

Annual Report



Women's House

Serving Bruce & Grey

April 1 2010– March 31 2011



Cover Art : Rita Lloyd www.nurturingart.com

Mission

We will provide services, within supportive environments, to women 16 years of age and older, and their children, who have or are experiencing abuse, sexual violence and homelessness. We base our work from a feminist, anti-racist, anti-oppression framework that embraces diversity, inclusiveness and equity. Our commitment is to social change through education and advocacy in order to achieve social justice for all women.

Vision Statement

To achieve an atmosphere in society in which all are respected, safe and valued as individuals. In the interim, we need to provide a safe container which nurtures, heals and encourages growth to full potential.

Contact Information

Crisis Lines

(toll free) 1-800-265-3026

(local) 519-396-9655

(Sexual Assault Crisis Line)

1-866-578-5566

Business Lines

(Bruce County) 519-396-9814

(Grey County) 519-372-1113

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 760

Kincardine, ON

N2Z 2Z4

Principles

It is a basic human right to be free from abuse and sexual violence. Also it is a basic human right to have safety, dignity, respect, social and economic justice, self determination and to contribute to society in our own manner.

Abuse and sexual violence are societal problems, yet generally perceived as private matters. Community has an obligation to become involved in these issues.

Education is necessary to bring about effective changes in attitude. We believe in challenging statements and beliefs that minimize the seriousness of racism, oppression, abuse and sexual violence.

Children's lives are traumatized by exposure to abusive environments. Their witnessing and normalizing of violence perpetuates the cycle. Their needs are specific and distinct from the needs of their parents.

We believe in fostering, sustaining and affirming women's culture and diversity and that they are sources of enrichment and strength.

We value the reality of every individual's experience and acknowledge and respect their uniqueness and understand that Individuals may display a variety of behaviours as coping strategies. However, safety of the woman shall be the primary focus of any intervention and she shall receive sensitive, immediate and appropriate service.

We believe that poverty, hunger and homelessness are safety issues that keep women and children in abusive situations.

Women's House recognizes that all women face misogyny and sexism, however some bear an additional burden of oppression due to racism and other forms of oppression.

We believe that systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression based on race, religion, class, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, and ability must be addressed as part of an integrated approach to ending poverty, abuse, sexual violence, and homelessness in the lives of women.

Networking, partnerships and resource building with other community partners is essential in order to best serve the needs of women experiencing abuse and /or sexual violence.

A coordinated community approach to service delivery is essential in order to provide options and information about services and the impacts of abuse and sexual violence so that the victim/survivors can make informed choices.

We believe that the abuser is responsible for his/her behaviour and should be held accountable. Society must develop a policy of zero tolerance for abuse and sexual violence.

Women's House believes in being accountable to the victims and survivors who use our services.

In-House Safe Shelter

- A safe, secure and supportive environment to accommodate up to 13 women and children
- Trained counsellor on duty 24/7

24 hour Crisis Lines

- Toll free, local and sexual assault crisis lines answered 24/7 by trained counsellor

In-House Child & Youth Program

- Offers crisis support counselling, safety planning and programming for children and youth during their stay at the shelter
- Provides guidance to mothers

Child Witness Program

- Education for parents regarding the effects on children who witness abuse
- Individual and group counselling for children between the ages of 4 and 16

Outreach Counselling

- Individual outreach counselling available in Chesley, Durham, Hanover, Kincardine, Markdale, Meaford, Owen Sound, Port Elgin, Southampton, Walkerton and Warton

Group Counselling

- Groups provided throughout Bruce & Grey counties in areas of need such as: Self Esteem, Dealing with Anger, When your Relationship Ends, and Finding Your Own Voice

Sexual Assault Services

- Confidential support for women 16 years of age and over who have been sexually assaulted recently, in the past or in their current relationship

Transitional and Housing Support

- Workers assist women with developing a transition plan and act as an advocate on her behalf in seeking assistance in the areas of housing, education, job training, income support, legal aid, childcare, transportation, etc.

Community Development

- Educates the public on Women's House services through public speaking engagements and presentations

Volunteer Services

- Opportunities to volunteer throughout the whole organization

Second Stage Housing

- Units in Kincardine, Port Elgin and Warton offer safe and affordable housing for women and their children for up to one year after their stay at a shelter

Board of Directors 2010/2011	
Chair	Judy Gates
Vice-Chair	Tracy Primeau
Treasurer	Jenny Iserman
Secretary	Hilary Johnson
Director	Joan Black
Director	Dominique Jackson
Director	Glenna McClelland
Director	Pauline Witzke
Director	Nancy Wyonch
Director	Paul Holmes
Director	Liz Dillman

Women's House Statistics 2010/2011	
Women Served	761
Children Served	140
Safety Plans	671
Crisis & Support Calls	1429
Volunteer Hours	1175
# km Driven by Volunteers	10,786.2

Statistics on Domestic Violence

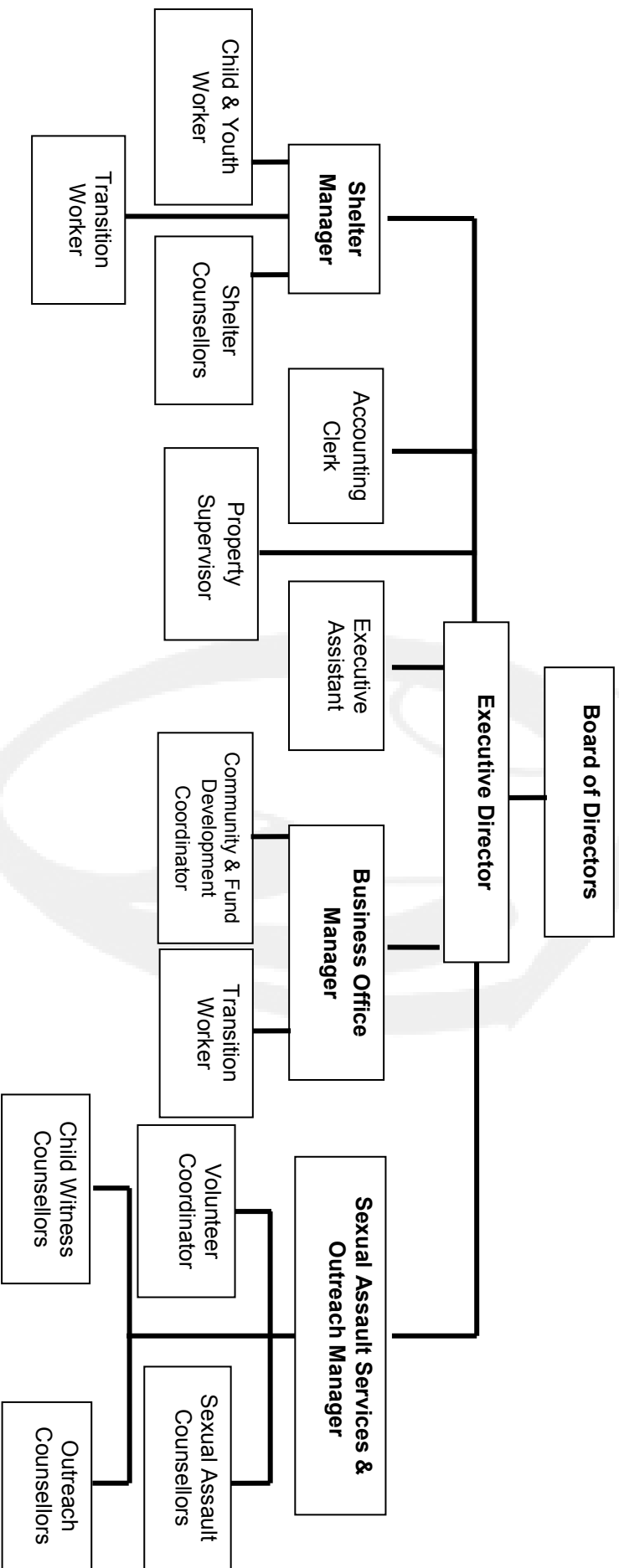
- **62%** of all women murdered in Canada are killed by their intimate partners¹
- Since the age of sixteen, **51%** of Canadian women report having experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence²
- **80%** of children living in violent homes witness that violence³

¹ War Against Women Report, Parliament of Canada

² Statistics Canada

³ Understanding Wife Assault, Deborah Sinclair

Organizational Chart



Donors 2010/2011

\$3,000 +

- Bruce Power
- Corporation of the County of Bruce
- United Way of Bruce Grey
- Ontario Power Generation
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Helen & Ron Cook
- Areva NP Canada Ltd.
- Power Workers' Union, Local 1000
- The Co-Operators, Jennifer Cook

\$1,000-\$2,999

- Energizer Canada
- Toronto Dominion Bank—Kincardine
- Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
- Meridian Credit Union—Kincardine
- Meridian Credit Union –Port Elgin
- Shoppers Drug Mart—Kincardine
- CAW Social Justice Fund
- ETFO—Ontario Bluewater Local
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Chippewa Golf & Country Club
- Herbal Magic
- Miller Insurance Brokers Ltd.
- Bruce Telecom
- Keith Battler
- Matchett Financial Services Inc.
- AMEC NCL
- RCM Technologies
- Greenfield Ethanol
- Hepworth Sauble Beach Pastoral Charge
- Canberra
- Peter Budd
- Robert Colwell
- Canadian Union of Skilled Workers
- E.S. Fox Ltd.
- Community Foundation Grey Bruce
- Crosby Dewar Inc.
- Port Elgin United Church Women
- Grace United Church
- H.Bye Construction

Media Sponsors

- Saugeentimes.com
- Kincardinetimes.com
- 98 the Beach
- MyFM
- Kincardine Independent
- Kincardine News
- Shoreline Beacon, Port Elgin
- Owen Sound Sun Times
- Hanover Post
- Lucknow Sentinel
- Walkerton Herald
- Bayshore Broadcasting
- CKNX Radio

Women's House is Gratefully Supported by:



United Way
Bruce Grey
 Change starts here.

Women's House Sponsorship Opportunities

Prestige Sponsorship (\$3,000+)

- Larger company logo on all promotional material, programs and in all media related to sponsored event
- Larger company logo on PowerPoint Presentation played during event
- Recognition in our bi-annual newsletter as **Prestige** sponsor of event
- Advertising Receipt
- Reserved table for 8 at sponsored event with name card
- Recognition at Annual General Meeting
- "Feature Sponsor" article in our bi-annual newsletter

Corporate Sponsorship (Gala -\$1,200-\$2,999)

(International Women's Day - \$1,000-\$2,999)

- Company logo on all promotional material, programs and in all media related to sponsored event
- Company logo on PowerPoint Presentation played during event
- Recognition in our bi-annual newsletter as **Corporate** sponsor of event
- Advertising receipt
- Reserved table for 8 at sponsored event
- Recognition at Annual General Meeting

Women's House Event Sponsors 2010/2011

Gala

Prestige Sponsors

- Bruce Power
- The Co-Operators, Jennifer Cook

Corporate Sponsors

- AMEC NCL
- Bruce Telecom
- Matchett Financial Services
- RCM Technologies
- Power Workers' Union
- Miller Insurance Inc.
- Greenfield Ethanol
- Meridian Credit Union
- Keith & Linda Battler
- Ontario Power Generation
- Herbal Magic

International Women's Day

Prestige Sponsors

- Bruce Power
- MyFM

Corporate Sponsors

- Power Workers' Union
- Meridian Credit Union
- Ontario Power Generation
- H. Bye Construction



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Chair of Board of Directors—Judy Gates

I would like to start by thanking the Board of Directors for their ongoing support and many hours of work and dedication to Women's House *Serving Bruce & Grey*. The Board has risen to the challenges presented to us in the past year and has continued to ensure that Women's House offers the highest quality of service to women and their children who have suffered abuse. Thank you to Liz, Pauline, Nancy, Hilary, Glenna, Joan, Jenny, Dominique, Tracy and Paul who bring an amazing skill set to the board table. It has been an honour working with you all and I will miss your friendship and support. Suffice it to say, I have learned a lot these past two years.

Special thanks go to Casey Weichert, Executive Director and her Management Team, Bernice Connell our Sexual Assault Manager, Lisa Owen, our Business Office Manager and Lana Sanderson-Neeb, our Shelter Manager as well as their hard working support staff. These women give above and beyond what is expected of them to meet the needs of our clients, raise funds, manage staff and volunteers and pay the bills.

Since I assumed the role of Chair in June 2009, as might be expected with such a growing, dynamic organization, there have been many challenges, making our successes even more rewarding.

The biggest accomplishment during my time with Women's House has been the Second Stage Housing projects in Port Elgin, Warton and Kincardine. Thanks to our generous donors, these facilities are now mortgage free. Second Stage Housing is critical to the healing and recovery of the women we serve. After leaving the shelter, many women benefit from the continued support provided in their new home in one of the Second Stage apartments. These services give our clients an extra year to safely transition to independent living. Women's House staff worked tirelessly to make this major project happen. While working on our three new builds, we were also able to make upgrades to both of our "older" buildings, the shelter in Kincardine and the outreach building in Owen Sound.

The Policy Committee has taken on the daunting task of rewriting, updating and streamlining the policy and procedures documents. This has turned into a massive, ongoing job and I thank the committee for their diligence. A job well done! We are receiving very positive feedback from our stakeholders.

I look forward to more down time now but leave with the satisfaction that I have done the best I could and have contributed to a worthy cause. I will continue to support Women's House in whatever way I can in the future but am very sure that the incoming board will continue to rise to the challenges ahead and surpass all our goals.

Executive Director Report—Casey Weichert

Here we are again, another year later with many successes to share. It's been an extremely busy year in all areas of the agency including client programming, the completion of our newest Second Stage housing program, many facility upgrades, enhancements in administration and continued collaboration among partners.

Women's House has grown over the years to meet the demands of the women and children we serve. We are no longer just a shelter to provide emergency refuge for women and their children fleeing abuse. We are now a well-known and respected agency, providing a comprehensive system of professional supports that are an integral part of our community's range of services for victims of domestic abuse. We have again seen an increased demand for services in all client programs offered. We have not only met our funder's service provision requirements, but have exceeded them in almost all areas. In order to meet these enhanced needs, additional support groups have been offered to provide services to more women and children than is possible with individual counseling alone.

This year, the last of the construction of three Second Stage apartment buildings was completed! We started this project over 6 years ago to meet the increasing demand for affordable and safe housing for women and their children after they left the shelter. There was no funding available for operating new Second Stage housing developments, however that didn't stop us from forging ahead as the need was clearly evident. With some initial fundraising we were successful in gaining the largest corporate support from Bruce Power. This in turn spurred confidence from other donors such as OPG, Power Workers' Union, countless individuals and groups, the County of Bruce, and lastly the Ministry of Community & Social Services who provided the shortfall in funding through a capital grant. This allowed us to be completely mortgage free when we opened the buildings for residency. The Port Elgin building opened in our last fiscal year, the Wiarion building opened in December, and the Kincardine building in January with all 11 units being fully occupied. Our recent focus has been on further developing the program aspects of delivering services to the women and children residing in the apartments.

As the agency has grown so rapidly over the past few years, areas of the business office needed some catch up. A capacity building proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Community & Social Services and funding received to complete a policy review and rewrite. Six different policy and procedure manuals were written into one manual that is more functional. Hundreds of hours went in to this lofty project by members of the board and management.

Also fully revamped is our health & safety program with a focus on enhancing staff safety within the workplace. We have set our standards to meet or exceed the requirements of a Workplace Safety Insurance Audit.

Although our agency was deemed a low risk by both our main funders, the Ministry of Community & Social Services and the Ministry of the Attorney General, our Risk Management Committee continues to meet and assess all areas of our work to ensure any possible risks are identified and plans put in place to mitigate the possible risks.

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Executive Director, continued...

Collaboration with partner agencies is critical to ending violence against women. Working collaboratively with other providers who interact with victims i.e. police, children's aid etc. is necessary to ensure best practices are shared as well as networking to improve service delivery for abused women. The newest collaboration is a pilot project funded by Trillium Foundation. The Woman Abuse Screening Project will develop a common screening tool for use in Mental Health and Addiction services to identify current or past violence, which is often the root cause of these issues presenting. We've seen an increase in our sector of women presenting with these concurrent issues the past few years. We are gaining more understanding of the link between violence against women, mental health issues and addictions.

Mental health disorders are substantially more prevalent among women who have experienced abuse than among the general population. Depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Anxiety are the most prevalent mental health effects experienced by women who have been victim to intimate male partner violence. Fifty percent of women in shelters as a result of woman abuse experience major depression (Cory, Godard, Abi-Jaoude, & Wallace, 2010). An estimated 64-94% of female victims of woman abuse develop trauma-related PTSD, representing almost 3 times the rate of non-abused women who develop trauma related PTSD (Campbell, 2002; Lilly & Graham-Bermann, 009; Pico-Alfonso, 2005; Scott-Tilly, Tilton & Sandel, 2010; Watson et al., 1997).

Also, women who seek treatment for domestic violence, which almost always includes sexual assault and rape, have higher rates of substance abuse problems compared to the general population (Cunradi, 2009; Martin, Moracco, Chang, Council, & Dulli, 2008). Alcohol dependency is 15 times more prevalent among women who are impacted by abuse than among the general public (Cory et al., 2010). Some studies have estimated that 2/3 of women who receive treatment for substance abuse experienced domestic violence in the year prior to seeking treatment (Lipsky et al., 2010).

With the addition of the Sexual Assault Program a few years ago, more focus on trauma response has been required. To help staff work with the more complex needs of the women and children we are servicing, enhanced training in trauma response has been provided over the past three years. This is an area we hope to continue skill building, and networking with these sectors in order to provide an integrated and comprehensive service delivery approach that is focused on meeting the needs of women with histories of woman abuse and concurrent disorders.

The staff of Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey is the most valuable asset of this organization – All staff work hard to meet the ever increasing needs of the clients and agency. As I reflect on this past year and the challenges that have presented, I am so proud of the staff, board and other volunteers, who with a positive team approach, have worked tirelessly to continue providing and even enhancing the services of Women's House. My deepest gratitude goes to these women and men who make WH such a wonderful resource that is vital for our community. Together, we can and do make a difference in the lives of the vulnerable population we serve.

Treasurer Report—Jenny Iserman

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer of the Board to oversee the management and reporting of Women's House finances. The Finance Committee meets regularly to review Women's House revenues and expenditures and to ensure that the Board is properly informed about the finances of the organization. We also review and update financial policies and procedures, liaise with our external auditor and provide oversight and advice to the Executive Director and Business Office staff.

This year has brought a measure of stability from the Treasurer's perspective. A major capital grant of over \$1M from the Ministry of Community and Social Services will mean that our Second Stage projects will be debt free. We are grateful to the Ministry for supporting this ambitious project from inception to conclusion. Further, thanks are due to the Ministry for funding extensive repairs, maintenance and upgrades to the Shelter and Owen Sound site.

Women's House operations now exceed \$1.5M annually. Approximately 10% of this budget depends on fundraised dollars which are used to supplement direct services to women and children where our Ministry funding falls short. We are so grateful that our many donors support us in this way.

Policy Committee Report—Committee Chair, Hilary Johnson

This has been a challenging year for the Board and Policy Committee. With the issuing of the MCSS guidelines for producing a comprehensive suite of Policy documents, the Board, Policy Committee and staff have been working to ensure that the Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey Policy Document aligns to the new guidelines.

Casey and her team need to be commended for the efforts they have expended in support of this significant activity. Each Board Member has contributed to the review of the suite of policy documents and a final document was produced in March. This Policy document is a living document and will be amended and submitted to the Board for approval on a regular basis as required.

Business Office Report—Lisa Owen, Business Office Manager

Lisa Owen joined the team at Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey as Business Office Manager in November of 2011. Continuous improvement of processes are a key function of this position so Lisa began working diligently on a number of important projects involving the Second Stage Program, human resources, health and safety, administration, and program delivery.

The Second Stage Programs in Wiaraton and Kincardine opened their doors to accepting women and children during this time, and effort was put into enhancing program development activities, including the creation of a thorough case management tool, orientation package for new residents, and the implementation of both individual and group work.

Personnel files were reviewed and organized, and a process for auditing them was developed. There was participation in labor management activities, and responsibility for support and supervision of the Community and Fund Development Coordinator and one of the Transition Workers fell under the position.

A good majority of time and effort was spent on the development of a more comprehensive health and safety program. Lisa became a certified member of the committee, and time was devoted to educating staff as to their roles and responsibilities under the newly revamped health and safety program. The new staff orientation was also enhanced to include required health and safety components.

Another major project involved a review of all applicable legislation and cross-referencing it with existing policy and procedures. This led to the development of a new policy and procedures manual, which is still in the process of review by a policy committee, including members of management and the Board of Directors. The Board has approved the new Policy Document with the expectation that regular reviews and updates will occur. Women's House website was reviewed for required updates, and the intent is to completely re-vamp in this next fiscal year.

Progress was also made on the risk management committee, with regards to risk assessment and prioritization of tasks to be completed.

Next year is sure to be filled with activities that will lead to continuous quality improvement. These will involve further Second Stage Program development, and the implementation of new policies and procedures agency-wide, including those that address personnel and health and safety issues, and all of the staff training that will be required to along with the implementation. Next year will also include the implementation of stream-lined human resource practices, and a new training program, not only for new hires, but also for existing staff. It is also anticipated that there will be continued participation in existing and new fundraising activities.

Shelter Report—Lana Sanderson-Neeb, Shelter Manager

The shelter at Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey has had another busy year. Based upon statistics, it continues to be an integral function for the local community, providing safe, secure, education and support to women and children who have experienced abuse. It was a year of success, but also came with significant challenges; both are summarized below.

One of the biggest challenges of the year dealt with continuity as the shelter was without a dedicated Shelter Manager for the first five months. It was a significant challenge for the staff during this period; however the existing shelter staff admirably completed the responsibilities of the vacant manager. I am happy to report that the transition period as the new Shelter Manager was very smooth, and I was received with warmth and support.

While not a consistent problem, capacity issues continue to be a challenge with the shelter running at, or over, capacity for the majority of the year. The physical structure of the shelter also posed challenges this year. An aging phone system had technical difficulties that made it difficult and frustrating to reach the shelter affecting both crisis calls and donations during a critical time. Ultimately, the situation was rectified with the installation of a new upgraded system. A leaky roof also required replacement, but not until after causing damage inside; again renovations were quickly completed, although not without cause or disruption on the Shelter routine. A consistent theme throughout the region was bedbugs and Women's House was not immune to it either. Proactive and diligent behaviours of the Shelter staff ensured that Women's House remained bedbug free; however the potential could have been significant. New policies and procedures were implemented as a result to mitigate or reduce the impact of any infestation.

The Shelter also focused on Team Building, in order to build on a positive and trusting work environment. These events also provided an opportunity for staff and management to understand the challenges and issues of the other. Team Building is now a regular agenda item for Staff Meetings.

The Shelter staff also coordinated another successful Christmas program, providing the women and children of the Shelter and those in our Second Stage units with gifts and food during a season that can be difficult for many.

Generally, the Shelter has undergone significant challenges and changes throughout the year that are considered a normal part of doing business. Each of these challenges was met with a competent and motivated staff, lending positive results. We continue to provide necessary support to the women and children of the area; unfortunately the statistics show a continued need for our services in the community.

Transition Program Report— **Krista Wilken & Lori Taylor, Transition Workers**

The Transition Program provided assistance to 147 women in the shelter and from the community during the 2010/2011 year. Of those women, Women's House has been able to work with several as long-term clients through the Second Stage Program.

The growing Second Stage Program has slowly become more and more of the focus of the Transition staff, in response to the opening of the Kincardine and Warton locations, and the needs of the women participating in the program. Assisting women with transition and safety planning through building support networks and advocacy work has continued to be a priority within the transition department. The services continue to be available to both women in the shelter, as well as women living in the community, who have experienced violence in the lives.

Shelter back-up is provided for front line counselors and has been the task of those working in the Transition Department. Transition workers have provided assistance with answering the telephones and doors for the front line counselors, and also with addressing immediate needs of shelter residents. In light of changes to the Transition Program with the growth of second Stage Housing, this back up has been increasingly difficult to provide.

This year, we will be implementing a new software program that will reduce the time needed for documentation and automatically gather ministry required statistics. More counseling groups and workshops in the shelter also reduces the amount of individual service time required by each woman and child. Another key modification already made is the change to the telephone business line set-up. This has decreased the frequency of business related calls that Transition Workers are required to respond to.

During this fiscal year, Transition staff worked with women through structured Self-Esteem groups, co-facilitated with the Outreach Counseling Department. Transition also facilitated the less-formal Women to Women support group and in house workshops on various personal development topics, (i.e. self esteem, self-advocacy, etc). Group work has received very positive feedback. In response we will be continuing to facilitate several workshops with residents in the shelter.

Transition staff has also been involved as often as possible in the inter-agency meetings. This has provided an outlet for networking and community education.

In-kind donations were the responsibility of the Transition Department again this past year. With the increased concern about the prevention of bedbugs in the shelter, the handling of donations has also become an area of work which is changing. The Transition Department is working hard to maintain positive community relations, but have become more cautious when accepting drop off donations into the shelter.

Student supervision has, once again been a part of this department's task list. The Transition Program supervised both a summer student, and a college student throughout this past fiscal year. Both students assisted with direct and indirect client needs including things like program development, group preparation/facilitation, administration support, one on one communication with clients, etc. It was very rewarding to be a part of increasing student awareness and knowledge around Violence against Women issues and in observing these students improving their skills and achieving their goals and objectives within the field.

Sexual Assault & Outreach Services—

Bernice Connell, Manager

“I am not alone, there is strength in numbers. I will remember I am someone. I changed my ideas about my life and destiny. I will remember the strong women I met here.”

These words were written by women who participated in various support groups facilitated by WHSBG staff this past year.

There are three direct service counseling programs included in Outreach Services; the Child Witness Program, Community Counseling and Sexual Assault Services. All programs are usually working to capacity with the occasional waiting list required. On behalf of WHSBG I extend heartfelt thanks to the women who work with such commitment to help other women who’ve experienced violence in their lives. It is my pleasure to provide some of the highlights from each program in 2010/11.

CHILD WITNESS PROGRAM

Nine children’s groups were facilitated this year with teens comprising the majority of participants. Counselors have established excellent working relationships with several area high schools and often work in collaboration with education staff. Another overnight girls’ retreat was held as well as the Healthy Choices Girls’ Conference in Port Elgin featuring self defense, yoga and healthy relationships. Comments from several young girls who attended the retreat allude to the impact of the event:

“I like how no one judges, and we all get along. It helped me express my feelings in a better way, also made me realize a lot of people understand you.”

To ensure effectiveness when working with young children (under 12), mothers must be active in the service provided to their children. To this end, one group was structured to have only mothers attend the first three sessions with their children joining them for the remaining sessions. In the coming year we will run a concurrent group with Child Witness Counselors meeting with children and Outreach Counselors meeting with their mothers.

Child Witness Counselors have provided more advocacy for children this year especially with the Office of the Children’s Lawyer and the Children’s Aid Society. Staff are involved with one primary school’s parent/teacher group and will participate on an advisory committee to the Supervised Access Program.

COMMUNITY COUNSELING

The Community Counselors continue to be innovative and adaptable in meeting the varied needs of women in rural Bruce & Grey Counties.

A recent Self Esteem group included 13 participants who provided extremely positive feedback upon conclusion.

The number of referrals from the legal system for women to receive anger management counseling continues to rise. These women are often in conflict with the law due to their self defense in abusive situations and have been mandated by the system to receive anger management. Over the past couple of years WHSBG have provided 7 groups with an average of 6 participants per session.

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Sexual Assault & Outreach Services— Continued

Bernice Connell, Manager

This year, counselors developed an ‘Understanding Anger’ group program which includes an important social context to women’s anger. The information and content covered in the group sessions are in line with the WHSBG understanding of causes of violence against women. VAW/CAS Ministry consultation in Toronto

SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

Sexual Assault Counselors have seen an increase in the number of accompaniments to court and police investigations. There were also several convictions with appropriate sentences given to sexual assault perpetrators over the year. Counselors continue to respond to women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, harassment, sexual assault and other forms of sexual exploitation.

Counselors received excellent trauma recovery training through several sessions facilitated by staff of the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre.

After extensive consultation with survivors of sexual violence and advocates, including the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, the provincial government presented its Sexual Violence Action Plan, Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives this past March. The Plan outlines initiatives to be undertaken over the coming four years in the areas of public education, prevention, improving services and collaboration. We look forward to participating fully in this work including strengthening the criminal justice system’s response to sexual violence. Fewer than ten percent of sexual assault victims report to the police (Sexual Assault in Canada 2004 and 2007. Statistics Canada) so there is much work to do.

Women’s House formalized our working agreement with Carrefour des Femmes to ensure appropriate provision of service to Francophone and French speaking women who have been sexually assaulted/abused.

COMMUNITY

WHSBG continues to have representation on various community groups and participated in many community initiatives over the year.

Grey Bruce Violence Prevention Coordinating Committee
Child Abuse Review Team
Domestic Abuse Review Team
Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres
CAS/VAW working group
December 6th Committee

Events & Training:

ON Accessibility Training
Health & Safety Training
Lateral Violence
Support to H.E.R. Grey Bruce (Hope Equality Respect)
VAW/CAS Ministry consultation in Toronto

Child & Youth Program— **Cayley MacDonald, Child & Youth Worker**

During the past year there was a slight increase in the number of children admitted to the shelter. The Shelter Child and Youth Worker provided one-on-one counseling and facilitated children's groups while the children were residents in the shelter. One of the most important topics discussed with children, both in counseling and in groups, was the topic of safety.

A Statistics Canada report on Children Witnessing violence can be found on the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics website <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/85-002-x2001006-eng.pdf> .

This website showed:

- Children heard or saw one parent assaulting the other in an estimated 461,000 households, which represents 37% of all households with spousal violence
- In cases where children witnessed spousal violence, they were more likely to witness assaults against their mothers (70%) than against their fathers (30%), and assaults involving mothers tended to be more serious. Over half of the female victims in these cases feared for their lives.
- During a one-year period, an estimated 57,200 women together with 39,200 children were admitted to 448 shelters across Canada, the majority fleeing violence at home. Three-quarters of these children were under 10 years of age.

These numbers are reflected at Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey and the majority of the children that come to the shelter have witnessed some form of violence between their mother and her partner. Safety planning teaches children not only to be safe in their community, but also how to protect themselves in their home. It also allows children to explore which adults in their life they can trust and go to for help.

In addition to providing counseling and support to the children, the Child and Youth Worker also worked with the mothers to connect them with positive parenting resources and support in the community. Many young mothers this year began to attend the Ontario Early Years Centre in the community to expand their knowledge about various Childhood Development topics and have support from other mothers in the community. The Shelter Child and Youth Worker also provided these mothers with a lot of advocacy support. Many times this included supporting the women while working with the Children's Aid Society, sitting in on meetings, and providing the mothers the opportunity to debrief and review information shared in the meetings.

Volunteer Program—

Candace Burton, Volunteer Coordinator

This was a year full of big changes for the whole organization, which impacted our volunteer program. With the opening of our Second Stage buildings in Kincardine, Port Elgin and Wiarton, we discovered the need for volunteers who were willing to take on maintenance and yard work positions in those new locations.

We had a total of 87 volunteers who generously gave a total of 1,175 hours. Thirty new volunteers were trained, including five maintenance volunteers who worked together as a team to ensure all of our buildings were taken care of. Ten volunteers resigned during this period, due to moves, health/family concerns, and new work opportunities. Sadly, one of our greatest volunteer losses this year was the passing of Barry Fuller. Barry was our shelter maintenance support person and a long time, outstanding volunteer who had become indispensable. He was affectionately referred to as “The Man of the House” by staff. A tree and bench at the shelter have been dedicated to his memory.

Women’s House Serving Bruce & Grey gratefully acknowledges the enormous contribution of our volunteers. We thank all our volunteers for all the important roles they take on as drivers, shelter support, admin support, board members, maintenance, special event support, and the list goes on. Our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon is but a token of thanks to the many caring women and men who give of themselves so willingly, to enhance the lives of the women and children we serve.

A Tribute to Barry Fuller

Volunteers gathered to honour the late Barry Fuller through a tree dedication and bench naming ceremony on Volunteer Appreciation Day 2011.



Community & Fund Development Program— **Shannon Drainville, Coordinator**

There is never a dull moment in the fundraising department of Women's House, and the 2010/2011 year was no different. With our funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services remaining the same, we were challenged to fundraise \$144,000 this past fiscal year. Like true survivors, we faced this challenge head on and met this goal through our hard work and dedication.

Our first event of the year was a charity golf tournament, a new venture for Women's House. This tournament was co-hosted by Chippewa Golf & Country Club, Nikamoz Serenity Spa, and 98 the Beach. Although this tournament was not as financially successful as anticipated, the tournament did provide extremely positive feedback from all participants. These golfers were impressed with the event, and look forward to participating again next year.

The next event for Women's House was the Red Carpet Celebrity Gala. With the gala being the most anticipated and successful event each year, the response was once again positive. We were able to raise over \$22,000 at this event, thanks to our sponsors and supporters. The celebrity theme was well received and attendees were entertained by a Tina Turner impersonator and had the chance to win a trip to Las Vegas!

After the Gala, we focused on our Christmas ad mail campaign. Newsletters were sent out to our mailing list as well as both Southampton and Paisley residents (our blanketed communities for the 2010 year). The community proved to be extremely generous once again and we raised over \$6,000 during this campaign alone.

Our final event for the year was the International Women's Day celebration. This past year marked the 100th anniversary for International Women's Day. In order to celebrate this anniversary, Women's House created and performed a "Women of the Century" skit that depicted women throughout each decade of the past century. Also entertaining attendees were Allyson Smith and Laurie Elliott from Yuk Yuk's Comedy tour. Another highlight of the evening was the handing out of the Woman of Distinction award to Lorraine Boucher of Port Elgin for her outstanding community involvement in both Bruce & Grey counties. We are proud to report that we had 230 attendees and were able to raise \$10,000 at this event.

Along with all of the events, we also had the pleasure of attending numerous events hosted by generous groups and organizations with proceeds going directly to Women's House. Some of these events included: Jazz Night at the Port Elgin Missionary Church, a jewellery party hosted by Jennifer Cook of the Co-Operators, and the annual Areva Charity Bonspiel. We are very thankful to all of the groups and organizations that help us raise money for the women and children who knock on our door each week.

One of our major sources of funds comes from the United Way of Bruce Grey. This organization has been an instrumental partner to Women's House through their own fundraising events and initiatives. United Way continues to keep us updated with new resources in both Bruce and Grey Counties.

In the Community Development department, presentations were made to many service clubs, churches and groups in hopes of educating the public on domestic violence and Women's House programs and services. Several positive community relationships were created as a result of these presentations.

Although this department does not work directly with the women and children we assist, we still never lose sight of our ultimate goal of our organization: to work towards the awareness and elimination of violence against women. We will continue to work hard to ensure the women and children in need in our community obtain the funds for the programs and services necessary to flee violent situations.

Community & Fund Development 2010/2011



"Tina Turner" impersonator at Gala 2010



Cheque Presentation from the Jazz Night at Port Elgin Missionary Church



Annika VanVeen—10 year old who fundraised for WH



"Women of the Century" performed at International Women's Day 2011



Cheque Presentation from Jennifer Cook of The Co-Operators



Areva Bonspiel 2011



Cheque Presentation from OPG

THANK YOU to all of our donors and supporters

Property Maintenance—
Nicole D’atri, Property Supervisor

This past year has been a very busy, but exciting year. All three Second Stage buildings are now complete, with the exception of further landscaping needed in all locations.

We have had extensive work done at both the shelter and the Owen Sound Outreach office. At the shelter, we have completely changed the look of the client backyard as we have put in a concrete patio with a pergola for shelter and replaced the backyard fence. We also have a concrete sidewalk from the fire escape to the hospital sidewalk as well as a sidewalk from the administration basement door. Also, we have a completely wheelchair accessible washroom in the Shelter, and a brand new energy efficient heating and cooling system complete with replacement thermal windows for every room in the shelter. The drainage issue outside the outreach building has been resolved and the rotting sill plates were replaced which included needing a new roof and new flooring. For such an old building, we are as up to date as funding allows.

The Owen Sound Outreach office opened up the stairwell in the storefront complete with new carpet and paint. The historical part of the building has been preserved and the rest of the building updated with new stucco. The Owen Sound office had some windows replaced to thermal windows and received a new high efficiency furnace. It was truly a busy, but extremely productive, year. Thanks to the many contractors and volunteers who have put in numerous hours to help us out. Also, thank you to the Ministry of Community & Social Services who funded most of the infrastructure work.

Second Stage—Wiarton



Owen Sound Outreach Office Restoration



Second Stage—Kincardine

