



Highlights of Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile by Joanne Havelock

Recently released statistics verify that spousal violence continues to be a problem in our province.

Men and women 15 years and older were asked if they had been in a relationship during the last 5 years. Those who answered "yes", were asked about violent contact with a current or former spouse in the last 5 years. In 1999 physical or sexual spousal violence was experienced by 9.5% of Saskatchewan respondents. While the rate fell to 8.2% in 2009, the Saskatchewan level is the worst of all the provinces.

In comparison, the Manitoba rate of spousal violence is 7.4%. Alberta and BC were the same as Saskatchewan in 1999, but both provinces have shown larger decreases, to 7.6% and 6.5%. Quebec also reduced its rate significantly from 7.4% to 5.3%. Newfoundland and Labrador have the lowest rate at 4.1%. (Data about the Territories will be reported at a later date.)

The statistics come from Statistics Canada's General Social Survey on Victimization. Note that this is not the rate of reporting to police – it is the rate of people answering a confidential telephone survey. The calls were made to landline telephones, so people with a cell phone only or people without a telephone were not contacted. This left out about 9% of Canadians. Because the number surveyed in Saskatchewan is not large and not all experience violence there is not a lot of data available specifically about Saskatchewan.

According to this report, about the same number of women and men reported spousal violence in current relationships, however women were three times more likely to experience more serious forms of spousal violence (being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a gun or a knife) than men, and were more than twice as likely to have been injured. As well, women were more likely to

experience violence from a former partner. These statistics include legally married, common-law and same-sex partners. Violence was experienced more frequently by those who were young and those who were living in common-law relationships and blended families.

Across Canada, people were actually less likely to report violence to the police or use services than in 1999 or 2004. Still, women are 3 times more likely to report the incidents to police than men.

Women were more likely than men to seek assistance. They sought help from sources in the following order: family; friends or neighbour; counsellor; co-worker; lawyer; doctor or nurse; crisis centre; and minister, priest or clergy.

Source: *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2009*. Catalogue No. 85-224-X. Released January 27, 2011.

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Regina Transition House Modeling and Mentoring Pilot Project

The following is a call for volunteers for a pilot project titled *Modeling and Mentoring: Creating the Supportive Relationships that Lead to Non-Violent Communities*, which is currently underway. The project is a joint venture between PATHS and Regina Transition House.

Are you a woman who has experienced intimate partner abuse?

Do you now live a life free from abuse?

Are you interested in spending time in a supportive relationship with a woman who has recently stayed at Regina Transition House?

If you answered yes to these 3 questions then Regina Transition House needs YOU!

To get involved, or for more information on this project, please contact Kim Fellner, Outreach Program Coordinator at Regina Transition House, at 757-2096 ext.227

Featured Member Agency: YWCA Saskatoon Crisis Shelter and Residence

The YWCA Saskatoon Crisis Shelter and Residence houses women, youth and children fleeing domestic violence, family violence and gang violence; women struggling with addictions and mental health; women who have been evicted, transient and women who are in need of safe shelter. We are a 24hr service providing crisis counselling in person or by phone, in-house programming, advocacy and referrals in a safe, secure, supportive and confident

environment. Our Crisis Shelter and Residence operates three programs: the Crisis Shelter, Turning Points and the Youth Program. The Crisis Shelter accommodates 18 residents with 14 single rooms and 4 family rooms with a maximum 30 day stay. The Turning Points program is a supportive living program for 15 single women for up to one year. The Youth Program accommodates up to six youth ages 16 – 21 that have been approved by the Ministry of Social Services.

Statistics:

In the past year, we served 1,022 shelter residents (including 410 children) 80 at risk youth and 38 Turning Points residents.

2,201 women and children were turned away because there was no room.

19 women transitioned to the community from Turning Points.

We provided crisis counselling to 178 women, men and youth over the phone.

Newcomer Women Who Experience Domestic Violence

by Crystal Fletcher

Newcomer women who experience domestic violence often face additional challenges and barriers, due to unfamiliarity with Canadian laws and culture and other issues related to immigration. Below is a very brief summary of some existing literature on the topic.

It has been suggested that newcomer women are often reluctant to leave an abusive relationship because of difficulty with language, fear of social isolation and poverty, cultural norms, stigma, threats of increased violence/deportation, cultural inappropriateness of existing services, and community pressure (VanderPlaat, 2007).

Godin (1994) suggested that some immigrant women who experience domestic violence may be reluctant to call the police given that they have immigrated from a country where they may have been oppressed by the police. Calling the police was also viewed by some women in a 2000 study by Waccholz and Miedema to bring shame or dishonour to the family and ethnic community and of having the possible consequence of further removal of social support.

As well, Wachholz and Miedema (2000) state that many of the participants in their study on the abuse of immigrant women did

not know that landed immigrants are protected from deportation. They also believed, incorrectly, that if the abuser was her sponsor, he could withdraw his sponsorship if she reported him. A woman who has received permanent resident status cannot lose that status or be removed from Canada because she leaves an abusive relationship, however women without permanent resident status and who leave an abusive relationship can be at risk of being removed from Canada (Community Legal Education Ontario, 2009).

Various forms of control have been placed on immigrant women by the men who sponsor them, including: "sponsorship debt", financial control, using knowledge of the immigration system to control and intimidate, social control, psychological control, and the threat of sponsorship withdrawal or expulsion from Canada. Further adding to this is control exercised by in-laws and the cultural community (Côté, Kèrisit, & Côté, 2001).

In several cases, even though Immigration told women that they were safe to stay in Canada, husbands continued to use the threat of deportation to blackmail their wives. The women often believed them because they didn't understand the immigration system and figured that their

husbands would know better because they had been in Canada longer (Côté, Kèrisit, & Côté, 2001).

Social isolation is a major factor in the lives of women who experience domestic violence, as well as some immigrant women. Therefore, immigrant women who are abused face a double barrier. Factors leading to isolation often include challenges with communication and language and cultural expectations. In rural settings, lack of transportation (such as no public transit or no access to a vehicle) may compound feelings of isolation, especially for farm wives.

Sponsored women suffer a great deal of isolation because they are not entitled to seek employment when they first arrive. Usually, the husband will work and the woman is at home with no one to talk to all day. One newcomer woman asked for the phone numbers for the police and fire departments in case of an emergency, and her husband told her that they didn't exist. She said, "I think that if I hadn't been sponsored and if I could have come on my own, things would have been different because I would have been informed. Immigration would have told me... but I came through sponsorship and I didn't have any information" (Côté, Kèrisit, & Côté, 2001, p. 61).

"If you shift your focus from oneself to others, and think more about others' well-being and welfare, it has an immediate liberating effect".
- Dalai Lama

Upcoming PATHS Shelter Workers' Conference: May 17th- 19th, 2011

by Diane Delaney

The theme of this year's conference is *Modeling and Mentoring: Creating the Supportive Relationships that Lead to Non-Violent Communities*. This theme comes out of a project that PATHS is currently working on with funding from Status of Women Canada.

The goals of the project are to help shelter staff, former clients, and community volunteers to establish supportive and effective relationships with clients of PATHS member organizations that will increase the likelihood of women's successful transition to lives free from violence.

The conference is open to staff from all of PATHS' member agencies. The keynote address by Dr. Bruce Alexander on the evening of May 17th will also be open to the public. We are particularly excited to be welcoming Dr. Alexander, who has written a highly acclaimed book on addiction.

Dr. Alexander has innovative views on the subject and suggestions for what we need to do as individuals, communities, and society in general to solve this problem. He points out how addiction is now a global problem which is becoming more and more prevalent world-wide.

Our other keynote speakers will be engaging us with equally relevant topics such as how to counsel women in a way that empowers them, the importance of prayer and ceremony in women's healing, narrative therapy, and more. Please watch for the conference registration forms which will be sent out in the next few days via email and regular mail.

The conference will be held at the Ramada in Regina, except for Dr. Alexander's presentation, which will be held at the University of Regina.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

Biography: Dr. Bruce Alexander

Bruce Alexander has explored many corners of the addiction field since joining the psychology department at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, in 1970.

Dr. Alexander has counseled heroin addicts, conducted psychopharmacological research (the "Rat Park" experiments), supervised field research on cocaine use for the World Health Organization, studied the history of drug law and drug policy, documented the diverse addictions of university students, studied the

"temperance mentality" in several countries, explored the addiction of Scottish people who migrated to Canada in the 18th and 19th centuries, and served on the Boards of NGOs in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

He has also published two controversial books, *Peaceful Measures: Canada's Way Out of the War on Drugs* (University of Toronto Press, 1990) and *The Globalization of Addiction: A Study in Poverty of the Spirit* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

Since retiring from the university as Professor Emeritus in 2005, Dr. Alexander continues to write, conduct research and teach neighbourhood addiction seminars in Vancouver.

He lectures frequently across Canada and in Europe. He was awarded the Sterling Prize for Controversy in 2007.

Dr. Alexander's newest book, *The Globalization of Addiction: A Study in Poverty of the Spirit*, is available for loan from the PATHS Library.

Student Report: SOFIA House

by Leanna Zary, University of Regina Social Work Mini-Practicum Student

So far my experience at SOFIA House has been one that has been both enlightening and rewarding. The support workers at SOFIA House are friendly and very knowledgeable when it comes to working with domestic violence survivors. The staff has provided me with direction and answered all of my questions. Whether the questions pertained to certain clients or how the City Of Regina's shelters were funded, the staff always is eager to provide an answer. If they are unsure of the answer they will articulate that "they don't know, but will find out".

One thing that surprised me was how many women try skipping steps within the program. Whether it is missing Wednesday night programming or inviting visitors into their apartment without the family support workers knowledge.

I have recommended SOFIA House to other potential students who will be enrolled in their mini practicum this fall.



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Battlefords Interval House (306) 445-2742	Regina Transition House (306) 757-2096
Envision Counselling and Support Centre Weyburn (306) 637-4004 Estevan 842-8821	Regina YWCA Isabel Johnson Shelter (306) 525-2141
Hudson Bay Family and Support Centre (306) 865-3064	Saskatoon Interval House (306) 244-0185
Moose Jaw Transition House (306) 693-6847	Saskatoon YWCA (306) 244-2844
North East Outreach and Support Services (306) 752-9464	Shelwin House (306) 783-7233
Prince Albert Safe Shelter for Women (306) 764-7233	SOFIA House (306) 565-2537
Piwapan Women's Centre (306) 425-3900	Southwest Crisis Services (306) 778-3692
Project Safe Haven (306) 782-0676	Waskoosis Safe Shelter (306) 236-5570
Qu'Appelle Safe Haven Shelter (306) 322-6881	WISH Safe House (306) 543-0493

Visit the PATHS website at
www.abusehelplines.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On January 11, 2011, Battlefords Interval House recognized several dedicated staff members for their years of service.

10 Years of Service
Sherri B. & Judy A.

20 Years of Service
Gloria B. & Alice K.

30 Years of Service
Connie B., Ann M., & June E.

Thank you for all your hard work!
We are truly fortunate to have you
as part of our provincial team!



Please send your submissions for the
April 2011 newsletter to Crystal
(paths.services@sasktel.net) by April
4th.

