



Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey Newsletter, Spring 2009

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Box 760, Kincardine, ON N2Z 2Z4 • www.whsbg.on.ca

Crisis Phones: (from 519 area) 1-800-265-3026
Bruce County: 519-396-9655
Owen Sound: 1-877-379-6636
Sexual Assault: 1-866-578-5566

Thank you for Your Continued Support!

When you supported and donated to Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey, you helped an abused woman and her child or children.

She may have arrived at our shelter with nothing. You help to meet her immediate needs such as:

- transportation to escape the violence
- clothing, toiletries and a hot shower
- food
- blankets, pillows, a clean mattress
- a lock on her door
- transportation to school or work
- counselling services 24 hours a day
- children's counselling
- employment support, life skills support, peer support and transitional housing support
- continuing education, and much more

But most of all...

- peace of mind that she and her children are safe

We receive anonymous, yearly support, bi-yearly support, sponsorships and planned monthly donations through organizations, businesses and individuals, which help to meet our fundraising goals.

You can be sure that every dollar is spent very wisely on client services. Agency administration costs are met through government funding.

We're thankful for your support, especially at this time when it's needed the most, due to economic changes.



*Together we are
making a difference –
Thank You!*

Comments from women who have accessed sexual assault counselling

"Thanks for believing me and helping me to accept that it wasn't my fault. Knowing my options and all that was important, but realizing it wasn't my fault was huge."

"I'm glad that you know about native spirituality and we can talk about it. It helps that you know about 'smudging' – that it is grounding and powerful for me."

"I learned healthier ways to cope with the pain, how to cry, and even how to get mad. So thanks for listening, and even the homework stuff that I resisted at first, and now find so helpful that I'm journaling and doing collages! I even taught it to my kids to help us communicate."

Coming Events:

May is **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**.

Please see our website for events promoting Sexual Assault Awareness www.whsbg.on.ca, and please plant the **Seeds of Change** to be given out at numerous locations in the month of May

Every Tues at 6:30 PM – Self Esteem Group

Every Wed at 1:00 PM – Woman to Woman Group

June 17th – Annual General Meeting



October 24th – Annual Fall Gala

"The Captain's Table"

Reserved bookings start June 01/09
Call Bev at 396-9814 Ext 25 for tickets and information.

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Volunteers Make Things Happen!

The women and men who volunteer their time and energy at Women's House do so for many reasons. Perhaps they want to gain insight and experience working within the social service sector. They may want to learn new and valuable skills. They may also enjoy meeting new people. But all of them share the desire to make a difference. During the week of April 19, Women's House joined in the international effort to recognize our volunteers for their outstanding contribution.

As an organization, we have continuously encouraged volunteer involvement by providing opportunities throughout the shelter. Our volunteers have responded by providing superb service to clients, staff and the community. More than 50 volunteers work hard to help

end violence against women and children by sitting on the Board or on committees, assisting with child care, helping with community events and community outreach, driving women to appointments, assisting with fundraising, administrative duties and much more.

Over this last year, these dedicated individuals have given thousands of hours to our programs and services. According to the United Way's calculations, this time is the equivalent of \$17 per volunteer hour.

We are extremely proud of our volunteers and of the hard work, empathy and compassion they show every day. We are honoured that they have chosen Women's House as their charity of choice.

What is the Transition Department at Women's House?

Transition workers assist women to transition from living within the constraints of abuse to living in violence-free homes. Sometimes that means helping a woman to recognize and no longer accept abusive behaviours within the relationship she continues to share with her partner. Sometimes it means helping her to establish her own independent home. Transition workers also help women to overcome an array of difficulties that women who are attempting to live abuse-free lives. They often face difficulties such as poverty, debt, addictions, court proceedings, health concerns and lack of personal support.

Roughly two thirds of our clients are women who have been residents in the shelter. Depending upon their individual needs, non-resident community clients may choose to use our services via the phone so that they don't have to physically come to the shelter. They may also choose to make appointments to come in and meet with a worker. Transportation can sometimes be arranged for these appointments.

The Transition Department also runs groups both for women residing in the shelter and for women living within Kincardine and the surrounding areas. Connecting with other women who are rising above similar challenges is often one of the key components of our clients' plans of self-care and successful transition to abuse-free lives. Transportation and childcare are provided whenever possible to allow women to attend these groups.

For further details, please feel free to contact the Transition Department Monday to Friday from 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM.



IT ALL STARTS WITH YOU.
BELIEVE
DON'T BLAME

**NO ONE DESERVES
TO BE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED**

**MAY IS SEXUAL ASSAULT
AWARENESS MONTH**



Women's House *Serving Bruce & Grey*
Sexual Assault Services Crisis and Support Line:
1-866-578-5566

ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE TAKES ALL OF US.
What will you do?

Community Development And Fund Raising

Just like a recipe – Women’s House Serving Bruce & Grey know the technique and we know how to cook it, but we may not know that recipe exactly. That’s what we, as a community can all do here: take that recipe, be innovative with it and create the outcome that we’re all looking for.

Communities are like families, they’re all different. Our aim is to bring these families together, build strong relationships and together meet the needs of Bruce & Grey.

Fundraising efforts in the past year have been very difficult, and the economic changes since November 2008 have certainly affected our fundraising budget. Fortunately, we have some very dedicated sponsors and donors who faithfully support our efforts. This money is needed to cover the shortfall in government funding in order to sustain current programs and services already in place at Women’s House.

Now more than ever we want to ensure no woman or child will have to live in fear of abuse due to job losses or financial instability.

Please continue with your vital support; together we do make a difference in our communities.

Comments from women who have accessed sexual assault counselling

“I feel accepted and supported and loved.”

“I think it’s great that I can talk to you about using ‘energy work’ for personal healing, and you understand and encourage me, and don’t think I’m weird.”

“I like that you didn’t just hand me a piece of paper about grounding or relaxation – you did them with me.”

“Thanks for ‘creating space’ for me to talk about the things my family and closest friends really don’t want me to talk about. They think I’m ‘over it’ or should be.”

Successful Fundraising Event – International Women’s Day

March 8th, 2009

Together, we made a difference and raised \$10,000 toward the emergency shelter, services and programs for abused women & children. “Strong Women, Strong World” was the theme this year. Two hundred and twenty people enjoyed a day of celebration music by the Pomelos and 9 year old Bronte Hunter who dedicated a song to her great-grandmother who was one of our 5 Women of Distinction.



Thirza Donaldson, Hannelore Fulford, Linda Crombeen, Abby Bolton and Holly Devlin

“I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. [1809–1894]



May is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

This fall, the Sexual Assault Services of Women’s House will be offering an eight week group program for women who have been sexually assaulted.

It’s free, private and confidential.

Call Brenda 519-396-9814 Ex 22 or call Jen 519-372-1113 Ex 222 to sign up.

Five Things Men Can Do To Prevent Gender Violence

1. If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing his female partner – or is disrespectful or abusive to girls and women in general – don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him about it. Urge him to seek help. Or if you don't know what to do, consult a friend, a parent, a professor, or a counselor. **Don't remain silent.**
2. Have the courage to look inward. Question your own attitudes. Don't be defensive when something you do or say ends up hurting someone else. Try hard to understand how your own attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
3. If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.
4. Be an ally to women who are working to end all forms of gender violence. Support the work of your local women's shelter. Attend "Take Back the Night" rallies and other public events. Raise money for the community-based shelter and counselling programs. If you belong to a team or service group, organize a fundraiser.
5. Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don't involve degrading or abusing girls or women. Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including anti-sexist men's programs. Join the Neighbour, Friends and Family Campaign and become a Champion. Lead by example.

Mother's Day & Father's Day

With Mother's Day and Father's Day approaching many of you will spend a loving, peaceful day with your family. For victims of abuse, however, this is not the case. Many will spend the day in pain and silence. Abuse affects many of the people we know and love. Our mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, neighbors, other family members and friends.

This Mother's Day and Father's Day we ask that as you honour and thank your parents, that you also help Women's House end the cycle of abuse.

Through education, prevention and intervention, you can ensure that a mother and her family will lead better lives tomorrow.

Your donation can be made "in honour" or "in loving memory" of someone special.

For your generous contribution of \$50 or more we will send a Mother's Day or Father's Day card acknowledging your gift to the honouree or family. Please indicate your wishes.

As always, Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey is grateful for your kindness and generosity.



This year's Women's House Fundraising Goal is \$120,000

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.



Please go to our website
www.whsbg.on.ca
to donate now!