX 1383
PORT ALBERNI, BC
V9Y 7M2

Tel: 250.724.5757
Fax: 250.724.2172

August 25, 2020

NTC Calls For Immediate Action To Address Overdose Crisis

Port Alberni, BC - As the world grapples with fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, our most vulnerable population is facing, what appears to be, an uphill battle against the tainted and powerful street drug supply that, throughout the month of July alone, has claimed over five lives per day in B.C. July was the third month in a row where we saw over 170 deaths, in B.C. alone, caused from suspected illicit drug overdose.

On behalf of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, we send our deepest condolences to all of our extended families that have had to grieve the losses of loved ones to the horrifying overdose crisis. We send our strength and love to all families who have had to grieve in a new way, as a result of the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic.

As First Nations peoples, we know first hand the devastating impacts that drug use has had on our peoples. When we see the numbers skyrocketing as they have, alarm bells go off and we demand an action plan, including sustained funds, resources, and assistance to combat this deadly crisis.

President Judith Sayers says, “We have seen the ability of our governments to roll out billions of dollars in response to the deadly disease Covid-19, we ask for a similar response in finding solutions to the opioid crisis that is taking away far too many of our people.”

Vice-President Mariah Charleson states, “We cannot sit silent any longer. Too many of our people are dying at the hands of addiction. We call upon the federal and provincial governments to act now to address this humanitarian crisis.”

Generations of explicit racism, systemic racism, and outright genocide towards our peoples has resulted in our First Nations peoples being grossly overrepresented in homelessness, incarceration rates, children in care, and overdoses. Deep rooted trauma will not end in a day. It will take long-term solutions and resources to allow our people to heal. Access to culture and ways of knowing and being will be critical in the healing of our people. We ask that the governments acknowledge this and take deep rooted action immediately to respond to this lethal crisis.

Contact:

Kekinusuqs, Judith Sayers, President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
P: 250.724.5757 ext. 231 or 25-720-5621
E: judith.sayers@nuuchahnulth.org

Mariah Charleson, Vice President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
P: 250-731-7218
E: Mariah.charleson@nuuchahnulth.org

About Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC) provides programs and services to over 10,000 registered members. The role of the NTC is to represent 14 First Nations in three regions stretching 300 kilometers of the Pacific Coast of Vancouver Island from Brooks Peninsula in the north to Point-no-Point in the south. The NTC represents Ahousaht, Ditidaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ay- aht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshaht, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit www.nuuchahnulth.org.