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Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

'Honor Our Elders: Let Them Enjoy the Night': a request to curb New Year's Eve gunfire

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 16, Tsothóhrha/December 2013) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) is strongly urging Kahnawa'kehró:non to stop the dangerous practice of welcoming in the New Year by firing off rounds of projectiles from firearms.

Those who use automatic weapons are especially being asked to stop doing so, in consideration to the children and elders.

Under the designation "Honor Our Elders: Let Them Enjoy the Night," a committee comprised of the Child Injury Prevention Program of Kateri Memorial Hospital Center's Community Health Unit, the Kahnawake Peacekeepers, and the MCK's Community Protection Unit (CPU) are hoping that a change in focus will help make positive changes.

"Many children and elders have expressed their fear and anxiety over this practice," said Claire Patton of the Child Injury Prevention Program. "While children usually have their parents or other family members to comfort them, our elders are often alone and without the support of others on New Year's Eve. That's the reason we placed added focus on the elders this time – haven't they earned the right to bring in the New Year without fear?"

"The community is being reminded of an incident in Kahnawà:ke a few years back in which a bullet went through the roof of a home and ended up near a baby's crib," said CPU Associate Director Arnold Lazare. "In the old days we used to bang pots and pans and light firecrackers but, somewhere down the line, things changed. We wonder whether the person whose bullet landed near the child's crib even gave it a second thought."

Kahnawa'kehró:non are being asked to make themselves and their family members and friends aware of the dangers of this practice and to refrain from engaging in it.

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