



# *Neighbours, Friends & Families*

## ***Interim Evaluation Report, April 2012***

*A client came into the Food Bank for assistance with her husband. I noticed her actions while he was there; when he left to take the bags of food to the car I slid the pocket sized safety card towards her across the desk. She first looked to see where he was and then took it and placed it in her purse. We spoke no words but the message was given to her.*

Major Roxena Hayden, Strathroy Community & Family Services



**Western  
Education**

**Centre for Research & Education  
on Violence Against Women & Children**

In a recent survey, researchers estimated that the cost of helping abused Canadian women is 7 billion dollars annually (United Press International, Oct 11, 2011). And while the economic costs of violence are staggering, the human cost is even greater. With the amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety legislation in Ontario, and the critical need for employers to protect employees from workplace violence and harassment, the need for intervention has never been more important. Providing critical support to employers and communities, the Neighbours, Friends and Families program, enhanced by the resources of Make it Our Business, continues to make significant inroads with increasing awareness of the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse, in addition growing individual and organizational capacity to effectively respond.

## **Evaluation Data**

Obtaining comprehensive evaluation data continues to be challenging with Coordinators citing lack of time during presentations, and limited funded hours, among other things. Only a portion of participant feedback forms are received at the Centre. The documentation of workplace presentations – the numbers and reach of engagement - and the process of capturing data is evolving with the goal of making collection of this information easier by, among other things, creating a fillable PDF form for the NFF website, and, more recently, the development of a very detailed database with the capability of generating reports based on a wide range of markers based on what is required. Coordinators continue to be supported in collection of evaluation data, and reminded of the value and necessity of this information.

As well, the sampling of evaluation data represents only a portion of the NFF@Work presentations being done in the province of Ontario. Participants from one of the two-day training sessions are equipped to deliver the one hour presentation within their own organization and community. Many workplaces, with the capacity to do so, provide internal training regularly but this data is not captured in any meaningful way. Steps are in place to establish an easy link on the website so organizations doing the work can provide basic data. In addition, the NFF material has been embedded in many public education streams, particularly VAW organizations that provide education on woman abuse. The number of presentations and reach of training is impossible to quantify as organizations are not required to participate in OWD reporting, and the NFF material has been integrated so thoroughly into programming that in many organizations it's not considered separate or additional, but an integrated part of the whole.

### **Community Coordinators**

During the reporting period of October 1st, 2011-March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 Neighbours, Friends and Families Community Coordinators delivered a total of 64 one hour presentations reaching a total of 1246 participants.

*Communities engaged include:* London, Toronto, Hanover, Owen Sound, Tiverton, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, Grenville, Kingston, London, Simcoe, Markdale, Holstein, Paisley, Ayton, Osprey, Sarnia, Port Franks, Forest, Petrolia, Oakville, Burlington

*Workplaces engaged include:*

Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario  
Thames Valley District School Board  
Grey Bruce Catholic District Board of Education  
Bruce Power  
Sarnia VAW Coordinating Committee  
United Way  
Fairfield Inn & Suites  
FH Davey Home  
Sault College ECE & Practical Nursing, Liberal Studies programs, & Student Residence  
CAW 1120  
Ministry of Northern Development & Mines  
Ontario Finnish Rest Home Association  
United Counties of Leeds Grenville  
Brockville CAS IHFS, EPII, LS & Intake Teams  
Girls Inc.  
Safe Communities Association  
Kemptville CAS Team  
Grenville Employment & Education Centre  
Grenville UCLE Staff  
Grenville EKIOC Team  
SLC Nursing Students  
Kingston Corrections Canada  
Toronto Ontario Public Service  
Whitehills Medical Centre  
Dalhousie Place  
Kids and Us Community Childcare  
Sarnia Employment and Learning Centre  
Lambton College  
Sarnia Ontario Early Years  
Sarnia Sexual Assault Survivors Centre  
Halton Family Services  
Municipality of Halton, Human Resources  
Access Counselling and Family Services  
Halton Women's Place  
Administrative Professionals Association

## **CREVAW Trainers**

During the reporting period from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, provincial trainers from the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children delivered four three-hour leadership training sessions with a total of 240 participants. They also delivered two two-day Corporate Education training sessions with a total of 29 participants, and six two-day Facilitator training sessions with a total of 166 participants.

*Communities engaged include:* London, Red Lake, Sioux Lookout, Dryden, Toronto, Owen Sound, Strathroy, and Hamilton.

Workplaces engaged include a range of VAW and community organizations, municipalities, police, union, manufacturing, private sector and public sector employers.

## **Performance Measures**

### **Direct Education**

Of the participant feedback forms collected, following the presentation, a total of 89.7% of participants reported that they felt an increased ability to identify the signs and risk factors of woman abuse and felt better able to make referrals and offer support.

### **Training**

Of the training feedback forms collected, following the training, a total of 95.6% of professionals, service providers or community leaders felt better equipped to educate neighbours, friends and families to identify the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse and felt better able to make referrals and offer support.

### **Total Number of Participants**

The total number of participants who received the one-hour public education session was 1246 participants in 64 presentations.

The total number of individuals participating in advanced leadership training or the two-day corporate or facilitator trainings was 817 participants in 12 advanced trainings.

### **Conferences**

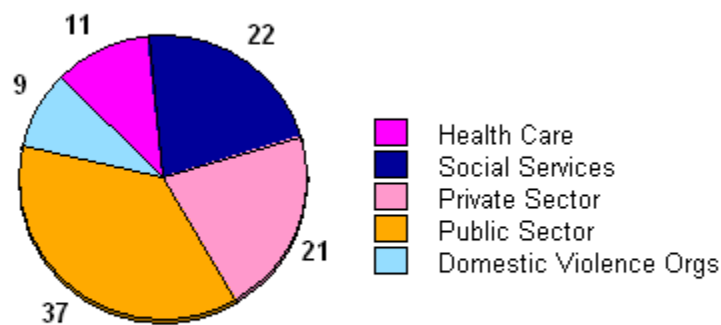
Neighbours, Friends and Families provincial team members attended a total of six conferences focusing on domestic violence in the workplace, with a total participant attendance of 812 individuals. Conferences include:

- *2012 Labour Relations & Human Resources Symposium*, Toronto, March 2012
- *2<sup>nd</sup> World Conference on Women's Shelters*, Washington, DC, Feb 27-March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012
- *Elementary School Teacher's Federation Conference*, Toronto, January 2012
- *Ministry of Labour Industrial Provincial Advisory Committee*, November, 2011

- *Making a Bigger Wave Coordinating Committees Conference*, November 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>, Toronto
- *Domestic Violence Risk Assessment and Management in the Workplace: Addressing New Requirements of Ontario's Occupational Health & Safety Act (Bill 168)*, June 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011

In addition, Barb Macquarrie, Community Director at the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children, will be presenting the work of Neighbours, Friends and Families and Make it Our Business at *Bullying 2012: The 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Workplace Bullying & Harassment*, June 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

### NFF Workplace Engagement



**Health Care** including hospitals, health care centres, public health units

**Social Services** including child, youth and adult organizations

**Private Sector** including manufacturing, media, mining, energy & utilities, personal & professional services, IT and telecommunications

**Public Sector** including a wide spectrum of Ontario Public Service Ministries

**Domestic Violence Organizations** including women's shelters, men's partner assault response programs, sexual violence organizations, VAW Coordinating Committees

## NFF@Work

Many Ontario communities continue their active engagement of workplaces by providing the one hour public education presentation and by encouraging employers to become Neighbours, Friends and Families Workplace Champions. Some communities have recently launched campaigns and have targeted social services and local businesses enabling employers to respond to the amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act through the resource support of Make it Our Business. Some of the campaign engagement strategies include, among others:

- Branding NFF@Work with promotional items and poster campaigns including community posters with tear offs about how to book a one hour presentation, and in workplaces for organizations to highlight their reporting team and policy (Haldimand-Norfolk Counties)
- Working collaboratively with a high school drama teacher to develop and present an interactive play in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month in May (Perth County)
- Co-sponsoring with local merchants to bring the Bata Shoe Display from Toronto and creating posters for display in storefronts of local women who have been murdered by their intimate partners (Sarnia Lambton)
- Sponsoring the Man of Integrity Award in which a male Coordinator does NFF presentations at service clubs and community groups and asks each group to identify a man in the community who best exemplifies exceptional integrity in the pursuit of gender equality. An award ceremony and dinner will be held in May to honour the recipient and to highlight the work of violence against women. (Huron County)

In addition, significant gains have been realized with many large employers across the province. Some of the most significant manufacturing, and often male dominated, employers to provide the one hour Neighbours, Friends and Families presentation include Vuteq Canada with over 700 employees and Bruce Power with more than 250 of their Emergency Response staff trained. In addition, one of the fastest growing areas of workplaces requesting domestic violence training include universities, colleges and municipalities. Some of the workplaces recently trained include the University of Western Ontario where over 3500 staff and faculty received mandatory training in support of the new legislation on workplace violence, harassment and domestic violence. In addition, online training was developed by UWO to support ongoing resource training. Similar training has occurred at Lambton College, Brock University, Cambrian College, in addition to municipalities like Hamilton, as well as the Thames Valley District School Board in London in which all supervisors are receiving the one hour presentation in order to support the Board's strategic objective. Plans are in place for the University of

Guelph to train all 5000 staff and faculty, in addition to ongoing talks with large employers like Cami and Toyota, among others. With the recent arbitration decision around workplace violence - based on Bill 168 - there has been added pressure for employers to heighten their awareness about workplace violence and, as the ruling noted, *to refuse to ignore the warnings of violence that puts employees in peril.*

We have found the Neighbours, Friends & Families (along with Make it Our Business) to be an invaluable resource and would like to provide all our employees with the three brochures outlined on your website. We are also interested in a brochure from Make it Our Business and plan to provide these resources to approximately 8500 employees. We are planning to roll this presentation out to supervisors in May and to the entire staff in June.

Health & Safety Trainer, Thames Valley District School Board

Further, municipalities like Hamilton have taken a strong leadership role in providing training and awareness about the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse to a large and diverse body of employees. Attending a corporate training, the Safety Specialist, along with two of his colleagues, organized trainings with their Human Resources staff, and is working to build capacity within the municipality to train facilitators to deliver the one hour NFF presentation. Additionally, as they are dealing with a number of active domestic violence cases, the municipality of Hamilton, thanks to the training and support from the Neighbours, Friends and Families and Make it Our Business, has implemented safety planning and support measures to the victims of abuse and has markedly increased their capacity to effectively respond. There is a growing need to create a follow-up system with participants from training sessions to further track growth and the success of the program outside of the official channels of dissemination.

### **Community Coordinator Capacity Building**

One of the key successes over the last year in helping to build capacity with Neighbours, Friends and Families Coordinators has been the implementation of the position of Community Workplace Advisor through the provincial NFF team. Eric Magni, who engendered a successful model of engagement in Middlesex County, assumed this role and has worked to help build the capacity of Coordinators through ongoing support and training and networking opportunities. Over the past

year two Coordinator workshops have been held, including the recent introduction to the Cut it Out campaign, in which Coordinators were trained to facilitate one hour presentations in their respective communities with salon professionals. In addition, an NFF@Work Coordinators Manual has been created and disseminated. This has been a huge asset as it provides all necessary documents for marketing the work, details on the Workplace Champion program, Coordinator responsibilities, in addition to support for community development and engagement. The position of Community Workplace Advisor was created from the feedback of those implementing the NFF program in their communities, many of whom work in relative isolation. The added benefits of this role include increased communication and information sharing, collective problem solving, additional training opportunities, and ongoing support in implementation and community engagement.

### **2012 Workplace Champion Recognition Celebrations**

The highly successful Neighbours, Friends and Families Workplace Recognition celebrations were held for the third year in February, most to coincide with Family Day. This year the celebrations, held in seven communities across the province, recognized almost 450 workplaces for their achievement of one of the three levels of engagement with the NFF Workplace Champion program. These communities included Algoma, Grey & Bruce Counties, Haldimand-Norfolk Counties, London, Middlesex County, Simcoe, and Leeds and Grenville Counties. Laurel Broten, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, created a video message that was played at each event, which also included speeches by federal, provincial and municipal politicians, in addition to messages from survivors of domestic violence. Some communities demonstrated strong support with the integral involvement of Mayors and MPPs, some of whom not only handed out workplace certificates but also co-signed letters of support and endorsement in order to more fully engage local businesses to begin the work of educating their employees about the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse. The Workplace Champion events demonstrate, in a visible manner, community engagement in ending domestic violence, providing participants with a sense of solidarity in working together to make a difference in the lives of their neighbours, friends, family and co-workers.



## **Algoma NFF Recognition Event**



### **Workplace Champion Program**

**Level 1 – Provide Information**

**Level 2 – Education on the warning signs and risk factors**

**Level 3 – Create sustainability and organizational change**

## **Make it Our Business Program Development**

In order to more fully support program specific outcomes to enhance the ability of Ontario workplaces in being able to recognize the warning signs of domestic violence and respond effectively, in addition to supporting employers to meet the legal requirements of the Occupational Health & Safety Act, program and curriculum development has continued to be refined with the end goal of contributing to ongoing sustainability. Training curriculum has been reworked to make it easier to customize to specific audiences. In addition, the three hour leadership and intervention workshops for employers have been standardized, and an additional three hour workshop developed based on the work and recommendations of the disability strategy to educate and support employers who work with women with disabilities and deaf women.

In addition, work is ongoing in establishing the certification process for trainers, a critical element in sustainability and in preparation for engaging a much broader market, with the training guide, software and program package being piloted in the next few months. There is a heightened need to build the pool of trainers in order to lay the foundation for a social enterprise model and to enhance the ability to respond to the increasing provincial needs for training.

## **Training**

Over the course of the last year there have been a number of two day trainings across the province with a wide range of employers from both the public and private sector included. These present rich opportunities for networking in addition to building community and organizational capacity in educating employees about the warning signs and risk factors of domestic violence, in addition to providing support for employers to enhance their ability to effectively respond to the legislative amendments. Most training sessions involve a range of organizations including union, police, VAW organizations, hospitals, private sector, manufacturing, municipalities, among others. With range of communities from Grey-Bruce, London, Middlesex, Hamilton, Simcoe, Toronto, there was also some significant capacity building and engagement of Northern Ontario communities with training sessions held in Kenora, Thunder Bay, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Red Lake and Manitoulin Island, each supporting the work in a disparate range of communities. For example, the March 2012 training on Manitoulin Island was held on the M'Chigeen reserve, a northern area and an unceded First Nation territory. While there were a range of workplaces represented, many of those attending work to support Aboriginal communities, and identified needs for strategies and specific workplace training for domestic violence issues in First Nations communities. While there is necessarily adaptation in each community to fully engage the population, in

northern and Aboriginal communities, with the level of isolation in addition to the complexity of supporting individuals who identify as living in two cultures with a myriad of layers of power and control, there is an increased need to creatively respond to, and engage with, the issue of domestic violence in a way that is flexible and open, as well as addressing barriers to participation with training and outreach. Further, with the northern trainings, there was an expressed need to develop workplace training specific to Aboriginal people. Going forward, there are opportunities for Kanawayhitowin, the mainstream Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign, and the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) to work together more closely to create specific strategies of engagement for northern communities, and those supporting Aboriginal workplaces.

In addition, the 2 day training with organizations involved with the OCASI NFF for Immigrant and Refugee Communities was particularly engaging with strong outcomes. Each community coordinator has been encouraged to host a 2 day corporate training over the next year in order to build capacity within their respective communities and to build relationships between the VAW and public and private sectors. The network of communities engaging in the work of educating neighbours, friends and families continues to grow with the demand for support increasing as employers especially begin to identify the organizational gaps in supporting victims of domestic violence.

Feedback from training sessions is consistently strong with many participants having had direct or indirect experiences with domestic violence in the workplace. Many people report that, prior to the training, they had not known what to do when they encountered domestic violence. Some reported employees leaving workplaces because of the impact of domestic violence and harassment by abusive partners. Many also reported that while learning to recognize the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse were key, crucial and more difficult also is learning how to effectively intervene. There is a need for ongoing training with many workplaces in order to empower them to take action when they witness domestic violence in order to increase the safety of all employees.

### **OCASI Neighbours, Friends and Families for Immigrant & Refugee Communities (NFF IRC)**

In November of 2011, a highly successful two-day training was held in Toronto for 22 individuals facilitating the NFF IRC work which was officially launched last year. Participants were part of the OCASI project that coordinates the NFF campaign in immigrant and refugee communities with nine member organizations currently participating. The goals of the training were to build capacity with the development of facilitation skills, adaptation of existing resources, small group work,

interventions and role play, in addition to networking opportunities and information sharing. There have been a number of successful community engagement strategies with immigrant communities in the mainstream NFF program and the OCASI project will deepen that work, extending to a broad spectrum of target audiences. One of the learning supports that the NFF IRC project has developed is E modules with four online courses including:

- Prevention of domestic violence against immigrant and refugee women through early intervention
- Family violence against immigrant and refugee women and community development strategies
- Family violence and refugee and immigration law
- Understanding and responding to violence against immigrant and refugee women

The NFF IRC will host a series of regional training workshops across the province to increase knowledge, skills, and enhance outreach strategies with topics including cultural issues and competencies, community development strategies for prevention of domestic violence against immigrant and refugees, anti-racism and cultural competency in program delivery, working with men of diverse cultures and faiths, and orientation to the Family Law Education for women campaign, among other things. The NFF IRC supports promising outcomes in the ongoing development of the mainstream campaign in addition to culturally competent engagement of immigrant and refugee communities across the province.

*“Our approach is based on the knowledge that comprehensive, culturally appropriate strategies are needed to reach out to and engage immigrant and refugee women, neighbours, friends and families, to raise awareness of the warning signs of woman abuse,” says Nadine Favics, NFF project coordinator. “There are many barriers to accessing information, services and opportunities for engagement which make immigrant and refugee women uniquely vulnerable when faced by domestic violence.”*

Nadine Favics, Project Coordinator, Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre

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## **Cut it Out for Salon Professionals**

Another key development over the last year is the completion and launch of the Cut it Out campaign for salon professionals with the outcome of educating salon owners and employees to recognize the warning signs of woman and abuse and respond effectively, and to help salon owners meet the legal requirements of the new legislation. The program was aligned with NFF@Work and the Workplace Champion program, and a *Cut it Out: Salons Against Domestic Violence* brochure and booklet was strategically designed for those working in the salon sector with information on how to recognize, respond and refer survivors of abuse, in addition to support for employers. Utilizing information and feedback from two pilot projects, final material was created along with a one hour basic education PowerPoint presentation that will educate salon and spa employees about domestic violence in the workplace, in addition to a facilitation guide. A five minute Cut it Out promotional video was also created to be used at trade shows and as a marketing tool that supports the key messages in the brochure. Neighbours, Friends and Families NFF@Work Coordinators were trained recently to deliver the one hour presentation and provided with an introductory letter and media release for those facilitating the program in their communities.

It's anticipated that Cut it Out will be an important information bridge and resource support to small salons as professionals working in that sector are currently not covered by any professional associations. The program also includes information related to workplace requirements under the new legislation as it relates to salons, and will be a strategy for reaching small workplaces and supporting their domestic violence awareness and policy development.

The program was recently officially launched in two communities including Chatham and Owen Sound with Arlene Morell, the key developer of Cut it Out, doing a presentation in addition to, at one launch, a local hair stylist who sharing her personal story. Comprised of salon professionals and Coordinating Committee member organizations, the launches received a lot of press coverage including interviews with Arlene Morell on CTV National News and CBC Radio and there is considerable interest in implementing this program in many communities across the province. Next steps include continuing to build relationships with the newly formed College of Trades and work towards finding ways of embedding this training within their trade school curriculum, in addition to building relationships with large beauty supply companies like Goldwell or Redken to create sustainability for a stand-alone campaign to engage and support the work of salon professionals in Ontario.

In addition, building the list of engaged workplaces, Cut it Out champions will be acknowledged, in addition to others, with the 2013 Workplace Champion events in

February 2013. Many community coordinators have worked with stylists in their areas and this program will enable them to build relationships with salon professionals and provide another vehicle for education and mobilization.

*The Program Works...*

Lori, a salon owner had a client in for an appointment who had disclosed the abusive nature of her marriage of 6 years involving physical, mental and emotional abuse. The couple had moved several times, and the woman had been hospitalized on one occasion when her husband broke her leg, in addition to having police involvement. The salon owner pulled Cut it Out information together and arranged to have support people at her salon when the client came in again in order to provide information for the woman and to ensure her safety. Lori also facilitated referral to other helping professionals who could provide ongoing safety planning and support to her client.

## **Disability Strategy**

After extensive work, the disability strategy report is now completed. Extending over a period of 18 months, under the leadership of Marianne Park, the report draws on 16 interviews and 11 focus groups with women with disabilities (WWD) and Deaf women, service providers and the Advisory Committee. With an accessible events guide, disability etiquette for volunteers, resources and fact sheets for survivors of abuse and their caregiver and service providers, the report examines woman abuse using an intersectional analysis. The purpose of the work was to:

- Examine information gaps in current literature
- Look at barriers to accessing information and ways to make it more accessible
- Identify prevention and identification needs for WWD
- Determine ways of adapting existing resources to make them more useful and relevant

Visioning for the future, some of the recommendations include the following:

1. Organize a symposium with all campaigns to examine how to fully integrate all the information about WWD and Deaf women into the existing mainstream, francophone and aboriginal campaigns.
2. Expand distribution of resources

3. Adapt MIOB to reach workplaces that hire WWD and Deaf women
4. Review data and conduct a needs assessment
5. Develop an accessibility consultant plan to determine resources
6. Create an independent NFF campaign to train front line service providers, ODSP workers, among others, and build capacity within the community to provide peer support.
7. Cross train service providers

In addition, a training workshop was developed to educate and support employers who work with WWD and Deaf women, in addition to augmentations of existing public education presentations and training curriculum to incorporate some key elements to increase the abilities of a broad spectrum of employers to work more effectively and strategically with their employees and co-workers.

## **Domestic violence**

### **Is a security and liability concern.**

In a recent study 94% of corporate security directors surveyed ranked domestic violence as a high security problem at their company.

### **Is a performance and productivity concern**

41% of individuals experiencing abuse had job performance problems and 48% had difficulty concentrating on the job as a result of their abusive behaviours.

37% of women who reported that the abuse impacted their work in the form of lateness, missed work, trouble keeping a job or inability to pursue promotions.

### **Is a management issue**

66% of executives said that their financial performance would benefit from addressing the issue of domestic violence with their employees

### **...and taking action in response to domestic violence works...**

In one study, after participating in domestic violence training, the rate of employees asking for workplace counseling services for domestic abuse problems was 14 times what it had been before.

*Seven Reasons Employers Should Address Domestic Violence, Futures Without Violence, 2012.*

## Media

The following are a partial list of some of the recent print and electronic media articles. These include:

- *Hairstylists Spot Domestic Abuse*, London Free Press, Tuesday, March 2, 2012
- *Workplaces Recognized for Leadership in Preventing Domestic Violence*, Strathroy Age Dispatch, February 22, 2012
- *Recognized for Preventing Domestic Abuse*, London Community News, February 22, 2012
- *NFF Recognizes Workplace Champions in Leeds & Grenville*, St. Lawrence EMC, February 21, 2012
- *Awards for Domestic Violence Prevention*, Port Dover Maple Leaf, February 20, 2012
- *Stopping Domestic Violence*, Times-Reformer, February 21, 2012
- *Local Groups Recognized for their Commitment in Preventing Domestic Violence*, CD98.9, February 17, 2012
- *Hairdressers Can Help Fight Domestic Violence*, Simcoe Reformer, February 21, 2012
- *Working to End Violence Against Women*, Orillia Packet and Times, February 18, 2012
- *The Chatham Kent Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee to Host Domestic Violence Educational Session in Partnership with NFF – Cut it Out*, Chatham Kent Times, March 20, 2012
- *Man of Integrity Campaign Helps Prevent Woman Abuse in Huron County*, Huron Expositor, March 7, 2012
- *Fighting Abuse in Hamilton's Immigrant Communities*, Hamilton Spectator, July 6, 2011

Additional interviews for the Cut it Out launch were conducted on CTV National News Network Channel, aired Thursday, March 22, 2012, and on CBC Radio. In addition to newspaper ads in many communities advertising the Neighbours, Friends and Families program and Workplace Champions, billboards have been displayed in a number of communities including Algoma, various locations in Perth and Huron Counties, among others.



On International Women's Day,  
**remember.**

**We all have a  
role to play  
in preventing  
woman abuse**



**By understanding  
the warning signs,  
you can help.**



**Optimism Place Crisis Line 1-800-265-8598**

**The Stratford Beacon Herald, November 2011**

## Adaptations and Endorsements

The Neighbours, Friends and Families program continues to have strong impact across the province and country with ongoing requests to adapt or utilize the foundational work of the campaign. The following jurisdictions have adopted the approach to NFF including providing education to neighbours, friends and families and incorporated this messaging into their content development, websites, and other public education materials. These include, among others:

- *Neighbours, Friends and Families: You Can Help Prevent and Respond to Abuse in Your Community*, brochure, Government of Prince Edward Island
- Nova Scotia Domestic Violence Resource Centre, <http://www.nsdomeesticviolence.ca/>
- Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women & Nova Scotia Provincial Government
- Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS – NB), [http://www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca/en/safer\\_families\\_safer\\_communities\\_publications](http://www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca/en/safer_families_safer_communities_publications)
- Prince Edward Island Premier’s Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention, -- <http://www.stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca/>
- British Columbia’s Domestic Violence website, <http://www.domesticviolencebc.ca/dvbc/what/index.page?>
- Public Health Agency of Canada, brochures in development

In addition, *It’s Not Right! Neighbours, Friends and Families for Older Adults*, a program supported by the government of Canada, is becoming an important resource for NFF Coordinators in their engagement of workplaces that support the elderly. Based on the NFF program of recognizing warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse, equipping people to be able to effectively respond to abuse, and enabling them to refer survivors to community and workplace supports, *It’s Not Right* is a promising program in extending the reach of public education on domestic violence. Three brochures have been developed including:

- *What you can do to keep yourself safe from abuse*
- *How you can identify abuse and help older adults at risk*
- *What you can do when abuse or neglect is happening to an older adult in your life*

In addition, a PowerPoint has been developed on how to identify abuse and help older adults at risk. This presentation is already being utilized by a number of provincial NFF Coordinators and used in specific settings that work with seniors and older adults.

## Endorsements

Neighbours, Friends and Families and Make it Our Business resources continue to gain visibility as highly effective supports for workplaces to ensure their employees safety and to help them comply with the legislative requirements of the amendment to the Occupational Health & Safety Act. Successfully utilized in a range of associations including the manufacturing WSPS Safety Group, formerly known as IAPA, and the Board of Ontario Public Health Association, among others, endorsement and support of the program is also evident in the recent linking to the NFF and MIOB websites by, among others, the Public Services Health & Safety Association and, notably, the Ministry of Labour. In addition, media and telecommunications companies like Cogeco have taken leadership for disseminating information on domestic violence by regularly airing the public service announcements in addition to the Sandra Schott video developed for the Neighbours, Friends and Families program.

*The MIOB campaign of CREVAWC adds to information in the NFF public education campaign on how to recognize signs of domestic violence – the goal is to provide resources to employees and develop strategies to prevent DV in the workplace.*

Ontario Ministry of Labour, Health & Safety, Workplace Violence and Harassment website page & Safety Planning Resources

Further, Neighbours, Friends and Families was included in both the recent Ontario and British Columbia Death Review reports. In the latter report to the Chief Coroner of BC entitled *Findings and Recommendations of the Domestic Violence Death Review Panel, May 2010*, NFF is recommended as a model public education campaign that was developed to raise awareness of domestic violence and can serve as a powerful tool and resource. From that report, other work has followed including that of the Domestic Violence in the Workplace Tool Kit developed by WorkSafe BC, which provides resources for employers and workers to respond to domestic violence in the workplace. In addition, Neighbours, Friends and Families has been recently cited as a promising and effective public education campaign in Walter DeKeseredy's book *Violence Against Women: Myths, Facts & Controversies*, 2011.

*Under Bill 168, the right to privacy takes second place to the right to safety if the threat of violence is real. Training is key. Doing something is always better than doing nothing.*

Mark Sabourin, "Safety Trumps Privacy Under New Workplace Violence Law", OHS, Canada's Occupational Health & Safety Magazine, Winter 2011

Recently as well, in the coroner's inquest into the death of OPP Constable Vu Pham, the jury's recommendations included the critical need for the Ontario Women's Directorate to continue to support and fund public education, including Neighbours, Friends and Families, that provides education about domestic violence risks, in addition for the need for more Public Service Announcements with the intent of directing persons at risk to appropriate sources of help.

Further, and increasingly, a number of large Ontario employers are using the information of Neighbours, Friends and Families and the resources of Make it Our Business to develop online training for their staff. Brantford Hospital, for example who have demonstrated strong support in their education and implementation of NFF, trained all of their senior leadership, directors, managers, supervisors and coordinators with a three-hour leadership training. Following from that, they developed Medworxx, an E-learning program on how to recognize and respond to domestic violence in the workplace. NFF is cited as fundamental to the development of the program that is a mandatory learning module for their almost 1300 employees. The module educates on the warning signs and risk factors of woman abuse, includes a flow chart for responding to domestic violence, utilizes a familiar workplace scenario, lists hospital and community resources, and includes a domestic violence quiz to test knowledge, which all employees are expected to successfully complete. An ongoing education tool for existing and new staff, Medworxx is also expected to be part of the hospital's annual compulsory education to ensure the ongoing level of knowledge and effective response strategies around the issue of domestic violence.

Other hospitals implementing online training for staff and physicians and educating them on domestic violence in the workplace includes Women's College Hospital in Toronto that developed their training to teach employees how to identify domestic violence and how to effectively support victims. There is a growing need for strong domestic violence online education programs in order to educate large numbers of employees in organizations where the logistics of bringing people together is highly problematic. Online training is one of the critical development pieces that the curriculum and training members of the provincial NFF team are working on, and

this promises to more fully support organizations and communities as they attempt to educate large numbers of employees about domestic violence and the resources available in their respective communities.

## **Thinking Outside the Box and Moving Forward**

In addition to ongoing program development, there is strong commitment to ensuring the sustainability of the NFF program not only by building capacity within communities to support the work, but also in thinking outside the funding box about how to move the work forward. In developing the social enterprise model, work continues in building the trainer certification program, and among other things, finding ways of embedding the work within existing organizational infrastructures, including education streams for salon professionals, physicians, nurses and others. Additionally, finding ways that NFF can be integrated and adapted into the public education work of the violence against women sector continues, as well as ongoing and deepening relationship building between the public and private sectors. There is an increasing ripple effect and a growing desire to work together to enhance the safety of women and the places where they live and work.

In addition to each NFF@Work Coordinator organizing a two day training in his or her respective communities over the next year, provincial Coordinating Committees are being supported to take on the work of NFF and take a leadership role in training their members, often a wide mix of VAW and other community organizations including police, justice, and private sector workplaces. Coordinating Committees become integral links to the burgeoning social enterprise model for NFF, in addition to the fledgling VAW Network that grew from the *Building a Bigger Wave* provincial forum in November 2011 that brought together over 130 individuals from 42 VAW Coordinating Committees from across the province.

Utilizing the concept of building a bigger wave by throwing a pebble in a pond, the goal of the forum was to create ripples that go out in all directions. Each wave of activity in ending violence against women has an impact and matters. Participants explored interest and the collective will to develop a provincial network for coordinating committees in the province of Ontario. At the conclusion of the forum, with 88% of MCSS-funded committees represented, there was a clear mandate to move to the next step of building the network. In addition, innovative projects were highlighted, including Neighbours, Friends and Families and Make it Our Business, and participants discussed ways of working collaborative together to move this work forward. The Forum provided an important first step toward the realization of a provincial network that will be designed to support the VAW sector

through relationship-building, increased visibility of local and provincial projects, and the demonstrating greater regard for the challenging work of collaboration.

The NFF@Work presentation to Forum participants underscored the benefits for VAW Coordinating Committee's participation in NFF including, among others:

- Broadening the scope of audiences reached with gender-based, VAW informed messages about prevention and appropriate responses
- Wider public engagement and understanding of VAW issues
- Potential for a coordinated approach across the province
- A means of addressing the problem of the low level of recognition for VAW Coordinating Committee work, something identified in the pre-forum survey
- Stronger relationships between non-profit, public and private sector workplaces
- Increased visibility and support for the work

The Provincial Forum was an opportunity to explore possibilities for "building a bigger wave" of awareness and action. Discussions served to identify preliminary strategies and structures that will help to achieve this goal in communities and across the province including information-sharing, working together on projects, and building regional and provincial networks. Next steps include developing and launching a website, compiling and sharing distribution and network lists, and seeking additional funding to fully implement the network.

Engaging Coordinating Committees in a more strategic way and building capacity within communities through the VAW network provides another powerful potential for engagement. While some VAW Coordinating Committees are involved in the work of NFF, many are not, so encouraging a wide range of communities through training, supportive resources for new NFF Coordinators, in addition to building relationships between NFF Coordinating subcommittees and community members of the public, private and non-profit sectors, provides an important foundation for sustainability.



**Building a Bigger Wave VAW Forum, Graphic Recording**

Over the next year, the transition to a social enterprise model will continue, in addition to the ongoing refinement of products, training certification, as well as the creation of a marketing and sector-specific outreach strategy. Given the pressure on employers to fulfill the obligations of the Occupational Health and Safety legislative amendments, partnering with the private sector for market engagement is a strong possibility as the programs and resources of NFF and MIOB become more widely known and strongly endorsed. While many employers are focused on workplace violence and harassment policy and procedure development, many are oblivious to the domestic violence component, which leaves them vulnerable if a situation arises in their workplace for which they are unprepared. There is a growing niche market for this work, and NFF@Work and Make it Our Business are placed to deliver unique high level services with strategic positioning and marketing. By endeavouring to think outside the funding box, the program continues to grow throughout the province with the implementation of training in existing networks like municipalities, large and small employers, Coordinating Committees, and others, in order to increase public awareness of domestic violence and support enhanced capacity and confidence to effectively respond.

Shortly after NFF@Work training with staff at Grey County Social Services there was a situation at the County office where a staff member experienced harassment and threats from her husband at the social services office. The male partner was receiving OW, and knew that he could access his wife at work, and had a legitimate excuse to be in the building. Staff immediately recognized this as a workplace DV situation and the supervisor and manager were able to work with the woman to develop a safety plan, and contact police to get a no trespassing order. The woman was so upset about the ongoing harassment and her inability to do anything about it that she told her manager that she planned to quit her job. With the support of her manager and supervisor, as well as her colleagues, she has remained at work and remained employed. The manager, Barb Fedy, commented that the NFF training was so timely for her organization, and for the staff - and that without the training she is certain that there would have been a much different outcome - social services would have lost a valued employee, the woman would have lost a good job and remained at risk, and the abuser would have remained in control of the victim.

Social enterprise is supported in Ontario through the McGuinty government's commitment to exploring partnerships and innovative ways to make social change through with forums like the 2011 Social Innovation Summit in which Ontarians were asked through Wiki online collaboration sharing tools to share their ideas and solutions to complex problems like poverty and domestic violence, among others. There is a growing understanding and synergy for social innovation and for actively and creatively addressing social challenges by bringing sectors together and innovation to life. Neighbours, Friends and Families grew from the ground up, and was adapted to the evolving needs of communities and workplaces, and as the program continues to grow, it provides increased opportunities to work in collaboration and build lasting relationships and sustainability.