Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

Thursday January 29, 2009 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

YOUTH GATHERING TO BUILD STRENGTH, RESILIENCY IN NAN YOUTH

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose together with the NAN Decade Youth Council officially launched the Fourth Annual Seven Sacred Teachings Youth Gathering during opening ceremonies in Thunder Bay today.

"Raising the self-esteem of Nishnawbe Aski Nation youth is a key factor in strengthening the resiliency of our communities," said Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose. "For many years young people across Nishnawbe Aski have spoken about their desire to relearn our Cree, Oji-Cree and Ojibway beliefs and practices. Our young people are beginning to understand that pride in one's culture raises one's self-esteem."

NAN Elders, teachers and community leaders will hold a series of education and cultural workshops that will instruct/educate youth about the traditional strength-building teachings and ceremonies of the Cree, Oji-Cree and Ojibway peoples in NAN territory and how these teachings can increase their resilience and cultural pride.

"The Seven Sacred Teachings of Love, Courage, Wisdom, Truth, Respect, Honesty and Humility are very important to our people, and it is inspiring to see our youth taking that extra step to learn about our traditional ways," said NAN Decade Youth Council member Jason Smallboy. "We encourage these participants to take what they learn at this gathering and share it with their communities, and we hope that future generations will continue to embrace their culture and heritage."

The Fourth Annual Seven Sacred Teachings Youth Gathering (Jan. 28 – Feb. 1) is hosted by NAN Decade for Youth & Development in partnership with the NAN Decade Youth Council. About 150 NAN youth and community members are expected to attend.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities within James Bay Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 territory – an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario.

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