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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALGARIANS TAKING A STEP TO STOP ABUSE

Calgary, Alberta, September 26, 2010 - Family violence knows no boundaries – it happens in all social, cultural, economic, age and religious groups. On Sunday, September 26, 2010, during the **2nd Annual Multi-Faith Walk to End Family Violence**, hundreds of Calgarians from diverse faiths will be walking together in Prince's Island Park in a collective effort to raise awareness about the dangers of family violence and, hopefully, put a stop to it.

In 2008, Calgary Police Services responded to 13,496 domestic violence related calls for service, but only a fraction of domestic violence acts are ever reported to the police. 16% of Calgarians turn to their religious communities for help when faced with domestic violence. It has become imperative for the Calgary community to be more vigilant when it comes to violence that may be occurring behind closed doors. The 2nd Annual Multi-Faith Walk to End Family Violence calls attention to the powerful role that religious communities play in ending violence in families and providing valuable support to victims in a city as culturally diverse as Calgary.

This annual event was inspired by the efforts of the first man to walk across Canada against violence -- *Imam Syed Soharwardy*. "I met thousands of Canadians over the period of almost 8 months. I got to meet with them, they shared stories with me and I motivated them to do whatever they can to stop violence in any shape or form," says Soharwardy. In 2008, he approached the Alliance to End Violence and asked that they continue the tradition of uniting people of all faiths to stop family violence from happening. The First Annual Multi-Faith Walk to End Family Violence was held in September 2009 with a successful turnout of over 300 participants from various faiths, such as Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Aboriginal and Jewish.

By walking and talking together on September 26, individuals, families and religious and faith communities declare their united commitment to ending violence and abuse in families and communities. The Walk will take place from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. beginning at the Eau Claire Market. Walkers will proceed west along the pathway, across the Bow River and back through Prince's Island Park, making a stop at the Garden of Hope.

Alliance to End Violence is Calgary's resource centre for family and sexual violence, working collaboratively with more than 50 agencies to enhance services for victims of interpersonal violence. Find out more at www.endviolence.ca

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