



*"Building the smallest democracies at the heart of society."
The United Nations: The International Year of the Family, 1994*

Agreement# 40063171

Study on Elder Abuse and/or Neglect

✂ ✂ ✂
by Kerstin Roger



"Elderly people aren't dumb; they've worked hard their whole lives [and] they know what goes on. My mother is 94 and she knows what goes on." Older Adult Participant

In 2006-07, RESOLVE was asked by the Province of Manitoba (Manitoba Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat) to conduct a pilot study on what Manitobans knew about, and experienced as important, regarding the protection of older adults from abuse and/or neglect. The goal of the study was to establish key strengths and weaknesses of existing legislation, research, and service provision regarding elder abuse and/or neglect in Manitoba and across Canada. This newsletter article introduces key aspects of this issue for Canadians, and what may have motivated the study in particular. The study has been described in more detail and is currently in press as an article in *Journal of Elder Abuse and/or Neglect*.

We know that our aging population is growing in numbers. For example, Novak and Campbell (2006) project that the persons in Canada aged 65 to 74 will more than double between 1998 and 2041. According to the Manitoba Law Reform Commission (1999), particularly vulnerable groups in Canada may include older adults who are Aboriginal, immigrants, disabled, isolated, and/or women. Other vulnerable groups may include older adults experiencing some confusion, older adults who have been diagnosed with dementia, and older adults who are nearing the end of life (Roger, 2006).

We still have very little research on this topic, although in discussion with front line workers (e.g. home care, nurses, family) we do know that older adults are at risk. Some of the primary areas of concern for abuse and/or neglect of older adults include (a) physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse; and (b) active and passive neglect. In the first category, we may see physical or verbal intimidation or aggression, shaking or inappropriate handling, and unwanted sexual touching. Examples of financial abuse include the withholding of money, misuse of power of attorney,

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Domestic Violence and the Justice System in Canada



by Jane Ursel



A few decades ago it was not unusual for police to respond to a call for help in a domestic violence incident by walking the abusive partner around the block and warning them to behave. Arrests for assaulting a spouse or family member were

rare. Public attitudes about partner or family violence at the time suggested these were “private matters” in which people should not interfere. However, times have changed and some of the most significant changes have been occurring in the justice system in Canada. One important area of change has been the introduction of specialized domestic violence courts in the criminal justice system.

In 1990, Winnipeg was the first community in Canada to introduce specialized courts for domestic violence. Specialization was a response to public concern that in those rare instances when an abuser would be arrested these cases would seldom proceed to sentencing. There was a strong sense that the criminal justice system could and should do more to stop violence in people’s homes. It was often expressed by women’s advocates that it is the only crime in which the victim and the accused have an ongoing relationship, sharing a house and often raising children together. Advocates for specialization felt that courts needed to be sensitive to the special circumstances involved in domestic violence cases. ‘you can’t treat a wife abuse case in the same way you would a bank robbery’.

Within the first few years the Winnipeg Family Violence Court (FVC) discovered that specialization leads to greater reporting by victims and a higher rate of arrests by police. It rapidly became one of the busiest courts in the city, today there are 17 prosecutors in the Domestic Violence Unit to handle cases in the Winnipeg FVC. It was seven years before another province, Ontario began to introduce specialized courts. Today Ontario has over 50 specialized domestic violence courts in towns and cities across the province.

Currently, we have 5 provinces, Manitoba, Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick and one territory, the Yukon, who have one or more specialized courts in their jurisdiction. All jurisdictions with specialized courts report that the arrest rates appear to rise and the volume of court cases go up. In addition to experiencing an increasing volume of cases these courts share a commitment to, victim safety, early intervention, rigorous prosecution and rehabilitation. Despite these common goals, studies reveal that each community tends to structure the court process and priorities according to the specific characteristics of the community. Smaller communities with a lower volume of cases often have the accused return to court a number of times after sentencing to report to the judge on the progress of their treatment. This is referred to as a judicial review and is practiced in the Yukon and one Saskatchewan court. In other cities where the volume of cases make judicial reviews difficult, there is considerable emphasis on early referral to treatment, as practiced in the Calgary court.

In the history of justice 17 years is not a long time, however, ongoing studies of these specialized courts suggest they are a more effective form of intervention than the former general criminal courts. The introduction of most specialized courts is also associated with an expansion of treatment programs for offenders and the increased victim services within the justice system. These changes suggest that the justice system is taking a more comprehensive approach to the problem than they did in the past and that is a good development. ☞

INTRODUCTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURTS IN CANADA

Manitoba, 1990

Ontario, 1997

Alberta, 1999

Yukon, 2001

Saskatchewan 2003

New Brunswick 2007

Manitoba Update



by Jocelyn Proulx

New Realities: An Evaluation of a Wolseley Family Place Initiative

In November 2007 RESOLVE completed a process evaluation of New Realities, a new program from Wolseley Family Place. This program provides families in the West Broadway area with counselling and facilitates their access to community resources for family violence, problematic substance use and other presenting issues. Within the first 18 months of the project, 27 families were assisted, with many accessing services for several months. The harm reduction approach taken and the inclusiveness of the program are ideally suited to respond to the vulnerability of the families served. The program also trains and utilizes the skills of peer mentors, part of its community capacity building efforts within the neighbourhood. Positive effects of the program were reported by participants and peer mentors. For more information about New Realities please contact Sharon Taylor at Wolseley Family Place, (204)788-8141.

Experiences of Violence in the Lives of Girls

In April 2007 the Alliance of Research Centres on Family Violence obtained SSHRC funding to complete a study of experiences of violence in the lives of girls. RESOLVE Manitoba is the central project site, with additional research sites in B.C., Ontario, and the Maritimes and potential research sites in Alberta and Quebec. This project examines the impact of disability, immigrant status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, age, and appearance on experiences of violence. Youth perceptions of the cause of the violence, who perpetrated the violence, whether the violence was disclosed, the emotional

impact of the violence and youth resilience will be investigated. Currently RESOLVE Manitoba is in the process of piloting the instrument constructed to assess experiences of violence within schools and community youth programs. The national study will begin in September 2008.

Protection Order Study

In 1999 Manitoba introduced new civil legislation to provide for emergency access to 'Protection Orders' for cases of domestic violence and stalking. There were a high number of applications in the first few years, however, by 2002 the number of applications began to fall. At the same time service providers began to express concern about the accessibility of protection orders. Based on consultations with service providers and lawyers in the community, the Manitoba Justice Department amended the legislation to improve accessibility for people at risk or experiencing abuse or being stalked. These amendments were implemented in late 2005. RESOLVE, was funded by the Status of Women Canada to conduct a study to determine the impact of the amendments to the legislation. We wanted to know whether the changes, both in the legislation and in the administration of the Domestic Violence and Stalking Act, would make a difference. We were interested in the number of applications and their status, whether orders were granted or

denied. The RESOLVE study compared pre-amendment applications in 2004 with post-amendment applications in 2006 in Winnipeg. Our findings indicate a 200% increase in applications and a 70% increase in the rate at which applicants are granted an order. Further analysis is underway and we hope to have a full report for interested readers posted on our web site this summer. ☘



Saskatchewan Update



by Jane Ursel

"It is a rare opportunity that I have to contribute to the Saskatchewan Update and it is a privilege to do so. My pleasant task is to announce the new Saskatchewan Academic Coordinator and to thank our outgoing Academic Coordinator." Jane Ursel



Mary Hampton

Mary Hampton, Professor of Psychology at the University of Regina is the newly appointed Academic Coordinator of RESOLVE Saskatchewan. She began her three year appointment in January of this year. We are pleased to say that Mary is no stranger to RESOLVE. She is the Saskatchewan co-investigator of the RESOLVE Healing Journey Project and the provincial co-investigator of the National Justice Observatory study involving all three RESOLVE Centres and the Alliance of Family Violence Research Centres across Canada. Mary also co-edited the sixth book in the RESOLVE publication series with her colleague Nikki Gerrard. The book entitled *"Intimate Partner Violence: Reflections on Experience, Theory and Policy"* is being used in a number of university courses across Canada.

Some of our readers will remember that Mary was recently featured in our newsletter (September 2007) when her Feminist Mentorship Award from the Canadian Psychological Association Women's Section was announced. In addition to being a greatly admired teacher and mentor to her graduate and undergraduate students, Mary is also a highly regarded researcher. She has a strong track record of conducting research in partnership with a wide range of community groups over the past 17 years, first at the University of Alaska and for the past 15 years at the University of Regina. Mary is well known and well regarded among academics and service providers in Saskatchewan and among health researchers across Canada. She will bring a much valued health research expertise to RESOLVE. On a personal note I must say what a wonderful, supportive colleague Mary is to work with and how delighted the RESOLVE Council is to welcome her to 'our world'. I would like to thank the members of the recruitment committee, Wendee Kubik and Maria Hendrika from Regina, and Nikki Gerrard, Karen Chad and Sheila Denysiuk from Saskatoon for their commitment to recruiting the best candidate for this position. There are lots of new challenges in store as the RESOLVE Saskatchewan office moves to the University of Regina, please note the new contact information on the back of our newsletter. ☘

Sheila Carr-Stewart, Faculty of Education at the University of Saskatchewan is the outgoing Academic Coordinator of RESOLVE. Sheila took up the position in 2004 and completed her three-year term in November of 2007. The three years of her leadership saw a number of new research projects added to RESOLVE Saskatchewan, including the ambitious study on femicide in Saskatchewan by Deb Farden and her team entitled *"In Each Other's Hands"*. There is also an active research team in Saskatoon working on the Healing Journey. Sheila's legacy to RESOLVE was to forge a strong cooperative relationship between researchers at the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan. Her support for students and researchers at the University of Regina has facilitated the development of two strong units of research on family violence and is a model for all of our Centres to follow. Thank you Sheila for this leadership and your service to RESOLVE. Good luck in your new administrative role as Associate Dean of the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. ☘



Sheila Carr-Stewart

Alberta Update



by Leslie M. Tutty

RESOLVE Alberta recently completed a project partnering with Calgary's Alliance to End Violence Action Committee Against Bullying and Harassment (ACAB&H). The research was a process evaluation of the first two phases of this coordinated community approach to address these social issues. The project received funding from Alberta's Community Incentives Fund in 2005. Since then, a significant progress has been made towards achieving the project objectives, several of which are listed below.

- 575 service providers, teachers and other professionals have attended professional development workshops related to bullying and harassment.
- 150 Faculty of Education students attended the initial professional development workshop on bullying and harassment. (RESOLVE Alberta evaluated the training)
- The Continuum of Services, which lists the youth violence prevention programs available in Calgary, the Child & Youth Resource Inventory and the Domestic Violence Resource Inventory were updated, uploaded on the web site and distributed to schools and community agencies.

The process evaluation consisted of interviewing eighteen members of the ACAB&H, all of whom had been involved with ACAB&H in various capacities for lengths of time from a few months to more than two years. The interviewees identified a number of strengths and several important concerns about the ACAB&H process. One of the most important challenges was maintaining committee membership, which resulted in inconsistent results and discouragement. Concerns about the committee vision during its Phases I and II, ran the gamut from being "too broad" to "too narrow" to "unclear".



Nevertheless, the committee members mentioned the major project outcomes, such as the "How was Your Day" web site and the Community Resource Directory, with pride. The committee meeting structure, that utilized presentations in the large groups and subsequently breaking out into task-oriented committees, was seen as effective, except when the membership was too small to make the work of the task teams viable.

The timing of the evaluation, initiated shortly after Nicola Youle, the previous program coordinator had resigned and before the new coordinator, Linda White, started in mid-November, is fortuitous. The feedback and comments from current and former members of the ACAB&H constitute a number of suggestions to improve the work of the group and provide a slate of early activities for the new coordinator.

This community approach to addressing bullying and harassment represents a unique model and the group had a number of significant accomplishments. More information on ACAB&H and copies of the evaluation can be obtained from Linda White, Child and Youth Coordinator at the Alliance to End Violence (phone: (403) 283-3013 ext. 230 or by e-mail lwhite@endviolence.ca). ☘

... (cont'd on page 6)

"Study on Elder Abuse..." ... (cont'd from page 1)

and/or controlling an older person's finances. In the second category, it may be the case that neglect occurs, and this implies an omission of care and a failure to attend to the basic necessities of an older adult. This most commonly includes neglect in the area of meals and food provision, medical or physical care.

There are several hypotheses about why abuse and/or neglect of older adults occur. In some cases, abuse and/or neglect of older adults is thought to be a continuation of previous and long-term existing abuse against a person who has become an older adult; it is also understood at times to be a result of caregiver stress (Hawranik and McKean, 2004). Abuse may also be a transfer of abusive behaviours to a parent, learned by a child who was abused by that person, who is now an older adult (Statistics Canada, 2005); or, it may be a sign of intergenerational conflicts.

It is evident that this topic raises basic questions regarding an older person's right to self-determination (including the choice to remain in an abusive relationship by choice) and society's desire to intervene. The need to find this balance is felt most keenly in the process of developing social supports and legislation that is intended to be effective, but not intrusive and paternalistic. Any legislation dealing with abuse and/or neglect of older adults must be careful to avoid stereotyping those who may be victims of abuse and/or neglect. Stereotyping can have the effect of compounding violence, either by not listening to the victim (thereby ignoring reports of abuse) or by creating disenfranchisement (thereby not allowing the older adult to have control over their own affairs) (Crichton et al, 1999).

More research is required in this area to better understand how health care and social service providers can effectively support older adults, providing resources and counseling, without being paternalistic. ☘

"Alberta Update" ... (cont'd from page 5)**RESOLVE Alberta People**

Over the past months we added several new staff members to the RESOLVE Alberta office. Swartika Nair and Mallory Faul (more recently) are working on the Evaluation of Calgary's Specialized Domestic Violence Trial Court and Monitoring of the HomeFront Specialized First Appearance Court funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre and the Alberta Law Foundation. Both came from the Justice Studies Program at Calgary's Mount Royal College. Since October, Sarah Anne LeDrew, who has a B.A. in Psychology, has been working on literature reviews for various projects. Welcome to each of these new employees!



Sarah Anne LeDrew and Swartika Nair, new RAs for RESOLVE Alberta

Tracy Braun left RESOLVE Alberta to take a position as Executive Director of the Bow Cliff Seniors organization in Calgary, and Jocey Bonneycastle accepted a position with the Calgary Police Service as a district crime analyst. Both Tracey and Jocey have been with RESOLVE for the past two years and have contributed significantly to our research agenda. All the best to Tracy and Jocey in their new positions. ☘

We made some changes to the RESOLVE Newsletter. We changed the color and type of paper, and we would like to know what you think! Please send us your response by e-mail, and if you would also like to receive the RESOLVE newsletter electronically send your e-mail address to:

newsedit@cc.umanitoba.ca



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Community Action, Research & Education (CARE) Grant Program

Call for Letters of Intent - 2008 Deadline - March 20, 2008

The CARE Grant Program furthers *Prairieaction's* goal to support community-based research into solutions and abuse. The Program funds grassroots, community-based organizations to do research projects that identify potential strategies, models and methods to ultimately eliminate the issues and impact of family violence and abuse.

Letters of Intent must be received by e-mail **no later than 4:00 pm (Mountain Standard Time) on March 20, 2008.**

For more information about the Call for Letters of Intent, visit *Prairieaction's* web site at www.prairieactionfoundation.ca

If you have any questions please contact: Pat McInnis, Executive Director
Prairieaction Foundation (403) 948-7390
E-mail: prairie@ucalgary.ca

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS



September 8 - 11, 2008 - ACWS is hosting the 1st World Conference of Women's Shelters in 2008. This event will present a new opportunity for family violence works in Alberta and around the world to learn from international experts and others.

Early Bird Registration Begins March 8, 2008

Shaw Conference Centre
9797 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta Canada
T5J 1N9

www.womenshelter.ca



May 22-23, 2008 - Winnipeg Narrative Therapy Workshop "Towards Collective and Community Practices: Narrative Ways of Linking Lives with Groups and Communities" Guest speakers: Cheryl White and David Denborough. For more information on registration go to www.winnipegnarrativetherapy.com or call (204) 229-7720. **Early Bird Enrollment ends March 20, 2008**

May 6, 2008 - Case Management "Collaboration and Communication" 11th Annual Symposium. Holiday Inn South, 1330 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB For further registration information call (204) 474-8016 or go to www.umanitoba.ca/extended/coned/cmc.

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Supporting solutions to violence and abuse

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New President at Prairieaction Foundation

✂ ✂ ✂
by Pat McInnis

At the Prairieaction Foundation Annual General Meeting in Calgary in November, Sheila Denysiuk handed off the position of Foundation President to Dianna Waffle. Dianna joined the Board in 2002 and is committed to raising an additional \$350,000 for the Foundation's Momentum Campaign by June 2008 in order to access a \$250,000 anonymous donation. The Board of Prairieaction Foundation will continue to look to Sheila Denysiuk for her leadership in the implementation of a three-year strategic plan and the completion of our Momentum Campaign.

✂ ✂ ✂

Prairieaction Foundation Special Events

Prairieaction Foundation 2007 Visionary Leadership Award: The 2007 Visionary Leadership Award was presented to Margaret Newall on November 6, 2007. Margaret was acknowledged for her role in establishing a new and unique approach for the financial support needed to bring together academics and community-based organizations to do results-oriented research into violence and abuse.

Margaret Newall, left, 2007 Visionary Leadership Award Recipient is congratulated by Dianna Waffle, newly-elected President, Prairieaction Foundation



An Evening with Calgary's Bravest Men – Calgary, Alberta: John Duhault, Prairieaction Board Member, participated on the organizing committee for Calgary Counselling Centre's event, "An Evening with Calgary's Bravest Men". On November 1, 2007 almost 200 people attended a dinner with guest speaker Thomas Roberts, Emmy nominated journalist and former CNN co-anchor. The Calgary's Bravest Men Award was presented to Al Duerr to recognize his efforts to bring the issue of abuse onto the political agenda in Calgary.

RESOLVE Manitoba

~ Jane Ursel ~
Director (Academic)

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