

PEACE STARTS AT HOME

Family
Violence
Project
E-Letter Spring 2007



PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON LAUNCHES BUILDING EXPANSION CAMPAIGN

On November 8th, Catholic Family Counselling Centre launched its capital campaign to expand the Family Violence Project facilities. The launch featured the Honorable William Jefferson Clinton, the 42nd President of the United States, speaking at a luncheon for 1,000 people. President Clinton, a domestic violence survivor, spoke passionately and eloquently about the impact of Family Violence on families, communities and the world. He made linkages between the problems that are presented in acts of domestic violence and the larger problems presented by suicide bombers and terrorists. Further, President Clinton demonstrated understanding of the issues and how persons experiencing domestic violence can be victims of violence and still have feelings of love for the perpetrator.

President Clinton encouraged the Family Violence Project and the community to continue its work: "That's really what this group is about, isn't it? You have a community supporting what they're doing because you realize that you are all part of a shared destiny, and if one family is in the grip of domestic violence and there's nobody there to help them and nobody there trying to prevent these things from happening in the first place, all of you are going to be diminished and eventually pay a terrible price for it, a psychic price and eventually an actual financial and social price."

CFCC hopes to see the expanded facilities completed by the summer of 2007.



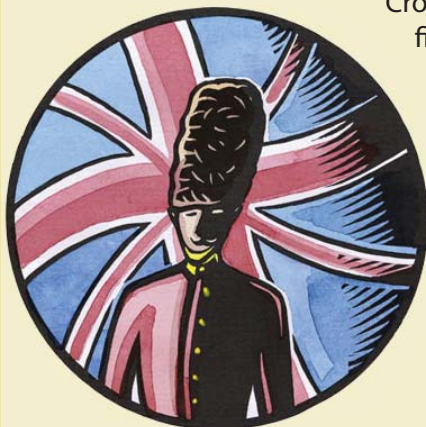
THANK-YOU

Thank you to all who submitted feedback on our previous "Peace Starts at Home" E-letter. We look forward to sharing ongoing news of the Family Violence Project with you and appreciate your interest. Feel free to forward copies of our E-letters to friends and colleagues who are interested.



- ⇒ Building Campaign Launch
- ⇒ Croydon, England
- ⇒ Web Resources
- ⇒ Workshop featuring Dr. Benoit Strangulation Assessment
- ⇒ Funding Announcement
- ⇒ Information Session with Crown Safety First
- ⇒ Information Sharing

CROYDON, ENGLAND FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRE



Croydon, England is the home of the first European Family Justice Centre. The Centre opened in 2005 and currently partners with a wide variety of agencies/services. The Centre, in collaboration with Metropolitan Police and Croydon Council, held its first International Conference on November 29, 2006.

Staff Sergeant Sean Tout, Officer-in-Charge of the Domestic Violence Investigations Branch, Waterloo Regional Police Services, and Pamela Mank, Coordinator, Family Violence Project, Waterloo Region, had the opportunity to attend this conference and give a presentation. Registrants at the conference included representatives from British Parliament, Scandinavian countries, Serbia and the European Union. The conference was followed by an international panel discussion and meetings with representatives from the San Diego Family Justice Center, Brooklyn Family Justice Centre, Croydon Family Justice Centre, Croydon Council, Metropolitan Police, Scotland Yard, the Crown Attorney's Office, the Mayor's office, business associations and Family Violence Project Waterloo Region.

The focus of the conference/panel and subsequent meetings was threefold: to share information regarding the need for and success of centres, to support the work being done in Croydon, and to launch an international alliance to encourage the development of such sites world wide. It was also an opportunity to renew acquaintances and to network with others working in the field. "We continue to be impressed by the commitment, passion and interest of people from around the globe in working together to offer care and services to victims and their families," says FVPWR Coordinator Pamela Mank. "Clearly there is a world wide interest in coming together to share best practices to end family violence." The Family Violence Project was proud to be included in this initiative and congratulates Croydon on hosting such a successful event!

A MEASURE OF SUCCESS

"This kind of organization is really the foundation of a family centred community... a place to heal after assault/abuse... a place to teach my children that abuse is not okay and that a family may have more or less members in number, but never abuse."

A Client



WEB RESOURCES



The Family Violence Project has an interim website hosted by Catholic Family

Counselling Centre

Waterloo Region's website: www.cfcchelps.ca. By clicking on "World Peace Begins at Home, Family Violence Project a Co-ordinated Response to Domestic Violence" you will access the home page for the Family Violence Project. We encourage clients and service providers to view this site and, particularly, to use the Resources section. This section offers a wide variety of recommended readings and websites to help people learn more about family violence issues, and provides information on how to find help and/or to be a support for others. If people receive accurate and consistent information about family violence issues they are better able to make good decisions for themselves and their families.

The "Recommended Websites for Persons/Women Being Abused" section contains a bold purple coloured hyperlink entitled "security link." This link will connect users with information from the Assaulted Women's Help line which gives details about how to erase their computer tracks on a basic level when they are searching for family violence information on the computer. As safety is always of primary importance in family violence situations, this is an important tool.

Additions are made regularly to both the website and to the Resources section. The site continues to provide linkages with other web-based resources throughout the world.

THE EFFECTS OF WITNESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

featuring DR. DIANE BENOIT

Community Action Program for Children (CAPC), a Partner at the Family Violence Project, held a workshop for the community on October 16, 2006. The workshop featured well known speaker Dr. Diane Benoit who is an expert on the impact of witnessing violence on children. The workshop was attended by 129 persons representing 27 agencies and groups from across the Region of Waterloo. Workshop participants were spellbound by the presentation and welcomed this learning opportunity with more than 50 individuals expressing an interest in being involved in a "call to action" follow-up meeting.

The "call to action" follow-up meeting was held in mid December and a focus group made plans to develop the next steps.

In addition, as a result of feedback received at the workshop, a successful grant application was submitted to the Family and Children's Services Foundation to develop a framework for assessment and treatment of children who have witnessed or been otherwise

involved in incidents of family violence. Under the direction of a community advisory group, Henny Laurin, Manager of Community Development, Family and Children's Services Waterloo Region, will be working with Dr. Diane Benoit in producing this framework focusing on four key ingredients.

Firstly, the framework will focus on screening and the development of a screening tool to be used by front-line workers. Secondly, it will look at the assessment of children who witness family violence. The option of developing an assessment tool will also be explored. Thirdly, the project will examine available treatment options and needs. The final piece to the framework development will be a community training and educational component. Sustainability and ongoing supports for families in the neighbourhoods where they live will also be addressed.

This project is an important initiative designed to heal children and families and to break the cycle of family violence.

STRANGULATION ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION

On November 28th, Cathie Cullen, a nurse, and Sue Gallagher, a social worker, from the Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre (SA/DVTC), gave a presentation to staff of FVP Partner agencies regarding some of the interventions that their team provides for patients who have experienced strangulation as part of domestic violence. They shared their assessment of strangulation and identified the nature and severity of injuries at the time of strangulation and also physical trauma/injuries that appear later. They distributed a patient self care handout that assists both victims and professionals in identifying the onset of additional symptoms and where to go for further help. The presentation was well received and this information will be made available to staff/service providers on an ongoing basis through contact with SA/DVTC.



FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT/NEW PARTNERS

Attorney General Michael Bryant came to visit the Family Violence Project on November 28th and made a supportive funding announcement. The Ministry of the Attorney General will provide funding for the full-time presence of the assistant Crown Attorney, and a full-time position for Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) at the Project. Currently, Teresa Donnelly is serving as the FVP Crown. In future, however, other Crowns will have the opportunity to perform specific functions related to the

Project. Laurie Black Rooney is the VWAP staff person located at the Project.

The Minister also announced funding for a 15-month Project Coordinator. Pamela Mank, who has been part-time in this position, will assume this full-time role.

The FVP is grateful to Michael Bryant and the Ministry for providing the much-needed funding for these positions and welcomes these new team members to the FVP.

INFORMATION SESSIONS WITH THE CROWN

Beginning in November 2006, The Crown Attorney at the Project, in collaboration with the Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP), has been offering monthly 2-hour group information sessions for clients involved with Domestic Violence Court. The focus of the sessions is to explain the court process and answer general court and justice

related questions. Located at 400 Queen Street South, these sessions were developed in recognition that uncertainty about how the court system works often creates additional stresses on victims and their families.

Referrals for the sessions are received through VWAP staff at the Project and are made by



co-located partners, community-based services, or directly by clients themselves.

SAFETY FIRST

The Women's Crisis Services outreach workers are in a pilot project with Waterloo Regional Police Services to offer personalized safety plans for all victims in cases where charges have been laid. This project is meeting with huge success. As a

result of this project, the number of referrals to WCS has been steadily increasing each month as countless women throughout the Region, who otherwise would be unaware of Women's Crisis Services, are being reached. Connecting with women to discuss

safety planning has also facilitated linking them with other services both at the Project and in the community. There are now two full-time WCS outreach workers dedicated to the Family Violence Project.

INFORMATION SHARING

The Partners have worked collaboratively to develop forms, including Consent to Release Information Forms, to facilitate the sharing of information between Partners and community services.

This sharing is done with client's consent and allows them flexibility in choosing which services with which to share information.



NEW CONTACT NUMBERS

- ⇒ The Elder Abuse Response Team (EART) can be contacted directly at 519-579-4607 (Arlene Groh, Elder Abuse Restorative Justice Resource Consultant or Detective Mike Payne); or the unit supervisor, Sergeant Mark Healey, at 519-579-9668.
- ⇒ The contact number for Victim/Witness Assistance Program office at the Project is 519-571-6160.

■ We recognize that so many of you have developed wonderful programs/projects/relationships in your own communities. We would welcome the opportunity to hear from you! You can contact any of the partner agencies directly and/or reply to this email. We also encourage you to look at our individual partners' websites as well as The Family Violence Project component of the CFCC Website at www.cfcc.ca for information and links to family violence resources.

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www.cfcc.ca