

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

Agreement# 40063171

## Exploring Sexual Exploitation Among Female Youth in Northern Manitoba

✂ ✂ ✂  
*by Cheryl Fraehlich*



Oberdorfer sits on Thompson's Sexual Abuse Awareness Team (SEAT), one of a number of regional teams in the province made up of various stakeholders who support existing services and plan new projects and activities in an effort to combat sexual exploitation. One of the goals of SEAT is to raise awareness about the issue of sexual exploitation in northern communities which often takes place in homes or other private locations, and is therefore "invisible". A key focus of the team's work is education. Presentations are made to youth and other groups; youth are informed about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a non-threatening forum and are provided with information about help that is available.

With a population of approximately 13,000, Thompson is the largest community in Northern Manitoba. Risk for sexual exploitation is increased within this community because of the number of people who are in Thompson on a temporary basis and who may not have meaningful connections to the community. This includes individuals employed through major construction projects in the area as

***Exploring Sexual Exploitation... cont'd on Page 6***

**O**ur last newsletter included an article that described the sexual exploitation of children and youth in Manitoba. We know that youth are sexually exploited throughout the Province and that this exploitation looks different from region to region. A number of studies have examined the exploitation of children and youth in Canadian cities, but there is a lack of research that examines this phenomenon in rural and northern areas. To begin to address this gap, a study exploring the sexual exploitation of young women in northern Manitoba is being conducted through the University of Manitoba Northern Social Work Program in Thompson, Manitoba. The principal investigator is **Lori Oberdorfer** from the Northern Social Work Program and co-investigators include **Lynda Paziuk**, also from the Northern Social Work Program, and **Cheryl Fraehlich**, from RESOLVE Manitoba.

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## Wolseley Family Place Celebrates 15 Years of Service to the Community



by Pamela Mason

**T**his year, Wolseley Family Place (WFP) will celebrate 15 years of full-time service to the community! An anniversary celebration and reunion will be held on May 14, to recognize the work that has been done and to celebrate the folks who have participated in all facets of the organization's history.

WFP was originally designed as an extension of existing health care services to address the needs of families with small children. Early on, however, it became apparent that social needs had a dramatic impact on the health of young families, so programs were developed to address these concerns. Over the years the family resource centre has approached the topic of violence in the family in many ways—the issue remains on the agenda in an on-going basis.

One of the most notable programs, *Working for Change*, a Crime Prevention Project, provided women with the opportunity to have a voice about crime/safety in their community and to foster feelings of empowerment. Through a series of creative projects women and girls were engaged in a discussion about the factors that put families at risk. There was also a focus on networking with community organizations.

*GLOW* (Girls Learning Options & Wisdom) *Club* was a safe and supportive place for girls ages 8–12 to express and celebrate themselves. These girls participated in fun activities that encouraged them to think. Several weeks were devoted to taking photographs of what discrimination looked like, which culminated with an exhibit at the Graffiti Gallery, complete with a well attended formal opening. The Glow Girls were highlighted on the CBC website for an extended period of time—interviews of the girls articulated what the program meant to them.

THE ZINE was a publication created by Working For Change participants. With articles, stories, art and poetry, this zine looked at crime from a youth

perspective—what is crime, how does it impact youth and what can be done about it?

In partnership with the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and Four Feathers, Working For Change developed *The Fairy Godmother Program* to provide support for women at the community level. Nine women completed an intensive mentorship program designed to give them tools and skills to work with and support others. This program was recognized by A-Channel (CITI TV) on their A-List for its contribution to the community.



Image: **Marny Barnes**—Vivid Intuition Photography

Through Working For Change, WFP was a key player in the community forum *Exploitation in the Sex Trade: What can communities do together?* This forum grew out of community unrest—some inner-city residents proposed drastic measures against the women who work in their neighbourhoods. This day long community forum explored ways in which the

community and social service agencies could work together to make positive changes for the women, men, children and youth exploited in the sex trade. Presenting and attending experiential women were a key part of this forum.

Another community forum convened in which WFP took a leadership position though *Working For Change*. The forum was called *Domestic Abuse: Practical Ideas and Everyday Solutions*. The goal was to increase awareness of the issues that surround domestic violence and to bring together agencies and individuals in the community to share strategies in promotion of peace.

A guiding principle of WFP is that all programs must be participant driven. Nowhere has that value been more crucial than in the area of family violence and substance use—women asked for support to address violence in their households and WFP responded.

**Wolseley Family Place Celebrates... cont'd on Page 7**

## Manitoba Update: *International Scholars Visit the Winnipeg Family Violence Court (WFVC)*



*by Jane Ursel and Cheryl Fraehlich*

**W**innipeg, Manitoba was the first jurisdiction in Canada to introduce a specialized criminal Family Violence Court. Today seven provinces and one territory (Yukon) now have specialized courts. As leaders in the country, we have attracted researchers from around the world to see how our courts operate and what our research tells us about them. Over the years we have hosted guests from across Canada, Australia, China, the U.K. and, most recently, from Sweden. On March 14, **Dr. Margareta Hyden** from Norrkoping University was hosted by the Family Violence Court research team to a morning in court followed by a lunch with the Associate Chief Judge **Janice LeMaistre**; Crown attorney **Jennifer Mann**, from the specialized D.V. unit in prosecutions; and **Pauline Jackson** (Corrections) to discuss the processes and consequences of specialized courts. Dr. Hyden is one of the foremost researchers in Scandinavia studying interpersonal violence, particularly domestic and sexualized violence, and social network responses. Later that day she gave a presentation on her work at the University of Manitoba. RESOLVE Manitoba was pleased to host such a distinguished visitor and introduce her to an important response to domestic violence in our city.



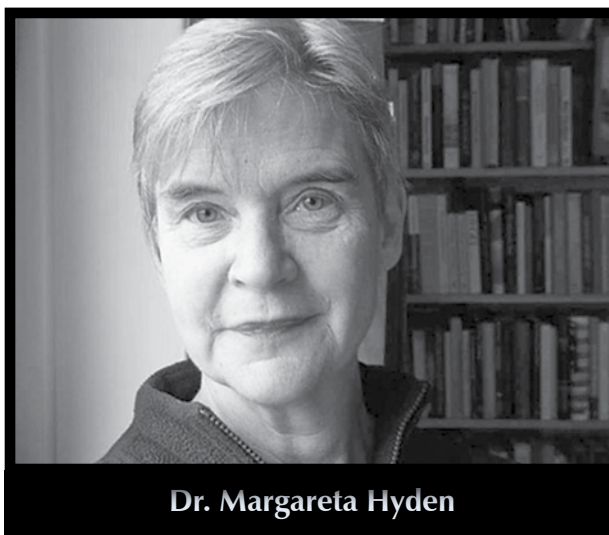
Springtime at University means getting in our final marks and getting our many research projects up to full swing. We are pleased to announce that all of the data from our massive Healing Journey Study is ready for analysis. It took RESOLVE two years to clean the thousands of variables of data and develop a log book which is like a user's guide to each variable. The log book identifies the number of individuals who responded to each question in each province for all

seven waves of interviews, their average response and the history of a scale if the questions were part of a scale. Now that this huge task is completed we see a number of our partners working on reports and publications. The Research Day in Calgary on October 21 will provide an excellent opportunity to present some of the new analysis.



The Manitoba team of the Rural and Northern Community Response to Intimate Partner Violence Project is busy working on our second year of research. The project, led

by principal investigator Dr. Mary Hampton of the University of Regina, involves all three RESOLVE centres, and academic and community partners from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories. We are working together to gain a better understanding of the needs of women from rural and northern communities who experience abuse. This year's project activities include interviews with approximately 30 service providers from each province/territory to learn about their perceptions of the needs of women from rural and northern areas who experience intimate partner violence, and the gaps in services that are available to support these women. The sampling procedure for Manitoba allows for interviews with a broad range of service providers from all areas of the province. Our sample includes RCMP members, Victim Services workers, shelter directors and staff, and counsellors who travel to communities to provide service on a scheduled basis. Thus far, the Manitoba team has completed over half of the interviews. We are fortunate to have research assistants in Thompson and The Pas and with their help, as well as the help of interviewers in Brandon and Winnipeg, we have completed most interviews in person. Service providers in more distant or remote locations will be interviewed by telephone. ☘



**Dr. Margareta Hyden**

## Saskatchewan Update: Rural and Northern Community Response to Intimate Partner Violence—An Update



by Darlene Juschka

**I**n 2011, Dr. Mary Hampton from Luther College, University of Regina, and Diane Delaney from PATHs Saskatchewan, along with researchers and community partners in our three prairie provinces and the Northwest Territories, were awarded a million dollar SSHRC-CURA research grant to carry out a study on *Rural and Northern Community Response to Intimate Partner Violence*. The study is being conducted under the umbrella of RESOLVE and is led by RESOLVE Saskatchewan. The intent of the study is to look at the services available to women who experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in rural and northern locations. IPV takes a multitude of forms, while levels and intensity vary. Furthermore, for those who live in rural and remote areas IPV takes more severe forms, even as women have decreased access to IPV services. This project aims to assist in the development of pathways toward sustainable and violence-free communities.

### Year One (2011-2012)

Researchers and community members came together in June of 2011, to discuss and confirm the way forward. This was a lively meeting and ideas moved around the room as we laid out some of the first steps, first and foremost defining the terms “rural” and “northern.” This is not an easy task when official definitions vary among provinces, while “rural” is a non-functional designation of space in the Northwest Territories. This important discussion, which would determine our research sites, went on for a number of weeks and concluded with the realization that our “rural” and “northern” designations needed to be flexible and reflect northern and rural boundaries on the provincial and territorial level rather than the national level.

Having a clearer idea of our geographical research sites, Dr. Hampton secured IPV incident information from the RCMP for the years 2009 and 2010. Dr. Paul Hackett and his graduate student, Alexandria Werenka, then began to develop the maps that

rendered geographically visible incidents of IPV. At the same time, other members of the research team began to develop an environmental scan of IPV services available to women in rural and northern communities. Development of this scan was labour intensive but was completed in time for our second face-to-face meeting in June 2012.

### Year Two (2012-2013)

The second year of the project saw full development of the IPV incidents and services maps that made visible the geographical gaps between those communities with substantial incidents of and support services for IPV. Using the maps, researchers and community partners identified their research communities. In the first year of our project a thesaurus was developed, which then gave us a clearer understanding of IPV services and the kinds of services we wanted to target for our interviews. After much discussion we decided upon

shelters, victim services (including the RCMP), support services for children, sexual assault support, counselling and mental health services, medical services, religious support, and crisis lines as our service categories. We further determined that we would interview ten each of officers of the RCMP, coordinators of shelters, and coordinators of victim services, for a total of thirty interviews per region.

At the outset of 2013, preparations began for the interview process and interviews commenced in February and March, with each province and territory conducting their own interviews. As the interviews come to completion the visible gaps seen on the maps between incidents of, and services for, IPV appear to be confirmed—services are spread very thin while incidents are high. We meet for our third face-to-face meeting in June, and certainly these gaps will be at the centre of our discussion. ❧



## Alberta Update



by Nicole Letourneau

We have selected a date and theme for RESOLVE's Research Day! Please mark your calendars for October 21, 2013, to attend **Promoting Development & Protecting Health in the Context of Family Violence** at the University of Calgary. Keynote speakers are highlighted on Page 7 in this issue. We look forward to sharing the results of RESOLVE's research with you and hearing about your work!

We have also renewed our Steering Committee membership and agreed to new terms of reference. In this Update we highlight the work of one of our new members, **Linda McCracken**, *Domestic Violence Coordinator*, Alberta Health Services. We look forward to highlighting other Steering Committee members important work in future Updates.

### *Anatomy of a Life Saved*

by Linda McCracken, Alberta Health Services, & Constable Brenda Murdoch, Calgary Police Service CONNECT-Family & Sexual Abuse Network

**S**aving the lives of those impacted by Domestic Violence (DV) takes the collaboration of Health, Social & Justice Services. Providers need to recognize clinical indicators of abuse, provide opportunities for disclosure, be knowledgeable about support options and share appropriate information when danger is imminent. This article relays one such success story, which resulted in a woman's life being saved.

This story begins at the triage desk of a busy Calgary Emergency department (ED) and ends with the arrest of a man who had abused his wife for 17 years and then tried to kill her. Trained in DV assessment, the triage nurse noted inconsistencies between her patient's presenting injuries and explanations, leading her to suspect intentional trauma. Thus, she assigned her patient to a private area where a more thorough assessment could be done. The patient's primary nurse, new to the ED and fairly new to nursing, had just received DV intervention training. As a result, she "asked the question." Though her patient's initial response was "No," in a non-judgmental way she continued her assessment with compassion and caring.

Despite being under pressure to hurry in this busy ED, the nurse was resolved not to rush her assessment. She was building a therapeutic, trusting relationship with her patient, even positioning herself physically so that the patient felt a sense of control in the discussion. Her patient eventually chose to disclose the assault, although as she shared, it was clear that this was not the first instance. The nurse discovered that the patient was ambushed, strangled and beaten by her estranged

husband. Fearing that she was going to die, she managed to convince him to take her to hospital. He agreed only if she promised not to tell the staff what happened. When the nurse encouraged the patient to look at her injuries in the mirror, she could finally acknowledge that she was nearly killed. The nurse re-iterated that the abuse of anyone was wrong, against the law in Canada and that she, the patient, was not to blame. Response options and support were available should she choose. The nurse proceeded to assess the current safety of the patient and that of the ED staff. The patient's life clearly remained at risk.

Together, the nurse and her patient contacted the police. The nurse\* described the offender and his location in the waiting room. Police then arrested the estranged husband without incident and he was charged with attempted murder and other criminal offences. Through an established Calgary collaborative partnership called the CONNECT Family & Sexual Abuse Network, the primary investigator on this file commended the DV Program Coordinator for her work training ED nurses to assess for DV because "asking the question and questioning the story works and a woman is alive because of it!"

Intervention, response and resolution were completed, with health and justice professionals fully engaged. Without collaborative strategies and sharing information, feedback on the effects of universal DV screening would not have been recognized. But above all, the patient in the centre of this story was well served and likely saved. ☘

\*The primary nurse is being awarded the 2013 Calgary Police Chief's Award of Award of Exceptional Recognition.

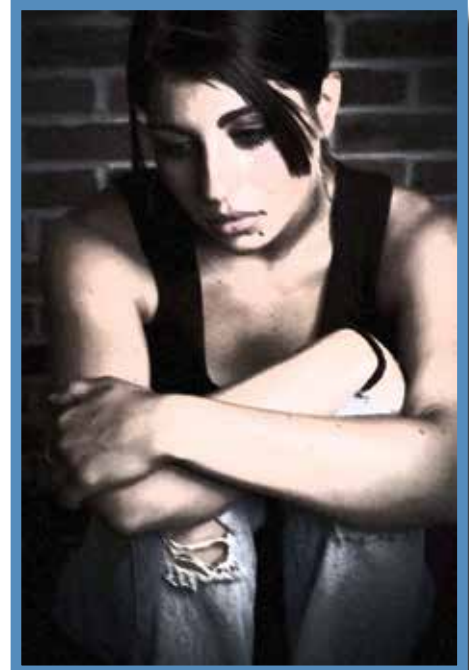


### *Exploring Sexual Exploitation... cont'd from Page 1*

well as youth from outlying communities who are in care or are attending school in Thompson. These youth are often away from their families and support networks and may not be able to recognize that they are in fact being sexually exploited. They may minimize or deny what is happening to them or see being exploited as a matter of survival. Thompson is also home to a large Aboriginal population. The legacies of colonization, the residential school system, and the 1960s child welfare scoop have impacted this population and poverty, a shortage of housing, overcrowding, substance abuse issues, and family abuse may also create vulnerability among young Aboriginal women in this community.

In addition to exploring the sexual exploitation of young women in the northern community of Thompson, the aim of the current study is to give these young women a voice through which to convey their experiences. Many women have never told anyone about their experiences and talking about what has happened may open the door for other women to do so. The specific research questions addressed in the study are:

- What form does sexual exploitation take in this community?
- How do young women in Thompson become involved in the sex trade?
- What are the barriers and challenges faced by young women in Thompson who want to exit the sex trade?
- What services and resources would help young women in Thompson who want to transition out of the sex trade?



Qualitative interviews are being conducted with women who are currently between the ages of 18 and 29 years and who have experienced sexual exploitation while living in Northern Manitoba, but who are no longer involved with this activity. Although the women who participate in the study are now adults, their experience of sexual exploitation began when they were younger. Women have been recruited through notices placed in health and social service agencies and community organizations throughout Thompson. The sensitive nature of this topic and the painful memories often associated with their experience make it difficult for women to come forward. Therefore, recruitment for participants is also being extended to Winnipeg because many women from the north relocate to this urban centre.

The results of the exploratory study will provide valuable information that will help to raise awareness of the issue of sexual exploitation in northern Manitoba and potentially inform programs and services. The information provided by women during the interviews can help to identify the needs of young women experiencing exploitation, to identify gaps in supports and services and to make improvements to the services that are available. ❧



For study purposes, sexual exploitation is broadly defined as prostitution, being in a sex trade, or exchanging sexual acts of any form for food, shelter, clothing, money, safety, transportation, or anything else.

## Announcements, Conferences and Events



**Friday mornings May & June, 2013 - My Mother, My Childhood & Me Group** presented by the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre. A group for women who feel their needs were not met in childhood by their mothers. The focus will be on grieving how we were mothered & learning how to mother ourselves. Women will have an opportunity to share their stories, identify their pain and connect with ways to care for themselves. Limited space. Please call **204 – 477–1123** to register. In-person intake required.

**May 14, 2013 - Wolseley Family Place Celebrate 15 Years of Service to the Community.** An anniversary celebration and reunion will be held at 691 Wolseley Avenue at 2 p.m. An open invitation is extended to all who have been part of Wolseley Family Place over the years—participants, volunteers, board members, funders, partners, collaborators, and staff. Please RSVP to Sharon Taylor, Executive Director of Wolseley Family Place, at [sharon.taylor@mts.net](mailto:sharon.taylor@mts.net).

**June 15, 2013 - Make One Change: A Women's Gathering** presented by the Women's Centre in Calgary, Alberta. The event will connect women from diverse backgrounds and communities: women experiencing poverty, Aboriginal and immigrant women, women living with disabilities, previously incarcerated women, mothers, seniors, community leaders, transgender women, corporate and professional women, among others. For more information refer to [www.womenscentrecalgary.org/get-involved/makeonechange/](http://www.womenscentrecalgary.org/get-involved/makeonechange/).

**May 19 - 21, 2013 - Global Possibilities** presented by the U.S. National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative in Phoenix, Arizona. This conference is designed for professionals working in the domestic violence (DV) field. Topics include DV Related Deaths and Near Deaths; Societal Responses to DV; Working with Surviving Family Members Including Children; Mock Review Exercises; Policy Debates; Latest Issues in Fatality Reviews and Safety Assessments; and Global Violence Against Women. To register and for more information visit [www.ndvfri.org](http://www.ndvfri.org).

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

### RESOLVE Alberta Research Day 2013

October 21, 2013

University of Calgary Hotel Alma, Alberta Room

Morning Keynote Speaker

**Dr. Sandra A. Graham-Bermann**

*Professor of Psychology & Psychiatry*

University of Michigan

*"Reducing traumatic stress and improving adjustment of abused women and their children"*

Afternoon Keynote Speaker

**Dr. Eamon McCory**

Co-Director of the Developmental Risk and Resilience Unit, University College London

*"Neural differences associated with exposure to family violence"*

To register or for inquiries  
please e-mail [resolve@ucalgary.ca](mailto:resolve@ucalgary.ca)

### *Wolseley Family... cont'd from Page 2*

Out of this came the *New Realities* program, where the centre seeks to build on the strengths of the families, and recognizes that family violence and excessive substance use are complex issues. Family members involved with the program define their goals and work with staff to make changes in their lives through personal development work, workshops, and group conferences.

A key factor in the success of all these programs is the essential nature of WFP. Holistic provision of service makes it possible for women and their families to address their challenges from many angles at one time and in one place so that they are more effectively addressed.

WFP has worked with RESOLVE and the Prairieaction Foundation to explore the effectiveness of many of the programs and services related to violence in the family. ❧

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](mailto:newsedit@cc.umanitoba.ca)



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### **Sharing our Success Stories: *The role of research in finding solutions to violence and abuse***

Since our inception in 1997, the Prairieaction Foundation has invested more than \$2.8 million dollars in research aimed at finding solutions to violence and abuse. This money has been used to fund the RESOLVE network and community organizations through our two established grant programs—the Community Action, Research and Education (CARE) grants and the Education & Awareness Grants.

We believe results-oriented research can reduce or prevent violence and abuse in our communities in a number of ways, including:

- Helping determine which laws and policies may be effective in preventing violence and abuse;
- Identifying which programs make a difference for victims and perpetrators of abuse;
- Finding which resources are needed in specific communities or within specific targeted segments of the population; and
- Using qualitative and quantitative data in designing and delivering services.

After 15 years of funding research we have accumulated a wealth of material. We are now seeking new ways to share and highlight the results of this investment with the broader community. Beyond the data, we are also identifying the impact of our funding on the lives of people in our community.

**This is where you come in; we want to hear from you.** If your organization or agency has received funding through a Prairieaction Foundation grant, let us know the impact it has had—on the programs you deliver and on the individuals you support. If you have used RESOLVE research to advocate for change, please let us know. If you have a personal story to tell, please share that as well. You can reach us by e-mail at [info@prairieaction.ca](mailto:info@prairieaction.ca) or by calling us at **1-877-926-8120** or **204-983-1234**. By sharing your stories with us, you are helping ensure the Foundation's continued growth and strength. Our growth is what will enable us to continue investing in the research that will help us build a society free from violence and abuse. ☘

#### **RESOLVE Manitoba**

*~ Dr. Jane Urşel ~  
Director (Academic)*

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