

Communities Connecting

Violence Prevention Newsletter

Being United for A Better World for Women

Autumn 2008

Upcoming Events

*Reminder: November is
Family Violence Prevention Month!*

**The MMFC's Fall Workshop
December 4, 2008**

The Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre, in partnership with the Male Violence Action Research Team (MVART), is organizing a workshop to explore ways men can be engaged in the reduction of violence against women. The workshop will be held in Fredericton on December 4, from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Simultaneous translation will be provided. For more information please contact the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Center fvrc@unb.ca or visit the website: www.unbf.ca/arts/CFVR

This newsletter provides a forum for resource and information sharing – primarily between regional networks of the *Provincial Partnerships in Action* committee and other stakeholders invested in women's issues in New Brunswick. You, the readers, are also contributors as you have the opportunity to share new programs, community events and other information relating to women's issues and service provider wellness. Please take this opportunity to share this newsletter by forwarding it to others in your own networks!



Minister Mary Schryer Announces New Chair for Advisory Council

I am very pleased to announce that Elsie Hambrook has been appointed the new chair of the NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Elsie is a resident of Quispamsis. She holds a Certificate in Business Administration from the University of New Brunswick and she is currently employed with the Department of Public Safety in Saint John and is currently on

secondment as Manager of Finance/Registration at NBCC, Moncton. Elsie is a member of the Saint John Alternative Measures Committee.

Appointed as Council members are Sharon McKinnon, representing the Chaleur Region, Justine Waldeck, representing the Carleton Region, and Rita Boucher, representing the Acadian Peninsula. All three are active members of their communities.

I am really happy to have appointed these women to the Advisory Council. They are all keen to improve the situation of women in New Brunswick, and I am looking forward to working with them.

I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the former Chair, Ginette Petitpas Taylor, for her years of dedication and commitment to the work of the Council.

The Advisory Council on the Status of Women was created by the provincial government as an agency for consultation and study on matters relating to the status of New Brunswick women. The Council was created to:

- advise governments
- increase awareness of the population on issues, programs and services
- recommend legislation, policies and practices to the Government of New Brunswick
- facilitate networking among women's groups
- gather, research and disseminate information.

Sincerely,

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

What's New?

Highlights from the Violence Prevention Unit

The Violence Prevention Unit, within the Women's Issues Branch works with partners in community and other government departments to address violence against women. Efforts on projects already underway continue to progress well. We have also completed the following items of interest since our last newsletter:

- In collaboration with Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS NB), pamphlets and posters are now available for the Moving Forward concurrent program for mothers and children. Facilitators of the program may contact PLEIS to obtain copies, via email: pleisnb@web.ca
- Not sure who to send your email message to? Don't have individual email addresses for the violence prevention team members? Know someone who has a question or comment for the Violence Prevention Unit and don't know where to direct them? These challenges now have a response; the new Violence Prevention Initiatives email address: vpinfo@gnb.ca
- The application forms for the Better World for Women Community Action Fund have been revised. New applications should be completed on the updated forms.
- The most recent version of the phone book information page is beginning to be printed as updated phone books begin to be distributed. Watch for it when the new phone book lands in your community.
- **Website launch...** our website has been revamped. It is now more user-friendly and contains more up-to-date information. To check it out, go to: www.gnb.ca/0012/violence/index-e.asp



Meet the Branch

Sara Mitchell is a Project Officer with the Women's Issues Branch. She has been employed by the branch for the past year and just recently joined the violence prevention team. Her career with the provincial government began as a summer student with Labour Relations Services. Sara graduated from St. Thomas University with a double major in Criminology and Psychology. She brings her interest and education in human nature to her work with the Branch, making her indispensable in completing various projects with attention to detail and consideration of those who will be receiving and using the finished products of her work. Sara logs the monthly outreach statistics that are being

collected using the more user-friendly stats forms that she recently helped to update. She will be joining the violence prevention team in the planning and facilitation of the next Provincial Partnerships in Action session, which takes place in Edmundston this November.

Sara is an aboriginal from Listuguj, Quebec. She is passionate about sports and plays both soccer and softball. You might recognize Sara's face, since she modeled this summer in the "Faces of Public Service" photo shoot that collected images to be used on various government documents and promotional materials.

Newsbytes from the Wage Gap Reduction Initiative

Wage Gap welcomes new staff members

Mary-Clare White joins the team from the Office of Human Resources as an HR Specialist. Mary-Clare will be partnering with the private sector on a variety of activities to help meet the goals and objectives of the Wage Gap Reduction Initiative. Mary-Clare brings with her a background in learning and development, management, and HR practices, and holds a Masters in Business Administration. She recently joined GNB from the private sector in 2007 and will be using her experience to collaborate with her partners.

Betty McCarthy is a former Human Resource Consultant who has joined the Wage Gap team on July 2. Betty is tasked with the Part 1 Pay Equity Maintenance Review and looks forward to sharing her HR knowledge and skills with the team.

NB Career Surf launches e-newsletter for youth!

The Career Surf e-newsletter is established to inform students, parents, guidance counsellors and those interested in staying up-to-date on news and events related to career planning, career resources, NB labour market,

scholarships, success stories, etc. If you know of any news or events/workshops that are happening in your area or perhaps you came across a great website or resource that you'd like to share, email it to us at cs-info-nc@gnb.ca. To subscribe, email cs-info-nc@gnb.ca with 'SUBSCRIBE Career Surf e-newsletter' in the subject line. Visit the website: www.gnb.ca/youth

Visit the Wage Gap website! For more information on the wage gap, click on www.gnb.ca/wagegap

Farewell to Cindy

As some of you may know, **Cindy Lanteigne**, Director of the Wage Gap Reduction Initiative, has accepted a secondment opportunity with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour as the Acting Director of Employment Program Design and Support starting on October 6th, 2008.

The staff at the Women's Issues Branch would like to sincerely thank Cindy for her support and contribution to the branch over the years. Her dedication and leadership in the Wage Gap Reduction Initiative has helped the branch move forward in our efforts to achieve equality in the workplace for women.

Please join us in congratulating Cindy... we wish her all the best!

Marg's Corner

The older I get, the more sensitive I become to scents and chemicals so for this issue I thought I'd do some research on the subject of environmental health and women. Did you know that women are far more likely to be affected by environmentally-linked illnesses (environmental sensitivities, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome) than men? Researchers have not been able to determine the exact cause but believe it's linked to hormones.

Since we are more prone to environmental illnesses, I thought I'd pass on some information on cleaning and personal care alternatives that are much more environmentally friendly and therefore better for women's health. I was extremely lucky to find a host of tips at www.womenshealthmatters.ca. For instance:

- To clean your oven, sprinkle with baking soda, spray with water and leave on for 12 hours, respraying the water periodically. Scrub until clean.
- To open a clogged drain, use baking soda followed by boiling water or vinegar.
- Borax disinfects, deodorizes, kills mould and mildew, and also whitens laundry – it can be found in the detergent aisle. This should be used sparingly, as it too can be toxic in high doses.
- Try using herbs and spices or boiling a lemon instead of using commercial air fresheners.
- For an all-purpose cleaner, use a 50:50 mix of water and white vinegar.



I don't know about you but I've never run into a product so strong smelling and irritating to the eyes and skin as oven cleaner. Who knew that baking soda and water would do the trick. As for Borax, I must admit that I've never used it for anything so thought I'd check it out a little further. According to 'The Green Pages' of the Montreal Botanical Garden website (http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin/en/info_verte/fiches_pesticides/sulfure.htm), Borax and boric acid are derived from boron, a naturally occurring element in soil, rocks and water. Pesticides with Borax are considered low-impact and can be used to control ants and earwigs (those nasty little critters that like to live anywhere damp and sneak into your house when you're not looking).

Women's Health Matters suggests the following for personal care:

- Shampoo – unscented shampoos with natural ingredients
- Soap – unscented glycerine soaps or other unscented natural skin cleansers
- Deodorants – mineral crystal stones or salts, or unscented commercial deodorants
- Toothpaste – salt crystals, baking soda or tea tree oil toothpaste
- Moisturisers – Plain almond oil, olive oil or cocoa butter, or use unscented, hypoallergenic products
- Dusting powder – cornstarch or French Clay powder (available in health food stores)

http://www.womenshealthmatters.ca/centres/environmental/Healthy-Environments/Alternatives_Products.html

Products that have been certified in Canada as being safer for our health and the environment have an **Ecolabel** (three doves intertwined to form a maple leaf.) I guess I'll be looking for that label from now on. How about you?

Stitching Solutions

New Brunswick's Provincial Family Violence Prevention Quilt

The squares that have been submitted to date have been stitched together and the assembled quilt was unveiled at the

Legislative Assembly on November 26th, along with the quilt created by the students from École Grand Rivière in Saint Léonard.

This is an ongoing project and the quilt will continue to expand. If you would like more information please contact: jennifer.kelly@gnb.ca
To submit blocks for the provincial quilt, please send them to:

Women's Issues Branch
Sartain MacDonald Building
POB 6000, Fredericton NB E3B 5H1

In the Loop

Comité de la Violence Familiale du Nord-Ouest Inc.

In the context of New Brunswick's Violence Prevention Initiatives and the New Brunswick government action plan *A Better World for Women: Moving Forward 2005-2010*, the Comité de la Violence Familiale du Nord-Ouest Inc. (CVFNO) has the privilege of offering various services to residents of the northwest.

The **Moving Forward Program** is a community group program for mothers and their children (aged 4 – 16) to help children whose mothers have been exposed to woman abuse, which is available in the Kedgwick, Saint-Quentin, Perth-Andover, Grand Falls, Edmundston, and Upper Madawaska areas. The program is voluntary and free of charge. To participate or for more information, call Mélanie St-Onge, the coordinator of Moving Forward: a program for children exposed to woman abuse at 506-263-1119 and/or 506-740-1121 or send her an e-mail at melanielstonge@hotmail.com.

The greater northwest region also has an **Outreach** program for women who are victims of family or relationship violence, which offers active listening, attention, and the support required during financial, legal and/or social procedures, essential support and assistance in crisis situations; outreach for appropriate resources and services; progress toward independence, and information sessions. The service is confidential and free of charge. The worker travels around the Madawaska-Victoria and Saint-Quentin/Kedgwick areas. Call Martine Thériault at 506-263-0888 and/or 506-740-4888 or send her an e-mail at martine.th@live.ca.

The **Réseau communautaire Nord-Ouest – réponse au problème de l'agression sexuelle** subcommittee of the CVFNO offers residents of the northwest a **program for victims or survivors of sexual assault**. This program provides women and girls in need with a free consultation service. In the spring of 2009, workshops on assertiveness, personal growth, and self-defence will be available for women. Several types of training will be made available between now and August 2009 for the prevention of sexual assault; the training will be given by specialized workers, service providers, and informal caregivers. Through this program, a pamphlet about sexual assault will be produced, and there will be active participation in awareness activities and the possibility of prevention activities in the schools. A list of documents and written material available at the regional, provincial, and national levels about sexual assault was made possible by financial support from the Women's Issues Branch. The results were compiled in the form of a data base (CD-Rom) with a view to developing a documentation centre in the future. This funding also helped to develop and implement support/self-help groups whose research and development phase began in July 2008. The first group will be in place shortly for the northwest region. An update of the helping tree and an adaptation of the tools for The Link program will

also be available soon in our area. For more information, call Julie Lizotte, sexual assault services coordinator, at 263-8868 and/or send her an e-mail at julie.lizotte@hotmail.com

A pilot project called **Apprentis-sages** to combat violence against young people was set up at Cité des Jeunes A.M.Sormany in September 2008. This program, through the auspices of the CVFNO, is designed to teach young people to recognize violent and unacceptable behaviour. After distributing a questionnaire about violence in several schools in the northwest, we determined there was a need to offer young people awareness training on discrimination and bullying. The project had several objectives, including viewing short films on the topic of violence, posting thoughts and scenarios, distributing pamphlets, access to a mailbox, distribution of testimonials, activities (rally) having to do with violence, and many others. For more information contact Édouard Dorion at 506-735-2249.

A quilt on the prevention of family violence was made by the students at École Grande-Rivière in Saint-Leonard. The quilt, now at the Women's Issues Branch, shows our intolerance of family violence. A big thank-you to École Grande-Rivière and the students for their involvement.

With its **Activités Promotionnelles** component, the CVFNO will offer a community awareness and education program on the topic of family violence, promoting greater accessibility to resources. The main idea is to help the CVFNO raise its profile and achieve better representation by key members, leading to an aware community.

- A press conference was held on September 22, 2008, with over 35 people in attendance, to provide information through the media on the programs available to those in need.
- A pamphlet containing a list of programs available to people in the northwest is now in circulation.
- On September 21, 2008, we took part in Family Day at John Caldwell School in Grand Falls, and on September 28, 2008, we will be participating in the Salon de la famille in Edmundston. These activities enable us to present our programs, do public awareness, and raise our profile using a place mat that is being distributed to restaurants in the area.

We plan to participate in a number of community activities throughout the year. Thank you to all those involved in the fight against family violence. Together we will make a difference!

PPA Session in Edmundston Nov 4-6

The Women's Issues Branch would like to thank everyone involved for yet another great PPA session, which just took place in Edmundston from November 4 – 6. This session's theme was "Assessing and Transcending our Biases" and the PPA members rose admirably to the challenge.



Silent witness project

Unveiling in the Acadian Peninsula

A ceremony was held at the Centre culturel de Caraquet on September 4, 2008, to unveil the silhouette of **Simonne Boudreau**, a silent witness.

The event was organized by the *Prevention* committee of the **Table de concertation pour contrer la violence conjugale et familiale dans la Péninsule acadienne**.

Simonne Boudreau's silhouette was the 17th to be built in New Brunswick. Simonne, aged 51, was the mother of two children and worked for the Red Cross. She was beaten to death by her common-law husband between December 30, 2006 and January 1, 2007. He pleaded guilty to charges of second-degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison. He had a history of domestic violence and a criminal record.

According to those close to her, Simonne was an exceptional woman who loved life and was good-natured, flirtatious, and always smiling.

Simonne Boudreau's family and friends were present at the event. Several elected officials, stakeholders, and residents of the Acadian Peninsula also attended the ceremony. The organizing committee wanted it to be a community project, and to make that happen, it got various stakeholders involved in its organization. Simonne's silhouette was built by Caraquet members of the RCMP and was painted by a police officer in the Major Crime Unit in Bathurst. The ceremony was hosted by the Crown Prosecutor, Pierre Gionet, and Martine Haché, President of the Table de concertation pour contrer la violence conjugale et familiale dans la Péninsule acadienne. The silhouette was unveiled by a police officer, a Crown Prosecutor, and the person responsible for victim services in the area. All the materials for the silhouette were donated by local contractors. The song "Je défierai la pluie" (I'll Stand in the Rain) was sung by Claudine Rousselle, a member of the Table de concertation. The community commitment was certainly a strength of this project.

Rina Arsenault of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre made a presentation about the extent of spousal abuse in New Brunswick and the goals of the Silent Witness project, i.e. to remember and honour the victims and to make the public aware of the problem of spousal abuse and family violence.

It was a solemn but emotional ceremony. The Organizing Committee wants to thank the Boudreau family which, despite the pain connected with a tragedy and the loss of a loved one, trusted them with this project. Thank you to the members of the organizing committee:

- Michèle Hébert, Crown Prosecutor;
- Denise Dupéré, Victim Services;
- Claudine Rousselle, Department of Social Development;

- Claudia St-Pierre, Department of Social Development;
- Patrice Ferron, Centre de Ressource de Vie Autonome;
- Josée Farley, RCMP;
- Patricia Owens, Coordinator of the Table de concertation.

The Prevention Committee hopes that the voices of our silent witnesses will make people aware of this problem, which has created so many victims, both the women themselves and their families and friends. Let us not forget them!



Karine Morais Dupont, volunteer social worker, receiving the award from Social Development minister Mary Schryer.

Volunteer Award

On the 26th of April, the 2008 prize for Family and Community Volunteer Award in the **Organization** category was awarded to **Women & Family Violence Strategy Inc.** of the Chaleur Region.

The mission of the Women and Family Violence strategy is to become involved in the safety and development of young girls and women in the Chaleur region with the intent to detect, prevent and stop

violence against girls and women in their community. For years, this organization has worked to increase the level of awareness and knowledge with regard to dating violence and existing community resources for helping young girls and women. Some of their activities include: support group for women who are victims of violence, prevention program for teenage girls, development and maintenance of crisis intervention services and the launch of a silent witness silhouette.



Members of the committee

The Kent Centre for the Prevention of Family Violence

The Kent Centre for the Prevention of Family Violence will soon be opening a second-stage housing facility for female victims of family violence. This will be the first service of its kind in rural New Brunswick.

For many years, the Centre has offered individual counselling and group sessions for women, as well as a support group for men and a resource centre. In that time, we have noticed that women living alone and older women have great difficulty obtaining affordable housing in the Kent region. In some cases, they have had to wait twelve months to get an apartment. Because of the lack of housing, some women have decided to remain in their abusive relationships.

Following an in-depth case study, the Centre went ahead with its project to set up a second-stage housing facility in the Kent region. Construction is now complete, and we are putting the finishing touches on the apartments and planning the official opening, which will take place this fall.

This second-stage housing project consists in three long-term apartments for female victims of family violence, who will also receive professional support services for a period of one year. The apartments will be safe and will enable the women to have a quality family life.

Together, the Prevention Centre, Serenity House, and the second-stage housing project will provide a full range of professional, confidential, bilingual services for battered women in the Kent region.

Beauséjour Family Resource Crisis Centre / Centre de ressources et de crises familiales Beauséjour inc.

- A conference on sexual predators, intended for professionals, parents, and Grade 9 – 12 students, was held on October 8 and 9.
- A bereavement support group is being offered at the Centre for bereaved persons in the region.
- The silent witnesses visited the Centre from October 4 – 9. They participated in a community day and in the conference on sexual predators.
- Through a generous contribution from the Regional Development Corporation, the Centre has just completed renovations and major repairs to the building.
- A bilingual sticker that reads “How would you describe your relationship?” will be released to the public during the month of November, which has been designated Family Violence Awareness Month. The sticker will be distributed to companies and businesses in the area.
- A weekly column will be published in Le Moniteur to educate and inform the public about different problems and/or difficulties that some people may have to face.

Outreach Corner

Liberty Lane

Liberty Lane's *Family Violence Prevention Outreach Program* has begun its' **Assertiveness Training** group. This group tends to be popular with women in our community. This time was no exception as the group filled up within a week.

For those unfamiliar with our Assertiveness Training group, it is an eight week group that combines information and tools to help women raise their level of assertiveness. The sessions use different styles of learning in a supportive environment. This helps women reach the goals they set for themselves at the beginning of the group. One of the strengths of our Assertiveness Training is that women do not just hear about assertiveness, they also have a chance to practice what they learn through role plays. Although initially some women are shy or find the role plays challenging, all women agree the role plays are a valuable part to putting what they learn into practice as they learn how to become more assertive.

As the facilitator a key message I communicate to the participants throughout our time together is that I am not the only one with information. They too have information and tools to share with each other when it comes to assertiveness. I enjoy facilitating this group because of this exchange of information and ideas. However, it is the opportunity to meet and work with some amazing women that makes facilitating this group so worthwhile.