

**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
**--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--**

***Campaign to stop violence against women and youth before it starts***

Toronto, Ontario – On May 1, 2012, the first annual May Be Me campaign “kicks-off” to raise awareness about violence against women and youth and raise funds to support violence prevention efforts. Canadian statistics show that one in two women experience sexual or physical violence in their lifetimes and youth are at greatest risk of violence.

**WHAT:** May Be Me campaign ([www.maybemecampaign.ca](http://www.maybemecampaign.ca))

**WHERE AND WHEN:**

- Official kick-off: online on Tuesday May 1
- **May Be Me Day:** everywhere, Thursday May 31
- Celebration Night: Wychwood Barnes (601 Christie St.), Thursday May 31, 7-11 PM

**WHY:** We all know a woman or youth who has experienced violence and we can do something to prevent it from happening.

Violence against women and youth flashes through the news on a weekly basis. Research shows its scope: of the 19 million Canadians who reported having a current or former partner in 2009, 6% were physically or sexually victimized by that partner. Women faced the most serious and repeated forms of violence (Statistics Canada, 2011). Youth, especially young women, consistently experience the highest rates of stalking and sexual and domestic violence (Statistics Canada, 2006; AuCoin, 2005).

Violence against women and youth was once viewed as a “private matter”. The issue is better understood but a need remains to do something to prevent it. May Be Me, a new campaign, addresses that need by raising awareness and funds to support violence prevention initiatives. People of all ages participate by registering on [www.maybemecampaign.ca](http://www.maybemecampaign.ca), choosing how they will express themselves in purple on May Be Me Day (May 31), and gathering pledges from friends and family. On May 31, a celebration event will be held for campaign supporters to show off their “purple look” and demonstrate their connection with the cause.

Actor and spokesperson Paula Brancati (Being Erica, Deglassi) stresses the far-reaching impact of the cause. “We all know someone who has been abused but we hardly talk about its impact in our lives. May Be Me is a great opportunity to break that silence about violence against women and youth and show we won’t accept it as a part of life.”

May Be Me is launched by METRAC (the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children), an award-winning Toronto-based charity that prevents violence against diverse women and youth. In 2012, proceeds will support the charity’s

prevention work. Into the future, the campaign will branch out to benefit other charities that do prevention programming.

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