



YWCA  
CANADA

WEEK  
WITHOUT  
VIOLENCE

THE POWER  
OF BEING aGIRL

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Healthy dating? There's an app for that! YWCA Canada launches YWCA Safety Siren app for iPhone

Yellowknife, 26 August 2010 - As part of its ongoing work to end violence against women and offer violence prevention and intervention tools, YWCA Canada, the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization, has launched the YWCA Safety Siren app. The app includes information relevant to Yellowknife and is being promoted widely with "Safety Siren" cards distributed to public places, like bars and restaurants, and to the high schools.

The unique Safety Siren is activated with a press of a button or a quick shake and turns an iPhone or iPod touch into a multi-functional safety device. Part of YWCA's Power of Being a Girl anti-violence initiative, the app is available for **free** in the App Store.

Available in both English and French, the YWCA Safety Siren, offers users Canadian health and safety information geared toward young women, including: short questions and answers about women's sexual health with a focus on dating and social interaction; tips and facts on safety and wellbeing; links to YWCAs across Canada as well as emergency and crisis resource centres; and SOS urgent email and phone functionality to a friend or family member when the user is in an unsafe situation displaying the user's location on a map.

"We are thrilled to be able to expand our existing roster of free materials on girls safety with this kind of new media outreach," says Paulette Senior, YWCA Canada Chief Executive Officer. "Access to information about sexual health, wellness and safety is absolutely essential and girls need it where they live, and they live on their phones."

Funded by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program, the Power of Being a Girl™ initiative is a signature violence prevention program for girls ages 12-17 and focuses on developing girls' leadership. An annual Power of Being a Girl conference™ will be held in Yellowknife in conjunction with school boards on October 20.

"Your iPhone is one of the most personal things you own. Having access to sexual health information where, when and how you need it is an important part of being able to keep yourself safe when you go out on a date," says Corinne Rusch-Drutz, YWCA Canada Director of Communications & Membership Development. "The YWCA Safety Siren goes where you go and answers some of the tough questions you might not be willing to ask your friends or family or look up on a shared computer. It's your own private gateway to a library of women's resources, from sexual harassment to STIs."

In addition to giving straightforward information on relevant sexual health and wellness issues, the app geo-locates the user with maps and directions to over 250 resource centres across Canada by topic or proximity including local YWCAs, emergency hotlines, health clinics and crisis centres. It's a one stop shop for healthy dating and it's free.

For more information on the YWCA Safety Siren app, visit [www.ywcacanada.ca](http://www.ywcacanada.ca) or download for free in the App Store at <http://itunes.apple.com/ca/artist/ywca-canada/id372269047> .

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For further information on the Safety Siren, contact Corinne Rusch-Drutz, Director of Communications and Membership Development at YWCA Canada at 416-962-8881 x 244 or e-mail at [corinnerd@ywcacanada.ca](mailto:corinnerd@ywcacanada.ca) or to find out more about programming for girls, contact Julie Green, Director of Community Relations at YWCA Yellowknife at 920-2777 ext 303 or e-mail at [julie@ywcanwt.ca](mailto:julie@ywcanwt.ca)

### **About YWCA Canada:**

YWCA Canada is the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization. With 33 Member Associations operating in more than 400 districts and communities across the country, our Turning Point Programs for Women™ - which address personal safety, economic security and well-being – reach out to 1 million women and girls in nine provinces and one territory. YWCA is the largest national provider of shelter to women, serving 25,000 women, children and teen girls including 6,000 fleeing domestic violence each year. We are the largest provider of literacy, life skills, employment and counselling programs in the country, and the second largest provider of childcare services. YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries. For more information about YWCA Canada and our Member Associations, visit [www.ywcacanada.ca](http://www.ywcacanada.ca).

### **About YWCA Yellowknife:**

YWCA Yellowknife is the largest provider of residential support for people with disabilities, with 22 clients living in five homes. YWCA Yellowknife also operates Yellowknife's only family violence shelter, the 12-bed Alison McAteer House and the 39-unit Rockhill transitional and emergency housing programs for families. We also offer confidence-building programs for girls and fee-for-service after-school programs for children ages 5 to 11 at every school in the city. YWCA Yellowknife has been serving the people of the north since 1966.