

WOMEN making waves

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Violence Against Women is the Most Pressing Social Issue of our Time

The Violence Stops Here Campaign takes the anti-violence message forward into the 21st Century recognizing that violence against women isn't only a woman's issue, but clearly an issue for men too.

We urge men to own their role in ending violence against women, become part of the solution and break the silence. After years of advocating against violence, we know now that men have to be part of the solution. Violence against women is a man's issue, too. The ugly truth is that more than a million children in Canada have witnessed violence against their mothers.

This act of witnessing perpetuates the cycle of violence. Including men is key in ending violence against women. People everywhere are realizing that violence against women is real. Men are starting to end the silence, and we have to take an ever greater stand – women and men, united – to make the violence stop here.

Right here, right now, we're giving you the chance to do just that. We are thrilled to tell you about the launch of our new campaign, *The Violence Stops Here*, and to ask you to lend us your support. In honor of our mothers, our sisters, our daughters, our granddaughters, our nieces, our girlfriends...in honor of every boy who dreams to live free of a potential destiny of violence perpetuation...in honor of our community, our neighbours, and our families, ourselves – *The Violence Stops Here*.



Expression Kept Me Alive



By Christopher
Ducharme

Please Help

The British Columbia Bereavement

Helpline (BCBH) is in need of finding a new office by April 30th, 2010 to share with a like-minded organization in Vancouver, B.C. If you are aware of any available office space (100-200 sq. ft. in size) for rent.

PLEASE CONTACT

Jo-Ann Turner
at the Helpline:
604-738-9950 or
bcbh@telus.net.

Thank you!

“Communication has a remarkable impact on the processes of victimization, recovery and prevention. Intervention and mediation become mediums that introduce us to a safe environment for healing and recovery.”

History • On March 22, 1996, my mother, Patricia Ducharme (40), was murdered by her boyfriend and former Vancouver Police Officer, Brock Graham. What began as their week of romance alone together and our spring break vacation with our father, ended up in an alcohol fuelled argument leaving my mother beaten, strangled and lifeless. Brock had pleaded guilty to manslaughter claiming he was too drunk to know what he was doing. In April of 1997, he received a life sentence for my mother’s murder, and in 2005 he admitted to, was convicted of and sentenced to a second life sentence for a second murder he committed prior to my mother’s death.



the tragedy and media coverage made them uncomfortable around me. In Edmonton, away from 95% of my family, my sadness and loneliness grew to the point that I was determined to find new ways of coping. At a young age I realized the impact of unresolved grief.

Choices • I am now 28 years old, and have lost three people to murder. Seeking support via counselling, group therapy, writing, sharing, talking and teaching have all become a regular part of my life. These have empowered me to share my story with others. Thus, without finding help for ourselves, it is impossible to help the ones we love in their times of trouble. To me, the difference between a “survivor” and a “victim” is that a

survivor is able to share, heal and learn from their mistakes. Today, because I have done this work, I have the tools to cope with all challenges that come my way, and that makes me a “Winner.”

Expression • All victims need an outlet for their pain. Lucky for me, I have sought after and found the support I need. For me it is: writing 1,100 poems; publishing two poetry books; lecturing to SFU Criminology students and to youth inmates in prisons; planning fundraisers to support non-profit victim support organizations; media interviews and chapel services. These ways communicate pain without causing harm. Whatever talent or interest you may have is a gift you can give to yourself and others.

Violence Against Women •

Violence against women is a non-genetic, generational problem. It is not a disease – it is a chosen behaviour. Unfortunately, what happened to my mother is not that unusual, even in Canada. What is even more unfortunate is that if she had known the impact of her decision to invite a stranger into our home, she never would have made that choice because she is a good mother. Part of my life’s work is to speak to and educate the public, victims and offenders about the reality and the consequences of their choices.

Bio

Christopher
Ducharme

After the tragic death of his mother Chris moved to Edmonton where he graduated university in 2003. His commitment to helping end the cycle of violence against women began with his spearheading “A Blade to Consider”, an offshoot from his use of rollerblading as

a physical release for the strong anger he experienced. While at Concordia University College of Alberta he published his first book of poetry, “The Truest Aspirations of a Poet,” and became involved with youth at risk, fundraising for the Ihuman Society - an organization

that uses art as a means of expression and healing. He also became involved with the Michael Cuccione Foundation and gained a working knowledge of fundraising and running special events. Happily for Vancouver, Chris returned in 2007 and immediately set out to help wherever

possible especially in his role as Director of Public Relations with the British Columbia Bereavement Helpline. His story is profound - his ability to forgive the man who murdered his mother shows incredible insight and will to not just live, but to also be happy.

Engaging Men and Boys in the Prevention of Violence Against Women

Previous Projects by Battered Women's Support Services



2007 - On Engaging Men for the Prevention of Violence against Women

Focus Group, Conducted and Reported by Harry Stefanakis, Ph.D.

The focus group was created with the purpose of acquiring knowledge on how to engage men in prevention work. More specifically the purpose of this focus group was to build an understanding of what prevention messages would resonate with men in general and men from marginalized communities specifically. To this end participants engaged in a three hour focused discussion.

2008 - Taking a Hard Look at Ourselves & Creating Change for the Future by Curtis Clearsky

Discussion between men and boys - How do you think you have been influenced to behave as a man? How does that contribute to violence against women? How

can we individually create change towards ourselves, women and men? How can we create change collectively?



2008 - Emerge Vancouver – Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes a film by Byron Hurt – presented by Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) and Vancity Theatre

BWSS hosted a special showing of Byron Hurt's acclaimed film Hip-Hop: beyond Beats & Rhymes, an official selection of the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes provides a riveting examination of representations of manhood in hip-hop culture. Byron Hurt, former college quarterback, gender violence prevention

educator and longtime hip hop fan was in Vancouver and joined by Chuck D., an American rapper, author, and producer. He helped create politically and socially conscious rap music in the late 1980s as the leader of the rap group, Public Enemy.

2009 - Tough Guise: Violence, Media and the Crisis in Masculinity by Jackson Katz – presented by Battered Women's Support Services and the Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy

This 1999 video featuring Jackson Katz examines the relationship between images in popular culture and the social construction of male identities in the United States – of which media messages play a large role. The video identifies several cultural developments in the last 30 years that are in part responsible for the current levels of date rape, domestic violence and school shootings. Media

are crucial to constraining men to seeing violent masculinity as the cultural norm – there is a growing connection in society between being a man and being violent (lots of statistics about men being the violent ones – 85% of murders are by men; 95% of domestic violence is by men; 99% of rapes in prison are by men, etc.). Abused boys tend to grow up to take on that role.



2009 - Women Making Waves by BWSS

BWSS's fall newsletter issue featured Troy Westwood – Little Hawk, Byron Hurt among the few to raise awareness to a male audience about violence against women.

By Angela Marie MacDougall
Executive Director



Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy

Prevention of Violence Against Women Week is April 19 – 25th, 2010

and the Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy will be on Commercial Drive, Vancouver throughout the week bringing the issues and taking action for women and for our critical and essential feminist services. In 2009, Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy was on Main Street, Vancouver to standing room only crowds. Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy alliance is Act II Safe Choice, Battered Women's Support Services, Surrey Women's Centre, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter, Women Against Violence Against Women and YWCA Munroe House.

For more information go to www.bwss.org or call 604-687-1613.

upcoming events

When Battered Women are Arrested

Tools for Women and Front-line Workers

Kirsty Howey
Law Reform

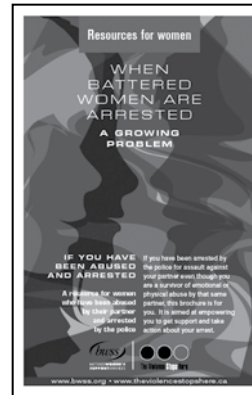
As reported in our last newsletter, Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) has been working on a number of fronts to address the growing problem of battered women being arrested by the police in the Lower Mainland.

This project arose after front-line workers at BWSS became alarmed at the increasing number of women contacting BWSS who had been arrested for allegedly perpetrating domestic violence against their partners, even though these women were themselves the victims of sustained relationship violence.

The arrested women related to BWSS workers the often devastating consequences of the arrest experience. These consequences included the involvement of MCFD, the loss of child custody in family law cases to a violent partner, incarceration, and the involvement of immigration authorities. Perhaps most importantly, women felt that they were made more vulnerable to further abuse by their negative experience of the criminal justice system – for example, some women felt reluctant to seek protection from the police again or reported being unable to access appropriate support services because they had been arrested and hence were not classified as "victims". These consequences suggest that the arrest of battered women can often serve to create yet more barriers for women trying to escape violent relationships.

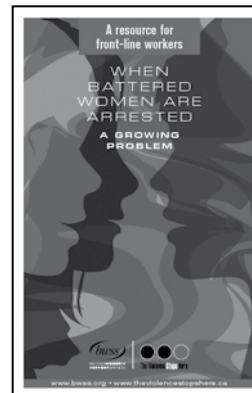
BWSS has been working hard to advocate for reform of policies and practice around this critical issue. This work has included speaking to women who have been arrested to hear their arrest stories and provide them with appropriate emotional support, assisting women file individual complaints against the police about their arrest, assisting women find appropriate legal advice and representation, and speaking directly to municipal police and RCMP (regional and provincial) about proposals for reform of practice and policy in this area.

As part of this project, in March BWSS released two resources aimed at providing practical help to women who have been arrested to access appropriate services and support, and at assisting front-line workers to provide arrested women with appropriate information, support and advocacy.



"If You Have Been Abused and Arrested – A resource for women who have been abused by their partner and arrested by the police" is aimed at empowering battered women who have been arrested to get support and take action about their arrest. The document lets women know that they are not alone in their arrest or the impacts they have been

experiencing, talks about some of the reasons why women may be getting arrested, says what the police should be doing when they make the decision to arrest, and gives women ideas for getting informed, getting support, and taking action about their arrest.



"When Battered Women Are Arrested – A resource for front-line workers" is designed to assist front-line workers and advocates to provide battered women who are arrested with the appropriate information, support and advocacy. The document looks at the reasons why women are being arrested, talks about the relevant police and

crown counsel policies around woman arrest, and provides information about how front-line workers can support women who have been arrested. The resource contains a comprehensive tool to enable front-line workers to make a detailed assessment of the woman's arrest experience, and some suggestions for advocating on behalf of individual women who have been arrested, and for law reform in this area generally.

If you would like copies of either of these documents, or if you or any other woman has had this experience and would like to share your story and/or get support, please do not hesitate to contact:

BWSS' Intake line at 604-687-1867 or email us at intake@bwss.org.

Our intake line is answered from Monday to Friday from 10am-5pm and until 8pm on Wednesdays.

All our services are free and confidential.

A Balancing Act



My name is Tasha Lynn Chartrand and I was born on January 18th, 1984. I am twenty-six years old. I would like to give you a brief summary of my childhood to shed light on some of the effects of abuse and living within the foster care system and the justice system.

Every day a woman or child is abused and it needs to stop. I want my story to give you a first-hand glimpse of what it was like, and how I have coped with the aftermath. I want people to know what is actually going on out there and what we can do to stop it. With that being said, here is a brief summary of the life I lead.

I was the oldest of three, born to a single mother. When I was still a baby, my mother was diagnosed with schizophrenia and refused to acknowledge her frailties. I was physically, sexually, and mentally abused from the age of six weeks, not only by my mother but also by the people she associated with. Consequently, I was in and out of the foster care system, having to experience over 50 moves and around 20 different foster homes. At the age of thirteen, I was deemed a ward of the government, meaning my mother had no more responsibility for me and that the government was my new parent. I didn't like that so much. When I was sixteen I was given the choice to go to school, or to be placed in an independent group home.

I chose school and went to the University of Saskatchewan for theatre production as soon as I graduated from high school. On my twenty-first birthday, I was called up by my social worker who told me my funding was being cut for school. I had my tuition cut off and was no longer a student. Only a few credits away from my degree, I had no choice but to drop out. I had no money, and felt insecure about living in society without my clutch. I had my tuition, books, rent, food and clothing paid for all through University. I had to go from being completely taken care of to being utterly alone. I applied for student loans and welfare, but was denied. I started to work crappy jobs to make ends meet. I went from relationship to relationship, depending on someone else. I eventually ended up in Vancouver working odd jobs in theatre, coffee shops, and musical gigs. I continued to be with boyfriends who were no good for me, and who were probably chosen because of what I was used to, abuse.

Two years ago I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia, which causes

connective tissue and muscle pain. It's like your nervous system starts to break down because of being tense all the time, so your cells stop communicating properly and don't tell the brain that your body is in pain. There are a number of possible causes. In my case, I gather it was from being in a constant state of stress and anxiety through most of my life. I was constantly in fear growing up when the next beating or move would be coming. I suffer from memory loss, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, weakness, insomnia, and depression. I have now learned that many women who have experienced childhood, ongoing trauma suffer from the same stresses throughout everyday life. It depresses me to think that at age twenty-six, I live with this condition. I feel sometimes as though life is unfair, wondering "why me"? However, I can't let myself get into that way of thinking or I get too down. I just try and manage my way of life. I try to exercise, eat right, to rest when needed, and to be thankful for the strength I do have.

Unfortunately, quite recently, I was in a very abusive relationship where I felt like my every move was being monitored and I had no right to speak. The relationship was imbalanced and I did not receive the respect which I deserved. It went on to the court system where I was wrongfully charged with assault by my abuser and put through trial. Imagine, I was put through a criminal trial from accusations my abuser stated, which the police



and Crown ate up without blinking an eye at the fact that I was the one with the physical injuries and history of abuse from this guy. Eventually, after six months of

If I were talking to a person who is going through abuse right now, I would tell them, “Love yourself, know there is help out there, and you are not alone.” *Tasha Lynn Chartrand*

waiting, I was proven not guilty, and yet he was not held accountable for his actions. I am filing a complaint against the Vancouver Police Department and the officer in charge, who lied on the stand for my ex. That I won't stand for. When the last altercation took place, I was thrown down a set of stairs by my neck. I had obvious bruises and injuries, and had my guitar broken by him. I felt helpless and completely alone and even suicidal. I had a girlfriend suggest a

helpline whereupon I was directed to the Battered Women's Support Services. They helped me a great deal. It led to me finding a great lawyer and joining the Empowering Women's Employment Program that opened my eyes to self-respect. It is a six month program designed to open doors to the future, and instils independence and love.

Abuse is very hard to live with. A scar will always remain, but it's how you live with that scar that matters. I could cry and cry about my past, but what good does it do if it only drags me down and leaves little room for love - love for myself, and passion to do what I love? Without love for myself, I wouldn't be achieving my innermost ambitions as we speak. One thing that keeps me here is that I don't let my past define who I am. All of these things that have happened to me have nothing to do with where I am going or my internal spirit. I am capable of anything I desire. I am currently in college working

towards a theatre production diploma and I play some of the finest music you could ever hear! Not to brag, but I do enjoy what I do. I have my own accomplishments to be proud of, just like anyone else. I've worked as chef for a few reputable establishments, stage-managed plays I've been proud of, and even played my guitar for an audience of 3,000. These things were accomplished because I had the hope and strength to see out of my situation. In BWSS I learned that it's okay to be angry - one has a right - and that it's okay to cry. I learned my strengths and my weaknesses, and how to balance the two. I learned to love myself first, and to take care of myself more. I learned that I wasn't alone and that there are many other women out there who have gone through a lot of the same circumstances. I learned that there is help out there for people like me, who have been abused, and for people who are currently being abused.

Critical and Essential Services at BWSS

In 2009 Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) responded to over 8,000 direct service requests

- Over 5460 women called our Crisis Line
- Over 1300 women accessed Crisis Support and Accompaniment
- Over 2304 women accessed Counselling
- Over 3650 Counselling sessions were provided
- Over 980 women accessed Support Groups
- Over 1,200 women who were starting over received clothing and/or household items



Diversity

In January 2010, 368 women accessed services at BWSS. Services included: victim services, support groups, legal advocacy, employment program and counselling, and over 500 women called the crisis line. Of the 368 women who accessed, 52% were of Immigrant status, Refugee, or Non-Status.

Vancouver is the second largest city in Canada with high percentages of people of colour and Immigrant populations. In 2006, 51% of Vancouver's total population identified as Immigrant, an increase from 49% in 2001 and 44.8% in 1996 (The City of Vancouver website). This reality of violence against Non-status, Refugee, and Immigrant women is a grave concern for BWSS and service organizations across the province alongside the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

Overall, Aboriginal women and Non-status, Refugee, and Immigrant women have been silenced about their experiences of violence. In British Columbia, over 10,000 incidents of violence against women in intimate relationships were reported in 2009. Currently, provincially, there are fewer than 670 transition house beds available

to women and their children being abused. Proposed government cuts of \$440,000 to those services were reversed after a public outcry, but a \$1.2-million reduction in budgets and other disruptions to transition houses and victim services programming is still proposed for 2011-12.

Battered Women's Support Services in partnership with other women's groups is trying to help the government understand that part of the solution is making transition houses and violence-prevention workers a strong part of the victim-referral support system, instead of relying on underfunded groups which are always fighting cutbacks. By working together, as a community, as an organization, we can all help the fight against this ongoing issue that haunts so many women's lives.

WOMEN
making waves

Support groups are intrinsic to empowerment and empowerment is at the heart of healing from the oppression of abuse and violence. So BWSS is committed to offering support groups to women dealing with abuse and its effects. BWSS' Women's Support Group Program provides a safe place for women to connect with each other in order to alleviate isolation, share information, raise awareness, heal by developing coping and recovery skills and plan for a life free from abuse. BWSS runs groups throughout the year – running on average about 10 groups on a seasonal basis. Some of the groups currently being offered are:

Awareness, Action, & Empowerment Group

*By Samantha Kearney,
Stopping the Violence
Counsellor*



This is a 10-week psycho-educational support group for women who have experienced abuse in intimate relationship(s) and who may have questions and concerns about where they're at with their relationship to self, to others, and to the larger social world. Group members would be supporting each other and learning how they can increase safety and power over their own lives. Topics often covered are: Where am I going?, Our relationship to our emotions, Knowing our boundaries & limits, How to better care for our whole self, Violence against women, Power & Control, Intimacy & trust, and Building healthy relationships.

Drop-In Support Group at the Downtown Eastside Women's Center (DEWC)

By Davina Ridley, First Nations Women's Short-term Support Worker

This is a drop-in support group for marginalized women who have

experienced abuse in an intimate relationship. **It is held Tuesday from 6-8pm at the DEWC.** The purpose of this group is to create a safe environment where women can share their experiences, reduce isolation, and obtain information and resources. Women in this group will learn about the impact that abuse and violence has had on them and ways to overcome the impact.

Empowering Mothers Support Group

By Rosa Arteaga, Manager of Direct Services



This is a drop-in support group for women who have experienced abuse in their intimate relationship and their children/youth have witnessed their abuse, women who are survivors of residential school or foster care system, women who are at risk of being involved with MCFD, and/or any woman who wants to feel more empowered as a mother.

Participants develop self-awareness and insight as it relates to their parenting strengths and recognize areas for improvement. They learn new tools to raise children at each stage of their development

and define individual mothering goals. Topics include: communication, values clarification, understanding our children's feelings and behavior, self-awareness, parenting skills, understanding the child welfare system and self-advocacy, etc.

Healing Connections

By Karan Wong, Volunteer Crisis Worker



Healing Connections is a drop-in support group for women who have experienced abuse in an intimate relationship. The group provides women access to safe and confidential support, help in reducing isolation, building self-awareness, and understanding of the dynamics and impact of abuse. Session topics are determined by the needs of the group so they vary. Some topics, however, often covered are physical and emotional safety, power and control in relationships, understanding and managing emotions, boundaries, and dealing with systems. The group is held every **Tuesday from 12pm to 2pm.** For more information and/or to join, please call BWSS' intake line at **604-687-1867.**

The Healing from Trauma Group Series

*By Athena Affan
Stopping the Violence
Counsellor*

Each year BWSS is committed to offering support groups for women survivors of violence. The Healing from Trauma series provides a supportive environment in which women can initiate a process of self exploration and understanding. Although women's unique experiences of violence against women and children, systemic or residential school abuse may vary, we acknowledge these experiences as trauma and validate the reality that the impact of trauma continues to affect women today. In this group each woman works from her own personal experience of trauma and begins wherever she is at her healing journey.

Using Trauma Recovery and Empowerment by Maxine Harris as a guide, facilitators support women to explore aspects commonly affected by trauma. Through relevant questions, art, individual reflection, and experiential exercises women develop a deeper understanding of themselves and gain tools that they can use for personal transformation.

From participant's direct feedback we have

BWSS' Women's Support Group Programs

*All our
support
groups are
free and
confidential.*

learned that women feel a sense of increased self-esteem, awareness and knowledge in addition to decreased negative mindset by attending the group. Women also share that they feel validated, hopeful and less alone because they were not judged by others. One woman stated at the conclusion of group, "I am getting to be a very strong woman now". As a facilitator, it is with honour and deep appreciation that I get to witness women become even stronger than they hope.

All participants are asked if they would recommend this group to others. In one woman's resounding words, "YES! YES! YES!".

My Money, My Choices
Partnership between
BWSS & FSGV



This program is designed for women who have experienced abuse in an intimate relationship and

who are working to make changes in their lives. A six week workshop series to gain a better understanding of your personal finances, learn about available resources, and create a personal money plan. This group is provided in partnership with Family Services of Grater Vancouver (FSGV).

TOPICS INCLUDE: Your Relationship To Money: *Reflect on how your experience, thoughts and beliefs shape how you manage your money, take stock of where you are now;* **Budgeting:** *Track your earning and spending and take control of your money;* **Income Tax:** *The basics of the Canadian tax system;* **Banking And Savings Tools:** *Choose the options that are right for you to save \$; CREDIT: Build and maintain a good credit history and deal with debt;* **Create A Personal Money Plan:** *Receive support to create a personal action plan.*

Gail, a woman who participated in the last series of workshops, shares below how that experience moved her in many positive ways...

"I had been struggling for years with accumulating debt. I had done the 'right' things, like investing and purchasing RRSPs, buying on sale. I had also done the 'wrong' things, like not budgeting, planning, saving, or even paying attention to anything like my receipts, my monthly statements, or even the cost of withdrawing money from other machines. Little by little it started to grow, that's the thing about debt, unless you're being smart about it, it just grows and grows! Then, due to a health issue, I was out of work and on disability for 4 ½ years. Now, not only did I not have any savings, I was making only 60% of my wage and lucky if I was able to make just the minimum payments. The more the debt grew, the more I ignored it or should I say, ran from it. Stress and the feeling of being trapped overwhelmed

me. I had wanted to know what to do, but was really unsure of where to even start. Then at Battered Women's Support Services I saw a flyer for a program being offered about taking control of your money and your life. It nearly jumped off the wall at me. I signed up and found myself exactly where I needed to be. The facilitator, Melanie Buffel, was a world of information! I learned so much from her and from all the women in the group. For the first time I was able to admit my debt without shame and in doing that I learned what I needed to do for myself. Now I knew who to contact, what to ask and what to be prepared for. I am on my way up and out of debt and it feels fantastic! Thank you to Battered Women's Support Services and to Melanie for a new start."

If you want further information about our support groups, please visit our website
www.bwss.org
or call our Intake/Crisis line at **604-687-1867.**

All our support groups are free and confidential.

check these out!

www.bwss.org and www.theviolencestopshere.ca

Battered Women Support Services (BWSS) is happy to announce the recent improvements made to our website, www.bwss.org, over the last month. We have been working hard to update all the information on our website and have added new and relevant content for all our web users to browse. The newly improved site will be updated on a weekly basis to ensure that information on upcoming events, job postings, programs, and exciting news that BWSS has to share is current and available for everyone to view. Please be sure to keep posted to our website and check out all the exciting things that are going on with Battered Women's Support Services!

We are also proud of the February launch of our micro-website for our exciting new campaign, The Violence Stops Here. You may visit this site at www.theviolencestopshere.ca or click on the link on our BWSS home page. The Violence Stops Here Campaign takes the anti-violence message forward into the 21st century highlighting the importance of men's involvement in eradicating violence against women. We urge men to own their role in ending violence against women, to become part of the solution and to break the silence that perpetuates rather than ameliorates violence and abuse. Please take the pledge and show your support by uploading your "Violence Stops Here" photo to our streaming slideshow.

Growing Demand for BWSS' Violence Prevention and Intervention Training

BWSS offers the Violence Prevention and Intervention Training twice a year to women who are interested in contributing to end violence against women through our volunteer program. We provide a twelve week training from a feminist, anti-oppression perspective using a popular education style. The training covers a range of topics such as crisis intervention skills, theoretical frameworks of violence against women, safety planning, group facilitation skills, criminal, family and immigration law and much more. Following the training, women participate in our volunteer program providing support to women survivors of violence on our crisis line, in support groups, and assisting our direct service programs.

Beyond skill development and knowledge acquisition, BWSS' Violence Prevention and Intervention Training is often described as "life changing" by participants. The training enhances

personal empowerment and self-awareness and increases the leadership capacity of participants. As one woman attending our fall 2009 training wrote, "The BWSS training was transformational. It provided a level of analysis and awareness that can be utilized in much more than the crisis work alone."

In 2009 we saw an increase in requests for this training program with over 230 women calling this past year to express interest in the program. A similar volume of requests has continued thus far in 2010 attesting to the high demand for this type of training and the interest women in our communities have to contribute to ending violence. Many women who completed the Violence Prevention and Intervention Training in 2009 continue to volunteer with us and several others gained employment in this field as a direct result of their participation in our training.

We are excited to have begun our annual spring training session on March 5th with twenty-two new women! A waitlist has already begun for the next available training session beginning in September. To receive more information or to inquire about the upcoming training session please call Jaclyn at 604-687-1868 ext. 303 or email intake@bwss.org.

More feedback about BWSS' Violence Prevention and Intervention Training...

"It was amazing! I learned so much. It changed my life, my understanding of issues concerning abuse, oppression, history, colonization, racism, homophobia and more!"



By
Jaclyn Sauer
Crisis Line
& Intake
Coordinator

"The training is essential for the workers/volunteers of BWSS...to continue making the difference that is required to make our society a better place to live in."

"This training was very helpful in giving me a better understanding of myself and how diverse and complicated experiences of abuse can be. The training also gave me hope that we can make a difference."

"I loved everything about this training, especially the vibration of genuine compassion, the intelligence, the awareness of unconscious judgment, and the most welcoming and open atmosphere where people can interact in a very personal level. What I learned through this training is my treasure all my life."

Feedback about BWSS' Settlement Worker Training Workshops: Supporting Refugee & Immigrant Women Who Experience Violence

Greetings Angela, • Allow me to once again thank you and your fellow facilitators in a well organized and informative workshop. I love being challenged, learning new models and information that keep me up to date with the issues that face us as women and our community at large. I am providing you with my contact information if by chance you would like to reconnect with me. P.S please greet Rosa and Julia for me as well. Thank you and till next time. -TA

For further information on upcoming Settlement Worker Training Workshops, please check our website www.bwss.org or call Rosa at **604-687-1868 ext. 314.**



Non-status, Refugee, & Immigrant Women who Experience Violence

March 30th & 31st

Conference & Manual Launch



Non-status, Refugee, & Immigrant Women who Experience Violence March 30th & 31st Conference & Manual Launch was a huge success! Over 70 front-line workers attended the two-day conference which was engaging, informative, and interactive. Valuable and positive feedback was received regarding BWSS' Manual and toolkits provided at the conference for all participants. **For copies of BWSS' Empowering Refugee & Immigrant Women who Experience Violence manual and/or the toolkits, Battered Women being Arrested, resources for women and frontline workers, please email angelamacdougall@bwss.org or call 604-687-1613.**

**Wanting to receive
our newsletter,
Women Making Waves,
by e-mail rather than
by post?
Just e-mail your request
to samantha@bwss.org.**

@ @ @ @ @

Refugee and Immigrant Women Who Experience Violence

Conference and Manual Launch

March 30 & 31, 2010

Strategies for Community Workers to work and support Immigrant, Refugee and Non-Status Women who experience violence in their intimate relationships and are navigating the Legal Systems

Battered Women's Support Services and The FREDA Centre invite you to attend this groundbreaking two day conference on Engaging Immigrant Women in the Legal System. Going directly to the experts on immigrant women's experiences, the knowledge shared in the conference has been developed by, for and with immigrant women.

Refugee, Immigrant and Non Status women who experience violence grapple with leaving their countries of origin, the migration and settlement process then navigate a complicated matrix of systemic, legal, attitudinal barriers all while managing the emotional, familial and relational layers all women who experience abuse and violence must navigate.

This conference is open to all community workers who work with immigrant women experiencing violence in their intimate relationship and interfacing with the legal system.

Where: SFU Segal School of Business

When: Tuesday, March 30th & Wednesday, March 31st
Time: **Tuesday: 9-5pm**
5-7pm - wine/cheese networking reception for participants

Wednesday: 9-5pm
Fee: Sliding Scale \$100 - \$350
(registration fees may be waived if requested)

TO REGISTER

**Email heidi@bwss.org
or call 604-687-1868 ext 308**

Day One: All participants will receive Empowering Refugee Immigrant & Non-Status Women Who Experience Violence Manual, a woman centered approach to managing the spectrum of needs from settlement to empowerment. Participants will receive practical training on the manual by a team of community workers, who are experts on the current and most vital issues affecting Immigrant, Refugee & Non-Status women.

Day Two: Legal knowledge will be increased further with presentations by three lawyers who will speak on the most pressing issues affecting Refugee, Immigrant & Non-Status women: Family Law, Immigration Law and Criminal Law. Participants will complete day two by receiving two newly produced tools: "When Battered Women are Arrested-A Resource for Front-line Workers" Manual and "Have You Been Arrested? A brochure for Abused Women who have been arrested"

By the end of this conference, participants will leave with more tools to effectively work with Immigrant, Refugee and Non-status women going through the legal systems.



Engaging Immigrant Women
in the Legal System funded
by The Law Foundation of BC

Women Go Missing and Die amid Government and Social Apathy



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(WINNIPEG MB, December 15, 2009) "There is no question – absolutely no question – that we are going to put violence against women at the centre of this country's agenda, starting right now," said Suzanne Dzus of Calgary.

Ms. Dzus made this compelling declaration following a day long meeting of women anti-violence advocates held at the Manitoba Status of Women offices in Winnipeg on Saturday. The women are key organizers of Missing and Murdered Women Memorial marches held in communities across British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

Women at this first-time meeting know full well that Canada has a very long history of hiding its dirty secrets when it comes to violence against women in general and Aboriginal women specifically, as Aboriginal women are disproportionately represented among the missing and murdered women in Canada.

"Once again, we are taking up the work of holding the Canadian government accountable for its history of colonialism and entrenched racism and the immense violence against women their seemingly never-ending denials have caused," said Carol Martin of Vancouver.

"We are moving forward with the leadership of Aboriginal women at the absolute centre of our efforts," said Martin.

"We understand that a massive change is needed. We know Aboriginal women have the leadership, the experience, the wisdom and the power to bring our communities back to wholeness, to create the healing our country so desperately needs," said Lisa Michell of Winnipeg.

The advocates returned to their communities dedicated to igniting a totally new level of action that includes co-ordination of memorial marches nationally and the development of a national strategy on ending violence against women. "Violence against women is everybody's business" said Michell. Another meeting will happen in January, as plans for involving the children of missing and murdered women get underway.

"The children have lost their grandmothers, their mothers, their aunts, their sisters, their friends. All murdered, with so many, nowhere to be found. Why is our country willing to have its children suffer these unendurable losses? Why do our children have to carry these horrific stories?" asked Danielle Boudreau of Edmonton.

The group also intends to work with men genuinely dedicated to doing everything they can to end the violence. "We are looking for men committed to taking every single necessary step to end the terror visited on women," said Angela Marie MacDougall of Vancouver.

The Memorial Marches for Missing and Murdered Women occur every February 14th across Canada. There is an estimated 3,000 women who have gone missing or been found murdered since 1969. Each case has left families of the victims and the broader community questioning whether the authorities acted responsibly to investigate longstanding reports of missing women. Aboriginal women constitute a majority of the cases from this period; research has indicated that more than 500 Aboriginal women are known to be missing, and feared murdered, in Canada.

The Alliance of February 14th Women's Memorial March Committees - Lisa Michell – Women's Memorial March Committee Chair Winnipeg, Danielle Boudreau – Founder Women's Memorial March Edmonton, Suzanne Dzus – Founder Women's Memorial March Calgary, Angela Marie MacDougall – Women's Memorial March Planning Committee Vancouver, Carol Lynne D'Arcangelis – No More Silence Toronto, Carol Martin – Women's Memorial March Planning Committee Vancouver, Audrey Huntley – Women's Memorial March No More Silence, Marlene George – Women's Memorial March Planning Committee Chair Vancouver, Trish Pal – Victoria, Jayna Patal, Montreal – continues to network to plan further initiatives and events to bring our voices together and stronger to stop further women to go missing and murdered.

*Women's
Anti Violence
Advocates Meet
in Winnipeg
Manitoba
and Discuss
National
Strategy to
End Violence
against Women*

WOMEN
making waves



Karen Osachoff
Temporary Legal
Advocate/Policy
Analyst

I am excited to be back at Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) as the temporary Legal Advocate/Policy Analyst. In addition to providing Legal Advocacy services to BWSS women, I am also working on Law Reform with a specific focus on Legal Aid cuts for battered women. As a follow up to the report I wrote for BWSS in August 2008 entitled, "**A Women's Right to Legal Representation: a critical examination of Legal Aid in BC**", I am currently working on implementing some of the recommendations.

I am a member of the Legal Aid Coalition, whose members are lawyers, advocates, union members and some members of professional associations. I have attended two meetings with the Legal Aid Coalition. At the last meeting, I volunteered for the research and events committees. No concrete plans have been made here, but we are planning on doing more after the Olympics. There are interim plans to do some events around the end of March to correlate with the LSS closures and cuts to services.

I can add that follow up issues from my 2008 report that should be tackled from BWSS are public awareness, lobbying of political bodies and maybe a test case to the BC courts that address the issue of battered women not receiving Legal Aid in some cases. There is some litigation in the BC Supreme Courts right now concerning the issue of Legal Aid not being provided in a case, but the decision has yet to be released.

In addition to being part of the Legal Coalition, I have been invited to a UBC law student forum on March 18, 2010 focused on the Legal Aid cuts and its effects on women. I will offer some insight into the effects of the cuts on our women and strategize with them on the above recommendations and any that come out of the forum. It will be through community contacts and mobilization that this serious issue can be approached and solutions can be found for BWSS women and many others who are not receiving Legal Aid in complicated family law cases.

Violence Against Women & Child Welfare



Angela Marie MacDougall,
Executive
Director

Battered Women's Support Services, PIVOT, and the Ministry of Child & Family Development have been meeting

to discuss and plan strategies to better support families where women are being abused and the children are witnessing their mother's abuse in metro Vancouver and surrounding regions.

Over the next year a number of initiatives are being planned. Violence against women is a factor in the majority of child protection situations and this collaboration is bringing together a strong group of social workers, advocates to plan and implement approaches that would better support and respond to the safety of mothers and of their children.

upcoming events

Lilith, A Celebration of Women in Music

Battered Women's Support Services would like to thank all those who voted for them in Lilith's, A Celebration of Women in Music, "Choose Your Charity" Program!

BWSS was submitted into the contest which was launched on March 19, 2010 through a Facebook campaign. Every tour date will honour the dedication and hard work of one well deserving charity in a given city by donating \$1 of each ticket sold to the cause. From 1997-1999, Lilith Fair raised over \$10 million for various women's charities both nationally and locally and they are aiming to do the same again! To learn more about Lilith, check out the website at <http://www.lilithfair.com>.

The charity with the most votes wins the grand prize of \$1 per ticket sold. To win the grand prize would be incredible...it would provide the opportunity for bringing further awareness of the realities of violence against women and of how we all can take the pledge The Violence Stops Here which is priceless.

To find out who won the grand prize and to further support BWSS, please check out their website www.bwss.org or Facebook group. Thank you all again for voting for Battered Women's Support Services and for supporting 30 years of work to end violence against women through support for survivors, training and prevention activities for communities, and working for systemic change.

DOXA Documentary Film Festival

runs May 7-16, 2010 Battered Women's Support Services is a community partner with The Documentary Media Society (DOXA) for the screening of SIN BY SILENCE and MALE DOMINATION.

Sin By Silence • Inside the California Institution for Women, the first inmate initiated and led a support group in U.S. prison history, shattering the misconceptions of violence against women. Convicted Women Against Abuse (CWAA) was created in 1989 to help women inside prison break the silence about abuse and learn more about what they needed to do to help others stop the cycle of violence.

Instead of fighting a system that does not fully comprehend the complexities of abuse, the women of CWAA led an initiative to help educate the system. Through careful orchestration of letter writing campaigns, media coverage, and senate hearings a movement was born and laws for battered women were changed. And for the founder of CWAA, the flicker of hope begins to grow as her possible freedom, after 26 years in prison, lies moments away.

SIN BY SILENCE offers a unique gateway into the lives of women who are domestic violence's living worst-case scenarios - women who have killed their abusers. While most of the women in SIN BY SILENCE may remain in prison for the remainder of their lives, the women are committed to helping others understand the reality of violence against women. Through their stories of terror and hope, the viewer can begin to understand the cycle of violence, the signs of an abuser, and how each and every one of us is responsible for changing the tragedy of domestic violence. <http://www.sinbysilence.com/film/>

Male Domination • In MALE DOMINATION, Belgian filmmaker Patric Jean (b. 1968) investigates the sexism that would still appear to reign supreme in our society. He doesn't provide any comment himself, instead leaving that to doctors, Photoshop experts, artists, plastic surgeons, strippers, abused women, and anti-feminist men - who all attest to a sexually unequal world.

The film begins with the essence of masculinity: the penis and the need to increase its size. As one surgeon sees it, "A centimeter in the penis is a kilometer in the mind." Jean, who also directed the mine worker epic Les Enfants du Borinage (1999), proceeds to examine the stereotypical division of roles in children's books and toys, the consequences of domestic violence, and the 1989 Montreal Massacre, in which a 25-year-old man opened fire on female students at the École Polytechnique with the goal of fighting feminism. This journalistic documentary also consists of more artistic elements, such as the amplified sound of clicking heels on the street in contrast to the dull thud of men's shoes. In his defense of feminism, Jean also gives the floor to disappointed men, who say that there's no room to be a man anymore these days. In their minds, "Feminism is a crime against humanity." <http://www.idfa.nl/industry/Festival/films-2009/film.aspx?id=be30566a-b87c-4073-8a2a-219cec705f9e>



WOMEN

making waves

Women Making Waves
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The View of the Impact of Violence Against Women as a Psychiatric Disorder is a Choice that Furthers the Violation and Oppression of Women Trauma Survivors

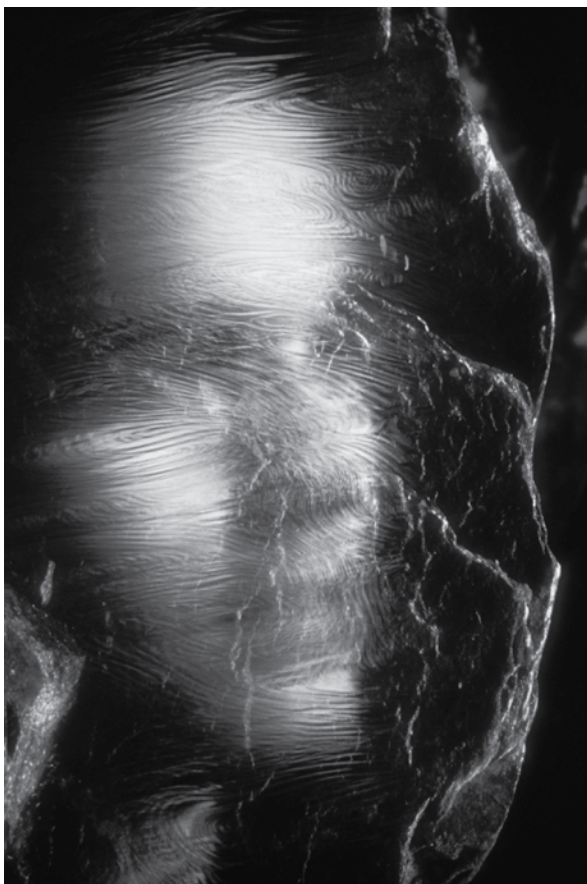
By
**Samantha
Kearney**
Stopping
the Violence
Counsellor

I write this article to share what I have witnessed, have heard, and what I believe based on my work with women who have experienced a multitude of violences and horrors at the hands of others. In my work as long-term counsellor, Stopping the Violence program, I have heard countless women who share with me their experiences within the helping systems such as psychiatry how they were silenced and disempowered.

I have worked with women who have shared that they have been in the psychiatric system for 20, 10, 5 years without ever talking about the violence they experienced in their lives. I have worked with women who struggle to understand the labels that have been thrown upon them – “manic depressive”, “schizophrenic”, “bi-polar”. I have worked with women who are so heavily medicated by anti-psychotic drugs who tell me they want to feel again. I have asked women who have been in therapy for most of their lives and have not shared their history of abuse why that is...I get the responses, “My therapist doesn’t work with abuse”, “I was told it would be too much for me to handle if I talked about it”, “I was told not to share my abuse in the group... that it is not the place”. When I ask women about their understanding and meaning of the diagnoses put upon them, many reply that they are confused and have no understanding of those labels. When I hear their histories most often abuse precedes the manifestation of the “psychiatric symptoms”. When I ask women if their “symptoms”/“diagnoses” were ever linked to

the trauma they experienced, many reply no. When I offer them information about the common reactions of abuse and trauma, such as intense emotions, swings in moods, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, intense fear, high vigilance, and so forth, many ask why this information was not shared with them by their doctor, therapist, psychiatrist and many feel a huge sense of relief, validation, and normalization.

Now, it is true that when we open and explore our “boxes of trauma”, it can be overwhelming and it can throw us for a spin that may compromise our safety (e.g., physical, emotional, social, spiritual). Being abused by others who are suppose to love and take care of us impacts our whole being and hurts us to our very core. So yes, when we open our “trauma box” and begin to share, we need to do so in a safe way (e.g., connected to what we are sharing and how much), with a safe person (e.g., one who will not judge, criticize, or hurt us), in a safe place, and have a sense of how we are going to take care of our selves afterwards (e.g., safety plans for our emotions and body). “Safety” is an umbrella term that signifies various elements such as reducing self-injurious behaviours, establishing physical safety from an abusive partner, reducing suicidality, gaining control of ways of coping such as dissociation/ disconnecting from oneself and the present. It is important before exploring past abuse, women have a level of safety in their present life. This does not mean women need to be shut down and silenced



When we are
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and caring.

when they share a bit of their past. In our world today, complete safety for a woman is not attainable right now. Women today continue to live and navigate in a world full of oppressive forces to keep them down and disempowered. "Simply living in the body of an oppressed person is traumatic and exhausting" (Women Making Waves, Volume 18, Issue 3, 2007). Women sharing a word or two or even a past incident of abuse, the listener can listen to it and does not need to jump to shut her down. Listening and grounding her sharing in the present and within the container of the counselling relationship and room can provide the necessary safety. Exploration of past traumatic material is critically important because it is through directly processing the trauma memories that they no longer have such an emotional hold and power over the woman.

So I hope we, listeners and helpers, do not assume and judge a woman's safety by the label and diagnose she has. I hope we assess with the woman herself what safety is, what safety she would need to do trauma based counselling, and how we can best support her in doing that work. I do not want our, helpers', judgements and own fears to silence women that would only be furthering and perpetuating the oppression women trauma survivors experience. We, helpers, need to remember that it was and is that woman herself who wants to share her pain and wounds of trauma that has been the one who has lived, managed, and survived those horrors. It is that woman who holds within her

the strength, the courage, and the tools to overcome abuse. We, helpers, need to see that and need to work and build upon those strengths rather than seeing the woman as some sort of fragile being.

As stated in our past newsletter article (Women Making Waves, Vol.18, Issue 3, 2007), "The work we do is complex for sure, it is informed by trauma theory, addiction theory, attachment theory, anti-oppression analysis, family systems theory...the work of the researchers and academics...at the end of the day it is very simple, really...When we are hurting and we're scared sometimes all we need is someone to be there when we need it, to listen, not place judgement or criticize or blame, to demonstrate compassion and caring. And that is what we are all about at BWSS..."

If you want information about interpersonal trauma/abuse and its impact, two useful resources you can check out are Judith Herman, Trauma & Recovery, and Charlotte Kasl who looks both at trauma and addiction.

If you are wanting information and support regarding the trauma you have experienced, please check out our **Healing from Trauma** through Empowerment Groups and our **Stopping the Violence Counselling Program** on our website at www.bwss.org and/or call our Intake/Crisis line at **604-687-1867**. All our services are free and confidential.

The Violence Stops Here

It takes an enormous amount of courage for a woman to stand up to violence. To walk out on a man who is abusing her, to end a violent relationship, or to seek help. Every year over 8,000 women contact Battered Women's Support Services.

Like you, we honour and respect all women who have faced abuse. Tragically, in British Columbia, 1 in 3 women experiences violence and we know that violence against women has increased 9%. We honour their courage to simply survive. Battered Women's Support Services exists to end violence against women and to provide support services to women survivors, training and prevention activities, and to work for systemic change.

It takes guts for an abusive man to finally admit what he's doing. To stop. And to get help. It takes courage for a man to break the silence, to stand up to other men who abuse women. And it takes strength for a man to support a woman he loves who is facing abuse. After years of advocating against violence, we know now that men have to be part of the solution.

The ugly truth is that more than a million children in Canada have witnessed violence against their mother.

This act of witnessing perpetuates the cycle of violence. Including men is key in ending violence

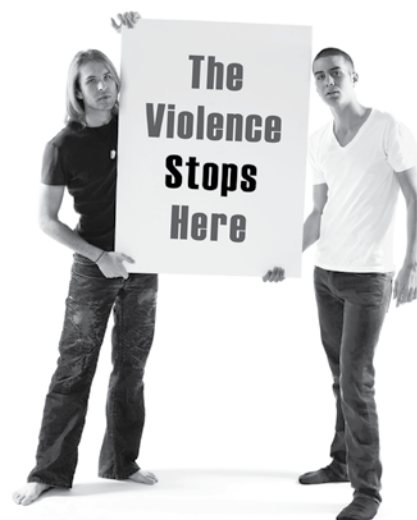
against women. People everywhere are realizing that violence against women is real. Men are starting to end the silence, and we have to take an ever greater stand – women and men, united – to make the violence stop here.

Right here, right now, we're giving you the chance to do just that. We are thrilled to tell you about the launch of our new campaign, *The Violence Stops Here*, and to ask you to lend us your support. In honour of our mothers, our sisters, our daughters, our granddaughters our nieces, our girlfriends. In honour of every boy who dreams to live free of a potential destiny of violence perpetuation. In honour of our community, our neighbours, and our families, ourselves – *The Violence Stops Here*.

What can you do?

Make a donation. Every dollar you donate will go directly towards providing services to women, training and prevention work for the end of violence against women. You will be contributing to a legacy that will nurture a succession of over 1 million boys, girls and youth, who each year witness their mother's abuse, to live in domestic peace and to change the world. Please help us support the women that need it and build awareness of the important work of BWSS.

Upload a picture of yourself holding a sign that reads: "The Violence Stops Here." You can dedicate it to a woman you know



who has experienced violence. You can remain anonymous. However you choose to participate, your message is loud and clear: the violence stops *with you*. All the photos we receive will be placed together to show that we will not stand idly by. The violence stops with *all of us*.

Purchase a "The Violence Stops Here" t-shirt. Wear it and proclaim your commitment to ending violence against women.

Email strategicinterventions@bwss.org or visit My Sister's Closet or MSC 1092 in Vancouver.



Yes! I want to contribute to The Violence Stops Here

You can make a secure online donation using your credit card by following the **"Donate Now"** links on www.bwss.org or www.theviolencestopshere.ca

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