

**Inter-Agency Case Assessment Teams (ICATs)**

With the 2010 changes to the VAWIR policy, there was clear direction to share information across sectors and work collaboratively on responding to domestic violence. Since that time, many communities have been developing teams that are working to increase safety for those at highest risk for serious bodily harm or death.

CCWS has been supporting many communities across the province to develop the foundation and tools to move forward on this work together. One of these communities is the very successful Vernon Violence Against Women VAWIR Committee and the North Okanagan Integrated Case Assessment Team (NOICAT). In addition to their groundbreaking work at the local level, they are also working with CCWS to share their expertise with other communities.

It is great to have the NOICAT paving the way for others who are fledglings in navigating the information sharing processes that an Inter-Agency Case Assessment Team (ICAT) requires.

In an effort to address the many questions coming from the field about confidentiality and working in an ICAT, EVA BC, in partnership with RCMP "E" Division, hope to engage experienced ICAT members from different regions in a roundtable conversation on information sharing. The event will be limited to a few seats for resource people and folks from experienced ICATs. CCWS will keep you posted on this.

CCWS wants to acknowledge and appreciate Sgt. Robb Daly and the Vernon RCMP detachment and Debby Hamilton, Vernon Women's Transition House Society and the North Okanagan ICAT for so generously offering their time to CCWS community capacity building events on developing high risk teams. Many communities have found that learning about the Vernon experience has been invaluable to the development of their team.

**Indigenous Communities Safety Project Update**

The Indigenous Communities Safety Project is a partnership between EVA BC and Legal Services Society with funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario. It aims to provide knowledge sharing opportunities for Aboriginal staff leadership (including Chief and Council, traditional leaders, and service providers) within Aboriginal communities in BC, on and off reserve, related to criminal justice, family justice and child protection laws, and policies and practices that directly affect women who have experienced violence.



*Participants at the Train-the-Trainers session held in July, L-R: Bev Jacobs; Barbara Barker (back); Elder Lois Rullin, Haida Nation (front); Mavis Erickson; Cherlynn Billy; Melissa Hyland (back); Katrina Harry. Participants not in this photo were: Marilyn George, Belinda Lacombe, Rhaea Bailey and Gail Edinger.*

Following along in the footsteps of activities undertaken by CCWS and the Northern Society for Domestic Peace, Project Consultant Bev Jacobs has continued to seek permission and engage the Aboriginal community, elders and leaders to lay the groundwork for the delivery of Knowledge Sharing workshops in 12 Aboriginal communities in BC in the coming months. Pursuant to this, Bev has developed the workshop curriculum and a Facilitator's Guide and recruited a team of Aboriginal women lawyers and anti-violence workers who will be co-facilitating the 3-day

Knowledge Sharing workshops. In July, they gathered at the EVA BC offices in downtown Vancouver to participate in an intense 2-day Train-the-Trainers session. Bev said the shared expertise and experience participants brought to the training made it a worthwhile experience for everyone and she is really looking forward to working with these skilled women out in the communities.

To date, five Aboriginal communities have confirmed their participation in the Knowledge Sharing workshops and plans are underway to organize their sessions. They are: Saik'uz First Nation; Nak'azdli First Nation; Sto:lo Nation Chiefs Council; Lytton First Nation; and Tsay Keh Dene First Nation.

Bev is also slated to deliver a workshop presentation to the National First Nations Health Managers Association and present at the BC Child Care Society in coming months. In addition, she will be a featured speaker at the upcoming FREDA and EVA BC training forum, *Sexual Violence, Domestic Violence: Exploring the Continuum of Violence Against Women and Girls*, where she will deliver the keynote address *Restoring the Balance: Empowering Aboriginal Women*. For more information on the Indigenous Communities Safety Project, visit our website at [www.endingviolence.org/node/1360](http://www.endingviolence.org/node/1360) or contact Project Consultant Bev Jacobs directly at [jacobs@endingviolence.org](mailto:jacobs@endingviolence.org) or by phone at 604-633-2506 ext 16.

## Regional Capacity Building

**CCWS Regional Capacity Building in the East and West Kootenays** - On September 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, at the invitation of the Creston Community Coordination for Women's Safety Committee, CCWS Regional Coordinator Gail Edinger and North Okanagan Integrated Case Assessment Team (NOICAT) members Debby Hamilton of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society and Community-Based Victim Services and Sgt. Robb Daly from the Vernon RCMP detachment delivered the capacity building session *Developing a Collaborative Response to Risk and Safety* to violence against women coordination initiative members from Creston, Cranbrook, Kimberly, Invermere, Revelstoke, Nelson, Castlegar, Salmo and Trail.

Over 50 participants worked in community teams to learn about risk and develop and strengthen local collaborative safety planning for women who are at the highest risk of serious bodily harm or homicide. The event was well attended by MCFD and police thanks to the efforts of CCWS Working Group members Shauna Filgate from the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence and Superintendent Paul Richards from RCMP "E" Division. Thanks to Shauna and Paul!

## Relationship and Sexual Violence: Working Collaboratively for Safety and Accountability -

This 2-day session held in Fernie in April for the Elk Valley Community Coordination for Safety in Relationships was a collaboration between CCWS and the North Okanagan Integrated Case Assessment Team (NOICAT). The agenda was designed to initiate newcomers to a coordinated response and the principles and best practices of coordination. CCWS facilitated and coordinated the event with Sgt. Robb Daly and Debby Hamilton presenting on the best practices model they are involved with in Vernon. Almost 40 participants attended from Elk Valley including Fernie, Sparwood, Elkford, Jaffray, Elko, Grassmere, Baynes Lake, Hossmer and Cranbrook. Two police officers and eight social workers were at the training, as well as representatives from public health, mental health, education, Salvation Army, anti-violence programs, Family Services from Tobacco Plains Reserve, alcohol & drug and hospital.

## Collaboration for Women's Safety: Building a

**Regional VAWIR** - A session held in May for the Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Partnership for Women's Safety was another CCWS/NOICAT collaboration aimed at initiating newcomers to a coordinated response and the principles and best practices of coordination. 30 participants attended from the Southern Gulf Islands of Salt Spring, Mayne, Galiano, Pender and Saturna, as well as representatives from the Duncan head offices of Probation and CBVS. Two police officers attended the entire two-day training as well as participants from MCFD, mental health, public health, a private supervised access centre from Duncan and the Police-Based Victim Services from Salt Spring and the Outer Islands. Island Women Against Violence programs (Transition House and STV Outreach) and SWOVA were on hand, along with Youth Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug Services.

## Other Workshop Highlights

**Developing a High Risk Team:** On July 11<sup>th</sup>, CCWS Regional Coordinator Michelle Novakowski facilitated a workshop for the team that's developing the Kelowna Domestic Violence Inter-Agency Case Assessment Team. The group looked at risk tools and safety planning around risk indicators and reviewed and finalized the team protocol. CCWS will be going back to Kelowna at the end of September to do follow-up training on information sharing and records management issues.



*Kelowna training group for the newly developing High Risk Domestic Violence Case Team*

**He Said/She Said: Use of Evidence and RCMP Policy to Identify the Primary Aggressor in Domestic Violence Cases** - A half-day workshop was delivered in Duncan in late June by CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat in collaboration with Advocate and STV Counsellor Cathy Welch of Cowichan Women Against Violence Society. In domestic violence cases police are sometimes confronted with a situation where both parties allege that the other one delivered the first blow. Arresting the wrong person can result in an escalation of violence down the road and the likelihood that the true victim will not report to police again. This presentation provided a statistical snapshot of DV cases and their power dynamics, a review of RCMP Primary Aggressor Policy and investigative strategies to help identify the primary aggressor. 50 participants included RCMP, PBVS, MCFD staff and restorative justice practitioners from Duncan and Lake Cowichan, as well as STV and CBVS staff from Cowichan Women Against Violence Society and Provincial Court Judge Josiah Wood.

**100 Mile House Violence in Relationships Committee** - A three-hour presentation and Q & A took place in mid-June facilitated by CCWS that included a presentation about the North Okanagan ICAT team by RCMP Sgt. Robb Daly, Debby Hamilton of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society, Brook McLardy from Vernon CBVS and Nicole Charney of MCFD. Over 25 community service providers came from all relevant sectors including RCMP, RCMP Victim Services, Probation, Canim Lake Restorative Justice, Women's Centre, STV Counselling, Children who Witness Abuse, Interior Health, School District 57, MCFD and the Family Enrichment Centre. The purpose of this session was to provide information and share the experiences related to the building of a high risk team and the benefits and challenges of vetting the highest risk cases. A team has since formed in 100 Mile and work on developing protocols has begun.

## Provincial Working Group

In June, CCWS staff provided support to the new Provincial Office of Domestic Violence by holding a Special Meeting of the CCWS Provincial Working Group. The meeting provided the PODV with an opportunity to gather input from CCWS Working Group members around potential responses and strategies to implement recommendations made in the Representative for Children and Youth's March 2012 report "Honouring Kaitlyne, Max and Gordon: Make Their Voices Heard Now".

## Resources

*CCWS Information Bulletin on Confidentiality for Sexual Assault Survivors under the Age of Nineteen:* This document is intended to clarify some of the questions about legal and policy mandates and to aid discussion when developing community or agency protocols.

*Third Party Reporting: Protocol Template:* This 2-page template shows what information needs to be included in a Third Party Reporting Protocol, such as documenting agreed-upon responsibilities of each participating service provider or agency.

*CCWS Information Bulletin on Family Law Act: Implications for Anti-Violence Workers:* Developed in consultation with BC Ministry of Justice, Civil Law Policy Unit.

*Developing Goals and Objectives: A Process Exercise for Violence Against Women Coordination Initiatives:* This Four Step process will guide a group to develop goals and attainable objectives that will address safety and accountability within the local response to violence against women and children.

To view CCWS resources and publications online, please visit [www.endingviolence.org/publications](http://www.endingviolence.org/publications).

## Trends and Emerging Issues

CCWS is a forum for discussing the challenges of policy and program implementation and resolving those challenges. We promote a broad range of system and community-based sectors working effectively in a solutions-based model.

When communities identify issues such as those below, CCWS Regional Coordinators work with community stakeholders to address the issue at the local level. When an issue cannot be addressed at the local level and CCWS recognizes a province wide “trend” emerging, we endeavour to address the issue at a provincial level through the CCWS Working Group.

- Implementation of VAWIR policy and high risk protocol
- Inappropriate and inconsistent use of alternative measures
- Information sharing in high risk cases

## Upcoming

### VAWIR Committee Conference Call

The next VAWIR committee conference call will be held on November 14<sup>th</sup>. All participants will be bringing issues forward from their communities and providing updates. For further information, contact CCWS Regional Coordinator Michelle Novakowski at [micheno@telus.net](mailto:micheno@telus.net) or by phone at 250-862-2887.

Visit us online at:

[www.endingviolence.org/ccws](http://www.endingviolence.org/ccws)

## Staff Changes

CCWS wants to express its sincere thanks to Lau Mehes for everything she accomplished during her time with us. We wish her all the best as she follows her passion to a new position as a youth worker at QMUNITY!



Good Luck, Lau!

Welcome, Terran!

We are very pleased to welcome Terran Bell as the new CCWS Administrative Assistant. After earning her master's degree in Gender and Social Policy at the London School of Economics, Terran moved to Galway where she worked at Rape Crisis Network Ireland, the coordinating body for rape crisis centres across the country. She has also worked as a hospital accompaniment support worker for survivors of sexual violence, both in Ireland and Vancouver. She has been involved in numerous education workshops, campaigns and research committees to do with gender, health and sexual violence. For fun, she likes to read feminist blogs, cycle around town, watch British soap operas and cook.

## Contact Us

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