

**BC Association of Specialized Victim
Assistance and Counselling Programs**



**Annual Report
2005–2006**

BCASVACP

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The Board of The BC Association Of Specialized Victim Assistance And Counselling Programs would like to gratefully acknowledge the funding and working partnerships this year of the following organizations:

- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Ministry of Community Services
- Ministry for Children and Family Development
- National Victim Policy Centre
- National Crime Prevention Fund
- Legal Services Society
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- The Vancouver Foundation
- BC Women’s Hospital
- BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses
- The Justice Institute of BC
- Pacific Association of First Nations’ Women
- BC Institute Against Family Violence
- RCMP E Division
- Ending Relationship Abuse
- BC Chiefs of Municipal Police
- Pacific Dawn
- The Centre, A Community Centre Serving & Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual People & their Allies

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PROGRAM MANAGERS

Cindy Holmes, Susan Armstrong

NEWSLETTER CONTRACTORS

Sarah Leavitt/Wendy Farmer O’Neil
Britt Permien

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BACKGROUND

Prior to the existence of the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs (BCASVACP), the BC Ministry of Attorney General provided \$5,750 per year, supplementing other federal Secretary of State funding, in order for the existing seven sexual assault centres throughout the province to meet and discuss current issues, provide training specific to specialized programs and share information on statistics, services and fund raising. This included problem solving on issues such as staff shortages, vicarious traumatization and isolation. The sexual assault centres began discussing about forming an association that would meet their needs and the needs of the many other specialized victim assistance programs for networking, mentoring and accessing vital information.



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A Secretary of State grant enabled a cross-section of individuals from sexual assault centres and other specialized victim assistance programs to meet, consult and formally assess the feasibility of establishing a provincial association. There already were similar provincial entities in place to coordinate and represent police-based victim assistance programs, women's centres and transition houses. However, to this point, sexual assault centres and other specialized victim assistance programs in B.C. had no networking, supportive, or coordinating body. Individual centres were all struggling in isolation to solve the same problems and to create policies for the same issues.

In March of 1992, the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs arose from the founding general meeting at which 22 of a potential 32 program agencies across the province joined the Association. The goals of the Association are:

- Provide support and training to the staff and volunteers of Community-Based Victim Assistance, STV Counselling, Sexual Assault Centre and other similar programs in BC.
- Undertake research, develop and distribute resources and tools to the staff and volunteers of Community-Based Victim Assistance, STV Counselling, Sexual Assault Centre and other similar programs in BC.
- Educate the public (including government bodies) on the needs of victims of violence.
- Develop and maintain standards for the provision of service to those who have been victimized, and other guidelines that assure quality of service and work.
- Foster the development of relevant intersectoral initiatives across BC and support communities to maintain them.

- Provide related education and training to criminal justice, health and social service system personnel.
- Work in partnership with other non-profit provincial organizations, educational institutions and other key organizations in related fields to ensure intersectoral collaboration and information exchange at the provincial level.
- Engage in projects and programs that work toward the prevention of violence.
- Provide oral and written representations to government bodies, commissions and committees with respect to legislative, policy and financial matters pertaining to those who have been victimized by violence.

With its inception, the Association established a provincial voice for women, children and others who are victims of violence. It created a network of communication between all programs in the province and established a link with the government and policy makers to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of all Specialized Victim Assistance Programs in B.C.

In April of 1992, the Association applied to the Ministries of the Attorney General, Women's Equality, Social Services and Health for core and project funding. Only the Ministry of Attorney General responded with an agreement to provide 28% of the core funding request, amounting to \$37,500 per year. This amount was meant to cover the executive coordinator, support staff, office supplies, telephone, fax, information distribution costs, Board meeting costs and other related expenses. All these needs could not be met by \$37,500.

In the fall of 1992, the number of Specialized Victim Assistance Programs that qualified for membership with the Association had grown from 32 to more than 50 programs, with the addition of new sexual assault/woman assault centres and other specialized victim assistance programs. All these programs focus on issues of sexual assault, woman assault, child sexual abuse and/or adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

At the Annual General Meeting in October 1994, the membership voted unanimously to expand its membership criteria to allow Stopping the Violence (STV) Counselling Programs to become members. It had been proposed that because STV Programs provide non-residential counselling services to survivors of sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and/or wife assault, they closely fit with the types of agencies the Association was founded to represent.



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CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

This year, 2005 – 06 was a year of growth and change in our sector with the addition of many new STV programs around the province. As well, again this year we saw the comings and goings of key staff members. We are blessed to continue to attract such incredibly flexible, creative and knowledgeable women to our staffing group. As a Board member it is heartening to know that the Association, even through all the change of these past two years, remains healthy, strong and responsive to the ever-changing landscape of work in the anti-violence sector. As member agencies it is reassuring to know that the fabulous and dedicated work of the staff, support our work day in and day out, and lead us towards making positive change in the lives of women, children and male survivors throughout BC.



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For the second year in a row we experienced many changes in the make up of our core staff. Cindy Holmes, who brought her passion, inspiration and tireless energy to the Association through her work as Program Manager resigned her position to pursue her Ph.D. Over the six years that Cindy worked for the Association she dedicated herself to the continued growth and development of support and training for STV Counselling programs, various Association initiatives and to the cutting edge work on violence in same-gender relationships through the Safe Choices Program and the LGBT Anti-violence Project. Cindy's vision and brilliant direction have manifested in the Safe Choices Program being recognized throughout Canada as on the forefront of programs working to address issues of violence in lesbian relationships.

Morgan Baldwin left her work with CCWS in the spring. Her insight, creativity and dedication will be missed by us at the Association and by programs throughout the province. Morgen is one of those quiet souls who acts with brilliance but rarely takes up space. She has left a solid foundation for the CCWS Program to continue its important work. Michele Novakowski, who joined us last year as Special Projects Coordinator, left that position to take over from Morgan as Regional Coordinator on the CCWS team. Susan Armstrong joined us as Program Manager and Harjit Kaur came on as Special Projects Manager. Sarah Leavitt shifted from the Administrative Coordinator for the CCWS Project to the new position of Communications Coordinator for both the Association and CCWS. Laura Ashley Wright took over from Jill Davis as the new CCWS Administrative Assistant. Through all the comings and goings, Habiba Rashid, Office Manager and Tracy Porteous, Executive Director not only kept the Association and all of our many programs running smoothly with amazing dedication and energy but more, continue to lead with vision and grace. Gisela Ruebsaat and Gail Edinger remained constant with the CCWS program, ensuring that everyday, there was support for coordinated responses and a deep analysis of the issues the programs are faced with. The Board feels very fortunate to have such a skilled staff all around. Thanks to all you wonderful women for your amazing work.

Over the course of the year a considerable amount of the Board's work focused on tackling the issue of support to the new STV Outreach Programs through discussions and collaborations with the BC and Yukon Society of Transition Houses Board. Our energies went towards working on a plan as to

how to best meet the needs of the Outreach Programs. The Association is keen to see the question of membership for Outreach programs resolved. Our goal is to ensure that the new Outreach programs get the support and services that they need in a timely manner. We take the responsibility of providing support, resource development, training, issues analysis and program representation very seriously and to this end the Board remains dedicated to finding closure to the issue of membership, support and training for Outreach Programs. We also remain committed to working in collaboration with the BCYSTH Board and staff on this and other issues as they arise in the years to come.

The Board said goodbye to Bally Bassi, Kay MacIntosh and Barbara Karlsen this year. Thanks to you wonderful women for your contributions to the Board. Your insights have been valuable to our work. Many thanks also to the current Board for all your energy, and willingness to engage in discussions with respect, acceptance of differences and an openness that has fostered a sense of cohesion and an ability to tackle challenging philosophical and ethical issues. These fabulous women include: Marsha Early, Sonya Boyce, Jennifer Woods, Nancy Taylor, Debbie Hamilton. Sandra Beggs, Brigit Atkinson and Lynnell Halikowski. It has been an honour to work with each and every one of you.

Thanks go to the many women who have provided contract work throughout the year on the wide range of projects initiated by the Association.

Thanks also go to all our members. The Association is committed to hearing your perspectives and responding to your needs as you work to ensure that the voices of survivors of violence are heard.

Last and most importantly, we honour those brave survivors who live with violence on a daily basis; whose courage, resistance and fortitude in making the world a more peaceful place respectful of all differences is awe inspiring. We are truly honoured to serve you.

Cathy Welch
Co-Chair

Ruth Sauer
Co-Chair



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Year in Review 2005-2006

In the spring of this year, the Association received a letter from an STV counsellor who was about to leave her position to take a job in a different sector. She said in part,

Your agency does incredible work – not only for those directly affected by violence in their personal lives, but also in supporting those who work in the field. Knowing you have always been there, only an email away, has been crucial to me. No matter the question I have always received encouraging, prompt and useful responses.... The BCASVACP truly walks the talk – as a woman, as a mother, as a counsellor, and as a survivor, I give you my humble and deep gratitude.



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This letter highlights one of the most important aspects of our work here at the Association: we reach out to communities and workers all across BC, many of whom have few other sources of information, training or other support. And the most satisfying part of our work is knowing that this support is breaking the isolation of those who do the work and increasing the effectiveness of programs and services that already exist.

Throughout this province, from Fort St John in the North to Invermere in the Kootenays, and from Vancouver Island to the Lower Mainland, there is an enthusiasm and appetite for creative and relevant solutions to ongoing challenges, and the Association is ideally situated to offer these solutions.

It seems to me that this year our outreach work has been even more at the forefront than ever, as communities continue to struggle with limited resources – money, time, training and so on. As well, many communities have brand new STV Outreach and STV Counselling Programs (thanks to funding from the Ministry of Community Services). These programs have received support from the BCASVACP that has helped them be better prepared to start their challenging work.

We travel to BC communities as much as possible on our small budget, and we are in touch with programs across the province every day by phone and email. The CCWS Program contributes a large part of the in-person outreach. In addition, the Association has offered essential training for programs in various locations across BC.

We finished delivering the ten regional Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault trainings that we reported on in the last Annual Report. There were an amazing total of 246 participants from a broad range of programs. Once again we thank the Ministries of Community Services and of Public Safety and Solicitor General for funding this important initiative.

We also delivered the STV Counsellor Core Training at the end of this fiscal year, again with funding from MCS, bringing counsellors from all regions of the province to this intensive training. This was an essential part of responding to the lack of training opportunities for STV Counsellors in previous years and addressing the need for training due to high turnover rates, particularly in smaller communities. An extensive revision of the curriculum was also done, continuing our commitment to the development of cutting edge training and resources.

Training for managers in the women's sector will be available at the JIBC next year, thanks to funding from HRDC and Vancouver Foundation. This training was developed in partnership with the BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses and the JIBC. I am thrilled that this project is coming to fruition, after years of great work by all involved. There is a definite need for support and training for managers in our programs.

Workers from across the province came to Vancouver in December for our Annual Training Forum: Without Consent – Working to End Sexual Violence in BC. Thanks again to funding from MCS and MPSSG, we were able to welcome STV Counsellors, CBVAP workers and members of coordination initiatives. Additional funding from the National Victims Policy Centre, Department of Justice Canada, allowed us to subsidize STV Outreach workers and Aboriginal women as well. We were thrilled to be able to respond to the training needs in the area of sexual violence, as that kind of victimization has fallen off the radar screen. The training forum was followed by a Strategic Planning Day on Sexual Violence, an appropriate follow up to the work we had been doing all year: training sessions, writing documents and making sexual assault the theme of our forum. We are hard at work now on preparing our 2006 Forum: Emerging Spirit: From Violence to Social Justice through Faith and Culture.

We provide support and referrals through our toll free number and broadcast faxes, and more and more via email. We receive phone calls on a daily basis from workers and administrators who are responding to ongoing difficult issues in the anti-violence field. We provide support on a daily basis to front-line workers and administrators in STV Counselling Programs and Community-Based Victim Assistance around the province. This year we also began providing support to the new STV Outreach programs that have been funded through the Ministry for Community Services, and assisting Community Based Victim Assistance Programs in clarifying their roles and coordinating their services with these new programs.

As this report details, workers continue to respond not “only” to violence in their clients' lives, but also to broader needs such as poverty and lack of food and shelter. After five years, closures of hospitals and courthouses and other cutbacks continue to have a significant impact on the lives of women across BC, especially rural and isolated women. Administrative tasks such as records management and accreditation procedures are increasing workloads and raising concerns about confidentiality. Above all, the waitlists and



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caseloads continue to increase as more and more survivors of abuse reach out for help to our programs.

As well as answering phone calls and emails from programs, we also proactively reach out to all regions of the province to gather information about current challenges and successes for STV Counselling and CBVA Programs. Information from our latest calls is included here (below), and provides important information about the state of safety in BC and the work being done by our programs.

Our listservs for Stopping the Violence Counsellors and Community-Based Victim Assistance workers get busier and busier. Not only do we use the listservs to pass on information, but more and more, workers use the listservs to share information with each other – ideas for offering support, resources, information, etc. We also used the listservs to gather important information for the BCASVACP: we surveyed programs for feedback about recent publications, about their need for volunteer insurance and about wages and benefits across programs. This information is invaluable to our work of supporting the programs, as well as to the programs themselves.



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Our website at www.endingviolence.org provides information and resources to programs across the province. We have just completed a review of the site and determined that an overhaul is needed to continue to meet the needs of our programs and to provide enhanced support and information. We look forward to moving ahead with that work. Our work with MCS over the past year to access and distribute technology grants, in partnership with BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses, will be of great assistance to programs that need access to online information and support.

We finished up the year with developing and distributing four new important publications to be used by anti-violence workers across sectors. These include: Records Management Guidelines (revised), STV Counselling Programs Best Practices Manual, Bill C-2 User's Guide and a series of five pamphlets related to LGBT issues.

Our two programs, Community Coordination for Women's Safety and the Safe Choices Program, have continued to excel at providing support to communities that are often marginalized and isolated from resources.

Community Coordination for Women's Safety (CCWS) continues to work with rural and isolated communities that wish to develop new models of coordination on violence against women, as well as communities that wish to enhance existing coordination initiatives. The program also works to track and develop negotiated solutions to issues that arise locally but may require response at a regional or provincial level. Over this year, this program has assisted 76 communities, and worked on significant initiatives that have a direct impact on women's safety in BC, including developing the Safety Issues Protocol with the RCMP and playing an instrumental role in a recent amendment to RCMP policy that directs officers to provide victims with a copy of the offender's UTA (Undertaking to Appear).

Regional Coordinators Gail Edinger and Michelle Novakowski travel to rural and isolated communities across BC to help them create or develop coordinated responses to violence against women. They continue to build on the strong reputation and connections that CCWS has developed over its five years in existence. Currently there are over fifty coordination initiatives in BC communities, all of which receive some level of information or support from our program. Gail and Michelle have developed new resources and new workshops to respond to the particular needs of rural and isolated communities, and of marginalized groups within these communities. Gisela Ruebsaat, our Issues Analyst for CCWS, continues to provide expert technical advice and develop documents on key issues such as third party reporting and information sharing. Our Provincial Level Working Group continues to grow and change with the addition of new members from new sectors. One of the most exciting pieces of work that CCWS has taken on this year is meeting with the Attorney General and with Deputies from MAG, MPSSG and MCS to outline concerns and areas for collaboration.

The Safe Choices Project continues to provide training and consultation about violence to gay / lesbian / bisexual / transgendered / two-spirited communities, as well as to service providers and systems people. In partnership with the Centre for LGBTQ People and Their Allies, we finished the LGBT Anti-Violence Project in January and published pamphlets to be used by service providers and community members to respond to violence. As detailed below, Cindy Holmes is regrettably no longer working with this project, but we are happy to announce that our new Project Manager, Susan Armstrong, will be taking over Cindy's role.

I continue to be proud of the depth of expertise and the incredible dedication and spirit of the staff and contractors that work here at the Association. The Association, workers across the province, and most importantly, women and children and male survivors of abuse, truly benefit from these amazing women.

This year ended with a number of staff and contractor changes for the Association. While we were particularly sad to say good bye to two long-term Association workers Cindy Holmes and Morgen Baldwin, we were deeply appreciative of the solid base they left behind them, and excited to welcome the experienced and enthusiastic new staff and contractors.

In April 2006, Cindy Holmes left her position as Program Manager after six years of amazing work. Since May, Susan Armstrong has been our new Program Manager and, since September, coordinator of Safe Choices Program. Susan comes to the BCASVACP from Vernon, BC, where she has worked as a therapist, clinical supervisor, researcher and community educator in the field of trauma for twelve years. During her years in Vernon Susan worked as a Stopping the Violence Counsellor, established the sexual assault response team, conducted research on sexual exploitation of youth in the Okanagan and taught at Okanagan College.



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Morgen Baldwin left her position as Regional Coordinator for Community Coordination for Women's Safety (CCWS) in May 2006 after five incredible years of developing, building and expanding this program. Michelle Novakowski is the new Regional Coordinator for CCWS. Michelle has worked in the anti-violence field for over ten years and was involved in community development prior to that. She began working as the Violence Against Women In Relationships Coordinator in Dawson Creek in 1995 and then moved with her family to Nanaimo in 1997. Since that time she has been the coordinator for Haven Society's Women's Assault Program in Nanaimo, and developed a VAWIR coordination project there.

Harjit Kaur has replaced Michelle as Special Projects Manager here at the Association's Vancouver office. Harjit has worked in the Violence Against Women field for more than a decade as a front-line crisis counsellor, advocate, researcher and trainer. She has worked at the Tri-City Women's Resource Centre, Surrey Women's Centre, FREDAs, BC Women's Sexual Assault Service, WAVAW and MOSAIC.

Sarah Leavitt has been working for CCWS since 2002 as the Administrative Coordinator, and has also taken on writing contracts for the Association since 2001. In April 2006 Sarah moved into a new position as Communications Coordinator for both the BCASVACP and CCWS. Sarah was a counsellor and educator for anti-violence organizations from 1992 until 2001, when she began working as a freelance writer and editor in literary and non-profit publishing.

Charito Gailling completed her nine-month contract as Training Coordinator in April 2006. Charito did an incredible job coordinating all of our many trainings this year.

Laura Ashley Wright has joined us as the CCWS Administrative Coordinator. Laura Ashley is a part time student studying Nutrition and International Development and has recently returned from presenting at the International Aids Conference in Toronto.

Long-time staff and contractors at the Association have once again put in a year of incredible work that as usual goes above and beyond. Habiba Rashid, our Office Manager, continues to keep the Association organized and efficient. Gail Edinger, Regional Coordinator of the CCWS Program, has been travelling across the province supporting communities in their efforts towards a coordinated response to violence against women. Gisela Ruebsaat, Issues Analyst for the CCWS Program, provides us with essential legal analysis and thorough and accessible documents on key emerging issues.

Britt Permien provided us with another year of great newsletters, once again working with Sarah Leavitt in her new role as Communications Coordinator (see above). Thanks to Sarah, the newsletter continues to develop into a richer and richer publication, providing important information, analysis and resources to our programs. Britt's design work creates a readable and accessible format for our busy readers.



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Consultants Maggie Ziegler and Maureen McEvoy, along with an advisory committee of STV counsellors and administrator, developed the wonderful new Best Practices Manual for STV Counselling Programs.

The volunteers on our Board of Directors once again worked tirelessly to provide input, guidance and support to the staff. We cannot thank them enough for the hours and hours of work they put in. And last, but definitely not least, Sheila Norgate again donated her beautiful artwork for use in our publications.

As always, we are grateful to our funders. The Ministry of Community Services and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General provide our core funding as well as funding for many of our projects. Staff at both ministries are outstanding in their commitment to ending violence against women.

We also thank the National Crime Prevention Centre, the National Victims Policy Centre and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority for their major contributions to our projects.

Working in partnership is clearly a huge part of how we achieve our goals. Along with the partnerships with BC/YSTH, BC Women's and the BC Institute Against Family Violence that we engage in each year, we have worked with Legal Services Society to ensure that our programs have access to their wealth of legal resources through online discussions and regular features in our newsletter. We also participated in research and analysis including sexual assault research with the Justice Institute of BC and Vancouver Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services. We continue to work with Pacific Association of First Nations Women, Pacific Disabled Women's Network, the RCMP and the BC Association of Chiefs of Police, both through the CCWS Provincial Working Group and through initiatives such as developing provincial protocols for third party reporting and referrals between police and CBVAPs. We also collaborated this year with the LGBT Centre, JIBC and Police Victim Services on a number of important initiatives. We are extremely grateful for the generous collaboration that all these organizations have offered.

DIRECT SUPPORT TO PROGRAMS

We provide support on a daily basis to front-line workers and administrators in Community-Based Victim Assistance and STV counselling programs around the province. Last year we also began providing support to the new Outreach programs that have been funded through the Ministry for Community Services, and assisting Community Based Victim Assistance Programs in clarifying their role and communicating related issues to the two Ministries.



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This section will highlight some of the key issues that we are responding to in the field.

As noted throughout the year, programs continue to see an increase in the complexity and severity of their cases. There continues to be considerable pressure on programs to respond to an increased demand for service, resulting in a reduced capacity to manage timely responses with existing staffing limits. Programs continue to be concerned about high caseloads, the risk of burn out and vicarious traumatization for staff, and lack of time for necessary records management, data collection and program reports.

While many programs report that court accompaniment is limited to clients with high needs (safety, trauma, special needs such as language, challenges), they still report that court orientation and accompaniment consume a major amount of staff time and resources. These are generally complex cases with clients who have high needs. This type of case cannot be handed off to a volunteer; they need the expertise and training that these workers can provide.

Since the many courthouse closures and some hospital closures around the province, many programs report that court accompaniment and orientation also takes a toll because of increased travel time. Some agencies now have to travel more than an hour to the courthouse, which means longer days and the need for larger travel budgets. Increased distances to travel to hospitals to provide accompaniment for clients has also put pressure on budgets and staff time.

There continues to be a high need for legal support and advocacy for women with complex family court cases, especially where litigation is used to continue the abuse. The inability of clients to access legal representation in family law cases continues to be a serious issue for our programs and the people who use them.

Poverty continues to be a concern across the province. Agencies are finding that they must become involved in activities beyond previous mandates (e.g. creating affordable housing, starting community kitchens, gathering food donations for their clients, assisting in Family Law matters). The impact on women's safety is difficult to measure but is heard daily by front-line workers. Women are forced to stay with abusers or move into unsafe situations because of the lack of affordable housing, or the reality that social assistance will only cover basic lodging with nothing left over for food.

Accreditation continues to be an issue facing programs. The extensive time and costs required leading up to accreditation has added stress to their work and that post accreditation, "record keeping time has quadrupled." We have also received calls questioning the information that needs to be obtained to fulfill the intake procedures established by accreditation. Much of the information required is not necessary to fulfill the needs of a Victim Service program or STV Counselling program and can actually work to the client's detriment (i.e. information on history of medication, mental illness). Programs



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are questioning the need to gather more than the basic information needed to provide service, as they are not therapeutic programs. The accreditation policies to gather this information are also in direct conflict with the Programs Standards for Victim Service Programs and the Records Management Guidelines developed for both STV Counselling and CBVAPs.

We continue to receive requests for information and resources about records management. We also receive requests for information about files being subpoenaed by defense, by the offender or requested by the Ministry of Children and Families. Other issues raised this year include:

- Providing support to agencies that have received new Outreach funding. This remains to be an important issue to solve as to which provincial organization will provide the ongoing support and representation to the these programs.
- Concern regarding communication problems. We receive many calls asking for information that has been circulated via fax, email and is posted on our website. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of access to computers for many workers.
- We have had many calls regarding the Ministry of Human Resources policy regarding women leaving abusive relationships and providing quicker access to social assistance. In many cases the policy that waives the three week wait for assistance is not being applied; clients who are fleeing abusive relationships are being required to do three week job searches, which delays their being able to leave, or keeps them in transition longer. Workers are forced to advocate for each client individually, often having to go “up the ladder” to district managers. This takes a great deal of staff time and also leaves the question of what is happening to those women who are trying to leave and are not accessing victim service or STV counselling programs.
- Questions about using third party reports for sexual assaults. The Community Coordination for Women’s Safety Program is in the process of developing a provincial protocol for third party reporting, and has held a roundtable and two cross-regional intersectoral discussion groups on the topic.
- Questions regarding the policy for STV Counselling Programs of MSC related to how long clients can be seen for.
- Concerns have been expressed by Victim Service Programs about the lack of formal, in house support or consultation they are receiving. They have expressed a need for access to the type of consultative supports that STV Counselling programs receive (i.e. STV Counsellor Support Plan). This would include opportunities for professional debriefing, case consultation and support with the impact of hearing multiple stories of trauma.
- Because of the substantial increases in much needed funding for many STV counselling programs in the last year, there are now 19 new STV counsellors in programs across BC. Most of these counsellors work half time positions and, in the short time they have been involved in the program, have been focused on building client case loads, connecting with community and other service agencies to inform and increase



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awareness of new STV services, and establishing support groups. Because most professional development in the field is post-employment, these new STV counsellors are in particular need of basic level training specific to STV counselling such as the STV Feminist Counselling Core Training that is offered through BCASVACP.

Newsletter

We publish 3 newsletters per year. We continue to refine the newsletter based on feedback from our membership. We encountered some unforeseen delays with our one issue this year—the contractor who was hired to produce an issue for February delayed the issue until April and then suddenly ended her contract as she had taken on too much other work. The newsletter is now being written and edited by Sarah Leavitt, Communications Coordinator for the Association and the CCWS Program, and will no longer be contracted out.

Website and Listservs

We continue to receive positive feedback about our website. We regularly upload our new materials on to the site to have a one-stop information source available to programs. We continue to encounter the problem that many programs do not have regular access to a computer. As the new OPRA online reporting system comes into effect for CBVAPs, this will create an extra strain on programs that have to compete for computer time.

The CBVAP Listserv was slow to start but is up and running. With the number of programs who don't have daily access to email, it is difficult to stimulate discussion. Because of the difficulty getting information to programs, we regularly post information to ensure that communication happens in a variety of ways. The STV and the CCWS listservs are being used more regularly as a way for program staff to converse with each other about issues they are facing.

Consultation and Referrals

We continue to provide consultation and referrals to victim service programs and STV counseling programs on many issues, as listed above. We also provide consultation in our two programs: Community Coordination for Women's Safety; and Safe Choices Support and Education Program (see below).

Regional Support Conference Calls

STV Counselling - In March of 2006, the Association facilitated five teleconference calls with STV Counsellors from across all regions in BC. The purpose of these annual calls are to provide an opportunity for STV Counsellors to connect with each other and identify critical issues facing women survivors of violence and STV Counselling programs, and to strategize about ways to address these issues. Counsellors utilize this opportunity to identify gaps in policies, programs and systems response; to bring forward priorities for resource development work; to identify training needs; and to share information. Thirty-seven counsellors from thirty



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programs participated, and numerous other STV Counsellors were able to communicate their issues or concerns before or after the calls by phone/fax/email. Please see the report on the conference calls attached for details.

The main issues raised by counsellors were: long waitlists, the need for services for young women, lack of transportation and other challenges related to rural areas, the need to build community supports for survivors, Ministry data collection, pressures to provide shorter term services, and, lastly, the stresses associated with serving women with co-occurring traumas, substance use issues and mental health issues. The counsellors also underlined the need for the counsellor support plan, and outlined their training needs.

Community Based VAPs – At the time of this report we were in the process of setting up a round of regional calls for these programs. Our next report will provide details.

TRAINING

Organized Group Perpetration Training

This specialized training on Organized Group Perpetration (OGP) was held over three days in March 2006 and was designed to meet the advanced training needs of STV counsellors who have worked in the field for a number of years. The curriculum was designed to build on the existing knowledge and skills of STV counsellors throughout BC who also serve women dealing with their experiences within organized group perpetration. The training included information and discussion on identifying OGP, the motives of groups, signs and symptoms of survivors, dissociation, programming, stabilization, safety issues and therapeutic tools. Experienced STV Counsellors have been requesting advanced trainings for many years. We were extremely happy to be able to offer this training. The training seats were all filled and many people are asking whether we will be offering this training again. We hope to be able to offer the training again in the future.

Feedback from participants was encapsulated in this one comment, *“so wonderful to be in a room with two people who know what they’re talking about. Validation of the work. Worth waiting 8 years for this training.”*

Sexual Assault Training

The “Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault” Training sessions have now been completed. Participants included workers from Community-Based Victim Assistance, Police-Based Victim Assistance, Stopping the Violence Counselling, Transition Houses, Second Stage and Safe Holmes and Children Who Witness Abuse Programs. We facilitated a total of 10 training sessions in Cranbrook, Fort St John, Terrace, twice in Vancouver, Courtenay, Abbotsford, Victoria, Quesnel, and Kelowna. The feedback was extremely positive.

We are anticipating a more coordinated response in BC as a result of this training as workers from different sectors worked together during the three



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days of training on how they are now going to ensure a coordinated approach. Funding for these trainings was provided by the Ministries of Community Services and Public Safety and Solicitor General. We've received many requests to run the training again in the future. Please see separate report.

A few evaluative comments include:

"Have this training in more communities. We could fill the room in Vanderhoof."

"Video clips were excellent, organization of the three days – intensive, stimulating, professional, inspiring. The group activities were well organized and great for team building."

STV Counsellor Core Training

The Stopping the Violence Feminist Counsellor Core Training provides essential skills and information. Administrators and counsellors in STV counselling programs have identified the need for funding subsidies (tuition, travel and childcare) for the Stopping the Violence Feminist Counsellor Core Training and have expressed their great thanks to the Ministry for providing these funds again.

The initial 15-day training was developed in 1993 by the BCASVACP and the Justice Institute, and was funded by the Ministry of Women's Equality. The content and duration of the training has changed somewhat over the past decade, in an attempt to better respond to the changing needs of STV counsellors. In an effort to make the training more accessible, cut costs and upgrade the curriculum, the BCASVACP is currently updating the program. See section below.

For the past several years, the Core Training has been provided by the BCASVACP and delivered in Vancouver/Richmond, using an in-class training format. After much investigation into possible modes of delivering the core training, it was concluded that due to the costs of sending trainers out to the regions, and due to the small number of STV counsellors within each region requiring training at any one time, the most cost-effective model of delivery was to offer the training once a year in the Lower Mainland. The training is currently structured into three four-day modules delivered over three consecutive months.

Prior to the 2006 offering, the last offering of the core training was in 2003 prior to the elimination of the Ministry's training subsidy program. Many STV counsellors have not taken the core training and this impacts the maintenance of standards of service in the field of STV Counselling Programs.

Core training is particularly important in light of the high turnover in STV Counselling programs (due to isolation, secondary victimization and low wages) and in the current economic and social climate, wherein the demands on STV counsellors are perhaps higher than ever before. We have received



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numerous calls from new STV counsellors and others who have never taken the training, requesting this training. We know that the recent funding and establishment of many new STV counselling programs, will substantially increase the demand for the core training in the province. For this reason, we have offered the STV counsellor core training in 2005-06 and will be running another course in 2006-07.

The twelve-day training is developed and delivered by the BCASVACP in three four-day modules. The curriculum encourages maximum participation from trainees and provides vital skills and information for STV Counsellors in the following areas:

Module 1:

- Feminist Counselling: key components of feminism, anti-oppression, counselling models for work with women who experience violence
- Ethical Practice: attitudes, values, beliefs affecting client/counsellor relationship; ethical practice in an empowerment model; transference and counter-transference
- Intake and Assessment: safety assessment tools that support women at risk, that empower women; evaluating assessment approaches

Module 2:

- Group Work: facilitating groups from a feminist perspective, working with adult survivors of abuse/violence
- Survivors and the Healing Process: trauma, counselling approaches, phases of the healing process, and addressing complex counselling needs

Module 3:

- Role of the Family: role and dynamics of family in lives of women experiencing violence, applications to STV work
- Program Management: administrative issues; clinical and peer supervision, case consultation, debriefing.
- Records Management: legal issues and effective practice in the creation, retention, and management of client records.
- Self Care and Vicarious Trauma: recognizing impact of vicarious traumatization; approaches to self-care.

The training is comprehensive in many areas, however we are updating it related to emerging issues in trauma counselling and specifically pertaining to the needs of marginalized women. We will be including a strong analysis of intersecting oppressions and how these affect women's experiences of violence differently. This includes discussion about the impact of trauma on Aboriginal women, immigrant women, women of colour, women with disabilities, lesbians, transgender women and older women.

Evaluative comments from this training include:

“the most important result for me this week was the removal of the feeling of isolation and recognizing the need for me to build a support network and it is my responsibility to do so.”



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"I am leaving with a 'backpack' full of information that will provide me with the knowledge and awareness and increased confidence in providing the best and most effective service to the women I serve. I am feeling excited and stimulated and looking forward to working with women given the delivery of this week's content and that of the previous modules. The compiled information, the experiences, and wealth of knowledge of our facilitators is first class in terms of delivery."

STV Core Training Curriculum Revision

The curriculum has been continually revised from an operational standpoint since 1993 based on the changes that have occurred in the field and on the guidelines established through the STV Counselling Draft program standards document. As well, the curriculum has always reflected the input and suggestions of many experienced STV Counsellors.

This year however we are undertaking an overhaul of the training that relates to the need to ensure that it has throughout it an analysis of oppressions and teaches skills and competencies in working with women from many cultures and diverse communities. We also are linking the training with the new STV Counselling Programs Best Practice Manual, a new resource for the counsellors that contains the latest and best research on all the issues facing the programs and the women they serve.

Annual Training Forum

Without Consent: Working to End Sexual Violence in BC was a provincial training event designed to strengthen the capacity of organizations and communities to support skilled networks of service provision which are able to meet the complex and diverse needs of those who have experienced sexual violence. Our theme this year focused on sexual violence, which, as we all know too well, is alarmingly prevalent in our society. We also know that responding to sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence is particularly challenging for responders with little or no training in the area. The Forum raised awareness of how to build competencies for reducing risks, increased understanding of how strong coordination prevents violence and secondary victimization, and strengthened relationships across the sectors.

In order to make this training event as in-depth and meaningful as possible, our planning committee is constantly striving towards creative ways of ensuring strong and representative diversity within speakers and workshop topics as well as increasing accessibility for workers across BC. For the last three years, the Association has been able to extend our Training Forum invitation to Violence Against Women Coordination Committee members in local communities across BC. This year, thanks to funding from the National Victims Policy Centre, we were also pleased to be able to offer tuition, travel and accommodation subsidies to our colleagues representing the new Ministry of Community Service's Outreach programs. This opportunity helped to address the training needs of new and established Outreach workers, who have not previously been able to access subsidized training events.



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One most valuable asset to the success of this year's training event, which was greatly appreciated and noted in participant evaluation comments, was the visible participation of Aboriginal women. With last minute funding from the National Victims Policy Centre, we were able to fully subsidize ten "special invites" from the Aboriginal community to attend this training at no cost. Interest on the part of Aboriginal communities to be involved in this training was immediately intense and appreciative, which to us reflects a critical gap related to accessible subsidized training. The opportunity to hear first hand expertise and analyses on violence within Aboriginal communities was an essential and valuable part of this year's Training forum.

As an added value to this year's Training event, we incorporated two new features based on feedback collected from previous Forums which reflected a strong desire for more unstructured networking and information sharing opportunities among programs. To accommodate this need, we hosted a number of facilitated "Dialogue Sessions" which enabled participants from specific sectors (i.e. Stopping the Violence counsellors, Community Based Victim Assistance workers, Program Managers, and Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee members) to gather together and explore more deeply their identified emerging issues. These Dialogues proved to be fruitful conversations, deepening existing relationships across similar programs and creating new opportunities for resource and information sharing, with fully 100% of participants requesting this space for intra-sectoral dialogue to be included in future Training forums.

Another new development this year was the inclusion of a third day focused on Strategic Planning and Consultation around issues of sexual violence. In an attempt to truly bring sexual violence intervention, prevention knowledge, and best practices back to the forefront, the special one-day Consultation and Strategic Planning Session capitalized on the information sharing, discussions and insights that people gained from having attended the previous two days of training workshops and keynote speakers, creating a space to consolidate the learning and strategize about where we will collectively go from here.

As indicated by the following sample of evaluation comments, the BCASVACP is a critical training site for front line anti-violence workers from across the province:

"Daily visible representation of Aboriginal women – what a gift."

"I'm so pleased that we continue to have these workshops. For us in the north it is life saving. Please keep them coming!"

"Exceptional speakers. One of the best training forums I've been to. Informative workshops and impressive facilitators".

"I am proud to be a member for so many reasons especially the quality /inclusivity of all women – especially the often marginalized Aboriginal women".

"Well balanced and interesting keynote speakers and useful/practical workshops. Keep up the great work!"



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Above and beyond the advanced training on critical and emerging issues that the Forum provides however, is the opportunity for front line workers – many of whom work in severe isolation - to meet, network, and strategize with both community and system based colleagues from across the province. BCASVACP staff find that most invaluable, as an aspect of the Forum, are the spontaneous and unstructured moments of face-to-face discussions between ourselves and the front line workers we serve and represent. Without this opportunity to greet the front line workers personally and to connect as individuals, some members may not have otherwise voiced the kinds of difficult situations and client realities they are seeing. This Training Forum not only provides advanced and meaningful training the programs, but also allows members to reconnect with their Association representatives and helps us to keep abreast of what is happening in communities and increases our understanding of barriers to service provision and current training needs.



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SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Best Practices Approaches: Child Protection and Violence Against Women
The Association worked in partnership with the BCIAFV and the BC/YSTH to follow up on the submission of a proposal we developed to MCFD to develop training for child protection workers and victim service staff and others based on the MCFD Best Practices document that we developed collaboratively with the Ministry. Together these partners received word that MCFD will be proceeding to fund this project. In the next fiscal we will manage this project and work collaboratively with BC Women's Hospital, the BCYSTH, BCIAFV and MCFD to develop the curriculum.

Survey re Wages and Benefits

The results of the STV Counselling and CBVAP program wage and benefit survey that we conducted have been compiled and are available through our office. Programs have been requesting information for some time and it will be valuable for programs to use in future planning and funding initiatives.

Program Support to New STV Counselling and STV Outreach Programs

The Ministry of Community Services, Stopping the Violence Branch, issued a Request for Proposals on March 28, 2005. We responded by ensuring all our members, including victim serving agencies and STV counselling programs were aware of the initiative and opportunity. We responded to many requests for support in developing proposals and in providing sample job descriptions for the new programs that are being developed. We received calls from new staff and supported the development of the new programs around the province.

Technology Grants for STV Counselling Programs

The Association and the BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses (BC/YSTH) were contracted by MCS to jointly administer a grant allocations process in response to funding the Ministry had for programs for new computers and other technology. The Ministry had a total of \$200,000. The Association received \$80,000 for the project to distribute funds to the STV Counselling programs. A separate more detailed report has been provided to the Ministry,

please see that report. This was a huge, time consuming project however was well worthwhile, in that many programs were able to access financial support for much needed computers. The focus of these monies was for programs who did not have access to a computer. The need expressed was far greater than the available funds and it will be important to continue exploring additional funding so that all programs and clients have equal access across the province. We also recommend a next round so that those with computer that is old, out-dated can upgrade. See report.

Sexual Assault Strategic Plan

On December 7th, 2005, we facilitated a one day special add-on session to our Annual Training for all those who attended the training forum that wanted to discuss issues related to sexual violence in BC: the incidence, the lack of reporting, the lack of training and special programs, etc. Our goal was to gather information that would form the foundation of an action plan to assist our province to move forward on this issue. We did in fact develop this action and will be setting up meetings to discuss our findings and recommendations with various authorities in the new year. This work has stemmed from, in part, reports from STV Counsellors over the last many years stating that they get a very high number of requests for service from teenage girls who have been raped but their mandate does not allow them to engage. There is no other program in place to assist this population, so hence something needs to be done.



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Management Training For Women and Victim Serving Agencies

In partnership with the BC/Y Society of Transition Houses, we successfully accessed \$55,000 of funding from Human Resources Development Canada to move forward with a certificate program for managers in the women's sector in BC. We were also able to access \$40,000 from the Vancouver Foundation towards this training. With this funding we were able to develop a 20 day program and pilot it to 20 senior managers or program coordinators in a 100% subsidized manner. We contracted the JIBC to develop the curriculum, which was a huge success. During this year we finalized agreement to run the course next year through the JIBC and to look for funding to assist those coming from out of town with travel and accommodation.

Family Law and Child Protection on-line Discussion and Other LSS Connections

In connection with the family law website, LSS has established an on-line discussion group to be a resource for advocates working with limited time and money on child protection and family law issues. This list can provide information about relevant legislation and useful resources, as well as provide a forum in which advocates can discuss difficult aspects of a case with other advocates. The list has guidelines about confidentiality for what people post to the list and how they deal with any postings.

This year we created a plan and agreement with LSS that in future we will be getting regular updates from LSS that we can then send out to STV Counselling programs and others on relevant issues. In addition, LSS will have a regular spot

in our newsletter, all in an attempt to better coordinate across the criminal and civil justice fields and also to ensure that workers are as up to date with resources their clients can access.

Pregnancy Outreach Coordination

In an attempt to ensure good program coordination in communities and among STV Counselling programs, other anti violence programs and Pregnancy Outreach programs, we have worked with the BCYSTH, BCIAFV and BC Women's Hospital so ensure that each sector knows who each other is and what they are doing. This work has consisted on a number of meeting, sharing of contact information and program information.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Records Management Guidelines Re-writing

In 1998 the Association produced and distributed the Records Management Guidelines, which have proven to be an invaluable resource to programs across BC in the development of their policy and procedures in managing confidential case files. Because a number of pieces of legislation have changed or been developed since then, we approached VSCPD and the MCS and requested some funding to assist us in the re-writing of this document. Thank you to both for assisting with this project. The revisions have now been completed and the manuals printed, and they will be distributed to all our programs with funded we were able to access from the Nation Victim Policy Centre.

STV Counselling Program Best Practices Manual Development Project

With funding from MCS we have finished developing a Best Practices manual for STV Counselling programs. Consultants Maggie Ziegler and Maureen McEvoy along with an advisory committee of STV counsellors and administrators developed the manual. The manual content promotes service delivery quality and consistency, yet retains the flexibility necessary to be adaptable for STV counselling programs and agencies in all corners of the province. The resulting best practices respond to priority questions and concerns from STV counsellors that have arisen in their work with women who are, for example, using drugs or alcohol, coping with mental health issues, charged with a criminal offence, mothers of abused children, abused in a lesbian relationship, mandated to counselling by MCFD, suicidal, or minors. The manual will also assist programs in addressing questions and inconsistencies that have arisen regarding such issues as wait lists, case-loads, external and inter-program referrals, and "administrative" versus "direct service" work. The Best Practices Manual will provide guidance in responding to women survivors of violence, for both new and experienced STV counsellors and administrators. The manual will also assist programs in developing key policies and procedures specific to STV Counselling.

Insurance for Agencies with Volunteers

The BCASVACP and Police Victim Services of BC have reached an agreement with VSCPD that allows agencies with volunteers to purchase



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liability insurance at a very low cost. The BCASVACP and PVS will coordinate this for their respective programs.

POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

Sexual Assault Research

Working in partnership with the JIBC and the Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society, the Association was involved in a research project that looked into the large number of police designated “unfounded” sex assaults complaints. While no meeting took place during this reporting period, emails have continued with the groups involved. We know that some of the initial findings relate to police stats that do not separate out child sex assaults from adult sex assaults, and this has been a problem for us. The researchers checked with police about whether we could separate out the adult files and the answer was no, except in a tedious manual manner. In any case, the founded and unfounded rates on which our research and sampling is based, is based on stats that include both adult and child sex assaults. Many of the files we are looking at, so far we have completed Richmond and done more than half of the Langley files, including a revision of the file review guide, are child sex offences. However, the results are promising to be very interesting, so once more of the work is complete our committee will meet and proceed with the analyzing of the data. One important question for us at this point is why isn’t the criminal justice system separating the files? Funding has been provided by the National Victims Policy Centre and VSCPD.



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Bill C-2 User’s Guide

Parliament passed Bill C-2 in 2005 amending the Criminal Code of Canada and the Canada Evidence Act. With this legislation, law makers sought to address specific victims’ concerns – namely, children and youth victims/witnesses who experience sexual exploitation, abuse and neglect and other vulnerable witnesses, including victims of criminal harassment, who are called upon to testify. The BCASVACP has produced the "Easy Reference Guide to Bill C-2," which will assist anti-violence workers in supporting clients who are preparing to testify in court. As with any legislation, the implementation of that legislation is what makes it effective and brings the intentions of the legislators to life.

It is important that workers in the field understand the legislation and are able to advocate for its implementation for their clients and community. We will be distributing this to all of our programs and posting on the website.

Evaluative comments on the guide include: *“very easy to follow”, “very helpful/explanatory”* and *“I am thankful for the easy reference guide as it will make it easier for me to provide much needed information to people”*.

Family Law Framework

With funding from MPSSG, we developed an Issues and Options paper called, Family Law Services for Women Who are Victims of Violence: What Can Be Done? The paper was ready for final review and release in April

however, on February 1, 2005 the BC Government announced a \$4.6 million funding increase to the Legal Services Society for legal services for "families in crisis" that included "additional family legal services in cases involving domestic violence; the provincial family duty counsel program; a new Supreme Court family duty counsel program; and a limited Supreme Court Family Referral program." The preceding allocations were consistent with the findings of the Issues and Options paper, however did not go far enough to address all issues and gaps identified during the development of the paper. The Paper was distributed to STV Counselling programs and others throughout the province to increase their knowledge of the changes and the issues the changes raise. It is critical that STV Counselling have knowledge in this area as they report to us that their clients are dealing with concerns in this area.



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Informants to the paper confirmed that without informed and widely accessible victim support and legal services, women can and do remain in an abusive relationship or leave their children with their abusive partner, placing themselves and their children at even greater risk. Additional recommendations in the paper covered the need for expanded victim support and legal advocacy; expanded duty counsel; greater and more consistent collaboration with Family Justice Counsellors; cross ministerial and sectoral improvements in intake procedures and risk assessment; interdisciplinary training in assessment and referral procedures; and a simplification and revision of the use of Supreme Court in family matters.

A significant recommendation for Victim Service and Community Program Division was to expand the mandate of the existing community based victim assistance programs to include victim support in the area of family law. The final step for this project will be to distribute it to all project informants and relevant government Ministries.

Through our management of the Community Coordination for Women's Safety, we recently met with the new AG to discuss this issue and other issues. He has invited us to meet with him again and will be doing this in March. In addition we have been invited to meet, in a joint meeting, with the deputies of the AG, CG and Community Services. We hope to see that meeting take place in February 2006.

Violence Against Women Policy Round Table

We have been working in partnership with the BCIAFV and the BCYSTH to plan an initiative that relates to policy gaps that need to be addresses that are affecting the safety of women and children in BC. Over this year numerous meeting have happened where we have identified the problems and came up with plans to proceed on this initiative. The issue that has arisen is the development of the Premiers Congress on Women's Safety. We have been assessing whether we need to join these two initiatives

ASAP

The Association has been providing an enormous amount of feedback and attending numerous meetings in person and on the phone related to the

ASAP project over the past year and a half. The ASAP initiative is a provincial move to develop consistent risk assessment practices among the anti violence sector and the systems. STV Counselling programs and others will be impacted by such a standard created therefore the Assn.'s seat at the table and feedback focused on the realities of the work environments of STV Counselling programs and others and attempted to bring a lens of what is really doable and what would not be. WE also wrote an appendix for the ASAP manual on LGBT issues to assist readers to understand the difference in risk assessment with LGBT communities.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

Community Coordination for Women's Safety

The Community Coordination for Women's Safety (CCWS) Program works with rural and isolated communities that wish to develop new models of coordination on violence against women, as well as communities that wish to enhance existing coordination initiatives. The program also works to track and develop negotiated solutions to issues that arise locally but may require response at a regional or provincial level.

CCWS activities during this reporting period include:

- Providing information, training and support to communities who have or who are developing violence against women coordination committees.
- Planning and facilitating meetings of the Provincial Working Group. New members of the group include Gloria Morgan (former RCMP member, Crown, defense lawyer and chief) and Wendy van Tongeren Harvey, representing the Criminal Justice Branch (Wendy will be replaced by Georgia Peters).
- In December 2005 representatives from CCWS met with Attorney General Wally Oppal and Assistant Deputy Attorney General (ADAG) for Criminal Justice, Robert Gillen Q.C. In February 2006, representatives from CCWS met with Deputy Ministers and other staff from MCS, MPSSG and MCS. CCWS raised a number of issues related to women's safety.
- CCWS is working with MAG and MPSSG regarding sharing information with victims about suspects' violent pasts. RCMP have agreed to work in collaboration with CCWS and MPSSG on this initiative. Once this protocol is in place, we hope go on to develop a high-risk information sharing protocol along the lines of the one in Nova Scotia.
- CCWS continued development of a provincial protocol template to allow sexual assault victims who do not wish to report to police to submit third party reports to another agency. CCWS held cross-regional intersectoral discussion groups on third party reporting to gather input from stakeholders across the province. A roundtable on third party reports was organized as part of the BCASVACP Training Forum in December.
- CCWS attended Day 1 of the Highway of Tears Symposium in Prince George, organized by the Lheidli T'enneh Nation to raise awareness and plan for action on the missing and murdered women of Highway 16 from Prince Rupert to Prince George (the "Highway of Tears").
- CCWS Regional Coordinators continue to support community agencies and local RCMP detachments to work together to resolve local issues.



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Relationships between some community agencies and RCMP detachments are improved as a result of this work, leading to better services for women who have experienced abuse.

- Documents completed by CCWS include: Under What Circumstances Can Assaulted Women get Information from Police about the Abuser's Criminal Past?; a PowerPoint presentation on Protection Orders entitled: From Paper to Protection: Community, Police and Government Working Together to Enforce Protection Orders; Courts and Community Agencies: A Tool for Collaboration; Administrative Job Description for Coordination Initiatives; Leadership in Coordination; October and February news bulletins.
- The third session of the Community Leadership Training was held March 7-9, 2006 in Vancouver. There were 29 trainees, representing 25 communities (see attached participant list). This year the training included 11 Outreach Workers, as their contracts specify participating in community coordination, and CCWS was eager to provide support to these workers. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. A waiting list has been started for our next session.
- We presented our Myth of Mutual Battering workshop for counsellors working with assaultive men at the Ending Relationship Violence Conference in November.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and Working Group member Diane Turner, CCWS did a presentation on protection orders at the World Conference on the Prevention of Family Violence in Banff in October 2005. Close to 100 justice system professionals including police, Crown counsel, corrections and community based service providers from across Canada and the world participated in this workshop.
- CCWS in collaboration with BCASVACP and BCIFV delivered a panel presentation on violence prevention including an adapted version of the protection orders workshop at the BC Injury Prevention Conference in Vancouver in March 2006.

Safe Choices – Support and Education Program

The Safe Choices program is funded by the SMART Fund of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. The purpose is to improve the health and safety (physical, sexual, and emotional) of women in same-gender relationships by increasing options for intervention and support, and by removing barriers to health care and social services for women in abusive same-sex relationships in Vancouver.

The program continues to receive many requests for training, consultation, healthy relationship workshops and writing about same-gender relationship abuse. Over the past year we have seen an increased awareness about the program in the community and we are starting to be recognized as a leader in this area locally and across the country.

Consultation, Referrals and Resource Development

We provided a number of consultations to other service providers and organizations working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and specifically in the area of same-gender partner abuse.

Public Education

We delivered 7 training workshops for 93 service providers. We also delivered 5 healthy relationship workshops for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered women on “After the Honeymoon: Healthy Communication and Conflict Resolution” with 42 participants.

LGBT Anti-Violence Network

This is a local initiative of The Centre, which seeks to bring together those working in the area of LGBT relationship abuse and anti-LGBT violence (hate crimes). These groups have not always worked collaboratively in the past and this network is a new attempt to increase coordination, collaboration, education and information sharing.

Expanding Safe Choices Library

We are in the process of purchasing a number of books on current and emerging issues related to violence in same-gender relationships.

Hate Crimes Roundtable

Safe Choices in participating in a planning committee for a roundtable on hate crimes in BC. This project grew out of a workshop delivered by the LGBT Anti-Violence Project at the 2005 conference on hate crimes. With funding from VSCPD, the committee includes Safe Choices, the Centre, the BC Human Rights Coalition, AMSSA, the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Native Women’s Association of Canada, as well as VSCPD. The goal of the roundtable is to provide information on hate crimes from a human rights perspective.

The LGBT Anti-Violence Project: Creating Strong and Safe Queer Communities

This one-year provincial anti-violence project was completed in January. However, after January, we printed and distributed the pamphlets we created. These are a series of pamphlets on: hate crimes, abuse in same-gender relationships, healthy relationships for gay men, healthy relationships for lesbians, and relationship abuse and transgender people. They have also been posted on our websites. We have received requests for the pamphlets from across Canada.

In March, the project was presented at the UBC Okanagan campus, during an event entitled “Honouring Diversity, Promoting Awareness and Social Change.”

We also completed a summary report on the project which was sent to all participants.



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PROGRAM REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

Educational Consortium

This is a committee of educators, government ministry reps and provincial associations who have been meeting for the two years to try to find ways to have formal education in BC teaching to and adhering more to the occupational competencies that are in place for each of the anti violence sub sectors in BC. The intent here is to try to save post employment training dollars by having people learn more while they are taking a college or university course that relates to community based victim services, transition house work and other similar work. During this reporting period there were no meetings, however, this is ongoing work.

Empowerment Curriculum Project – Advisory Committee

The Association. has partnered with the JIBC to develop curriculum based on the empowerment research and to pilot this curriculum in a number of sites in the province. In this last quarter there have been no meeting however this work is ongoing.

PROGRAM REPRESENTATION TO AND ASSISTANCE TO GOVERNMENT

Victim Service Division Training Committee

This fall the Victim Service Worker Certificate program was launched and the first cohort received their certificates in April 2006. Congratulations to Laurie Hearty, Victim Services and Community Programs Division and Shelly Rivkin at the Justice Institute for all their hard work on this. We feel this will go along way to enhance the knowledge of workers and credibility of Victim Service Programs in B.C. This is the first Victim Services certificate program in Canada and the most extensive of the three programs that exist in all of North America.

Victim Service Division Strategic Planning Focus Group

We have been involved in this group since its inception this fall. This working group, made up of service providers, is working on developing a template or tool for strategic planning to be used by programs across the province. We see many advantages to having a user friendly – Victim Service Program specific tool that workers can easily access. The project is completed and regional trainings will be carried out in May and June through VSCPD.

Victim Service Toolkit

This project is being worked on in conjunction with Police Victim Services of BC. We are part of a steering committee who is looking at gaps in training or skills for victim service workers. We have begun by undertaking an inventory of training resources and have brainstormed the gaps that exist. The scope of this project includes looking at developing a template for Community-Based and Police-Based Victim Service Programs to begin working more collaboratively, including looking at the referral process.



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Assistance to the Deputy for the Development of the Premier Congress on Violence Against Women

While attending the Premier's Congress on Public Safety, we were invited to have lunch with the Deputy Minister of Community Services and the Premier. During that time we proposed that the Premier hold a similar Congress on Violence Against Women. This was agreed upon and announced by the Premier. Since that time we have met with the Deputy and provided background material and consultation information towards shaping the Forum.

Press Conference Hosting

We were asked by the Ministry of Community Services to host a press conference in our office in the New Year and to MC the event to announce the Ministry's Community Safety Grants. This involved coordinating a statement with the other speakers, and liaising with the Ministry's Communication Branch, as well as making our office physically ready to host such an event.

OTHER

Provincial Integrated Recovery Council

This interagency provincial committee, hosted by the PEP and ESS, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, consists of a cross section of crisis intervention and planning agencies looking at a coordinated disaster response. The committee has created a number of working groups, three of which we are members of. These include:

Activation/Coordination Methodology

Strategies for Individual, Family and Community Recovery

Crime Prevention, Response and Coordination

The second group has completed the development of terms of reference.

Workshop for Police Victim Services Conference

The BCASVACP is planning a workshop for the June PVS conference on collaboration during and after disasters.



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Appendix A:

Membership Listing

BCASVACP Current Membership

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM NAME	TYPE
100 Mile House Women's Centre Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Abbotsford Community Services	Abbotsford Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Abbotsford Community Services	Abuse Counselling and Support Services	STV
Abbotsford Community Services	Multicultural Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Abbotsford Community Services	Mission Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Battered Women's Support Services	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Battered Women's Support Services	Specialized Victim Service	CBVAP
Bella Coola Community Support Society	Women's Counselling Program	STV
Bella Coola Community Support Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Boundary Family & Individual Services Society	STV Program	STV
Burnaby Family Life Institute	Stopping Violence Against Women Program	STV
Cameray Centre	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Campbell River Family Services Society	Community Based Victim Service Program	CBVAP
Campbell River & North Island TH Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Castlegar & District Community Services Centre	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Chetwynd Women's Resource Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Child Abuse Prevention & Counselling Society of Greater Victoria	Sexual Assault Centre - Mary Manning Centre	CBVAP
Chilliwack Community Services	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Chimo Crisis Services	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Chinese Community Policing Centre	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Comox Valley Family Services Association	Community Based Victim Services	CBVAP

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM NAME	TYPE
Comox Valley Transition Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Cowichan Women Against Violence Society	Specialized Victim Service – Cowichan WAVAW	STV
Cowichan Women Against Violence Society	STV Counselling Program – Cowichan WAVAW	CBVAP
Creston & District Community Resource Centre	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Cythera Transition House Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Desert Sun Counselling & Resource Centre	STV Counselling Program	STV
District 69 Family Resource Association	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Downtown Eastside Women's Centre	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Family Resource Centre of Invermere	STV Counselling Program – Women in Crisis	STV
Family Resource Centre for the North Okanagan	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	New West Stopping the Violence Program	STV
Family Services of Greater Vancouver - VISAC	Adult Services Program - VISAC	STV
Family Services of Greater Vancouver - TASA	STV Counselling Program – TASA Counselling Centre, Richmond	STV
Family Services of Greater Vancouver - VISAC	Victim Support Services - VISAC	CBVAP
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Burnaby/New West Community Based Victim Services Program	CBVAP
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Vancouver Domestic Violence Unit (DVU)	CBVAP
Family Services of the North Shore	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Fernie Women's Resource & Drop-In Centre	STV Counselling Program – Fernie	STV
Fernie Women's Resource & Drop-In Centre	STV Counselling Program – Elkford	STV
Fireweed Collective Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Golden Family Centre Society	Abuse Recovery Program - Stopping the Violence Program	STV
Haven Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Haven Society	Women's Assault Program	CBVAP

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM	TYPE
Haven Society	Haven Society Community Victim Services - Parksville	CBVAP
Hope & Area Transition Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Information Services Vancouver	VictimLINK	CBVAP
Interior Health Authority/Enderby Community Health Centre	STV Counselling Program	STV
Ishtar Transition Housing Society	Ishtar Counselling Services – STV Program	STV
Ishtar Transition Housing Society	Ishtar Counselling Services – Community Based Victim Services	CBVAP
Island Women Against Violence Jubilee Care/Canadian Mental Health Association	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
	Community-Based Victim Services	CBVAP
Kelowna Family Centre	STV Counselling Program	STV
Ksan House Society	Stopping Violence Against Women Program	STV
Ksan House Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Lillooet Friendship Centre Society	CHOICES - STV Counselling Program	STV
Lillooet Friendship Centre Society	Lillooet Community Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Lower Similkameen Community Services Society	LSCSS Stopping the Violence Program	STV
MacKenzie Counselling Services Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Community Services	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Marguerite Dixon Transition Society	Marguerite Dixon Transition House	STV
MOSAIC	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
MOSAIC	Multicultural Victim Services Program	CBVAP
Namgis First Nation, Namgis Health Centre	Namgis Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Nelson Community Services Centre Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Nicola Valley Community Human Services Association	Nicola Family Therapy, STV Counselling Program	STV
North Coast Transition Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM	TYPE
North Island Crisis & Counselling Centre Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
North Island Survivors Healing Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
North Island Women's Services Society	STV Counselling - North Island	STV
North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society	Community Based Victim Services	CBVAP
North Peace Community Resources Society	Choices for Women (STV Program)	STV
North Peace Community Resources Society	Community Based Victim Services Program	CBVAP
Northern Society for Domestic Peace	Stopping the Violence Counselling	STV
Northern Society for Domestic Peace	Specialized Victim Assistance	CBVAP
Northern Society for Domestic Peace	Stopping the Violence Counselling – Houston	STV
Omineca Safe Home Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Pacific Centre Family Services Association, Victoria	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Port Alberni Women's Resources Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Port Alberni Women's Resources Society	Community Based Victim Service Program	CBVAP
Powell River Community Services Association	Specialized Victim Support Services	CBVAP
Powell River & Region Transition House Society	STV - Powell River Women's Outreach Office	STV
Prince George & District Elizabeth Fry Society	STV Counselling Program – Prince George	STV
Prince George & District Elizabeth Fry Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Prince George & District Elizabeth Fry Society	Quesnel Family & Sexual Victim Support Services	CBVAP
Prince George & District Elizabeth Fry Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program – Burns Lake	STV
Prince George Native Friendship Centre	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Prince George Sexual Assault Centre	STV Counselling Program	STV
Prince Rupert Community Enrichment Society	Community Based Victim Services	CBVAP

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM NAME	TYPE
Princeton General Hospital (Interior Health Authority)	STV Women's Counselling Program	STV
Queen Charlotte Islands Women's Society	Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Queen Charlotte Islands Women's Society	Women's Counselling Program	STV
Quesnel Women's Resource Centre	Women Against Violence (STV)	STV
Robson Valley Home Support Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Sea To Sky Community Services	STV Counselling Program, Squamish	STV
Sea To Sky Community Services	STV Counselling Program, Pemberton	STV
Shuswap Area Family Emergency (SAFE) Society	STV Program	STV
Shuswap Area Family Emergency (SAFE) Society	Community Based Victim Service Program	CBVAP
South Fraser Women's Services Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
South Fraser Women's Services Society	STV Counselling Program – Cloverdale	STV
South Okanagan Victim Assistance Society	STV Women's Counselling Program – Penticton	STV
South Okanagan Victim Assistance Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
South Okanagan Integrated Community Services Society	STV Counselling Program – Oliver	STV
South Peace Community Resources Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
South Peace Community Resources Society	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Summit Community Services Society	Stopping the Violence, Women's Counselling Program	STV
Summit Community Services Society	Family & Sexual Violence & Victim Support Services	CBVAP
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society	Family and Sexual Violence Victim Support Services	CBVAP
Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society	STV Multicultural Program	STV
Surrey Women's Centre Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Surrey Women's Centre Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Tamitik Status of Women Association	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
The Advocacy Centre / Nelson District Community Resources Society	Community Based Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP

AGENCY NAME	PROGRAM NAME	TYPE
Trail Family & Individual Resource Centre	Specialized Victim Services	CBVAP
Trail Family & Individual Resource Centre	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Tri-City Women's Resource Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program - Path Counselling Centre	STV
Tri-City Women's Resource Society	Community-Based Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Tumbler Ridge Counselling Services - Northern Health Authority - North East	STV Counselling Program	STV
Vancouver Coastal Health – Aboriginal Health Services	Aboriginal Wellness Program	CBVAP
Vancouver Island Men's Trauma Counselling Society (Men's Trauma Centre)	Men's Trauma Program: Victims Assistance	CBVAP
Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society	Victim Services Program	CBVAP
Vernon Women's Transition House Society	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Vernon Women's Transition House Society	Specialized Victim Assistance Program	CBVAP
Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre	Historical Abuse Program - STV Counselling Program	STV
Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre	Sexual Violence Victim Services	CBVAP
Victoria Women's Transition House Society	Spousal Assault Victim Support Program	CBVAP
Victoria Women's Transition House Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Westcoast Community Resources Society	STV Counselling Program	STV
Women Against Violence Against Women Rape Crisis Centre (WAVAW/RCC)	Stopping the Violence Counselling Program	STV
Women Against Violence Against Women Rape Crisis Centre (WAVAW/RCC)	Victim Services Program	CBVAP
Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley	Mission Women's Support Services	STV
Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley	Abbotsford Women's Support Services	STV
Yellowhead Community Services	STV Counselling Program	STV

**BC ASSOCIATION OF SPECIALIZED VICTIM
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Appendix B:

Audited Financial Statements