



Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey Newsletter, Spring 2010

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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

Happy Spring to All!

This is your bi-annual update from Women's House. Please accept our apologies if some of you receive this in duplicate as we try to inform all who support us on a regular basis and to blanket others who are new

to the area. Thank you for your understanding. We are grateful for your support, and on behalf of all the women and children we serve, who are fleeing violence in their homes, **thank you** very much.



Child and Youth Program

The Shelter Child & Youth Program offers crisis support, counselling, safety planning and various programs for the children during their stay at Women's House. Programs are developed based on the needs of the child and can be individual sessions or groups. There is counselling available specifically directed towards children who have experienced or witnessed abuse in the home. The Child and Youth counsellor also works with mothers to offer support and guidance regarding their children.

The Child and Youth department has been a busy hub of activity the past few months. Examples of programs that are run with children include anger management for children, social skills development, and counselling involving play and crafts. The Child and Youth counsellor also provides support in adjusting to living in a communal shelter. We have some outdoor equipment and recently received a donation of a Nintendo wii to help make life in the shelter a little

more comfortable and maybe even fun at times!

The Child and Youth Counsellor provides support and guidance for mothers who would like to improve their parenting or gain tools to help deal with the abuse-free life they may be about to begin. We also work with mothers who

do not currently have their children in their care. We discuss the expectations and requirements of the courts or Children's Aid Society and work towards taking steps to improve parenting skills.

Our goal in the Shelter Child and

Youth Program is to help parents and children deal with the trauma they have been through, work towards building connections in their community, and prepare for a more positive future.

It's easy to forget at times how very difficult some kids' lives are, living in the midst of abuse and sometimes concurrent poverty. A little girl, a few days after admitting

“to help parents and children deal with the trauma they have been through, work towards building connections in their community, and prepare for a more positive future”

with her mom, said with a beaming face, “You guys have so much FOOD here!” For her, the assurance of future meals was a huge novelty and warranted a comment. What a great reminder of the value of the Shelter for young ones who are already survivors of violence in the home with all that it entails!

Announcements

We are thrilled to announce that Geza Kocsis, owner of Chippewa Golf Course in Southampton and Nikki Zimmerman owner of Nikamoz Serenity Spa in Port Elgin are sponsoring a Signature Golf Tournament at Chippewa Golf Course, August 29, 2010.

Call Bev at 519-396-9814 Ext 25 or Chippewa Golf Course at 519-797-3338 for more information.

Don't miss out on our **Annual Gala Event** this fall, October 23rd. Early reservations are accepted in June by calling Bev at the number above.

Gratefully supported by



United Way
Bruce Grey

Community Involvement At "Take Back The Night" Event

About 45 people rallied in Victoria Park, Kincardine to "Take Back the Night," A community march to raise awareness about abuse against women.

Organized by the Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey, the event featured the M'Wikwedong singers and drummers of Owen Sound, and a few words from Joachim Ostertag of the Men's Program in Owen Sound and then the group lit candles and marched to

Durham Street and back before holding a closing ceremony.

"This is a chance to take a stand, a chance to break the silence, to put an end to sexual violence against women," said organizer Bernice Connell of the Women's House sexual assault services. She said "Take Back the Night" began in the 1970s and has become a worldwide movement, demanding safe streets for women to walk, even at night. "Coming out to this event is person-

al for some people," she said. "They know somebody who has been assaulted or they have been abused themselves."

Joachim said there are glimmers of hope in the way people are raising their children. "I hope these marches continue until we don't need them anymore," he said.

The crowd marched as a show of solidarity to end violence against women; to celebrate the steps being taken to support each other and to create change; to experience the freedom of what it's like to walk at night and not be dependent on the protection of men; to remember women who have survived abuse and those who have died as a result of sexual violence; and to shout out the desire to live freely without the threat and fear of violence.



M'Wikwedong singers and drummers of Owen Sound

International Women's Day Very Successful

International Women's Day was celebrated around the world on Monday, March 8, 2010 and, in Bruce County, a sold-out crowd attended the celebration held at the CAW Education Centre in Port Elgin, Saugeen Shores.

This year's event featured former Olympian, Elizabeth Manley, direct from the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, sponsored by Herbal Magic of Port Elgin and Kincardine.



Women's House Executive Director, Casey Wiechert, Olympian and Keynote Speaker, Elizabeth Manley and Bev Spence of the Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey

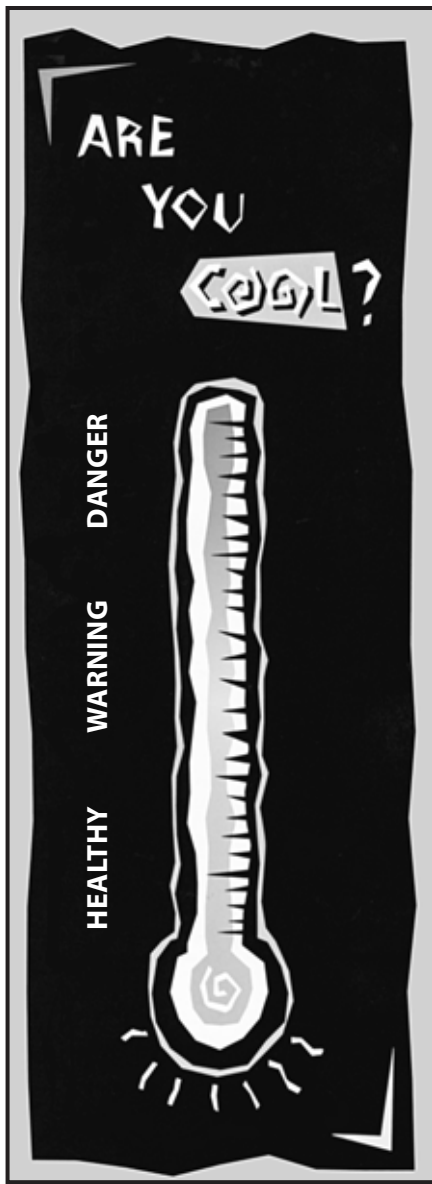


MC Francesca Dobbyn, Executive Director of the United Way, bedazzled the audience in her 'hollywood oscar' finery

Support Group an Ongoing Success

The Self-Esteem Educational Support Group was a motivating success. It was held for 10 weeks with 6 participants and two facilitators. The last group was finished on February 11th, 2010. The group experience allowed women from our community to connect and bond with each other while sharing and relating similar challenges and tribulations. During this time they learned to understand how low self-esteem develops (in regards to abuse), what keeps it going, and skills and strategies to improve and foster a sense of healthy self-esteem.

Grant money was used to purchase advertising, snacks, and participant certificates with a flower for group end. All these additional "extra's" along with the group content made for a well-rounded, welcoming and comforting experience for all participants. The group proved to be very successful.



How Cool are you?

Danger

Physical Abuse – does your partner slap, push or kick you?

Sexual Abuse – does your partner force you to be involved in sex against your will?

Financial Abuse – does your partner control all the money and how it is spent?

Threats & Intimidation – does your partner threaten to hurt you, your family, friends, pets or scare you with looks, actions or suicidal behaviour?

Emotional & Verbal Abuse – does your partner shout, yell, put you down, call you names or make you feel badly about yourself?

Isolation – does your partner control where you go and when, or keep you from your family and friends?

Warning

Blame and Denial – does your partner blame you for, making the abuse happen, avoid personal responsibility or deny that there is a problem?

Jealousy – does your partner check up on you or act jealous or possessive towards you?

Control – does your partner boss you around, give orders, or make all the decisions?

Criticism – does your partner criticize your appearance, your ideas, your family and your friends, or purposely embarrass you in front of others?

Fear – does your partner have a quick temper, a history of mistreating others, threaten suicide or make you feel afraid?

Force – does your partner force you to do things that you don't want to do and make you feel guilty if you disagree?

Healthy

Responsibility – do you and your partner make decisions and solve problems or conflicts together?

Trust – do you and your partner respect each other's feelings, wishes and opinions and do you support each other?

Honesty – do you and your partner accept responsibility for your actions, admit when you are wrong and talk openly and honestly with each other?

Fairness – do you and your partner work through conflict so that both of you are satisfied and are you each willing to compromise?

No Threats – do you and your partner talk, act and resolve conflicts in way that make you both feel comfortable and safe?

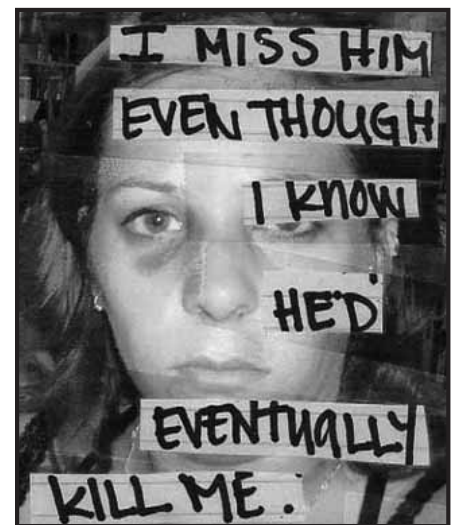
Financial Partnership – do you and your partner share financial decisions and responsibilities?

Respect – do you and your partner respect each other's feelings, opinions and differences?

Sisterhood of the Travelling Shoes

This project is a memorial to the women, children, friends and family members who have lost their lives due to domestic violence. There are 355 donated pairs of shoes on display to represent a victim and is accompanied by a card recounting their tragedy. Each year the Travelling Shoe exhibit marks Women's Abuse Prevention Month.

If you, or someone you know, is being abused call 1-800-265-3026



Volunteers are “What about you?” kind of People

It seems to me that we are living in an age of a “what about me” mentality. We expect more, even perhaps, demand more. We are giving our children everything they want and more, yet it never seems to be enough. We are living in a hurried world, where we are always on 24-7, our day is spoken for, from the time we open our eyes in the morning to the time we close them again at night. It seems that there is just not enough time in the day to do all that we need or want to do. Most of us are ruled by computers, forced to deal with automated answering machines, or email and text messages instead connecting face to face with real people. We have cell phones or other electronic devices that demand our constant attention. We may be caring for our children, our grandchildren and for many of us, aging parents as well.

Yet with all this going in and around us, there are those individuals who paint their world with a wider brush. They take a brave step outside of themselves to reach out to those in need. Women’s House Serving Bruce & Grey celebrates 25 years of service in 2010. Volunteers have been our strength since our very beginnings and now, 25 years later, are as much a part of our foundation as are the bricks and mortar of the shelter itself. They come to us saying “what can I do” to help? They are aware of the many women and children who are seeking shelter, safety, help and hope. They want to be a part of the solution.

At Women’s House, our volunteers do so many things, it is hard to keep track. They provide transportation, assist with fundraising, they sit on our board; they

provide childcare which gives exhausted moms a chance to catch their breath. They help to keep our shelter clean and care for our gardens; they make repairs to our many buildings; they help us promote our services; and they are there to lend a listening ear. They give, and give, and give and ask for nothing in return, except maybe a chance to offer a hand to someone in need. They want a chance to contribute to the greater good of their communities, their country and indeed their world. They ask only for a chance to say whole heartedly “what about you?”

If everyone in the world volunteered in some way, just think what a wonderful world it would be. Women’s House extends its heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our incredible volunteers. Using their wider brush, we also give thanks for volunteers all over the globe.



A Few of Our Volunteers
From left to right:
Bonnie Ritchie, Jim Rapley,
Karen Rapley and
Joyce Throop.

Project Mother’s Day

It’s a day to revere Mom, to give her a day off, to quietly and respectfully show love. That, at least, was the way Ms. Jarvis intended it back in May of 1908, when a simple white carnation was handed out to mothers to celebrate Mother’s Day.

Now it’s a multimillion-dollar business and the sentiment of a simple carnation and a hand written card has faded with the past.

Our clients at Women’s House really don’t get to celebrate Mother’s Day, yet this celebration should be the most specific to them.

Please help to honour these women on Mother’s Day by donating towards a better life for them. With a donation of \$50 twice a year you can help to provide counselling, safety and protection for women and children fleeing violent homes.

You can donate in honour of your Mother, Sister, Daughter or friend.

This can be your way of saying, “You’ve made such a difference in my life, and in your honour, I’m making a difference in the life of someone else.”

Happy Mother’s Day to all!



This year’s Women’s House Fundraising Goal is \$146,000

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 also like to become a voting member of the organization for \$10 per year
- 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.



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www.whsbg.on.ca
to donate now!