



**Native Youth Sexual Health Network and National Aboriginal Council of Midwives
Announce Partnership during “Heart Your Parts” Week 2014!**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - February 10, 2014 - The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (NYSHN) and National Aboriginal Council of Midwives (NACM) are excited to announce our partnership and memorandum of understanding (MOU) during [“Heart Your Parts” National Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week](#) February 10-14th.

This partnership will provide us with the necessary support to work together at the intersections of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice. These intersections include bridging the gap between culturally safe sex education and midwifery care through a mutually supportive partnership that will increase education, share skills, as well the opportunity for NACM members and NYSHN staff to work collaboratively to deliver workshops and information in our communities. We will also be working to improve access to midwifery care amongst younger parents and other members in our networks - including people who are incarcerated, within the criminal justice or child welfare system, HIV positive, Two-Spirit, Trans, and Gender non-conforming families.

At NYSHN we *heart our parts* by creating media arts justice responses such as our [Indigenous feminist condom cases](#), that push back against mainstream representations that often demean our sexualities. We also continue to express all our different sexual and gender identities without apology. #WeAreMoreThanARainbow

At NACM we *heart our parts* because we believe they are so powerful in creating and sustaining life. In the words of Elder midwife Katsi Cook, women are the first environment. We feel it is essential to honour and respect ourselves in order to care for that first environment. Together, we cultivate the next generation/s of healthy and self-loving people.

The National Aboriginal Council of Midwives is a diverse group of midwives from all regions of Canada, representing First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. We recognize that the good health and well-being of Aboriginal mothers and their babies is crucial to the empowerment of Aboriginal families and communities. We advocate for the restoration of midwifery education, the provision of midwifery services, and choice of birthplace for all Aboriginal communities

consistent with the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As active members of the Canadian Association of Midwives, we represent the professional development and practice needs of Aboriginal midwives to the responsible health authorities in Canada and the global community. <http://www.aboriginalmidwives.ca/>

The Native Youth Sexual Health Network is an organization by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice throughout the United States and Canada. NYSHN works with Indigenous peoples to advocate for and build strong, comprehensive, and culturally safe sexual and reproductive health initiatives in their own communities. NYSHN are resisters of violence from the state, violence on the land, and violence on bodies. Restoration of knowledge, justice, and ways to be safer in communities is critical to our work. And yes, resistance is sexy! <http://nativeyouthsexualhealth.com/>