



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

Agreement# 40063171

Family Violence from an Aboriginal Elder's Perspective



by Mary Hampton, Elder Betty McKenna, Kim McKay-McNabb



Elder Betty McKenna

This story shares words conveyed to me (Mary) and my adopted daughter, Kim, by our Kookum (grandmother). Elder Betty is from the Anishnabae Nation, Shoal River Band and is very knowledgeable about many traditional teachings which she has

learned from her grandmother and from teachings of various other Elders. We believe it is important to share the wisdom of Elders on the problem of family violence since they are the keepers of traditional knowledge. Sources generally state that Aboriginal women suffer up to three times the prevalence of spousal violence as non-Aboriginal women. We asked Elder Betty why this might be so, and what can be done about it.

Elder Betty: Aboriginal people started to get together in Cities – in urban centers – not knowing who they were and how they connected with their Mother. Their connection to Mother Earth was broken. They didn't know themselves. If you don't know yourself – you can't get along. Not even with your family. You are lost. The whole community was like a family. So that if one thing was to go wrong with the family, everybody would fix it. And when you come in to a larger centre and you come

from a place that's very small and very close knit into a cold city, your sense of who you are is tested. You have racism. And you have people judging people by the color of their skin, the color of their eyes. And it's placed upon you by the people you live around. It is because of the misconceptions or their misperceptions of who you are as a person. And then comes the poverty.

You lose the sense of who you are – your sense of belonging. And that's why you have so much violence. Amongst our Indian and Métis families there is intergenerational violence. Violence is like a mood. It's like a habit. I've heard people who have a real bad mouth on them. Like a sewer. But if mama talks like that, then so does the kids. So people need a process of learning how to change that behaviour and put a different one in its place. And every time you go to do it, use that different behaviour so that you reprogram yourself to do things that are less violent, you know in the home. If you see a parent who hits their children, you're going to have children that will go out and hit other kids and fight. Simply because if you're bigger than someone then you hit them. And it's the viable thing to do because it's ingrained in them that someone

... (cont'd on page 6)

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Moving Forward: A National Roundtable on Aboriginal Women in Sport



by Janice Forsyth

While an article on sport and recreation might seem like an unlikely contribution to the Resolve newsletter, it is indeed a relevant topic because it is a reminder that women in all areas of life face different challenges and forms of abuse.

In an effort to begin addressing issues pertinent to this segment of the Canadian population, the first-ever *National Roundtable on Aboriginal Women in Sport* was hosted in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This gathering brought together thirteen Aboriginal women from different regions of Canada from February 22-24, 2008. The goals for the *Roundtable* were three-fold:

- 1) to bring together Aboriginal female athletes, coaches, and organizers from the mainstream, Aboriginal, and traditional sport settings in a friendly and supportive environment to discuss the place and importance of sport in their lives and to examine the conditions that have helped and hindered their participation,
- 2) to identify various strategies that will enhance Aboriginal female participation in sport, and
- 3) to raise public awareness of these issues by producing a final report and proceedings of the gathering that will be available to the public in electronic format in May 2008.

Using their own experiences and the strategic directions outlined in the *Canadian Sport Policy* (2002) and *Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport* (2005) as a framework, the delegates identified and discussed what is working in sport, what is not working, and set out recommendations on how to enhance their involvement. The results of the Roundtable show that the environments in which Aboriginal females are working typically lack the supports they believe are the most important for their success. For example, the delegates identified and discussed "support and capacity development" as their most important

strength (something that "makes them strong"), but also the leading barrier and challenge to their ongoing involvement. The results can thus be used as a guideline for better understanding what Aboriginal women in sport and recreation currently need and want.

Readers might think the *Roundtable* focused on issues specific to women; quite the opposite was true. While there are issues specific to women that need to be



The thirteen Aboriginal women from different regions of Canada

addressed, the delegates were also equally focused on the health and well being of the people around them. For example, the delegates were very attentive to issues of governance, and how a lack of governance is a barrier to Aboriginal women as well as Aboriginal men.

When the process for making decisions is not transparent, especially regarding issues of job security, professional responsibilities and advancement within an organization, or when established processes are ignored because they are deemed to be either too costly, time consuming, or not important, the people who are negatively impacted by these decisions lose trust in the ability of the organization and might be less willing to engage or stay committed to sport and recreation in the future. Clearly, Aboriginal women have a keen interest in matters related to sport and recreation, and because of their unique experiences, possess unique insights and have some very clear ideas about the possibilities and challenges for all Aboriginal people in sport and recreation.

The *Roundtable* was co-hosted by Janice Forsyth, Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management and Vicky Paraschak, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Human Kinetics, University of Windsor. The event was funded by Sport Canada and supported by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS). ❀

Manitoba Update

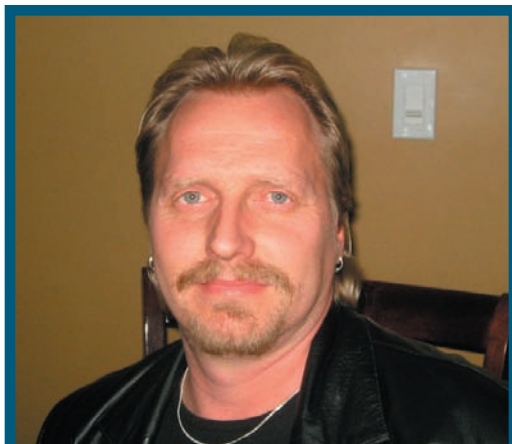


by Jane Ursel

BOIVIN BURSARY AWARD WINNERS: RESOLVE Manitoba is very pleased to announce the winners of the 2007-2008 Carolynne Boivin Bursary. Thanks to the generosity of Carolynne and Dan Boivin we now are able to grant two awards to students undertaking research in the area of family violence treatment or prevention. This year we had an impressive number of applicants, all with very interesting research interests. Our first award recipient is a RESOLVE research assistant, **Maggie Penfold** who has been working on the Longitudinal (The Healing Journey) study for over a year. She does interviewing and data entry and has done a magnificent job keeping our study up to date. Maggie's research for her Masters in clinical psychology is based on data from the longitudinal study. Maggie is interested in the different coping strategies of women who have experienced multiple levels of victimization. As an Aboriginal woman who has worked for a number of years in a woman's shelter, she is particularly interested in the differences and/or similarities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women in the Healing Journey study. Congratulations, Maggie. We are all looking forward to the results of your study.



Maggie Penfold



Stuart Toews

Our second award recipient is **Stuart Toews**, a PhD student in psychology. His dissertation involves a project to teach adult sexual offenders with intellectual disabilities to discriminate between dangerous and safe situations. In this study he evaluated an applied behavioural analysis program to teach offenders to discriminate between those situations in which they were likely to re-offend from situations that were safe and would not lead to reoffending. Mr. Toews is carrying on extremely important work which is designed to prevent reoccurrences of sexual offending behaviour. We are pleased to support research with such immediate application to violence and abuse prevention.

MAKING A TRI-PROVINCIAL RESEARCH NETWORK WORK: Keeping everyone informed and engaged in our tri-provincial network is always a challenge. Having three active Research Centres and over 30 research projects underway, finding time to get together to plan for the future is sometimes difficult, but always important. Given this is our tenth anniversary year, our Regional Council decided our May meeting will involve a day long strategic planning session. After ten years of hard work, we realized it was time to reflect on what works well for our organization and to plan our priorities for the next three to five years. On May 23 we will all meet in Winnipeg to plan our course for the future.

In keeping with the spirit of rejuvenation, the Manitoba Steering Committee has redesigned our meeting format and schedule to make our meetings both more accessible and more engaging for our community partners. We began our April meeting with two of our long standing community partners, Tim Wall of Evolve and Sharon Taylor of Wolseley Family Place discussing their history of working with RESOLVE. They identified how their agencies' partnership with RESOLVE have enriched the work of academics and supported the work of service providers. We are well aware of how busy our community partners are so we have moved to three full meetings annually and a more active subcommittee structure. I am pleased to say that our new structure appears to have worked...our April meeting was very well attended and a very exciting agenda has been set for the September meeting. ❀

Saskatchewan Update



by Mary Hampton

The Healing Journey:

Saskatchewan continues its work on the Healing Journey -- with respect and anticipation. As you know, Saskatchewan's Healing Journey project is located in three distinct sites: Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert. I will give you all a brief update on what's happening in Regina. In the picture below, you will see most of us. Mary Hampton and Maria Hendrika, as the provincial coordinators, are pictured here.

Also, Darlene Juschka, Wendee Kubik, and Deb George, the Regina site coordinators, are pictured here (Carrie Bourassa and Ann Bishop, not pictured). The other beautiful women are interviewers with the project. Note Meghan Woods

(project coordinator) and Ashlee Mulligan (data entry specialist), and other members of the interviewing team: Christine Bilinski, Jill Nutini, Jody Haukeness, Kim Fellner, and Laura Taylor (not pictured: Kim McKay-McNabb, Carmen Webb, Holly McKenzie, Judy Wright, and Mark Nelson). It is important to name all of these people because they are the ones who make this project happen. In this picture, we are enjoying a Christmas respite -- food, gifts, and an infusion of love for everyone. As we all know, hearing the stories and learning about the reality of the lives of many women who survive the horrors of abuse can take a toll on our spirits. I take this opportunity to recognize our team and thank them for their continued commitment to this journey.

We are finishing Wave IV and V of the interviews and working toward the final phases of the project. The continued commitment of the 200 women in Saskatchewan who have shared their stories with

our interviewers contributes to the success of this longitudinal project. Prairie Action Foundation has recognized our research with support from the CARE grant program. Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU c/o Bonnie Jeffery) also assists with yearly financial and administrative support. Wendee Kubik and the rest of us academics at the University of Regina received funding from the U of R Dean's Research Fund to do a qualitative pilot study called "Interviewing the Interviewers." We rely on

the interviewers we have hired to maintain a positive research relationship with the participants that have been assigned to them. The interviewers are primarily graduate students and community researchers who develop

trusting research relationships with several women. They contact their participants every six months and conduct a face-to-face, two or three hour interview. Many challenges have emerged from this research project; our interviewers have developed methods for maintaining contact that are innovative and can inform other researchers attempting to conduct this type of longitudinal research. Our interviewers have reported that the interviews themselves are particularly challenging. Several of our interviewers are at risk for developing secondary trauma as a result of their interview experiences. In the qualitative pilot project, we (academic researchers) will interview a sample of Saskatchewan Healing Journey interviewers to learn from their experience. We will have results from this project by the end of this summer. In addition, Meghan Woods is finishing her M.A. thesis examining patterns of sleep in our participants. We expect other sub-projects to emerge from this large longitudinal project. ❧



Front Row: Laura, Ashlee, Christine, Meghan, Jill, Jody
Back Row: Wendee, Darlene, Mary, Deb, Maria, Kim

Alberta Update



by Leslie M. Tutty

On March 5th, the Action Group on Elder Abuse hosted a community forum entitled, "Pulling Back the Curtain: Confronting the Abuse of Older Adults". The purpose of the forum was to engage representatives of Calgary community agencies and services that address the abuse of older adults. The end goal was to create action plans to raise the profile of this critical issue and to discuss what additional services or partnerships might better serve the needs of older adults at risk for abuse.



Jeanne Desveaux

Jeanne Desveaux, a lawyer from Nova Scotia who specializes in issues with respect to elder law, was the key-note speaker. Prior to obtaining her law degree, Ms. Desveaux worked as a nurse for over 20 years with persons with dementia. Jeanne's presentation focused on the complexities of working with seniors affected by abuse. She provided very practical examples of red flags to help those in the legal or helping professions identify the possibility that a senior could be the victim of abuse. Jeanne also commented on common processes such as powers of attorney, joint bank accounts and wills that can be utilized in the service of abuse rather than assisting older adults. Ms. Desveaux's key-note address nicely set the stage for acknowledging the many ways that services and agencies can more adequately prevent abuse and assist those victimized by others.

Leslie M. Tutty, Academic Coordinator for RESOLVE Alberta, provided some background on the abuse of older persons, especially when the older individual

has a disability. RESOLVE Alberta has been partnering with the Persons with Disabilities task group of the Alliance to End Violence. Funding from the Prairieaction Foundations CARE grant program has supported interviews with key Calgary stakeholders who work with individuals with disabilities who have been abused at some point over their lifespans. Sarah Anne le Drew and Kelli Moorey, both with RESOLVE Alberta, have been conducting the literature review. Interestingly, there is little information about programs specific to individuals with disabilities who have been abused, although the impact of such abuse can be dire.

The community forum ended with working groups that addressed focused questions including "What do we currently have that is working well in Calgary?", "What else will be needed to build an effective community response model for Calgary?" and "Who else needs to be part of these discussions?" The responses to these questions will be utilized to create an action plan for the Action Group on Elder Abuse for the next several months.

Other RESOLVE Alberta News: We just received word that our proposal, "Identifying best practices to safely house abused and homeless women: A proposal to the Homelessness Knowledge Development Program" has received funding from the Homeless Partnering Secretariat, of Human Resources and Social Development Canada. This project builds on the "Feasibility Study for a National Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses", prepared for the Housing and Homelessness Branch in March 2007. The current project will be a similar national collaboration with the Alliance of Research Centres on Violence Against Women with a number of community partners. The core of the project will be interviews with women abused by intimate partners who were homeless or who faced homelessness. The project has clear policy and practice implications, providing best practice models to both VAW and homeless shelters that could more effectively address the needs of their women clients to find safe, affordable and permanent housing. ❧

"Family Violence from ..." (cont'd from page 1)



Kim McKay-McNabb, Co-author

can hit them.

It's an extension of those emotions that they feel. It's the same as with a child, a parent or a grandparent. They feel emotion and they put anger in its place because they can deal with anger. Some people that's all they work out of it is anger, they can't work out of happiness, they can't work out of whole. I can get up and cook if I'm

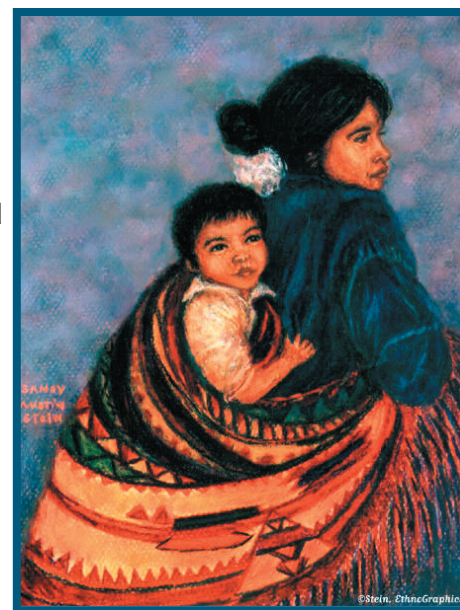
angry at my mate. Get up and do the laundry if I'm angry at my mate. There are people that just work that way. Choosing their partners, their lifelong partners, they'll always choose somebody that's most like their parent. That's how the cycle continues because they tend to go towards, you see it's not the opposites. They have to have a firm grasp to understand who they are. Respect. I think that whole attitude came in with the Europeans. Patriarchal. Women were treated like cattle. And I think that it was that whole word "chattel".

What comes to mind is doing the things that draw together people as a community. Help from within, that's my experience. If you know who you are, you're happy and content and you don't see the problems – it's not been a part of your life. And that's one of the things that I think we could do as a community, as a city. Appreciate one another for our strengths, and assist one another in finding our places in the city as leaders, because we see leadership to be like geese. They taught us leadership. We don't see one leader always leading the formation; the geese fall back and let another lead the V formation -- not one person leads the pack. Aboriginal people are working in communities that are multicultural. It's not one culture that leads the pack, but everyone takes their turn at leading. It's a simple process.

Yes, you have the legal system now. That doesn't teach the man anything. It justifies what he's done to the woman. Number one you have to have the woman quit being so violent to herself. If the person feels that they should be in a relationship where they should get sworn at, that's not so bad. I can take being sworn at. Or if he slaps me once

a week, I can take that. He's only slapping me. He hasn't threatened my life any. I can take that. Okay, he only kicks me around when he's drinking. That only happens every weekend. That's not so bad. There's still five good days there. And you bargain with yourself, that's always against yourself. Women are being violent against themselves. You know you just continue to do it more and more until it gets to the fact that the children are being abused. But you have to take young girls back to a place where they understand their true value in this world. If they believe that they are valued, if they understand where they are as human beings, they'll understand their role as women. They won't be looking for somebody who is going to be abusive; they won't be putting up with it for five minutes. Okay he swore at me, you're out of here. I always think that women who will take any violence off a man does not see herself as a viable human being.

Mary: As I listen to the words of Kookum Betty, I hear the traditional Aboriginal worldview, where women were treated with profound respect. Colonialism brought with it an imposed patriarchy that disrupted the functional gender equality of traditional communities; racism imposed cultural and individual shame; poverty and oppression further disrupted the communities. Elder Betty suggests that the answer to family violence is healing....returning the knowledge of who Aboriginal Peoples truly are; the respect and dignity that was conveyed through traditional teachings. Listening to the voices of Elders can assist family and community healing. ☘



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Marina Webster

When **Marina Webster** joined us as our newsletter editor, she indicated she would try it for a year. Having full time employment at the University of Manitoba Libraries, she has come to discover there is a limit to the number of balls she can juggle at one time. This is the last issue Marina will edit. We will be announcing our new editor in the September issue. It has been short but sweet and we will really miss Marina's hard work, generous spirit and wonderful sense of humour. Thank you Marina for your contributions to RESOLVE.

We are pleased to announce a new member of our office staff - **Kyla Shead**. Kyla comes to us with a wide range of experience in bookkeeping and office management. Kyla does the weekly payroll among other bookkeeping activities and in no time has become an indispensable presence in our office. Amy and Jane are finding life a lot better organized since she arrived in February.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS



August 14-17, 2008 - "Missing Women: Decolonization, Third Wave Feminism, and Indigenous People of Canada and Mexico" Conference. Presented by Luther College in conjunction with the Women's Studies Department and the University of Regina. For more information go to www.missingwomenregina.com

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.

For additional information contact the Conference Secretariat

Ph: 780-421-1240 or Email: info@ceoinc.ca

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



October 3, 2008 - Brandon University, School of Health Studies will host a one-day workshop entitled "Family as Focus for Nursing and Psychiatric Nursing Care" with Dr. Maureen Leahey, Calgary Health Region.

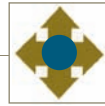
For more information please contact Judy Ramsay by email: ramsay@brandonu.ca

Advanced Suicide Prevention Training: Klinik Community Health Center offers this 2-day training for healthcare professionals and those working in social services who already possess a basic understanding of suicide prevention and who work directly with people at risk of suicide. Throughout the training, connections are made between suicidal behaviour and complex trauma. Drawing on the experience and expertise of the group, this training explores how we work with individuals who are persistently suicidal. The training explores complex clinical scenarios and important tools that can assist in one's clinical practice. Training can be provided at your center or organization or participants can attend sessions available at Klinik. For more information please contact: Leslie Debreccen at 204-784-4206 or visit Klinik's web site www.klinik.mb.ca

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Prairieaction Foundation at Work



HomeFront is a Calgary-based agency that provides a coordinated community-justice response to domestic violence in Calgary. It is internationally recognized, research validated and widely considered leading edge.

According to the Calgary Police Service, in an average year there are around 12,000 domestic violence calls for service. Of those calls, police lay charges in approximately 3000 cases, identifying a need for follow-up where police attended, but charges were not laid.

HomeFront's Early Intervention and Outreach Program was developed in partnership with the Calgary Police Service and the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority to address this gap by reaching out to individuals, families and children facing the potential risk of domestic conflict. The program provides short-term support and referrals to family members to try to defuse the potential for escalation.

In 2005, Prairieaction Foundation's CARE Grant Program funded HomeFront's efforts to measure the impact of the Early Intervention and Outreach Program.

As a result of this research, HomeFront is able to consistently measure their client's progress using a strength-based approach (Resiliency Canada). This approach identifies the existing strengths and tools of families who have experienced a non-crisis form of domestic conflict and helps the HomeFront Outreach team work with the family and apply those strengths to overcome future challenges.

Today, HomeFront reports that of the 197 families who were studied, less than 2% have required further police intervention. Through the evaluation, HomeFront has confirmed that the Early Intervention and Outreach Program has resulted in a decrease in the escalation of violence. This translates into significant savings to the police service, court, corrections and health systems and the corporate sector, through loss of employee time and decreased performance.

For more information on HomeFront's Early Intervention and Outreach Program please visit www.homefrontcalgary.com. For more information about projects funded under the Prairieaction Foundation CARE Grant Program visit our web site at www.prairieactionfoundation.ca. ☘

RESOLVE Manitoba

~ Jane Ursel ~
Director (Academic)

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