

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

Agreement# 40063171

"You're Not Alone": Calgary Counselling Centre's Therapy Groups for Women Abused by Intimate Partners



by Leslie M. Tutty and Robbie Babins-Wagner

"I realized that what happened to me happens to others as well. What I experienced is not acceptable."

The quote above is from a woman who was a member of the *You're Not Alone* (YNA) group offered by the Calgary Counselling Centre (CCC). Women whose partners abuse them are often isolated and may not know what types of assistance are most helpful. Group intervention is commonly offered to intimate partner violence (IPV) victims to address such clinical issues as depression, anxiety, and trauma that often stem from being abused by an intimate partner and to give women opportunities to learn more about the nature of partner violence and make choices about their futures.

Calgary Counselling is a community-based agency that has provided family violence programs and services since 1981. Programs include the *Responsible Choices for Men* program for men who use physical or psychological violence and control tactics in intimate relationships, and *Responsible Choices for Women* for women deemed to be the primary abusers.

First offered in 1986, You're Not Alone groups for women abused by intimate partners are conducted over 14 weeks in weekly two-hour sessions. Groups include six-to-twelve women, with an unstructured psychotherapeutic and a structured psycho-educational component. The interventions are informed by a narrative approach by Australian family therapist **Alan Jenkins** and, more recently, **Allan Wade's** theories of resistance to violence. Groups are facilitated by a female-male team, with at least one leader a senior therapist experienced with domestic violence and group work. A mixed

gender team models conflict negotiation between men and women, and confronts stereotypes about gender roles.

A recent evaluation of the groups, now published in the *Journal of Family Violence*, examined characteristics of women in the YNA groups, compared those who completed the groups to those who did not, and looked at how well the completers fared on a number of mental health variables before and after group.

Women who started the YNA group all self-reported clinically significant mental health concerns, depression, and self-esteem. Trauma symptoms and anxiety were similarly concerning, although measures used have no clinical cut-off scores. Of the women who started the You're Not Alone group, a little more than half (214 or 56.5%) finished. Women with lower income and with a psychiatric history were less likely to complete, as were women with higher depression, clinical stress, and mental health symptoms.

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RESOLVE Awards



by Jane Urssel



From left: **Andrea Silverstone** & **Nicole Letourneau**



From left: **Diane Delaney** & **Karen Wood**



From left: **Suhad Bisharat** & **Jane Urssel**

This year, at Research Day in Regina, we introduced the RESOLVE Award. This award is given to a member of our community, in each province, in recognition of their distinguished contribution to creating homes and communities safe from interpersonal violence and abuse. The inspiration for this award came from our close working relationship with services providers in the field of violence and abuse. In each of our prairie provinces we have a wide range of community agencies—from shelters and second stage programs to counselling services and advocacy. Work in this field is difficult, typically involving long hours and a very unique skill set; compassion for clients, persistence in the pursuit of funding, and a willingness to speak out and be counted when circumstances put individuals and families at risk.

Many of the staff of these agencies are members of our Steering Committees, and give of their very valuable and 'in demand' time to encourage research that is program and policy specific. They are committed to the growth and development

of services in their field and see research as an important component of that development. Often program directors and service workers in the field of interpersonal violence are the unsung heroes in our community. We felt it was time to sing their praises and create an award that would acknowledge their outstanding contributions to our communities. Alberta's award recipient is **Andrea Silverstone**, Executive Director of Peer Support Services for Abused Women in Calgary, (see Page 5 for a brief biography). The Saskatchewan recipient is **Diane Delaney**, former Coordinator of the Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services, in Saskatchewan, (see Page 4 of our September 2015 issue for a brief biography). Manitoba's award recipient is **Suhad Bisharat**, Executive Director of The Laurel Centre in Winnipeg (see Page 3 of our May 2015 newsletter for a brief biography). In addition to their remarkable work in our communities, all three recipients are active members of the RESOLVE Steering Committee in their province. ❀

Manitoba Update: *Buying Sex is Not a Sport*



by Jane Ursel

On November 29, 2015, Winnipeg will host the Grey Cup. While many of us are planning parties or pulling out our long johns and down jackets for the day, a number of Government departments and NGOs are planning a public awareness campaign. Most people who attend large sporting events, like the Grey Cup, are only interested in that event. Unfortunately, however, human trafficking and sexual exploitation tend to become more common with the large influx of visitors (primarily men) in the host city. Law

enforcement agencies report a spike in the number of online adds and social media posts related to human trafficking in the weeks leading up to these events. To counteract this pattern the Manitoba Sporting Events Safety Working Group is launching a month long public awareness campaign: **Buying Sex is Not a Sport**. This initiative is aimed at helping victims of Human Trafficking, and others impacted by sexual exploitation in Manitoba.

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Introducing Our Steering Committee Members

Sharon Taylor

by Pamela Mason



Sharon Taylor

Social justice is a way of life for **Sharon Taylor**, Executive Director, Wolseley Family Place, a well known family resource centre in west central Winnipeg. She has supported justice and inclusion for marginalized people; women, youth, children, and individuals who live with a variety of abilities and sexualities in all of her work. Sharon has sought to level the playing field through the provision of necessary resources and through the development of policies that recognize differing needs. She has also served as an able spokesperson for those who are not often given the opportunity to speak for themselves.

Sharon's commitment and compassion has been recognized by her peers, and she has been the recipient of many awards. Her awards include the 2009 Provincial Council of Women Award for Years of Community Service for Women, the 2010 Best Beautiful Women Award for Community Service, the 2011 Provincial Award of Distinction from the Manitoba Partners for Addictions Awareness, the 2012 Ruby Award and the 2012 Diamond

Jubilee Medal for work with women and children. In addition, Sharon has been nominated in 2000, 2006, 2014 for the YM/YWCA Women of Distinction Awards, for the 2011 Hero Award for Mental Health, and for the 2011 Mary Wolfe Award. In return, Sharon was the driving force behind the 2011 Community Heroes Award, which honoured community members who went above and beyond. Sharon has served on nearly a dozen coalitions and boards. She is sought after to provide presentations at conferences and meetings, to participate on advisory committees, contribute to think tanks, and sit at policy development tables across the country.

During her 18 years as Executive Director at Wolseley Family Place, Sharon has worked tirelessly to ensure equitable access to resources for families with small children, bridging the gap between existing services and community needs. She has advocated for prevention and harm reduction practices, the promotion of wellness and optimal development, cultural sensitivity, respect, empowerment, interdependence, and community development. Sharon's leadership has supported her team to provide a broad spectrum programs and services that holistically support each determinant of health, including medical, social, cultural, and familial factors. Winnipeg west central is a kinder and more supportive community as a result of Sharon's hard work and inspired leadership. ❀

Saskatchewan Update: *RESOLVE Research Day*



by Ann Bishop

Once again RESOLVE Research Day was a great success. The conference theme was *Intimate Partner Violence: Engaging Beyond the Survivor*, and we saw 100 participants from the three prairie provinces enjoy 13 sessions, all interesting and informative. **Mary Hampton**, Academic Research Coordinator for RESOLVE Saskatchewan, did a great job leading the conference, and **Ann Bishop** and her graduate student volunteers had everything run smoothly.

Our keynote speakers were a hit with **Judge Marylynn Beaton** speaking about her experiences with Saskatchewan's Domestic Violence Court, and **Ms Roz Kelsey**, faculty member in Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina, spoke of her involvement with the *Man Up Against Violence* movement and her experiences with the young men in her faculty and across the University who are committed to doing their part in ending violence against women.



Judge Marylynn Beaton

There were several presentations about the SSHRC/CURA project entitled *Rural and Northern Community Response to Intimate Partner Violence*. Other sessions dealt with a myriad of topics related to all types of violence against women and children.

Elder Betty McKenna, RESOLVE Saskatchewan's guiding elder, "womaned" our healing room again this year and Ann Bishop, conference organizer, said it was great to see people use the space. Participants came to de-stress, find a quiet moment, and talk about their conference experiences.

RESOLVE-Saskatchewan asks each presenter to provide their PowerPoint presentations, or other materials, which will then be posted on the conference website at www2.uregina.ca/resolve/ResearchDay2015.html. If you didn't make it to the conference, this might be a good way to learn more. ☘

Introducing Our Steering Committee Members



Amy Balfour

Born and raised in Regina, **Amy Balfour** has dedicated her time working to reduce victimization and harm to persons at risk, particularly youth. Amy graduated from the University of Regina in 2005, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Justice, and a Master of Arts degree in 2008. Her graduate work focused on youth involved in the sex trade, where she learned the complexities of trauma from those with whom she worked. Through Amy's work at the Paul Dojack Youth Centre, and then at the Ranch Ehrlo Society, she learned to admire the strength and perseverance of young people. Interpersonal violence, trauma, and abuse were just a few barriers children and youth presented while in care and in the community.

Amy has been employed at the Regina Police Service since 2009, and was recently promoted to management in 2015. When not at work or teaching at the University of Regina, she also volunteers her time to the University of Regina Research Ethics Board, and RESOLVE. As a Certified Law Enforcement Planner, a member of the International Association of the Law Enforcement Planners, the International Association of Crime

Analysts, and the Canadian Criminal Justice Association, Amy continues to be dedicated to the improvement of police practice through evidence-based research and analysis.

Her experience with youth and adults as offenders and victims has offered many opportunities to learn, grow, and support those in need. An avid animal lover, successful business owner, and wife, Amy looks forward to new challenges and opportunities while continuing to serve her community. ☘

Alberta Update



by Nela Cosic

"It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to desist from it"

Rabbi Tarfon – 2nd century CE

Introducing Our Steering Committee Members

RESOLVE Research Day 2015, themed *Intimate Partner Violence: Engaging Beyond the Survivor*, was a huge success! **Andrea Silverstone** was presented with the 2015 *Excellence in Community Service and Research Award* in recognition of her distinguished contribution to the creation of homes and communities safe from interpersonal violence and abuse.

Andrea is a registered social worker, with an interesting and unique academic background—she attended Lindenbaum College in Jerusalem and York University in Toronto. Through her extensive dedication and leadership in the domestic violence sector for over 15 years, she is clearly very passionate about her work and has a very impressive background in advocacy. The list of her individual achievements is extremely extensive; she simultaneously serves many different roles, all in effort to end violence and promote healthy relationships. As a highly respected community leader and manager of numerous agencies, she organizes a cooperative public response to family violence in Calgary and the surrounding area. Andrea regularly seeks new and interesting ways to raise awareness and educate communities about domestic violence and its associated issues. She strategically involves herself in many different organizations in order to disseminate this knowledge in the most effective way. Andrea has worked diligently to convey how domestic violence is not only an issue in itself, but is often the root cause of many other social problems, i.e., addictions, homelessness and sexual exploitation. Andrea has partnered with agencies and service providers of other sectors to create programs that support women who seek assistance for issues that have ultimately arisen from domestic violence.

Andrea currently holds many executive positions in various organizations and committees aimed at ending family violence. Along with serving as an active Steering Committee member for RESOLVE Alberta, she is also the Executive Director of Peer Support Services for

Abused Women (PSSAW), Co-Chair of the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) and Shalom Bayit Coordinator at Jewish Family Service Calgary (JFSC). Andrea also runs a private practice, where she provides therapeutic support for individuals and families impacted by domestic violence. Through her private practice, she has been engaged in Governance and Strategic Planning for non-profit organizations, and the development of the Outreach Program at the Black Diamond Shelter. In addition, through her private practice work with FaithLink and as a research assistant at the University of Calgary, she has worked to support faith communities to address the issue of domestic violence. Her practice has also allowed her to be engaged in understanding the intersection of domestic and sexual violence, specifically through her work as a researcher for the Canadian Association for Sexual Assault Centres. Andrea has contributed, and continues to contribute, very significantly to RESOLVE–Alberta as a Steering Committee member. With RESOLVE, Andrea currently coordinates a research study to establish how the quality of services provided to those affected by abuse in the Jewish community can be improved. In addition to her current achievements, her past successes are also quite extensive—Assistant Direct of Steinhart Cayne Foundation, New York and Clinical Supervisor of Awo Taan Native Women's Shelter.

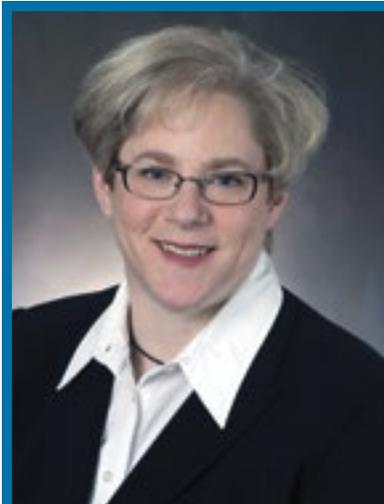
Andrea's commitment and engagement in non-profit organizations and committees reflects her strong belief in the strength of a collaborative, grassroots community approach to ending domestic violence and abuse. She believes that this is ultimately the most effective way to provide healing and hope to all those affected by this issue. In partnering with various service providers, committees, agencies, organizations and individual community members, Andrea works to raise public awareness and create a movement focused on supporting healthy relationships and preventing domestic violence and abuse. ☘



Andrea Silverstone

You're Not Alone... continued from Page 1

The 184 women who completed the YNA groups reported statistically significant improvements in all four clinical variables—general mental health issues, depression, clinical stress, and self-esteem. Such large improvements in these critical mental health issues are impressive and provide strong support for the utility of the YNA groups.



Dr. Robbie Babins-Wagner



Dr. Leslie Tutty

Nevertheless, the group completion rate of approximately 56% is disappointing given the administrative effort to offer the program, and the effect on the women who stay and feel abandoned when group members do not return. As the women who dropped out of YNA were poorer and reported more clinical issues, an exploration of ways to better engage group members to complete the program is recommended. Nonetheless, the non-completion rate is not a surprise given the high rates of trauma symptoms reported by the women at the start of YNA.

Further, non-completion of the program should not necessarily be seen as a “failure,” as one case example illustrates. A woman whose partner was also in attendance at the men’s perpetrator group stopped YNA about halfway through the group as she began to realize the impact of her childhood sexual abuse history. She connected with the local sexual assault centre and began counselling there.

Ultimately, she left her abusive partner, went to a local shelter and began a new life for herself, and became a local spokesperson for violence against women issues.

In summary, *You're Not Alone* is a promising group therapy model for addressing mental health issues of women abused

by intimate partners. While the major thrust in many communities is, understandably, an effective treatment for the men who abuse intimate partners, it is important to acknowledge the impact of the abuse on women with support and therapeutic treatment alternatives. ☘

Leslie Tutty is a professor emerita with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary. From 1999 to 2011, she served as the Academic Research Co-ordinator of RESOLVE Alberta. Contact tutty@ucalgary.ca.

Robbie Babins-Wagner is the CEO of the Calgary Counselling Centre and an adjunct professor with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary. Contact Robbie.Wagner@calgarycounselling.com.

The published evaluation can be accessed at:
Tutty, L. M., Babins-Wagner & Rothery, M. A. (2015). *You're Not Alone: Mental health outcomes in therapy groups for abused women. Journal of Family Violence, 30.* doi:10.1007/s10896-015-9779-6

December 6

*National Day of Remembrance
and Action on Violence
Against Women*



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The Sporting Events Safety Working Group includes representatives from the Government of Manitoba; Winnipeg Police Service; RCMP; Winnipeg Blue Bombers Football Club; and The City of Winnipeg. These organizations are working hand-in-hand with a number of prominent nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) known for their work combating interpersonal violence and sexual exploitation. The NGOs include Youth Agency Alliance, Beyond Borders, Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre, Salvation Army, Klinik Community Health Centre, and Ndinawemaaganag Ednaawaad. This broad alliance of organizations speaks to the commitment in our community through the power of partnerships in confronting the sexual exploitation of vulnerable individuals in our society.

The Campaign launch included the announcement of Manitoba's new permanent **Human Trafficking Hotline 1-844-333-2211**, run by Klinik Community Health Centre. This hotline will operate 24-7, and is staffed by trained counsellors who will provide crisis intervention, and connect callers to emergency shelters, financial assistance, trauma counseling and police services. In the month leading up to the Grey Cup highly visible ads with the *Buying Sex is Not a Sport* logo (see left) will appear on Winnipeg

transit buses, as well as in restaurant and bar bathrooms, and will include the distribution of posters and fact sheets, and social media messages. ☘

Announcements, Conferences and Events



November 25 - December 10, 2015 - Orange the World: End Violence Against Women and Girls. The **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign** is a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world. The international campaign originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute coordinated by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. For more information refer to www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/16-days-of-activism.

March 22 - 24, 2016 - International Conference on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Engaging Men & Boys, in Washington, DC, U.S.A.. Presented by End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI). For more information refer to www.evawintl.org/conferences.aspx.

RESOLVEnews is a quarterly newsletter published by RESOLVE Manitoba. Any submissions, announcements and inquiries can be directed to the RESOLVE office in each of the three prairie provinces or to the editor, Ilze Cepelis, RESOLVE Manitoba - phone (204) 474-8965; fax: (204) 474-7686; e-mail: newsedit@cc.umanitoba.ca



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We're finding solutions to protect women and children from violence and abuse!

Telephone: **1-877-926-8129**

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Web site: **www.prairieaction.ca**

Call for Letters of Intent 2016

Prairieaction Foundation is calling for Letters of Intent (LOI) to conduct research that supports solutions to violence and abuse. The goal of the **Community, Action, Research and Education (CARE)** grant program is to support community-based research onto solutions to violence and abuse. This program funds qualifying charitable organizations to do research projects that identify potential strategies, models, and methods to eliminate the issues and impact of family violence and abuse.

There are now two call dates per year:

- **May 1 to July 15**
- **November 1 to January 15**

If your organization or institution is interested in applying for a 2016 CARE Grant, the deadlines to submit your Letter of Intent are **January 15, 2016**, and **July 15, 2016**. For more information about the application process, please visit our website at **www.prairieaction.ca**. ☞

RESOLVE Manitoba

*~ Dr. Jane Ursel ~
Director (RESOLVE)*

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