

PATHS NEWS

New Projects Underway at PATHS

by Crystal Giesbrecht, Director of Member Programs & Services

PATHS is currently beginning work on some new initiatives. We are excited about these new projects and believe they will greatly benefit our member agencies, their clients, and communities across Saskatchewan.

PATHS is partnering with YWCA Canada to begin work on the project, *Building Service Capacity: Supporting Access to Justice for Aboriginal Women Dealing with Violence*, along with the YWCAs of Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina. PATHS will work with partners to design community-based, locally and culturally appropriate legal support training and to train staff in Saskatchewan YWCAs and partner agencies with knowledge and understanding of legal services, processes and remedies available to women experiencing violence.

PATHS is also beginning on a new three year project, funded by the Status of Women Canada, titled *Community Planning to Reduce Violence Against Women and Girls in Rural Communities and Small Urban Centres in Canada*. The goal of the project is to enhance opportunities for communities to take action to reduce rates of violence against women and girls in rural settings and small urban centres. The objective of the project is to support women and community partners to work together to develop and implement a community plan that addresses the issue of violence against women and girls, including sexual assault, in the local area.

The *Northern and Rural Community Response to Intimate Partner Violence*, a five year project, is now beginning

its second year. The project, funded by the Social Sciences Humanities Research Council's Community University Research Alliance (SSHRC-CURA), seeks to enhance the understanding of effective community response to intimate partner violence in rural and northern regions of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and the North West Territories. The project seeks to determine the unique needs of victims of intimate partner violence in rural and northern areas, the gaps in services, and how to create and sustain non-violent communities in rural and northern Canada. PATHS is the Primary Community Partner on the project and the Saskatchewan Research Team is led by Mary Hampton from the University of Regina and Diane Delaney from PATHS.

Health Disparity in Saskatoon

by Sandra Nourse, YWCA Saskatoon Crisis Shelter and Residence

On March 13, 2012, an inspiring forum discussion took place at the Saskatoon Farmer's Market called, *Café Scientifique: Minding the Health Gap*. There was a panel of presenters, including Doctor Jennifer Cushon who presented findings from the research report, *Health Disparity in Saskatoon: Analysis to Intervention*. There was an impressive turnout of professionals from social, political, health and education backgrounds.

Doctor Cushon began by sharing the statistical differences between groups who access health care in Saskatoon, including those in the 6 lowest income neighbourhoods and the 5 most affluent neighbourhoods, as well as children, teens and adults,

Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people. She also drew upon statistics of those who live in "food deserts" with limited access to healthy foods. The statistic that Dr. Cushon shared that struck me the most was the rate at which elementary school children in low income neighbourhoods considered suicide, compared to children the same age in affluent neighbourhoods. This figure alone is an indication that change is needed immediately.

Next, Vanessa Charles, an advocate and member of the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition spoke of her firsthand experiences as a low-income person trying to perform

...continued on page 2



Inside this issue:

New Projects Underway	1
Health Disparity	1
Health Disparity— cont.	2
Why I'm Too Thin: Poem	2
Survivor Story	2
Violence in Viet Nam	3
Member Directory	4
Family Violence in SK	4

Health Disparity in Saskatoon— continued

...continued from page 1

magic acts with money in order to keep on top of basic needs such as rent, medical expenses, food and transportation. As people who work in transition houses and shelters, we know this reality exists too often for so many people we work with.

Senator Hugh Segal was also present on the panel. Senator Segal focused much of his discussion around the point that if we simply gave people in poverty adequate incomes, many of the negative effects of poverty would eliminate themselves. Our system in Canada appears to be ruled by myths such as - “we cannot trust poor people with money”. The welfare system as it is right now costs a great deal of money and it is not adequately meeting the needs of the people who use it. Senator Segal said that, “We have

to break the mould on the way we address poverty.”

During a break before questions and comments from the audience, everyone had an opportunity to add ideas and actions to large poster board stating what they thought (head), what they felt (heart), and what actions they would like to take (feet). This really got me thinking about how easy it is to get caught in the cycle at work each day helping individual people (which is so important), but imagining how my coworkers and I could make an even bigger difference if we devoted 10% of our work day to working toward macro social change. Unless we work to improve the systems we will never be able to break the cycle of poverty, homelessness and violence, as well as all other disparities these issues influence.

During the discussion, a participant made a point that there are over 50 non-profit organizations working within the core neighbourhood of Saskatoon. The discussion closed on the point that there was a great deal of influence in the room that day and that to reduce poverty and health disparities we need to unite with one common voice and one common message to require our governments to act. We need to decide together, “what type of society do we wish to become” (Lemstra & Neudorf, 2008).

Reference:

Lemstra M, Neudorf C. *Health disparity in Saskatoon: analysis to intervention*. Saskatoon: Saskatoon Health Region; 2008.

Story of A Survivor from Viet Nam

“My husband beat me and caused bruises to my leg that lasted for months. He was keeping a pipe in his hands for smoking; he threw it towards me – to my hip and breast... He beat me then he pulled me like a dog from the gate to inside the house. My hair was in a mess... My god, he took the small chair next to the dining table or he took a brick to beat me... He took off his shoes to throw at my face, which was painful. I ran away but I could not run fast enough. He took the chair to throw towards me. I managed to hide behind the doors and the chair hit the door and fell down. My neighbours heard the noise and they came over. They held his hands and told me to run away. I ran away and he threw bricks behind me...”



Where was the photo on the cover taken?

Post your guesses on our Facebook page or email paths.services@sasktel.net

Why I'm Too Thin

Poem by a Client of Moose Jaw Transition House

Don't ask me why I'm too thin
My protruding collar bones
Are the chest plate in my suit of armour
That keep your violent sword at bay.

Reflecting insults, threats, your painful words
Mean nothing against my rack of ribs.
In my frailty I am strong, laughing!
In the swollen face of your angry, hurtful phrases

Don't ask me why I'm too thin
I can't fight you off of me, but
You can't see, I'm doing it inch by inch
When I refuse to gorge my vacant vessel.

Less desirable, less compliant, less.
Just less. You've greedily eaten my soul.
And I'll wear my empty husk proudly
On the outside, just to tell what you have done.

Don't ask me why I'm too thin.
My breasts have gone, no need to nurture.
The death of our love is as plain as my face
Sunken in, tortured, carried on my shoulder blades.

My last defensive mechanism in this war of wills
The spine of my ship, visible and sharp, bent in hate.
My knees, jutting, like arrows loosed have carried me
Straight to this intervention. I'm too thin you say?
Don't you dare ask me why I'm too thin.

Domestic Violence in Viet Nam

by Vu Thanh Van, PATHS MSW Practicum Student

In Viet Nam, although domestic violence is widespread, the problem is very much hidden. According to the national study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam in 2010, one in three (34%) of ever-married Vietnamese women report that they have suffered physical or sexual violence from their husbands at some time in their lives. Meanwhile, almost two-thirds of Vietnamese women believe it is acceptable for men to beat their wives. When all three main types of partner violence – physical, sexual and emotional – are considered, more than half (58 per cent) of Vietnamese women report experiencing at least one type of domestic violence in their lifetime. Besides the stigma and shame causing women to remain silent, many women think that violence in relationships is “normal” and that women should tolerate and endure what is happening to them for the sake of family harmony (GSO, 2010).

Domestic violence is still not widely considered to be a criminal act that should be sanctioned in the same way as other crimes in Viet Nam. Under Article 104 of the Vietnamese Penal Code, husbands who physically injure their wives can be charged with intentional infliction of injury. In practice, however, there are two conditions that must be fulfilled before this can occur. Firstly, the woman must have suffered injuries amounting to an “infirmity rate” of between 11% and 30%, as assessed by a medical doctor. Secondly, and perhaps most important in terms of blockages to women’s freedom from violence, the woman is required to file with the police charges against her

partner. According to information received, police will not usually arrest wife batterers without an explicit request from the woman, regardless of the degree of injury that she has suffered (OMTC, 2001). Due to the complicated legal procedure and conditions and social and cultural pressures, most women only reveal their experiences of domestic violence when they are seriously injured and have to be hospitalized or they are seeking a divorce and indicate the domestic violence as evidence of marital breakdown. As a consequence, 90 per cent of women suffering domestic violence do not seek help and 50 per cent of women do not dare to tell anyone (UNFPA, 2011).

In March 2007, the Viet Nam Women’s Union established the first shelter model to support victims of domestic violence. This shelter was named “Ngoi Nha Binh Yen”, meaning “Peace House”, with the aim to provide peace to vulnerable women. Clients living in this shelter are provided with a full social welfare service package, ranging from counselling, to child-day care, shelter, vocational training and assistance to re establish themselves, and in many cases their children, in housing in the community. To date, three shelters have been set up, of which two shelters focus on providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and the other supports returned victims of trafficking crimes. Each shelter provides accommodation for 15 to 20 women at a time with a maximum of 5 months stay for victims of domestic violence and 18 months for trafficking victims. After leaving the shelter, the clients of both types of shelter can participate in a 24-month sup-

port program where they continue to receive counselling services, outreach follow-up support as well as vocational training activities. Since its establishment, Peace House has received 284 and 181 clients of domestic violence and trafficking respectively (Peace House, 2012).

Peace House plays an important role in the fight against domestic violence in Viet Nam in its service advocacy role. Peace House in conjunction with the Women’s Union seeks to highlight the problem of domestic violence within the community. Staff from both organizations are involved in public education campaigns to reduce the incidence of domestic violence and to encourage women to seek assistance if domestic violence occurs.

After a five year period of implementation, Peace House has been recognized as the most effective model in providing a practical intervention support for women and children who are victims of domestic violence or trafficking, from all over the country.

References:

- OMTC, (2001). *Violence against Women in Viet Nam. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*. Geneva.
- Peace House - Ngoi Nha Binh Yen (2012). *Shelter for Women Who are Victims of Gender-based Violence*.
- UNFPA (2011, November 14). *90 per cent of women suffering domestic violence do not get help*. UNFPA in the news. Retrieved from <http://inthenews.unfpa.org/?p=11678>
- Viet Nam General Statistic Office (2010). *National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam*.

“Little progress can be made by merely attempting to repress what is evil; our great hope lies in developing what is good.”—
Calvin Coolidge

Next PATHS Newsletter:
September 2012
Send Submissions to
paths.services@sasktel.net

And in the meantime,
visit us on the web:

www.abusehelplines.org



Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services



@PATHS_SK

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”—

Dr. Seuss, The Lorax



The Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan



Contact PATHS:

2505 11th Avenue
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 0K6
Phone: 306-522-3515
Fax: 306-522-0830

PATHS Staff:

Diane Delaney,
Coordinator
Email: paths@sasktel.net

Crystal Giesbrecht,
Director of Member
Programs & Services
Email: paths.services@sasktel.net

Vu Thanh Van,
PATHS MSW Practicum Student
Email: paths.student@sasktel.net

www.abusehelplines.org

Member Agencies

Battlefords Interval House
(306) 445-2742

Envision Counselling and Support Centre
Weyburn (306) 842-8821
Estevan (306) 637-4004

Hudson Bay Family and Support Centre
(306) 865-3064

Moose Jaw Transition House
(306) 693-6511

North East Outreach and Support Services
(306) 752-9464

Piwapan Women's Centre
(306) 425-3900

Project Safe Haven
(306) 782-0676

Qu'Appelle Safe Haven Shelter
(306) 322-6881

Regina Transition House
(306) 757-2096

Regina YWCA Isabel Johnson Shelter
(306) 525-2141

Saskatoon Interval House
(306) 244-0185

Saskatoon YWCA
(306) 244-2844

Shelwin House
(306) 783-7233

SOFIA House
(306) 565-2537

Southwest Crisis Services
(306) 778-3692

Waskoosis Safe Shelter
(306) 236-5570

West Central Family Support Centre
(306) 463-6655

WISH Safe House
(306) 543-0493

"The quality of life is determined by its activities"—Aristotle

Family Violence in Saskatchewan

by Crystal Giesbrecht, Director of Member Programs & Services

The report *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2010* was released from Statistics Canada on May 22, 2012.

Statistics on family violence in Saskatchewan from the report state that:

- For both family and non-family violence, rates were highest in the territories, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in 2010.
- The territories, along with Manitoba and Saskatchewan had the highest rates of family-related homicide in 2010.
- Saskatchewan reported 6,534 victims of family violence in 2010.
- Saskatchewan reported 7,036 victims of intimate partner violence in 2010.
- At the provincial level, Manitoba and Saskatchewan recorded the highest overall rates of intimate partner violence, including intimate partner homicides for both male and female victims. Saskatchewan, however, was the only province to report a higher rate of male intimate partner homicides compared to female intimate partner homicides.
- Saskatchewan reported 28 female victims of intimate partner homicide and 30 male victims of intimate partner homicide over a ten year period, 2000- 2010.
- Saskatchewan reported highest provincial rate of family violence against children and youth in 2010.
- At the provincial level, western provinces consistently recorded the highest rates of family violence against seniors, without exception. Rates of non-family violence against seniors in 2010 were highest in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

The report is available in full from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2012001/article/11643-eng.pdf>