



Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey Newsletter, Fall 2008

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November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month!

Sisterhood of the Travelling Shoes

November is woman abuse prevention month! To honour the hundreds of women in Ontario who have been murdered by their intimate partner and to bring further awareness about the issue of woman abuse, an exhibit has been displayed throughout Bruce & Grey counties. Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey, in sisterhood with The Women's Center, are raising awareness about the serious issue of woman abuse throughout November with a campaign called "Sisterhood of the Travelling Shoes".

The exhibit consists of a labyrinth style display of women's shoes to depict and honour the loss of each woman in Ontario who has been murdered at the

hands of her intimate partner. In 1995 The Ontario Association of Interval & Transition houses began keeping the annual list of all these murdered women. Each year the list grows with several new names of Ontario women, and often their children who are caught in the crossfire of an abusive relationship. Each woman and child has a pair of shoes with a brief description of how their life ended. On completion of the exhibit, the shoes will be donated to those in need.

The exhibit has been rotating weekly throughout locations in Bruce & Grey counties. This is a rare opportunity to honour the many Ontario women and for some of their children, who have been murdered in an abusive relationship. At first we mourn, and then we work for change.

Exhibit sites: Southampton, Kincardine, Meaford, and Owen Sound. For details call: 519-396-9814, ext. 25



Reynold Jarama, 29, Toronto, was attacked by her husband of less than a year and left to die. He then hid, crawling his car into a wall where he died. The Reynold Jarama Memorial Foundation was established to fund advocacy and fundraising each year for women experiencing abuse. (September 2002)

How Many "Hats" do our Volunteers Wear?

- We now have a beautiful new garden thanks to the hard work and dirty hands of Volunteers who helped to create this welcoming green space for everyone to enjoy.
- Thanks to volunteers we were able to collect and display over 280 pairs of shoes for The Sisterhood of the Travelling Shoes memorial display. This display has touched everyone who has seen it.
- Our Shelter is looking and smelling cleaner than ever with the help of volunteers, who helped us clean inside and out.
- Whether they are driving women to appointments, support groups or making a run to the local dump, our drivers are making big difference in the lives of the women we serve everyday.
- Our Gala was a big success this year and could not have taken place without countless hours of volunteer's time to make it a magical evening for all. Merci!
- Our administrative support volunteers work hard for us everyday by sitting on the board and being on committees, shredding paper, and helping with fundraising, we appreciate every gift that our volunteers give to us so selflessly.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to each and every one of you!

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November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month

November marks Woman Abuse Prevention Month, an opportunity to increase public awareness about the realities of abuse against women and children in communities throughout Grey and Bruce.

On average, two women in Ontario are killed every month by their partners. Nearly a thousand incidents of spousal violence are reported to the Ontario police each month (Stats Can). We need to work together to end this violence and learn lessons from these tragedies.

Just recently The Domestic Violence Review Committee released its fifth annual report, which reviews domestic homicides in Ontario, looks at common themes and makes recommendations on what can be done. In 2007 the review found that there were many cases in which family members, friends, or acquaintances were aware of the abuse occurring in the relationship. Also, many victims were involved in the justice system and other social services, and their story was heard by many professionals. As The Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women and Children notes, most of these deaths appeared predictable and preventable.

How can we prevent further violence in Grey and Bruce? There are many opportunities to increase public awareness, learn to recognize abuse and how to help, and understand the services available for women fleeing abuse.

There are ways to help women and children who you think may be in an abusive situation. Learn about the warning signs of abuse so you can help, and treat woman abuse as everyone's business.

Neighbours, Friends and Families

This campaign is active throughout Grey and Bruce. It provides information for those close to an abused woman or abusive man on safe ways to intervene. To learn more, visit:

<http://neighboursfriendsandfamilies.ca>

During the months of November and December, there are many public awareness campaigns, including:

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign

This is an international campaign linking 16 Day period between November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and December 10, International Human Rights Day.

www.cwgl.rutgers.edu

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women – December 6, 2008

Established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada, this day marks the anniversary of the murders in 1989 of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. They died because they were women. This is a day to remember all women who have died as a result of violence.

www.swc-cgc.gc.ca

The White Ribbon Campaign

Each year, men and boys in Canada are urged to wear a white ribbon starting on November 25 until December 6, to show their support.

www.whiteribbon.ca

Equality Rules Campaign

The goal of the campaign is to educate children and youth ages 8-14 and the adults who influence them about the importance of healthy, equal relationships. The website has comprehensive package of Curriculum Services Canada approved resources for elementary school teachers.

www.equalityrules.ca

Coming Events

- **November – Woman Abuse Prevention Month**
- **December 6 – National Day of Action and Remembrance of Violence Against Women**
On December 6, 1989, 14 young women were killed by a lone gunman at an engineering school in Montreal. The events of that day focused national attention on violence against women.
Candle lighting ceremony and vigil at Owen Sound Farmer's Market, 114 8th Street East (near City Hall), 10 AM to 11 AM
- **December 10 – Human Rights Day**
Celebrating the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed in 1948.
An opportunity to reinforce Canada's commitment to women's rights as human rights.
Window display's at store front locations in downtown Kincardine and Owen Sound
- **March 8 – International Women's Day**
A Celebration of the Women of Bruce & Grey Counties.
For tickets to this special event please contact Beverly Spence at 396-9814 Ext 25
Early reservations recommended
- **April 27 to May 3 – National Volunteer Week,**
pays special tribute to Canadian volunteers across the country who give of themselves to better their communities and the lives of others.

Front Line Challenges at The Shelter

Working at Women's House in the Shelter is very challenging work. It involves operation of the shelter as a safe place for women and their children with counselling and Transition services to assist in changes needed for an abuse free life. Staff are on site 24/7 so that the needs of residents can be met and security assured. Women don't need to commit to leaving their partners in order to access services because the role of staff is not to advise women what they should do but to offer them information and options about what they *might* do. At the same time, the Counsellor on Duty (COD) is responsible for two crisis lines devoted to family violence and a separate line dedicated to sexual assault callers. Safety is the priority of the team, safety for clients as well as staff; only when a woman's safety has been assured can she focus her attention on other priorities.

Three Shelter Team members were interviewed to discuss the work of the Shelter Team.

Q. What are the challenges to the work you do at Women's House?

A. Finding resources for clients such as housing and legal support. There is such a lack of understanding about the effects of violence on women and kids, even by other agencies that we interact with daily.

Q. How has working here changed your views or values?

A. There are so many ways that abuse is practised on women! The power and control wheel is an exceptional tool to help women understand and name the behaviours of an abusive person. Personally, I now have better communication tools in my personal relationships and tend to use words better, now that I understand the power words can have.

Q. How do you feel about the client work?

A. There are some extremely rewarding moments when we see women making healthy changes and good choices. I enjoy working with women to set goals and seeing them achieve things they never imagined they could. Each woman has a unique story and in many ways I have learned from each woman. It is satisfying to witness a woman regaining trust in herself. Often when a woman admits to the shelter or perhaps

begins calling the shelter for support, her self esteem is quite low yet most have managed to hold on to a sense of hope.

Q. Best part of working here?

A. It's very powerful to witness a woman and perhaps her children leave the shelter rejuvenated and more educated, aware and empowered to make positive changes. It's the best part of the job, seeing a woman take back or gain control over her life. It's also satisfying to observe women achieving results together in group work, sharing and embracing one another for support.

Q. Does the crisis line work present any special challenges?

A. At times. But there is great reward when a client says "thank you" or "thanks for listening, I just needed to let go a little."

Clients' Comments

Q: Tell me what you have learned as a result of your stay at WH?

A: Because I have experienced other homes & shelters in Ontario, I know that this one is the most supportive and probably unique. The [staff] were sincere with answers and importantly took time alone with me to help me open up to others.

Q. How has your time with WH affected you personally?

A. The healing has started.

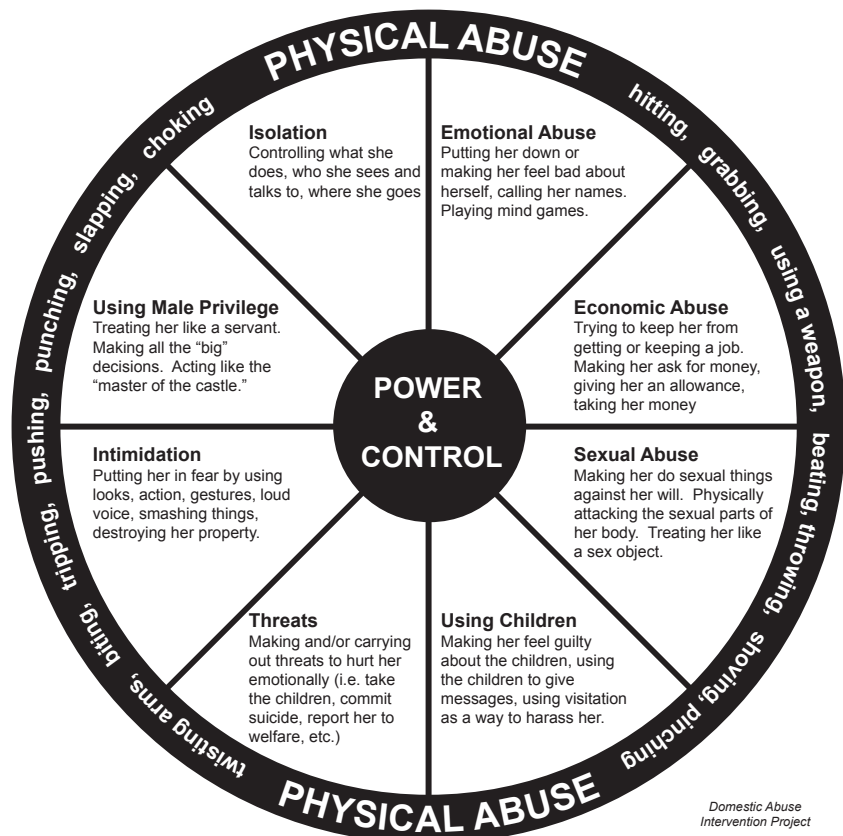
Q. Best part of staying at WH?

A. Feeling safe. And knowing I won't be judged, even for my set-backs.

Q. What do you want to tell us on departure?

A. There is no where else where you can find this compassion, caring and empathy. Your world stops with abuse; it's hard to get up again. My stay at the Shelter was a break but staff helped me to get things done.

The Power Wheel



Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
Duluth, Minnesota

We can ALL help end domestic violence -- Ask. Listen. Learn.

Annual Fall Gala – “An Evening in Paris” – Very Successful



Corinne Robertson-Brown and Bill Brown, in charge of selling chocolates for the Diamond Draw

On October 25, 2008 Governor's Inn Best Western was the venue of a very important fundraiser. Many generous corporate sponsors, businesses, organizations and individuals came together to dine, dance and bid on the items donated. \$17,000 was raised toward our goal of \$141,000 for this year. Grand Prize was a one week trip to Paris, France, Second Prize was a B&B Getaway trip to Paris, Ontario and Third Prize a case of vintage French wines.

The Diamond Draw was very popular with 120 boxes of chocolates sold, one with a card saying “you are the winner” inside. The lucky recipient of this received a pair of diamond earrings. The Live Auction item was a gourmet dinner for 6 which was auctioned off in a record time of 5 minutes! The band was fabulous and the excitement created as the last name was drawn from the drum just topped off the evening with a thrilling celebration.

This fundraising event proves each year to be an important evening for dedicated citizens to show their support to Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey. Donations from caring people truly make a difference in the quality of our client's lives and in the quality of help we can continue to offer.

Reserve your table early for next year's event on October 24, 2009 by calling Bev at 396-9814 Ext 25.



Beverly Spence, Event Co-ordinator, with Grace Morris



Volunteers Jessica MacKenzie, Sherry Cox and Joelene Murphy admiring the “diamond” chocolates, during the gala.



Elaine Van Rooyen, winner of the Grand Prize Trip to Paris



The year's Women's House Fundraising Goal is \$141,000

I would like to support the work of Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey throughout the year!

My donation of _____ will help to ensure the continuation of all programs to assist women and children in crisis

I am enclosing my cheque for: \$50 \$75 \$ 100 \$250 Other I would like a charitable receipt

I prefer to use my VISA Mastercard Signature for credit card: _____

Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____ / ____

- I would like to discuss a bequest or other planned giving.
- I would like to become a voting member of the organization.
- I would like more information on becoming a volunteer or board member.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Yes, please email me news about upcoming events.



Donate Now
through
CanadaHelps.org
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Please go to our website
www.whsbg.on.ca
to donate now!