While some may think of risk identification and risk assessment as essentially the same thing and use the terms interchangeably, it is important to recognize that behind those two terms lays a world of difference. Recognizing and understanding this difference could help you, as a worker, better serve the women who need your help, as well as mitigate potential risk for your organization.

Many in the anti-violence field choose their language with care on this topic based on the perspective that “assessment” is a very loaded term that implies a depth and breadth of analysis that may include, for example, such things as forensic psychiatric examinations and interviews with family. A great deal of what is done at the frontline level by Community-based Victim Assistance workers, STV Counsellors and Outreach workers is not “assessment” in the sense described above, but closer to working within a “risk identification” framework, particularly at the initial safety stage of service.

This month, in March 2010, Community Coordination for Women's Safety launched the first session of its new training “Domestic Violence: Developing a Community Response To Risk And Safety”. Part of the training is dedicated to reviewing a number of risk assessment tools, checklists and indicators and discussing their various strengths and potential pitfalls. For example, CCWS Regional Coordinator Michelle Novakowski states “I would steer away from labeling a situation as high, medium or low risk as situations change daily, sometimes hourly, and this could put your organization in a difficult situation down the road. For example, if a situation labeled ‘low risk’ resulted in a serious injury or murder.

This edition of the newsletter, with the theme of Risk Identification and Assessment, will be taking at look at many of the factors that place women at an increased risk for violence and abuse. In our next newsletter, please look for follow-up articles that will focus on the topic of Safety Planning.
Message from the Executive Director

It’s hard to believe we are already well into 2010. It does not seem possible that it has already been almost four months since many of us were together at the Annual Training Forum last November. I hope you are feeling re-energized and renewed in this new year as you tackle the many issues and challenges at hand in this important work we all share.

EVA BC was in back in court when the Lee Inquest resumed for its final week in mid-December 2009. During this final week, two of our member programs testified, Wendy Walsh of the Spousal Assault Program in Victoria and Nancy Drewery, Community-Based Victim Services Coordinator in Langley. I wish you all could have been present when they so clearly articulated the importance of Community-Based Victim Assistance Programs, what they do and the critical role they play in providing safety planning and advocacy. Among the 14 Jury Recommendations that resulted from the Inquest, one clearly spoke of the need for universally available advocacy services, so their presence was invaluable.

Other recommendations highlight the need for a continued focus on cross sector coordination, proper risk assessment screening before offender release, increased bail release conditions, standard and broad risk assessment tools to be implemented and public education.

On January 18, 2010 the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General announced the launch of a Domestic Violence Action Plan which includes plans for the BC Coroner’s Service to convene a death review panel and the proactive targeting of high risk offenders, as well as a number of other actions.

With all these things in mind, it seems like a good time to take a current look at risk identification and assessment, so that is the focus of this edition of the newsletter. Our next newsletter will follow through on this by featuring safety planning. Though these things are not new to us, they continue to be crucial and complex pieces in the continuum of our services to women and children, part of the effective response we are all working to achieve.

With respect,

Tracy Porteous
Michelle goes on to say that “while checklists can make us feel better, I think they need to be used carefully with clients. I advocate for training for staff in risk indicators and safety planning and using those as a guide. Nothing replaces the woman’s intuition about the situation and your gut feeling.” She noted that many experts take the view that a woman's high fear level is the best indicator of risk, but cautions against using a lack of fear or low level of fear to evaluate that risk level as low, as most humans simply cannot function in a high state of fear for any real length of time and cope by minimizing their danger or becoming numb.

Risk Indicators for Domestic Violence
Taken from “Domestic Violence: Developing a Community Response To Risk And Safety”, Community Coordination for Women’s Safety, 2009.

History:
1. History of violence in relationship by perpetrator
2. Prior violence against family or pets
3. Past assault of strangers or acquaintances
4. Past violation of conditions
5. Prior threats or attempts to commit suicide by perpetrator
6. Perpetrator history of mental illness
7. History of sexual assault by perpetrator
8. Has the perpetrator ever strangled, choked, or bitten the complainant?
9. History of assault on victim while she was pregnant

Perpetrator Factors:
10. Was abused or witnessed abuse as a child
11. Recent substance abuse/dependence
12. Suicidal and or homicidal ideation
13. Recent psychotic or manic symptoms
14. Sexual jealousy
15. Extreme minimization or denial of spousal assault history
16. Attitudes that support or condone spousal assault

Current Situation:
17. Recent separation
18. Recent escalation of violence
19. Are there children under 18 in the home?
20. Are there children that are not the perpetrator’s in the home?
21. Does the suspect have access to weapons?
22. Is the suspect unemployed or in financial difficulty?
23. Does the suspect control most of the complainant’s activities?
24. Threats to kill complainant
25. Threats to kill complainants children/family
26. Does complainant feel the perpetrator is capable of killing her?
27. Child custody dispute
28. New partner in victim’s life

Victim Factors:
29. Does the complainant believe the suspect will violate the terms of release?
30. Does the complainant fear further violence if the perpetrator is released?
31. Is the complainant socially isolated?
32. Does the complainant experience social barriers to getting help?

Systemic Factors aggravating risk:
33. Breaches that are not acted upon
34. Custody and access orders contradicting no contact orders
35. Divorce, separation and property settlement proceedings underway
36. Woman victim mistakenly arrested
37. Service of no contact order without adequate safety plan
38. MCFD involvement/fear or threat of child apprehension
39. Lack of involvement of victim in systemic responses
40. Services that are inaccessible due to geographic or language barriers
41. Lack of information and supports in victim’s language
42. Lack of coordination between service providers

Currently, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is developing a priority assessment guide for programs to use in identifying clients that need urgent response. This is expected to be distributed to programs in the next few weeks and, if available, CCWS will present the new form at the March 2010 training.

Risk Indicators taken from:
SARA: Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide: Kropp et al
2nd Edition 2008
Danger Assessment, J.C. Campbell, 2003
Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee Risk Factor Coding Form
Vancouver Police Department, Patrol Domestic Violence Guide
Aid to Safety Assessment and Planning (ASAP): BCIFV & MPSSG Jan. 2006
Community Coordination for Women’s Safety, CCWS Regional Coordinators
Developing Domestic Violence Service Priority Assessment Form
To help victim service programs identify clients who are at potential risk of serious injury or death as a result of domestic violence, Victim Services and Crime Prevention (VSCP) is developing a Domestic Violence Service Priority Assessment Form. The Form is intended to support victim service programs in their assessment of the immediate safety needs of clients and to make informed decisions on service priority and proactive referrals.

The questions included on the Form were developed based on the best available research on factors associated with violence by a current or former intimate partner. They represent information that clients may be willing to disclose about their safety and, although they do not cover all known risk factors, they are intended to ensure that programs across the province are using a consistent set of criteria in their intake procedures. These criteria are intended to supplement professional judgment.

VSCP has sought the input of a number of service providers in the development of this Form, which is accompanied by more detailed guidelines that include information for service providers and front-line users. The Form will be made available to all victim service programs across the province this spring and will be distributed for information purposes to other service providers responding to domestic violence incidents.

Domestic Violence Task Force
The Inter-ministry Committee and Task Force is attending the next Provincial Working Group meeting in Vancouver hosted by Community Coordination for Women’s Safety.

The mandate of the Task Force is to:
- guide and implement government’s response to the recommendations of the Coroner’s Jury and the Representative for Children and Youth;
- develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated, cross-government protocol on domestic violence; and,
- within 60 days provide an action plan to the Solicitor General detailing work completed to that point and outline the further actions that will be taken.

Resource Materials Available
Two victim service publications, Victims of Crime: Victim Service Worker Handbook (2nd edition) and Victim Services Directory (January 2010) have recently been updated and are available in electronic format.

The Division also recently acquired a series of violence against women information brochures titled Help, Hope & Healing that are available in various languages including Chinese, English, Filipino, French, Punjabi, Persian, and Vietnamese.

For more information about these or other resources available to your program free of charge, please visit the MPSSG website at http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victim_services/publications/ or contact Carlie Thauvette at 604-660-5266 or Carlie.Thauvette@gov.bc.ca

Domestic Violence Response: A Community Framework for Maximizing Women’s Safety
The new Division publication “Domestic Violence Response: A Community Framework for Maximizing Women’s Safety” was recently sent out to programs around the province. It is available to download on the Ministry’s website at http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victim_services/publications/docs/domestic-violence-response.pdf
There is so much to consider when identifying the various risk factors that may be impacting a woman’s safety and that of her children. Though a number of factors are often common across the board to a large number of women who are threatened by violence and abuse, there are even more layers to consider when working with women who have additional factors such as being an Aboriginal woman, immigrant woman, having a disability, being queer, working in the sex trade or living in a rural area, as examples. In addition, mental health issues or substance use may be part of an individual’s experience. As workers throughout the anti-violence field are well aware, there are infinite possibilities for overlapping factors that create each woman’s unique situation.

In “Assessing Social Risks of Battered Women”, Radhia Jaaber and Shamita Das Dasgupta state that “the aim of assessing a battered woman’s risks is to centralize her safety in the most comprehensive way possible.” They go on to discuss the need to take into account the diverse social factors that impact a woman’s choices and decisions, identifying that these social factors may facilitate her safety or just as often hinder it, engendering their term ‘social risks’. Jaaber and Dasgupta point out that “social risks do not arise from isolated incidents or experiences. Rather, they are the results of history and simultaneous occurrences, which interact to provoke complicated emotions, attitudes, and perspectives. A woman integrates the collective consciousness of her society and continuum of her own life events into her identity, which in turn affects every facet of her decision making.”

They also earmark the irony that the policies and practices of systems and institutions that were constructed to protect people may, in fact, have the opposite effect and create systemic and institutional barriers for some women rather than helping them.

**Aboriginal Women**

In “Researched to Death: B.C. Aboriginal Women and Violence”³, there is clear recognition that report after report has identified colonialism, racism, sexism, paternalistic measures and programming as contributing to the development, continuation and societal acceptance of violence, victimization and deaths of

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**Statistics on Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls**

*Taken from “Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls”, National Aboriginal Women’s Summit 2007*

- Amnesty International (2004) reports that Aboriginal women aged 25-44 are five times more likely than other Canadian women of the same age to die of violence.
- More than 500 Aboriginal women and girls have gone missing or been murdered over the last 30 years. Systemic racist and discriminatory factors on the part of Canada play a role in violence against Aboriginal women and girls. (Native Women’s Association of Canada)
- In 2003 Aboriginal people were three times more likely to be victims of spousal violence than were those who are non-Aboriginal. In addition, 54% of Aboriginal women reported experiencing severe and potentially life threatening violence compared to 37% of non-Aboriginal women. These percentages remained unchanged since 1999; however, for non-Aboriginal women, the percentage who experienced the most serious forms of violence declined from 43% in 1999 to 37% in 2004 (Statistics Canada, 2006)...
- Up to 75% of survivors of sexual assaults in Aboriginal communities are young women under 18 years old. 50% of those are under 14 years old, and almost 25% are younger than 7 years old. (METRAC, 2001)
- Eighty-two percent of all federally sentenced women report having been physically and/or sexually abused. This percentage rose to 90% for Aboriginal women. (Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, 2006)
Aboriginal women. Any and all risk identification and assessment for Aboriginal women needs to take into account these large-scale factors and their profound impact on the lives and experiences of Aboriginal women.

A 2007 issue paper by the Native Women's Association of Canada, “Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls”, stated:

“For Indigenous women, the systematic violation of their collective rights as Indigenous People is the single greatest risk factor for gender based violence – including violence perpetrated within their communities.”

The paper goes on to describe the polarities between Aboriginal and Western worldviews and discusses how colonization in Canada “created cultural, social, economical and political dislocation”, explaining that:

“All Aboriginal women experience extreme marginalization and suffer from inequalities related to their social, economic, cultural, political and civil rights. These inequalities breed violence, such as postcolonial structural inequalities, family violence, racialized and sexualized violence, and gender violence. They also lead to poverty, lack of access to adequate housing, including the lack of access to matrimonial property rights, lack of access to justice, low...employment rates, low health status and little or no political participation.”

In 2003, the Pacific Association of First Nations Women, BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, and EVA BC convened a two-day forum with the long-term goal of increasing Aboriginal women's health and safety within the context of sexual assault and relationship violence. The forum, “Strategizing for Safer Communities for BC Aboriginal Women”, brought together Aboriginal women representing at least twenty-five different organizations and community groups from across BC, who spoke from both their personal and professional perspectives. These women spoke extensively about the context of violence in Aboriginal women's lives, and in so doing identified many of the risk factors that form the reality of so many. Specifically, they discussed the systemic racism they experience and the devastating legacy of violence left by the impact of residential schools and colonization. Observations they made, such as “there is no support; the labels, the looks...”, “poverty is what keeps our people down” and “…a lot of aboriginal women... are afraid of the legal system and do not want to go to court because they feel the justice system will not do any good”, speak to risks associated with racism and sexism and how poverty plays a key role in significantly increasing risk for Aboriginal women on an everyday basis.

Risk for Aboriginal women is also increased through a sheer lack of services specific for Aboriginal women experiencing violence, as well as lack of accessibility to the services that do exist, particularly for those in isolated communities. For women who need to travel to larger centres for services such as counselling, health care, social assistance, victim services and court, there may also be the obstacle of a complete lack of public transportation that makes accessing these services difficult or impossible.

Aboriginal women who participated in a Canadian study carried out in 2006 identified intimate partner violence as a major problem facing Aboriginal women. Focus group participants from four locations across the country, including Prince George in BC, described abuse as verbal and physical, sometimes having severe emotional and physical effects and sometimes causing death. The report also noted that, “despite the fact that no effort was made to recruit victims of violence, many participants in the focus groups had personal experience with intimate partner violence.”

Risk related factors identified by first responders who also took part in the study cited substance use issues, in particular, as almost universally considered to be a characteristic of the abusive men discussed. A domineering attitude toward women was also described as common. A lack of self-esteem that was seen to stem from the loss of traditional roles and identity, and sometimes from direct or indirect experience with the residential school system, was also mentioned as a characteristic of abusers. Participants also talked about the struggle of living in poverty and discussed the complexities involved when men are either unable or unwilling to provide for their families. Once again, the Aboriginal women in the groups recognized the role played in that by the loss of their traditional way of life.

In BC and across Canada, many Aboriginal women are working hard to create healing their communities. However, Aboriginal women continue to be at much higher risk for
violence and abuse than their non-Aboriginal counterparts as the historical legacy of dispossession and abuse continues to impact them physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

**Immigrant, Refugee and Non-Status Women**

Current research being done by EVA BC in our three-year, BC Law Foundation funded Immigrant Women’s Safety project, with partners MOSAIC and Vancouver Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services, has identified several broad-scale issues with the potential to put immigrant, refugee and non-status women and their children at increased risk. There is widespread consensus that immigrant, refugee and non-status women experiencing violence also have specific needs stemming from immigration and their status as newcomers to Canada. Multiple factors, in combination, increase the vulnerability of immigrant and refugee women.

**Lack of coordination:**

Project findings indicate systems-based risk in the form of lack of coordination among the various components of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), as well as between and among CIC and others who respond to immigrant, refugee and non-status women who are victims of violence. Other sectors that could be responding to immigrant, refugee and non-status women include the criminal, civil, and family justice systems, the child protection system, settlement services, language services, schools, housing, health, and community-based support services. Women receiving one or more services are often left to struggle with the result that they encounter a variety of policies, practices and interpretations that may leave them with overwhelming or inconsistent information about immigration or refugee issues, as well as their rights, obligations and options. This lack of coordination leaves the door open to further abuse and reluctance to come forward. For example, frontline workers have reported cases where women without status have called the police about domestic violence. The women were then put in touch with CIC to address their immigration status and some have been subsequently removed from Canada. Even if they do have status in Canada, the perceived threat of deportation will prevent many immigrant women or refugee women from reporting, thus putting them at risk by causing them to remain isolated from help in a violent relationship.

**Gender bias:**

The existence of criteria and rules that tend to favour attributes commonly associated with male immigrants and the use of these criteria to determine eligibility to immigrate to Canada put immigrant women at a disadvantage throughout the entire process. Programs that favour male applicants encourage women’s dependence on men for immigration status. This may translate into women remaining in abusive relationships in order to be allowed entry into Canada in the first place or to gain permanent resident status once here. This context of dependence may put abused women and their children at increased risk of victimization.

The immigration points system for skilled workers and professionals, the Business Immigration Program, and the Canada Experience Class are all biased in favour of men because men are more likely than women to be well-educated, to be trained for high skill jobs, to have substantial cash sums, to have been enrolled in Canadian post-secondary educational institutions, and to have
work experience in managerial, professional, or technical occupations or skilled trades in their home country or in Canada.

The traditional skills around homemaking and child rearing that many women bring to this country are often less valued than those brought by men, both by society as a whole and within the immigration system. For example, the one immigration program that favours the traditional skills of women around homemaking and child rearing is the Live-in Caregiver Program. However, this program restricts the participants in ways that some other immigration programs do not. The program does not provide an opportunity to apply for permanent resident status or the ability to bring in family members until after two years of employment. Furthermore, the caregiver is required to live with the family and is dependent on her employment to be eligible for permanent resident status. This could put some women in situations where they are at risk of abuse by their employer.

**Sponsorship:**

Immigrant, refugee, and non-status women are vulnerable to violence and abuse because they may be reluctant to report spousal violence to police for fear of losing their claim to permanent status and being removed from Canada. Many women are also vulnerable if they leave abusive husbands on whom they depend for a sponsorship application, either as a dependent immigrating under the independent class, or as a dependent refugee claimant. Abusive partners may withdraw their sponsorship application if the woman reports the abuse or leaves the relationship. As a result of these realities and fears of losing their claim to permanent status and/or being removed, immigrant, refugee, and non-status women experiencing abuse in Canada often feel they do not have an option about reporting and therefore live with increased risk.

Focus group participants in the project provided some tangible examples of the situations a woman may face, such as:

- A woman coming to Canada may make the assumption that her sponsor will complete the paperwork to obtain her landed status. Often, the sponsor never makes an application and the woman is left without any status for a long time.
- The sponsor is responsible for the medical care of the woman, and will receive any medical bill incurred. This

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**The following list documents some of the immigrant women and their children murdered or seriously injured by their husbands or ex-husbands or other family members in BC since 1996:**

- In April 1996 in Vernon, Mark Chahal shot and killed his estranged wife, Rajwar Gakhal and eight family members, as well as himself, in the worst mass murder in the province’s history.
- In July 2003, Rajinder Atwal stabbed his daughter Amandeep to death in a car near Cache Creek because he objected to her love affair with a school mate.
- In December 2003, Denise Purdy was murdered by her husband, Kelvin Purdy, in Nanaimo.
- On October 18, 2006, pregnant schoolteacher Manjit Panghal was killed in Surrey by her husband Mukhtiar Panghal. Her brother-in-law, Sukhvinder Panghal was also charged with offences related to the murder.
- On October 19, 2006, Port Coquitlam nurse Gurjeet Kaur Ghuman was shot in the face and blinded by her estranged husband, Paramjit Singh Ghuman, who then killed himself.
- On October 29, 2006, Navreet Kaur Waraich was stabbed to death by her husband, Jatinder Singh Waraich in Surrey.
- On July 5, 2007, school principal Shemina Hirji was killed in Burnaby five days after marrying Narinder Cheema who had a criminal record for violent offences.
- On September 4, 2007, Peter Hyun Joon Lee murdered his wife, Sunny Yong Sun Park, their six-year old son, Christian, and his wife’s parents in Oak Bay on Vancouver Island.
- On August 28, 2009, Yan Lin was stabbed to death along with her ex-husband, Chang Xi Wang, who had a history of violence against Yan Lin, was charged with the killing.
- On September 21, 2009, Lesney Valencia, mother of five, was murdered in Burnaby. Her estranged partner, Oswill Vergara, was charged with the murder.
- On January 5, 2010, Kamaljit Singh Dhanoa was charged with the murder of his wife, Tejinder Kaur Dhanoa, mother of their two small children, in Surrey.
would inform an abusive sponsor of the woman’s whereabouts, increasing the likelihood she may be located by the abuser, which compromises her safety.

**Sponsorship debt:**
Sponsorship debt or the threat of sponsorship debt is another area that has the potential to be a significant obstacle to a woman’s safety. Currently, sponsorship debt may be accrued by an abused woman who leaves her abusive spouse whom she has sponsored and who subsequently collects social assistance within the three years named in a sponsorship undertaking she has signed. The signed undertaking makes her legally financially responsible for the costs of social assistance provided to the sponsoree by government. This may include income assistance as well as other related services such as subsidized housing.

The circumstances involving sponsorship debt or threat of sponsorship debt may act as a deterrent to women leaving an abusive relationship and may significantly impact their ability to gain financial independence. A sponsor who is being abused by her spouse (sponsee) may be faced with a situation where she either continues to accept the abuse or exposes herself to enormous debt. While current federal and provincial policies allow for suspension of sponsorship debt collection in circumstances of abuse, the debt is not cancelled and may be collected at a later date.

Also, during the time that she carries the debt, she cannot sponsor any of her family that she may need to come to Canada for practical help such as childcare, as well as the emotional support of having family members nearby.

**Need for training:**
Violence against women and children represents a very real danger for immigrant, refugee, and non-status women as it does for Canadian-born women. The project’s findings to date indicate that adequate training on the nature and dynamics of domestic and sexual violence for all appropriate Canadian immigration officials is essential if women and their children who may be victims are to be safe. There is a great need for CIC personnel to understand the complexities and risks of these forms of violence and develop a focus on the safety needs of women and children. Such training would enhance the ability of CIC personnel to refer women to the appropriate help and to support and advise women who are victims of violence, as well as inform the decision-making of Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) members.

**Rural and Farm Women**
Rural and farm women may experience a number of layers rooted in rural culture, geography and, for women involved in farming, the business of the family farm, that create additional risk factors when they are threatened by violence and abuse. “Poverty, lack of public transportation systems, shortages of health care providers… and decreased access to many resources (such as advanced education, job opportunities and adequate child care) all make it more difficult for rural women to escape abusive relationships.”

**Geography:**
One of the most obvious risk factors for women outside of BC’s more densely populated areas is that of geography. Given the size and terrain of the province, it is easy to see how the sheer physical obstacles of distance and transportation can increase risk and impact the efforts of women seeking safety. When we think about roads becoming treacherous or completely impassable in winter months or during spring break-up, assuming roads exist, or consider the isolation of women living on one of the many small islands dotting the BC coast, it is easy to see that the risk factors pertaining to geography are enormous. Add in considerations...
like not having physical and financial access to the necessary means of transport such as a car, boat or plane, lack of 911 or access to support services when trapped for what may be months at a time, and we begin to grasp the severity of risk for a woman in this situation.

According to Statistics Canada, only one-quarter or less of British Columbia’s population has been classified as rural since the mid 1960s. However, in a province that typically brings to mind images of wilderness, it is worth noting that the definition of “rural” in this context refers to anyone living “outside centres with a population of 1,000 AND outside areas with 400 persons per square kilometer.”

Certainly, that tells us there are a number of women who, though not counted as “rural” in the census, are nonetheless living in communities or environments that, for practical purposes, are more rural than urban.

**Rural Risk Factors:**
A brochure for rural women developed by the Robson Valley Community Coordination for Women’s Safety Initiative, Confidentiality for Rural Women Who Have Experienced Abuse, outlines some of the dynamics of abuse and risk factors that can exist in rural, remote and farm communities:

- Rural communities can be very different from each other so, although certain themes are common, there isn’t one distinct profile of an “abused woman”.
- The problem has not been named; normalizing, minimizing and victim blaming are common.
- Intimidation tactics often include threats to harm pets or farm animals; farm women have witnessed the killing of animals so threats of femicide are very real.
- Firearms are readily available in farm and rural communities.
- Difficulties in farming can be used as a justification for other abuses.
- Offenders can use tracking skills to monitor a woman’s movements. Tire tracks and footprints are easily distinguishable in the mud and snow common in rural locations.
- Vehicles, farm machinery, power tools, etc. can be used to induce fear and terror.
- Farm women are often blamed for everything that goes wrong on the farm; crop failure, bad weather, animals getting sick, market and financial problems, etc.

**Rural Culture and Confidentiality:**
A culture of self-reliance and concerns about confidentiality are also often part of the context of women’s lives in rural or isolated areas. These are factors that can translate into a reluctance to seek help, thereby adding to a woman’s potential risk.

An example that illustrates this is a 1995 U.S. study that conducted structured interviews with 42 women in a mid-western primary healthcare clinic. Their findings noted that: forty-five percent of this sample reported experiencing physical, social and/or emotional abuse from an intimate partner; [and] of the 36% who reported being physically abused, 38% presented to the clinic for health maintenance reasons.

The Robson Valley brochure mentioned earlier cites the following problems with maintaining confidentiality in rural communities:

- Women lack anonymity when accessing services in small communities. There is a fear that health care professionals and police will not maintain confidentiality.
- Many people have scanners capable of monitoring police radios.
- Even non-identifying information can reveal the identity of a woman and/or her children, i.e. when a woman from Highway 16 East with five children is the only woman in that area with five children!
- Roles that service providers fill may intersect with the roles women experiencing abuse fill, i.e. the children of a shelter worker may attend school with the children of a woman who is fleeing abuse.
- Extended family networks in rural communities share information between each other and tend to take sides.
- Gossip is a normalized form of communication in rural communities. There can be a perceived lack of confidentiality within service agencies when a women’s story is discussed in the community.
- There is a general lack of anonymity in small communities. Women can be identified by the vehicles they drive, the routes they take, the people they associate with, etc. This can both threaten and enhance their safety.

Nancy Taylor, the long-time Stopping the Violence Counsellor in the Robson Valley area who developed this brochure, offers this account of her work with rural women:
“My experience in safety planning with women who choose to stay in a violent relationship has shown me that leaving can mean letting go on many levels. Imagine leaving the land you have worked, the house that you have built, the livestock and pets you have cared for daily. Imagine leaving a freezer and root cellar stocked with food you have produced. Imagine pulling your children away from a place that has become part of their identity.

Women living in remote locations, often in isolation, have a deep connection to the earth. The rhythm of daily routines can be rich and satisfying compared to the hustle and bustle of urban life. It is hard to leave the land. Yet the option of staying on as a single woman, without the financial and physical support of a partner, can seem just as daunting.”

Nancy believes that until very recently in rural communities, “counselling” was not considered part of a person’s safety net, that women relied mainly on family and friends for support and historically help has often meant advice giving and enabling that may be cloaked in judgment. She believes that, as a result, a woman’s expectations of counselling may be that they will simply be told what to do, rather than offering them a process of self-exploration grounded in safety, validation, empowerment and empathy.

Risk factors, as stated again and again, are wide ranging and limitless in how they may come together in the life of any one woman experiencing violence and abuse. “Intimate violence is only one part of women’s total experience in society. Societal, institutional, and cultural knowledge that women gain individually, communally, and historically intertwine with their experiences of domestic abuse and affect their choices and decisions regarding safety.”

The challenges for service providers are many and complex as they seek to identify and work with all risks, whether they be readily visible or not. Having said that, the principles

How do I join the listservs?

To sign up for an EVA BC listserv, visit www.endingviolence.org/sign_up_listserv.
and values of feminist practice continue to offer a solid base from which to work: respect; empathy; validation; empowerment; recognition of societal systems and contexts; and ultimately, the acknowledgement that every woman is the expert of her own life.

2 Jaaber and Dasgupta
6 It should be noted that statistical methods for measuring violence against women is flawed as it was not specifically designed to take into account cultural differences among minority groups, including Aboriginal women.
7 This information offers a snapshot of some of the issues the project is working to address.
9 Until 2002, the older forms of sponsorship undertakings imposed a ten-year period of financial responsibility. This was reduced to three years after organizations such as the National Organization of Women and the Law (NAWL) advocated for changes. It was acknowledged in the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS) that the length of the spousal sponsorship undertaking was decreased from ten to three years because of concerns that the undertaking aggravated family violence. Women were staying in the violent relationships because of the undertakings.
13 Jaaber & Dasgupta, p.17.

BE PART OF THE NEWSLETTER!
If you have something to contribute to the next EVA BC newsletter, whether it’s a photo, an article, or an idea you would like to discuss — please contact Nancy at 604.633.2506 ext. 14 or email boyce@endngviolence.org
DISSOLVE: A DOCUMENTARY ON DRUG-FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

Created by Vancouver actor, singer, playwright Meghan Gardiner and award-winning filmmaker Michelle Porter in 2009, the film version of Dissolve is based on Meghan Gardiner’s one-woman play of the same name. It shares the real stories of several women who, despite different situations and circumstances, were all the target of drug-facilitated sexual assaults.

The retelling of their experiences serve as a springboard into a larger discussion about these drugs and their effects, the aftermath, the medical response, the police, the legal system and prevention. Interviews with experts in the field, including EVA BC Executive Director Tracy Porteous, BC Women’s Hospital Sexual Assault Service Nurse and Program Coordinator Helen Griffiths and Counsellor Wendy Potter, as well as others, are interwoven throughout.

On her website, http://www.meghangardiner.com/dissolve/, Meghan Gardiner writes:

“This is a story that needs to be told. In fact, Dissolve represents countless stories that were never told. For whatever reason — lack of evidence, shame, fear — thousands of incidences of drug-induced rape go unreported, and it’s about time something was done to change the terrifying statistics. My vision with Dissolve is not only to inform my audiences, but also to force our society to recognize that this is an ongoing problem that desperately needs to be acknowledged. No one wants to believe that drug-induced rape happens in their social circle, but as long as the issue is ignored, women will continue to wake up frightened, ashamed, and terribly confused. Those victims need to know that they are not alone, and that someone is doing something to help them.”

The film shows vignettes where a little liquid or powder is slipped into a drink. Women are drugged into unconscious or semi-conscious states. They awaken in a variety of situations, either having absolutely no memory of what has happened or remembering bits and pieces that leave them feeling confused and frightened. One woman reported waking up on a plane with no idea how she got there, another wearing her attacker’s clothing. What they all know is that something horrible has happened, that something is seriously wrong.

With the tag line, “awareness is the first step towards prevention”, Dissolve seeks to inform its audience about the risks that are out there, with the message that knowledge is crucial not only to prevention, but to healing, as well. It offers information about what women need to know to make themselves less vulnerable to this premeditated crime and encourages them to seek support.

To preview a trailer of this 42-minute film and see the companion study guide, go to http://www.dissolvethemovie.com/Home.html.

January 2010 was declared Sexual Assault Awareness Month by the Dean of Arts at the University of British Columbia. This is something the university hopes to make an annual event.

Over the course of the month, a variety of activities were carried out to raise awareness and provide education around the issue of sexual assault.

The opening event for the awareness month was a presentation of Dissolve: A Film about Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault. EVA BC Executive Director, Tracy Porteous, BC Women’s Hospital Sexual Assault Service Nurse and Program Manager Helen Griffiths and UBC student Anoushka Ratnarajah all spoke at the opening event and participated in a panel discussion later.

Other activities throughout the month included a community rally and march around the UBC campus, a one-woman performance by Meghan Gardiner of her play Dissolve followed by a question and answer period with the actor/writer, and a public lecture and student workshop delivered by well known anti-sexist male activist Jackson Katz.
TRAINING FORUM

Predicting the Storm: Preparing for an Increase in Addressing Violence Against Women and Children in Good Times and Bad was held on November 19-20, 2009 in Vancouver. Over 250 people gathered together at this highly successful training forum to enhance their skills and become better equipped to support women and children during large-scale events or natural disasters.

The atmosphere for the entire two days of the training forum was energetic and positive, with a full roster of accomplished keynote speakers and workshops. Presentations by lawyer Mavis Erickson on the missing and murdered women in BC and the laws and policies that have impacted First Nations women in Canada, former Olympic athlete Sandra Kirby talking about sexual harassment and abuse in sport, psychiatry professor and clinical psychologist Lisa Najavits discussing her “Seeking Safety” model for working with PTSD and substance abuse and long-time feminist and social activist Ellen Pence offering her insights into change making in our communities, were all highly informative and inspiring.

Forum attendees were particularly responsive to the video screening of “You Are Not Alone”, which is part of the Peer Anti-Violence Education (PAVE) toolkit. It was presented by three of the creative and courageous women involved in the development of the film - Rose Nabass, Sandy Hiebert and Darcy Labuchinsky, who spoke about their views of the film and ending violence against women.

You can relive keynote speeches by Mavis Erickson and Sandra Kirby on our website at www.endingviolence.org/public_education_tools.

Here’s what some of you had to say…

“I was moved and inspired – the keynote speakers were amazing – I learned a lot, especially about violence in sports, which I knew but was not conscious of...

I learned so much!”

“Thank you for the relevant workshops, it was difficult to choose.”

“The training was very well organized, comfortable and conducive to wonderful learning moments.”

“Lovely to see so many more first nation women participating and up front. Good work EVA BC.”

“Lots of emergent issues – thanks for the range. Great info booths, great networking.”

“It was a powerful training.”

L-R: Isabel McKinnon, Michele Clark, Jennifer Woods

L-R: Gail Edinger and Morgen Baldwin

L-R: Nimmi Kang, Ninu Kang, Setsuko Hirose
EVA BC held its 14th Annual General Meeting on November 21, 2009. Executive Director Tracy Porteous presented a review of the immense work of the Association during the previous year, Board Co-Chair Bally Bassi also said a few words and the new Board of Directors was established for the upcoming year.

EVA BC staff Harjit Kaur and Cathy Welch facilitated a general group discussion looking at issues and priorities for the Association for the coming year. What emerged was a list of over thirty topics of interest to members that included sexual assault coordination in local communities and Provincial sexual assault policy, women being arrested, STV training and the intergenerational impact of residential schools, violence in the workplace and collaboration between anti-violence and settlement sectors – just to name a few!

A copy of EVA BC’s Annual Report for 2008-2009 can be downloaded by going to our home page at www.endingviolence.org and looking under the “What’s New” section.

**EVA BC Board of Directors 2010-2011**

North Vancouver Island (Region 1):
**Jennifer Woods**

South Vancouver Island (Region 2):
**Stephanie Capyk**

Lower Mainland (Region 3):
**Brigit Atkinson**

Fraser Valley (Region 4):
**Sonya E. Boyce**

Interior (Region 5):
**Jan Seelinger**

Okanagan (Region 6):
**Aimee Thompson**

East Kootenays (Region 7):
**Jasmine Lothien**

West Kootenays (Region 8):
**Marsha Early, Co-Chair**

North West (Region (9):
**Grainne Barthe**

North Central (Region 10):
**Bally Bassi, Co-Chair**

North East (Region 11):
**Nancy Taylor**

North Central (Region 10 – Floating Seat):
**Lynnell Halikowski**

Executive Director Tracy Porteous and the EVA BC Board of Directors for 2010-2011
I had the honour of attending this last year’s EVA BC Training Forum in Richmond, BC. Tracy Porteous and EVA BC graciously gifted six Indigenous women from Vancouver Island guest attendance at the forum not fully realizing the important and invaluable work that would be done there. All of the women in this group are part of the Aboriginal Women’s Wellness committee, led by Samantha Sansregret, Aboriginal Women’s Wellness Co-ordinator in Victoria. The women came from a cross section of the various Saanich Nations on Vancouver Island. There was an Elder from the Pauquachin Nation present who is seen as a spiritual leader in her community and is respected for her work. This Elder (who wishes to remain anonymous) went to the workshop on Trauma. Towards the end of the workshop, a time of quiet and reflection was given to the participants. The following words are the Elder’s description of events:

As I closed my eyes I saw in my spirit that the room was crowded, so very crowded. There were many women and children sitting and standing around the edges of the room. The women were hurting, some of them with bruises, some bleeding with bandages... so much damage. The children also looked so lost, so afraid and so sad. I realized that this vast community of women and children were those who had endured violence. They had died because of the violence in their families. There were many nations and races represented and they seemed to be waiting...I asked an Elder in their midst what they were waiting for. She replied that they had come every year to this gathering hoping that someone could lead them on to the other side of the spirit world. They had also come for reassurance that the good work was continuing on behalf of family members that had been left behind. They had also come to encourage those who do this work not to give up - that the work matters. They wanted us to also know and remember that they are there with us to give strength when it seems that there is nothing left to give and when we feel we cannot go on; we must remember those who have died.

Our Elder from the Pauquachin Nation then asked the gathering of women and children if they were ready to walk to the other side. The community said they felt reassured and grateful that someone was there this year who could recognize them and help to lead them to rest, as they had been waiting for many years. Our Elder then proceeded to take them across in pairs, in families and alone to cross the divide from pain to healing rest. Our Elder did much work – good work that day.

I saw the Elder as she came out of the workshop looking utterly spent and exhausted. As I helped her to her room she shared this story and message with me, giving me permission to share with EVA BC so you would know that your work is valuable and makes a difference. She also wanted you to know that those who have suffered and gone on in the spirit world give you their support and strength, reminding you to keep strong and continue the work on behalf of those who are left behind as victims of violence in their families.

Hy’chka siem-all my relations.
On December 14, 2009 the BC Coroner’s Inquest into the murder-suicide that took place in Oak Bay resumed after an eighteen-month adjournment. In September 2007, Sunny Park, her 6-year old son Christian Lee and her parents Kum Lea Chun and Moon Kyu Park were murdered by her estranged husband, Peter Lee, who then took his own life.

EVA BC was again present and involved in the proceedings, represented by Executive Director Tracy Porteous, CCWS Legal Analyst Gisela Ruebsaat and lawyer Diane Turner. The Ending Violence Association of BC applied for standing at the Lee Inquest with the goal of contributing to the proceedings to substantially increase the safety of women and children in BC.

Over the course of the last four days, the Jury was exposed to a range of witnesses and testimony that highlighted the systemic gaps and lack of coordination that were at the heart of this tragedy. As part of fulfilling its goal in participating at the Inquest, EVA BC submitted forty-six recommendations to the Jury to assist them in their development of recommendations. These recommendations included:

- Focus on risk assessment and safety planning training for all sectors
- Dedicated domestic violence police and Crown
- Coordination by all sectors on all cases
- Mandated referral to advocacy and support programs such as community-based victim assistance programs
- Increased funding for existing community-based programs and money for new programs
- Increased programs and increased monitoring for offenders
- Changes to bail such as:
  - Providing police more time to put together their reports for Crown Counsel
  - Implementing GPS monitoring system on offenders
- Better information sharing across the sectors. Right now there are conflicting interpretations of existing privacy legislation (e.g. Freedom of Information legislation) that precludes information-sharing
- Rigorous enforcement of breaches
- Province-wide public awareness campaign

At the conclusion of the inquest, the five-member Jury issued the following findings and recommendations:

1. All police departments work across jurisdictional boundaries as one unit
   To: Attorney General for British Columbia

2. All victims and abusers should be provided with universally available advocacy services. Such services to be initiated upon first contact
   To: Solicitor General and Attorney General for British Columbia

3. Special domestic violence units be set up regionally and coordinated with stakeholders
   To: Solicitor General and Attorney General for British Columbia

4. “no fixed address” designation not be allowed on bail orders unless accused agrees to GPS monitoring on high risk cases
   To: Government of British Columbia

5. All updated “K” file information be shared across all jurisdictional lines immediately and with all agencies
   To: Solicitor General and Attorney General for British Columbia

6. Bail release conditions be developed in conjunction with bail supervisors to ensure they are enforceable
   To: Solicitor General and Attorney General for British Columbia

7. On-going multimedia community based educational advertising program surrounding domestic violence be expanded and enhanced
   To: Ministry of Education

8. Ongoing unification efforts of the various police departments
   To: Solicitor General for British Columbia

9. The government provides global funding to accommodate associate costs of these recommendations
   To: Ministry of Education

10. Develop a single domestic violence unit across all provincial jurisdictional lines and include all agencies and services
    To: Solicitor General for British Columbia

11. Family relationships and domestic violence education program be instituted for all students from kindergarten to grade 12
    To: Solicitor General for British Columbia

12. SARA or BSAFER be used to train all involved service providers to a common standard in all criminal justice regions in the province
    To: Ministry of Education

It is hoped, by virtue of the jury’s recommendations and the actions of many, that future tragedies such as the one in Oak Bay will be prevented.

During the resumption of the Lee Inquest in mid-December 2009, newspaper headlines repeated that nothing new was being done to address the issue of domestic violence in BC. “B.C. Approach to Domestic Abuse Unchanged since Killings...” said Victoria’s Times Colonist on the second day of the proceedings. The same day, the Globe and Mail’s headline read “No Budget for Domestic Violence, Inquest Told”. As the week progressed, the revelation delivered during testimony that Peter Lee had sought counselling just days before he murdered his family, information that came from a non-profit society that had since lost its funding to provide services, was widely reported throughout the media.

One month later, on January 18, 2010, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General announced the launch of its Domestic Violence Action Plan initiative to help victims of domestic violence by creating the kind of systemic change recommended by the Lee/Park Inquest Jury, the September 2009 report issued by BC’s Representative for Children and Youth, and EVA BC’s Keeping Women Safe paper. Kash Heed stated his intentions, as Solicitor General, to lead the “systemic change that will help first responders, support workers, the courts and communities to deal more effectively with domestic violence through better training, standardized policy, more coordination and prevention.”

The Times Colonist’s Les Leyne’s response to the announced plan was hard-hitting, his column “Domestic Violence Plan is Mostly Talk” opened with the comment, “it’s pretty clear Solicitor General Kash Heed isn’t winning many arguments in the premier’s office or at the cabinet table these days when it comes to his priorities.” Leyne went on to say that “twenty-eight months after a horrifying domestic violence case left five people dead, the government’s long-awaited response involves parting with a few thousand dollars to hire two more caseworkers for Greater Victoria, firing off a bunch of policy memos and promising more later.” Others echoed the idea that sufficient money was not being put in place to back up the stated intentions, as in the Globe and Mail’s article of January 19, 2010 “Big Pledge, Little Cash on Domestic Abuse Plan”.

The BC Coroner’s Office reports that 73 people in BC have lost their lives due to domestic violence over the past 5 years, most of whom were women and children. Numbers offered by Statistics Canada indicate over 650,000 women suffered either sexual and/or relationship violence in Canada between 1999 and 2004. The United Nations, Amnesty International and the World Health Organization all say violence against women is the most tolerated human rights violation around the globe. The scale of difficulties faced by the anti-violence sector around the issue of domestic and sexual violence is immense. Certainly, there is truth in what the media continues to report, that a great deal of work must be done before genuine and lasting systemic change can be realized.

**MEDIA FILE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN**

**Big pledge, little cash on domestic abuse plan**
—THE GLOBE AND MAIL

**B.C. to fund regional domestic violence unit, conduct review of homicides**
—THE PROVINCE

**Province tackles domestic violence**
—THE VANCOUVER SUN
This February I presented a workshop series on violence against women intervention skills for front-line workers in Tokyo, Nihonmatsu City and Morioka City, Japan. The series was a partnership between EVA BC and Japan's NPO Association for Human Rights of Women (AHRW), fully funded by the Japanese people. AHRW works with a close network of NGOs, international bodies and governments to address “feminization of poverty, rampant international human trafficking, increasing of female victims under armed conflict occurring one after another and ongoing victimization by HIV/AIDS.” My understanding of the anti-violence context in Japan is impacted by such issues as language barriers and should be understood as my perception of the situation.

I travelled across North Eastern Japan for 9 days with my host Ms. Mizuho Matsuda, Executive Director of AHRW. In partnership with local host organizations, she handled all the arrangements for the workshops and travel that made my trip and the work I did very easy and enjoyable. Ms. Matsuda is a long-time anti-violence worker who has worked in frontline support to women experiencing violence, as well as national and international work to address women's human rights issues such as trafficking, migration and economic empowerment. We also travelled with translator Ms. Kayoko Shigematsu, who for many years has been specializing in the areas of gender equity, autism and cancer.

In Japan there are a variety of anti-violence workers, reflected in the workshop participants. They included crisis support workers and counsellors for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, victim support programs for the criminal justice system for victims of all crimes, child support workers located in shelters, as well as women's centres providing support to all women. Workshop participants also included child protection workers, lawyers, local government workers and the general public.

Although there are many differences in the context for anti-violence workers in Japan, we have a great deal in common. I heard many familiar themes from workshop participants about the issues that increase risks for women: poverty, lack of affordable and safe housing, inconsistent application of relatively progressive laws and policies, child protection interventions that hold women accountable for their partners’ use of violence, lack of services for offenders, particularly those not involved with the criminal justice system, and decreasing government funding for support and other programs.

One understanding I gained from the women I met during these workshops is that they define their work as women's human rights work. Women’s unequal status in society is a major contributor to violence against women, and at the same time, violence against women is a major contributor to women's unequal status in society. Improved criminal justice system response is included as one of many goals, along with improved response from anti-violence agencies, child protection, the family justice system, migration systems, local and national government, employers, families, friends and the general public.

Workshop participants expressed appreciation for all of the information, and particularly gave feedback on four areas in each of the workshops:

1. **Stress impacts are normal and self-care is essential.** Overwhelmingly, participant feedback was that this was the most validating and useful part of the workshops. One participant said she just knew she was tired all the time but didn’t know why, or what she was doing wrong. Others commented that they knew it was stressful and they appreciated receiving tools to track and address stress impacts of anti-violence work.
Anti-oppression analysis is central to anti-violence work. Some participants responded to this as a new concept and one that was helpful in understanding the need to consider unique risks, barriers and strengths for each individual woman. Others said it reaffirmed the importance of being conscious of power imbalances impacting the women they support, and the increased risks created by issues such as racism, heterosexism, classism and ageism.

Empowerment is essential in building safety. Many workshop participants commented that they were committed to empowering women, but had gained new information and tools about putting that concept into practice. Particularly useful, they said, was the discussion about strategies to address the power imbalance between survivors and workers. Many also commented on the importance of providing support where the woman’s unique perspective and problem solving abilities are acknowledged and central, and where information such as common risk indicators is shared in a way that will assist the woman’s work to increase safety.

Mother’s safety is key to children’s safety. Although this was not a long segment in the workshop, there were many comments that it had a significant impact. I shared information about the Best Practice Approaches developed by the Ministry of Children and Family Development in collaboration with EVA BC, BC Women’s Hospital and Health Centre, and BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses. Participants strongly agreed with the Best Practice Approaches position that women’s safety is an integral part of all child protection interventions where violence against women exists. Participants shared how relevant and useful this principle is in their work to support women, and in their current struggles to ensure that interventions with children exposed to domestic violence do not blame and re-victimize their mothers.

Participants commented that it was very validating and energizing to understand the issues they have in common with anti-violence workers in BC. Many said they look forward to other opportunities to build on the connection EVA BC and AHRW have been facilitating between anti-violence work in BC and Japan. Staff from the Morioka Women’s Centre, host of the third workshop, are keen to come to the EVA BC Annual Training Forum in November 2010. I hope many of you will have the opportunity to connect with these amazing and inspiring women.

Morgen Baldwin is an independent consultant, based in Terrace, BC. She began anti-violence work in Prince George in 1992 and spent 8 years supporting survivors of sexual and domestic violence from Prince George and surrounding communities in shelter, shelter outreach, specialized victim assistance, public education, community coordination, and events planning. For the last 11 years Morgen has worked as an independent consultant for various local and provincial clients, including EVA BC. She has completed numerous contracts for EVA BC, such as regional coordination for the Community Coordination for Women’s Safety Program, and the development and facilitation of the STV Outreach Worker Core Training.
BOOK REVIEW

By Nicki Breuer, Odin Books

It’s My Life Now: Starting Over After an Abusive Relationship or Domestic Violence, 2nd Ed

Meg Kennedy Dugan & Roger R. Hock
Retail price at ODIN BOOKS $25.95

Getting out of an abusive relationship is difficult and requires a great deal of bravery. What happens next matters just as much, because the groundwork for a new life involves so much more than just leaving the old life behind. At the beginning, it’s only about surviving, about getting away. Fear, self-doubt, and grief are there, but must be pushed aside, tamped down in order to make an escape. Dealing with these complicated emotions comes later, and requires more courage, tenacity, and support.

This book offers insights on several levels, debunking common myths about what abusive relationships are and aren’t, and describes the repetitive behaviors that form a pattern of abuse. It shines a piercing light on the black heart of domestic violence – the abuser’s need for absolute power and control over another human being.

It’s My Life Now speaks clearly to those beginning a new life after leaving a violent situation. A well-defined, three-part format offers a clearly mapped guide to a stronger, calmer, and infinitely better life. Counsellors can use the exercises in each chapter to guide clients through their rocky beginnings, working through necessary emotional turmoil to come out the other side, stronger, more aware, and with a greater confidence. Clients can use the book as an educational tool, a source of reference, and a comfort to help them chart the tentative, then sure steps toward a future of their choosing.

From the first section, Looking Back, to the one entitled Now, to Looking Forward, it offers a blueprint for understanding some of the complexities of domestic violence. Difficult topics and self-exploration exercises ask the tough questions that survivors of abuse need to answer, for themselves, for their own personal growth, and for their understanding of the situations that led to a crisis relationship.

Initial chapters deal with the myths that relationships are only abusive if they involve physical violence, outline patterns of abusive events, and explore relationships built on power and control. Self Exploration exercises include an Abusive Behaviors Inventory, an Abusive Behaviors Analysis, and a questionnaire entitled “Assessing Your Safety.” Covering how abuse happens to how and why victims loved or still love their abusers, this book also explores abuse of men by women, and abuse in Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender relationships and the unique challenges they present.


The last section of the book, Looking Forward, deals with the practical side of healing. The Self Exploration exercise Just How Much Money Do You Need to Survive? focuses on practicalities and exercises that confront the temptation to go back provide a strong foundation for future challenges. The final chapter helps survivors discover what to look for and what to avoid in future relationships.

This is a practical book that provokes self-examination as well as leading readers to their own answers. For counsellors and for clients, it is a respectful look at a complicated series of topics and well worth reading.

Author Meg Kennedy Dugan, M.A., is Director of the AmeriCorps Victim Assistance Program under the aegis of the New Hampshire Coalition against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Her co-author, Roger R. Hock, Ph.D., is Director of the Psychology Program and Professor of Psychology and Human Sexuality at Mendocino College in Ukiah California.
By Alison Ward, Legal Services Society

Community Advocate Support Line (CASL)
The Community Advocate Support Line (CASL) is a dedicated telephone support line for BC advocates. The line is staffed full-time by lawyer Alison Ward, who can give you brief legal information and advice about specific client files in areas including family law and poverty law. The CASL line is part of the Legal Services Society’s LawLINE service, and is funded by the Law Foundation.

Advocates and community workers can reach the CASL at 604-601-6074 from the Lower Mainland, and toll-free within BC at 1-877-601-6066. **Please note:** these numbers are for advocates’ use only; please do not distribute them to the general public. To access legal advice on the CASL line, you must provide Alison with your client’s full name and contact information, and the full names of any opposing parties.

Law Foundation continues CASL funding at the Community Legal Assistance Society
In December 2009, the Law Foundation of BC announced that it will continue to fund CASL for the 2010/11 fiscal year, in a new location at the Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS) in Vancouver. The Law Foundation has funded CASL since its inception at LSS in May 2006.

As a result, on April 1, 2010, the location and management of CASL will move from LSS to CLAS, and CASL will continue to operate at CLAS until at least March 31, 2011. LSS and CLAS will be working together cooperatively to facilitate the smooth transition of CASL to its new home.

I am happy to say that I will be moving with CASL to the Community Legal Assistance Society as of April 1, 2010, and will continue work as the CASL lawyer there.

Update about the Community Advocate Support Line (CASL)
In the spring 2009 edition of EVA BC’s newsletter, I discussed changes to legal aid services that took effect in April 2009. In November 2009, the Legal Services Society (LSS) announced further changes to legal aid services that will take place at the end of March 2010. Among other things, LSS announced that the LawLINE and the Community Advocate Support Line will be discontinued at LSS effective March 26, 2010. Further, that “effective April 1, 2010, the Society will replace its regional centres in Kamloops, Prince George, Kelowna, Surrey and Victoria with local agents and an expanded, province-wide call centre.” For more information on the service changes at LSS announced since last spring, see http://www.lss.bc.ca/media/newsReleases.asp

The purpose of this article is not to detail those changes to legal aid services, but to let you know some good news about CASL.

New CASL numbers effective April 6, 2010
CASL’s transition from LSS to CLAS will take place as follows:
- Until March 25, 2010, advocates and community workers can continue to contact CASL on its current phone numbers at LSS
- March 26 to April 5, 2010, the CASL lines will be closed to facilitate CASL’s move to CLAS
- Tuesday April 6, 2010, CASL will re-open at the CLAS office, with new local and toll free telephone numbers, as set out below:

**How to contact CASL by phone effective Tuesday April 6, 2010**
From the Lower Mainland: (604) 681 CASL (2275)
Toll Free within BC: 1 888 781 CASL (2275)

**Please remember that these numbers are for the use of advocates and community workers only, and do not distribute them to the general public.**

I look forward to continue working with you through CASL!
STV Counsellor Core Training - Module 4
Linking Violence, Mental Health and Substance Use was offered in Vancouver recently. Of the twenty-two STV Counsellors who attended the 4-day training from January 18-21, 2010, most were from outside the Lower Mainland. Comments from participants were overwhelmingly positive.

2010 Teleconference Calls
In March, EVA BC facilitated a series of 2-hour teleconference calls with Community-Based Victim Assistance programs, STV Counselling and STV Outreach across the province. Full reports of the calls will soon be available on our website at www.endingviolence.org.

Ministry of Children and Family Development
EVA BC is assisting MCFD with the updating of the Violence Against Women In Relationships (VAWIR) Best Practices to include information on risk and safety.

Legal Services Society
EVA BC continues to consult with the Legal Services Society about changes to legal aid. The intention of EVA BC is to bring a number of its member programs together in a conference call to look at how legal assistance can best be delivered to abused women around BC. We are looking into developing a list of lawyers around the province with experience in cases involving violence against women who are willing to take on legal aid cases.

Olympic Preparedness Committee
In January 2010, EVA BC Executive Director Tracy Porteous made a presentation on Risk and Safety for victim service workers from Olympic impacted communities.

Immigrant Women Project
As reported in previous newsletters, EVA BC is partnering with MOSAIC and Vancouver Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services on a three-year, BC Law Foundation funded project to consult, analyze and take action to address policy gaps that compromise the safety of immigrant, refugee and women who otherwise are in Canada without legal status who experience violence. Most recently, the project has drafted a series of briefing documents that address key broad issues impacting the safety of immigrant, refugee and non-status women. Topics addressed are gender bias in immigration criteria, the needs of women who are without status as a result of leaving an abusive spouse, the need for coordinated responses, sponsorship debt, and the training of immigration officials on violence against women. Our next step is to meet with federal policy makers to engage in discussion about needed policy changes.

Provincial Protective Measures Unit
The Provincial Protective Measures Unit (PPMU) is a province-wide resource for enhanced safety planning for those working with victims of high-risk spousal or familial violence. The PPMU is housed within the Vancouver Police Department’s Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) and is staffed by one police detective and one victim support worker. Like the other Vancouver DVU teams, the PPMU reflects a partnership between Family Services of Greater Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department.

The PPMU is a unique resource for victim support workers and others, such as police, Probation, Crown Counsel and transition house workers, who are working with victims of intimate partner or familial violence in high-risk situations. From time to time, those working to support victims of abuse come into contact with situations in which women and children appear to be at extreme risk and all usual protective measures have been tried and have not been effective. The PPMU is available to consult on such cases from across the province to see if there may be other measures possible that have not been previously considered.

The PPMU works with other agencies provincially and federally that provide specialized assistance to victims of life-threatening intimate or familial violence. Much of what the PPMU can provide are measures which are considered to be last resort options, and are long-term strategies rather than short-term emergency measures.

Prior to calling the PPMU, it is helpful if you are able to have information such as a synopsis of the history of violence and police involvement, police file numbers, current circumstances, current protection orders and custody orders, other protective measures that have been tried, and any plans that the woman is considering for the future.
Note: The PPMU phone number and email are intended for worker consultation only, not to be distributed to clients. Please call 604-717-3098 for more information or to request consultation, or send an email to ppmu@vpd.ca

CCWS helps BC communities develop new models and improve existing models of cross-sector coordination on violence against women. Learn more at www.endingviolence.org/ccws.

Coordination Initiative Workshops
It’s with great excitement that CCWS is launching its new training, “Domestic Violence: Developing a Community Response To Risk And Safety”, in Kelowna in March 2010. This three-day training will help participants gain a solid understanding of collaborative risk identification and woman-centred safety planning. Demand for this training was higher than expected, with over 55 applicants for 25 seats. For those who were not able to attend, we plan to hold this training again next year.

In January 2010, CCWS Regional Coordinator Gail Edinger worked with Grainne Barthe of the North Coast Transition Society in Prince Rupert to develop training for the Prince Rupert Violence in Relationships Committee. This coordination initiative has been meeting for some time and asked CCWS for assistance with creating a more effective structure for their group, and a workplan for moving forward together. Facilitator Morgen Baldwin then delivered a one-day session on developing and maintaining Violence in Relationships Community Coordination that was attended by a broad range of sectors involved or interested in coordination work in Prince Rupert. Also in January, Gail and Morgen worked with Tamitik Status of Women in Kitimat to address the expected impact of the EUROCAN closure. Other communities CCWS is currently working on developing training for are Castlegar, North Vancouver, Maple Ridge, Creston and Penticton and dates have been set to deliver these sessions in person.

In preparation for Surrey Women’s Centre’s 24-hour response during the Olympics, CCWS offered a two-day training, Working With Survivors of Sexual Assault, at the Surrey Women’s Centre on January 18 and 20, 2010. CCWS Regional Coordinator Michelle Novakowski and EVA BC’s Program Manager Harjit Kaur delivered the training that looked at beliefs, assumptions, rape trauma and skills practice on the first day and focused on medical procedures, drug facilitated sexual assault and the legal system for the second day. We were very appreciative that Surrey Women’s Centre also allowed staff from Howe Sound Women’s Centre and Whistler Pemberton Victim Assistance to attend.

As well as the many trainings that CCWS undertakes, CCWS staff are always available to support communities working to develop collaborative responses to violence in relationships and sexual assault. CCWS staff work with communities daily via telephone and email to support work around the province.

SAFE CHOICES PROGRAM
Safe Choices works to end abuse and create healthy, respectful relationships for lesbian, bisexual and Two-Spirit women by offering support and education that empowers women and enhances the capacity of our communities to respond to this issue. Learn more at www.endingviolence.org/safe_choices.

On January 14, 2010, Safe Choices conducted a Service Provider’s Workshop for transition house workers through BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses. Thirty participants attended this daylong session that provided them with an introduction to the language, definitions, issues, misconceptions and realities of the LBT2SQ community.

For upcoming Safe Choices workshops, please go to http://endingviolence.org/event. To find out more about other Safe Choices services, please contact program coordinator Cathy Welch at welch@endingviolence.org.
IN MEMORY OF CATHERINE WHITE HOLMAN
APRIL 18, 1954 — NOVEMBER 29, 2009

Catherine White Holman died suddenly in a small plane crash off Saturna Island on November 29, 2009. As a social worker and an activist for the GLBT Community, Catherine’s involvement with EVA BC’s Safe Choices program went back a number of years. Along with EVA BC, she was an active member in the community education initiative, Network Against Abuse in Same Sex Relationships and later participated in the Safe Choices Advisory Committee from its inception in 2002 until the time of her death.

The card at her memorial service offered the following details about Catherine’s career and service to the Queer Community:

Catherine was a founding member and community counsellor at Three Bridges Community Health Centre. As a dedicated professional she also shared her knowledge of ethics and advocacy through her work with first year medical students at the University of British Columbia. She helped establish guidelines and standards of care that integrated social work and health care for the disenfranchised. Many of the programs that we now depend on in the Queer Community were guided by Catherine’s insight and dedicated work. The wisdom and compassion that she embodied will be profoundly missed.

A December 2, 2009 tribute to Catherine in XTRA!west noted that she had authored “Guidelines for Transgender Care and Care for Transgender Adolescents,” considered to be the benchmark on best practices internationally.”

A few weeks later, on December 17, 2009, XTRA!west ran another article describing the huge gathering at the WISE Hall that was her memorial, with the headline “A Tribe of Broken Hearts Bids Catherine White Holman Farewell”. And so do we.

JANE COOMBE RETIRES

Long-time policy analyst with the BC Provincial Government and friend to EVA BC, Jane Coombe recently retired from her career of public service. Jane’s career with government spanned more than 20 years, during which time she contributed greatly to the body of knowledge and policy development related to violence against women.

In a tribute to Jane at a farewell party held in Victoria, EVA BC’s Executive Director Tracy Porteous described Jane as “the energy behind creating the most advanced vision for a coordinated response to violence against women in our country.” She went on to say that Jane was ahead of her time when, in the 1980’s, she sought to convince government, police services and Crown to work closely with community advocates, crediting Jane for helping create much of the policy and programming relative to violence against women currently in place in BC today. She went on to say that “Jane has a real knack of making you feel you are doing something really fun and really cutting edge, and for sure, if you are engaged with her, it is.”

Our thanks go out to Jane for all her amazing work and for making our province a safer place. We wish her many happy adventures on the road ahead!
Announcements

Truth in Sentencing Act Comes Into Effect
Bill C-25 – Truth in Sentencing Act – introduced in the House of Commons on March 27, 2009, received Royal Assent on October 22, 2009. Offenders will receive a maximum of one-day credit for each day spent in custody prior to sentencing. Only under special circumstances and with a justification will the courts be allowed, from now on, to give an offender 1.5-day credit for each day spent in custody prior to sentencing.

Events

UPCOMING EVENTS 2010
April 17 – Equality Day
April 18 – 24: BC Prevention of Violence Against Women Week
  National Victims of Crime Awareness Week
  BC Victims of Crime Awareness Week
May 15 – International Day of Families
May 17 – International Day Against Homophobia
June 21 – National Aboriginal Day

Jackson Katz
In recognition of National Victims of Crime Awareness Week, EVA BC will be hosting an event in Victoria during the week of April 18 - 24, 2010 for Members of the BC Legislature with internationally renowned educator, author and filmmaker Jackson Katz. The goal of this event is to create an opportunity for elected officials to gain new information and insights into the issues surrounding gender violence that may assist them in their work as they make critical decisions to enhance the health and safety of all British Columbians. Funding for this event is being provided by the Department of Justice, Canada.

Resources

New EVA BC resources
In case you were not able to attend the 2009 Training forum or Annual General Meeting, you can view keynote speeches by Mavis Erickson and Sandra Kirby, as well as download EVA BC’s Annual Report 2008-2009 at www.endingviolence.org

Resources for Risk Identification & Assessment
- Intimate partner violence risk assessment tools and online training from Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell at www.dangerassessment.com

Rural Women
- The BC Rural Women’s Network sponsored the Online Safety Toolkit in response to stories about women vulnerability and risks when communicating online. http://www.onlinesafetytoolkit.com/
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## Community Coordination for Women’s Safety Program

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Mission Statement
The Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) works to coordinate and support the work of victim-serving and other anti-violence programs in BC through the provision of issue-based consultation and analysis, resource development, training, research and education. Our work is guided by respect for difference, human dignity and equality.

Membership Eligibility
Membership is available to provincially funded Community-Based Victim Assistance Programs, Stopping the Violence Counselling Programs, Stopping the Violence Outreach Programs, Sexual Assault Centres and other similar programs. Please contact EVA BC at 604-633-2506 ext 10 or evabc@endingviolence.org if you are unsure about your agency’s eligibility.

Membership Benefits
• Receive our tri-annual newsletter with news, resources and in-depth articles about top issues in the anti-violence field.
• Become a part of our broadcast fax list and receive time-sensitive information about funding and policy changes, surveys and more.
• Receive copies of all of our publications, including manuals, reports and discussion papers.
• Take advantage of reduced tuition fees for our annual training forum.
• Become eligible to sit on our Board of Directors.
• Participate in our province-wide listservs.
• Access our toll-free line for members.

We wish to thank the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General for its ongoing funding support.

ENDING VIOLENCE
Association of BC

My program would like to become an EVA BC member ($60-$160, depending on ability to pay) □

My program does not qualify for membership, but we would still like to receive the EVA BC newsletter three times per year ($25) □

Name: ____________________________
Organization: ____________________________
Mailing address: ____________________________ Postal code: ____________________________
Website: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________
Amount enclosed: $ ____________________________

Please make cheques payable to “Ending Violence Association of BC” and forward to:
728-602 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1P2
Charitable # 13926 5821 RR0001