

WOMEN

making waves

VOLUME 18 :: ISSUE 1

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Empowering Women Strengthening Communities – Join Us



By Angela Marie MacDougall, ED

The women who are employed or volunteer at Battered Women's Support Services are on the front-lines of an undeclared war against women; one that is waged in the houses, apartments, single occupancy rooms, and hotel rooms in our cities, our towns, our villages, reservations, and refugee camps all over the world. The undeclared war registers below the radar screen of the 24 hour news networks, the print media or on the local evening news broadcasts, and when reports trickle through, though horrific, the focus is individual and narrow. When we step back we can easily see that violence against women affects us all.

Over half of Canadian women have experienced violence, one in every three women in British Columbia has experienced violence, almost a million women are either assaulted or sexually assaulted in Canada every year, a minimum of one million children in Canada have witnessed violence against their mother by their father or father figure and in Canada almost 90 women are murdered by their partner each year.

The women who work and volunteer at Battered Women's Support Services hear the very worst that one human can do to another human; they know intimately the extent to which violence is inflicted and harm is done. Our staff and volunteers are witnesses for the unspeakable. Our existence is to make public what happens in private.

Currently BWSS employs 24 women and provides volunteer opportunities for 70 women all of whom represent the widest diversity that exists in our communities. We have worked very hard to establish and maintain an organizational culture that ensures everyone is well trained and supported to be the very best at her area of responsibility. It is a dynamic place to work to do the triage work, the service work, the retail

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...
PO Box 21503
1424 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5L 5G2
...
Business Line: 604-687-1868
Fax: 604-687-1864
Counselling: 604-687-1867
Email: information@bwss.org
Executive Director:
Angela Marie MacDougall
Graphic Design:
www.oaxacastudio.com
Editors: BWSS Staff and
Volunteers

Note about this issue:

This edition of our newsletter is dedicated to all those who have made the work of Battered Women's Support Services possible. Inside you will find information about our services and programs, testimonials from volunteers and women who use our services, and introductions to new staff. You will also find information about upcoming BWSS events and our line up of Spring Support Groups and Programs. Please Enjoy.

Battered Women's Support Services is a dynamic organization. Under the leadership of Executive Director Angela MacDougall, the society is flourishing. With a committed team of staff and volunteers BWSS has reached a level of cohesiveness that is making us look in new directions to expand our services, while ensuring we honor our mandate and the women we serve.

BWSS Board of Directors

By Shawna Baylis

Board Members:

- Ninu Kang
- Blanca Salvatierra
- Jennifer Johnstone
- Shawna Baylis



However, with all the growth and expansion BWSS has achieved it leaves us wondering what is next. We believe that the cornerstone to stopping violence against women is education. We are in the process of forming an inclusive component to the organization that will include youth, women as well as men to talk openly about the impacts of abuses on the community is a whole.

We will not deviate from our mandate. Instead we look at this as the next step in moving toward fulfilling our mandate. We encourage all members of the community to dialogue with us around the impacts that violence against women has on our communities as a whole. Violence against women is a community problem. Our intention is to address the issue on a community level as the next step to creating a world that is free from violence against all women.

I want to extend my sincere thanks for the diligence and hard work that the staff and volunteers demonstrate each and everyday the doors open at BWSS. They are the back bone of the organization. It is their presence that encourages the women who access our services to return and continue to share our stories. I also want to honor and share my respects to the women who share their stories with us at BWSS. We at all levels of the organization recognize the privilege they are extending to us, by allowing us into their lives, and for that, we say thank you.

Continued from page 1

work, the activist work, the administration work, and the empowerment work!

Empowerment is the idea of being fully able to authorize ourselves to be ourselves. Empowerment is the process of enabling ourselves to be ourselves. Women who survive violence and abuse and who access our myriad of services and programs, as soon as they reach out are engaging in the empowerment process. As 52% of the population it matters significantly that women are empowered. Strong women mean strong family and strong community.

When we step back we can easily see that violence against women affects us all.

Everyday the women who work and volunteer at BWSS move the vision of empowerment forward through compassion, energy, passion and determination for ending violence against women, through our humble and honorable work. Our volunteers and staff are exemplary examples of what it means to be women, feminists and leaders, activists and change makers... I am honoured to serve them, I am inspired by their commitment to teamwork, their unshakable and unwavering commitment to making a difference at all cost.

I ask you to join us and become part of the solution.

Volunteering at Battered Women's Support Services once a week as an office volunteer, helps me keep my life balanced and my priorities in the right place. When I come in to the office I feel as though I've left the hectic, anonymous city and entered a different space, a calm, positive women-empowering space where I feel I'm truly making a difference in peoples' lives, even if only by offering a cup of coffee or a smile as I let them through the door. I love the camaraderie and the friendly banter amongst staff members, and their inclusion of me as an equal. And when I leave at the end of the

Words to Share:

day, I am always newly inspired by all of the women I encounter: the staff who dedicate their careers to this cause, and my fellow volunteers who give of their time as I do, and most importantly, the women who use these services, who have taken such a courageous step towards changing their lives for the better. I am deeply appreciative of BWSS for giving me the opportunity to help support that step, and for giving women in difficult situations the opportunity to take it.

- Robin Attas
Office Volunteer

In 2002, the doors were opened to me at BWSS. I'm one of many women who have been abused. In the five years that I've been at BWSS, I have found it to be a warm and safe, supportive space. I went to support groups, Trauma 1 and Trauma 2, and I did yoga, which I found very relaxing. I've got the best counselor. I feel stronger but I feel that the fear will never go away. I have felt trapped in the fear for five years. I continue to get the help that will help me to get over the pain and suffering now and any that may come my way later on in life.

- K.

Spring Has Sprung at My Sister's Closet & The Outlet

By Portia Sam

We at MSC and The Outlet want to thank you all for your support. The donations keep coming, and both staff and volunteers are working hard to keep up with the demand. In 2006 alone, we sent out \$9,000,000 worth of Hamper Vouchers and \$57,000.00 worth of Clothing Vouchers to organizations across the Lower Mainland.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of our volunteers for all of your hard work, commitment and dedication to the organization. I know that is has been said before, but it begs to be said again that "we could not open our doors without you!" We have great volunteers, and it's great to see the diversity of the women who come to volunteer with us.

The forecast for the BWSS Retail Program is bright and exciting. We hope to see you!

Strengthening Communities: Another Partnership



A new partnership between the Richmond Women's Resource Centre (RWRC) and Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) has developed in order to provide additional and accessible support for women in Richmond who are/have experienced violence. BWSS Stopping the Violence Counseling will now be available every Friday at the Richmond Women's Resource Centre in Central Richmond.

For more information about the BWSS Stopping the Violence Counseling Program please visit our website at www.bwss.org.



New faces at BWSS

My name is Roisin Donnelly and I am pleased to have joined the team of women working together to end violence toward women. I am working with BWSS part-time as a First Nations Short Term Support Worker. My background

is of mixed heritage, I am from the Kwakwaka 'wakw speaking people of Kingcome Inlet and Irish. I have had 2 years previous experience within the counseling field working with youth in a substance misuse residential treatment centre, and I have completed the Family and

Community Counseling Course at the native Education Centre. I look forward to getting to know the women involved with BWSS, and I am pleased to be a part of an organization that has created a positive, safe, supportive and empowering environment for all women.

At BWSS, we provide many services and programs for women, but statistics show that youth are vulnerable to abuse in intimate relationships as well. In fact, one in seven girls in high school have been assaulted by a boyfriend, and 40% of teenage girls report knowing someone their age who has been abused in a dating relationship. Because of these high statistics, we believe that prevention needs to be a huge part of our work in ending violence against women.

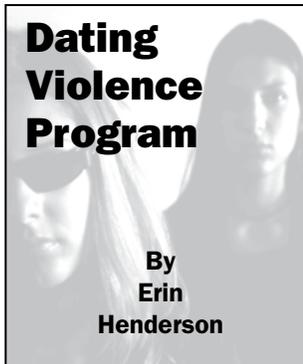
We deliver 50-75 minute long Dating Violence presentations to high school youth in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. The classes are usually mixed gender, and typically at the grade 10-12 level. The students are engaged and interested, and by the end of our presentation, they are able to identify the different forms of abuse, and that abuse is a systematic pattern based on power and control over another person. Students take an active part in the presentations being

involved in the learning process through brainstorming and small group activities. This gives students an opportunity to share their ideas about what a healthy relationship is to them. In this past year alone we reached approximately 1000 high school students, and we look forward to reaching even more students in 2007.

Although we meet our objectives for delivering Dating Violence Education, we are aware that an even deeper dialog could be possible if this kind of preventative education was more prevalent throughout their entire schooling. We have

received phone calls and emails from girls seeking support after the presentations, so we know that the presentations are making an impact. However, based on the statistics, we also recognize that we are only scratching the surface, and know how critical this work is towards ending violence against women and girls.

Dating Violence Program



By Erin Henderson

yes! I would like to support BWSS in your work to end violence against women.

I would like to donate \$ immediately to BWSS.

Monthly Sustaining Member

I wish to join the *Circle of Strength* monthly giving club and make my gift of \$ every month.

I authorize BWSS to bill my credit card on the 1st of each month. I understand that I may cancel my contribution at any time with written notice.

Payment Information

Enclosed cheque payable to BWSS
 VISA MasterCard American Express

Card Number
 Name on card
 Expiry Date /
 Signature

Contact Information

Name
 Address
 Phone
 Email

We respect your privacy and will not trade or sell your name to other organizations

I wish to receive the BWSS newsletter, *Making Waves*
 I have remembered BWSS in my will
 Please contact me to discuss how I can include BWSS in my financial and estate planning

Please send your completed form & donation to:

BWSS	OR
P.O. Box 21503	By Phone 604.687.1868 ext. 315
1424 Commercial Dr.	By Fax 604.687.1864
Vancouver, BC V5L 5G2	Online www.bwss.org

Your gift is tax deductible. We will send you a tax receipt.

We would like to thank all of you who have made a donation to BWSS in the past few months. Your generous gifts have made a huge contribution towards our vital programs and services for women.

Thank You

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A-Part Auto Wrecking Ltd • The Hydrecs Fund • Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation • Ben Muns and Associates • Solly's Bagelry • Meraloma Soccer Women's A Team • Paradise Marketing • ANAF 28 LA • St. Mary's Kerrisdale • Stephen Hammond • P. Delville Pratt • Miss Gladys E. Bloomfield • Bill and Margaret Mah • Robert and Joan Carne | <p><i>To the wonderful businesses who donated their services to the OZ Project Pilot:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sibble Computer Consulting • Banana Republic • Sleep Country Canada • Aero Carpets • Benjamin Moor Paints • Vancouver Community College <p><i>Donations also have been made in the honour of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. and Mrs. Mike & Kathy Lafèche -and- Vicki |
|---|--|

BWSS received a bequest from the estate of Olga Anne Coyes who died February 12, 2007

SPRING Support Groups at BWSS

- Tuesday Drop-in Group
- Ten-week (closed) Group at DEWC
- Healing from Trauma Through Empowerment Group. Stage I
- Healing from Trauma Through Empowerment Group. Stage II
- Inside the Circle
- Empowering Mothers Parenting Program
- Women Seeking Safety
- Ten-Week (Closed) Support Group
- Women's Only Pro-Bono Clinic
- Lesbian/Bisexual Women 10-Week Support Group
- Managing the effects of trauma through Art



Lawyers and other professionals with experience on the topic will facilitate all workshops with the BWSS Legal Advocate. Please call our Intake Line at **604-687-1867** to register.

Topics include:

- Legal Resources
- Legislation and Principles of Family Law
- Applying for Orders
- Varying Orders
- Writing Affidavits
- Section 15 Reports
- Maintenance Orders
- Division of Assets and Property
- Judicial Case Conferences and Family Case Conferences
- Do It Yourself Divorce
- Ex-Parte and Restraining Orders
- Child Protection System
- Immigration System
- Criminal Justice System
- Changing Identity
- Tips for Self Representation

Please phone our intake and crisis line at **604-687-1867** for more information or to register for the support groups or women's only pro-bono clinics

LEGAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS:

Legal advocacy workshops are for women in need of legal information on their current family law cases, and are ineligible for legal aid, and/or in need of legal support for their cases.

BWSS Spring 2007 Calendar of Events

APRIL 22-28 BC Prevention of Violence Against Women Week

APRIL 28 Saturday night 8:00pm to 12:30am

Women's Dance, featuring: DJ Susan Y
 Dance will be held at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 7 West 7th. Avenue, Vancouver, BC. Tickets are available at My Sister's Closet and over the phone at **604-687-1868** for **\$15.00** and at the door on the night of the event for **\$20.00**.

MAY 13 Sunday, 11:00am to 5:00pm

My Sister's Closet Mother's Day Sale
 1029 Commercial Drive Receive **15% Off** all Women's Clothing

JUNE (exact date to be announced) Commercial Drive Festival

Come say "Hi" at our information table, and don't forget to check out MSC. We're sure to have some great finds!

JUNE 24 Saturday 7:00 to 9:30pm

BWSS Summer Gala, A Midsummer Night's Dream
 Held at MSC, 1029 Commercial Drive Join us in a night of shopping, food, music and friends. Door Prizes and lots of Goodies
 Tickets **\$3.00** at the door