

Abuse Council of Hamilton Wentworth formed a task force with three local boards of education and other member agencies to look at the increasing numbers of reported child abuse.

FVPP has three major components: First, the development of a school based family violence prevention curriculum for K-13; second, a Handbook for the Prevention of Family Violence; and third, an Inservice Training Program for school personnel.

The curriculum which is designed to educate students about family violence includes the following components:

1. Awareness-that violence exists and is supported in society;
2. Personal safety-strategies to help students avoid unsafe situations and identify community resources;
3. Communication skills-that focus on verbal and non-verbal messages, active listening and the development of assertiveness and conflict resolution skills;
4. Healthy relationships-development of social skills that will foster healthy relationships;
5. Prevention of stereotyping-an examination of the limiting effects of sex role stereotyping on males and females and of the value of individual uniqueness;
6. Self-esteem-the use of strategies that will help children recognize their own worth.

At the intermediate level this curriculum is being pilot tested during the 1991-92 school year.

The Handbook for the Prevention of Family Violence was developed with input from over 60 professionals including teachers, social workers, child care workers, physicians, police and shelter workers, and provides the most current and comprehensive information for people working in this field. The subject matter includes child abuse, wife assault and elder abuse, and focuses on prevention. In 1990, the Handbook for the Prevention of Family Violence (1,000 copies) was distributed free to all schools and service providers within the Hamilton-Wentworth region.

The third component of FVPP, Inservice Training for school personnel, is critical to the success of the project. Teachers receive no training in family violence in their teacher preparation. As a result, many have yet to examine their perceptions and stereotypes about violent offenders and their victims. Some teachers feel overwhelmed by the mandated curriculum while others have yet to recognize that family violence is a serious problem. For teachers who have experienced abuse in their own lives, the training sessions can be very painful.

The Inservice Training has been conducted over a period of three years beginning 1988-89 with the distribution of a pamphlet, "Working Together to Prevent Family Violence," to 11,000 school employees within all three school boards. Included in the pamphlet were details on a series of workshops offered free to all school personnel. These workshops were funded with grants from the Ministry of Education Family Violence Prevention Initiatives. In this same year every student in Kindergarten to grade 6 attended performances of the play, "Touching," which sensitively portrays child abuse, relationships and problem solving.

Parents were invited to preview the play and a storybook was available for those parents who chose to do further education at home with their children. A kit for teachers includes character cards, "Bill of Body Rights," a teaching guide and concept cards.

In 1989-90 Inservice Training, a pamphlet entitled "Wife Assault and its Effects on Children" was distributed to all school personnel. Professional development workshops and a weekend retreat for teachers were also designed to address this issue. In addition a play, "Whenever I Feel Afraid," was presented to over 400 school administrators, trustees, vice-principals and principals.

This play, shown to all high school students in the Hamilton-Wentworth Separate Board in 1990-91, tells the story of a group of teenage characters and examines the roots of violence and sexism in their lives. Specifically the play focuses on a brother and sister whose experience with their father's violence towards their mother has had a negative impact on their self-images and relationships.

FVPP is one example of an innovative and ambitious program; a strategy for change. This project has gathered together many of the basic components of a community: schools, social service agencies, police, medical staff and shelter workers. In the course of discussing these issues, there has emerged at the very least, a common understanding of the nature and prevalence of the problem. An offspring of this project then, has been the education of a diversity of organizations in the community. Education is a crucial factor in any strategy for change. While schools have been the focus of the current project, the elimination of violence against women and children will require the education of all members of society.

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Études sur la condition de la femme: Un moyen de combattre la violence

Par Gail Brandt

Depuis 1975 existe au Collège universitaire Glendon un programme bilingue d'Études des femmes, qui intègre les connaissances théoriques et la recherche universitaire au vécu des femmes. Les différents cours offerts dans le programme permettent aux étudiant-e-s d'analyser les structures économiques, idéologiques et sociales qui encadrent la vie quotidienne des femmes. Une place importante est réservée à la question de la violence contre les femmes et aux stratégies pour la combattre : nommer le problème, en discuter, c'est la première étape de l'acquisition des pouvoirs nécessaires pour le résoudre.

Dès le cours d'introduction, offert en français et en anglais, on aborde la question de la violence. D'autres cours, tel *Femmes, Sexualité, Pouvoir*, traitent des différentes formes que prend, dans la société canadienne, la violence perpétrée contre les

femmes. Depuis 1990, le programme offre un cours monté en collaboration avec TV Ontario: *La Femme et la Violence*. Conçu et mis sur pied par la professeure Lorraine Gauthier, ce cours de 13 émissions — le premier du genre à Glendon — s'adresse non seulement aux étudiant-e-s inscrit-e-s à Glendon, mais aussi à toutes les femmes francophones de l'Ontario. C'est ainsi que plusieurs femmes ont suivi ce cours à distance; des téléconférences leur permettaient de participer aux groupes de discussion hebdomadaire. Certaines des participantes étaient elles-mêmes victimes de violence sexuelle et physique, et le cours leur a fourni l'occasion, pénible mais positive, de mettre en perspective leur propre expérience traumatique et de ressentir des liens de solidarité avec d'autres femmes d'âge divers. Cette année, le cours *La Femme et la Violence* devrait atteindre un nombre encore plus grand de femmes de la communauté francophone. Un nouveau cours télévisé dans lequel la violence faite aux femmes occupe une large place s'est également ajouté au programme: *Les Femmes et la Santé*.

En plus d'offrir des cours qui traitent de la violence, le programme Études des femmes s'associe à des activités qui ont pour objectif de réduire la violence subie par les femmes. Une étude, menée conjointement avec le Réseau des femmes du Sud de l'Ontario, a permis d'établir un répertoire de la documentation sur la violence disponible en français. Ce répertoire est à la disposition des francophones de la région torontoise à Glendon même, au Centre de Recherches et de Ressources pour femmes, siège social du Réseau. Un autre projet est en cours, en collaboration avec d'autres universités ontariennes, pour monter une campagne éducative contre les viols commis dans les campus, particulièrement contre ceux commis par des personnes connues des victimes.

Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements sur le programme et ses activités, veuillez prendre contact avec Lorraine Gauthier, Coordinatrice, Études des femmes, Collège universitaire Glendon, 2275, avenue Bayview, Toronto, M4N 3M6; tél.: (416) 487-6828.



Teaching and Transformation: A Native Family Violence Training Program

By Connie Chapman

The Vancouver Native Education Centre offers a one year Native Family and Community Counselling Program which trains Native adults to be entry level family violence workers. This course works to balance skill development with personal growth and transformation. This article describes the program, discusses the areas of growth and describes the Talking Circle, one of the major tools of transformation.

The Native Family and Community Counselling Program, a year long certificate program at our centre, is designed to train Native adults to do safety interventions in family violence situations (wife battering, sexual abuse, elder abuse). The primary focus is on crisis and short-term interventions. The Urban Native Indian

Education Society first saw a need for such training through the experiences of its students. Many of the students were having trouble completing their studies due to current or past abusive situations. In 1987, money was received from Health and Welfare Canada to run an experimental two and a half year Family Violence Counselling and Community Service Training (FVC&CST) program.¹ Although the length of this initial training proved to work, available funding limited the succeeding programs to one year in length.

Two additional training sessions have been completed since the first eight learners completed the two and a half year Family Violence Counselling and Community Service Training programme. Both the particular circumstances of the learners and the nature of the work has contributed to this being both a skill training program and a transformative personal process.

Training Process

Learners spend eight months in a classroom setting and two months in a work experience setting. The school year is divided into two semesters of 16 weeks each. The following list shows the courses learners take each semester.

Semester One:

- Counselling Basics
- Sociology of Family Violence
- Social Psychology of Family Life
- English Writing and Communication
- Psychological Development
- Psychology of Human Sexuality
- Personal and Cultural Development
- Practicum (four weeks)

Semester Two:

- Issues in Counselling
- Group Therapy and Group Skills
- English (Public Speaking)
- Dynamics of Family Violence
- Community Development
- Program Development and Evaluation
- Personal and Cultural Development
- Practicum (five weeks)

Transformation Process

The learners come into the program carrying the legacy of two hundred years of foreign rule that have destroyed every aspect of their societies through disease, residential schools, church intervention, introduction of alcohol and drugs, outlawing of governing and spiritual practices and removal of children. As well, since the majority of the learners are female, they are also carrying the legacy of hundreds of years of sexism imported from Europe. Of the 38 trainees who have attended the course 56 per cent were raised either in residential schools or foster homes, 80 per cent had come from alcoholic homes, 72 per cent had been sexually abused as children and 56 per cent of them were recovering from alcohol and drug use. Seventy-nine per cent of the 33 women had been in battering relationships as adults. We do screen for active alcohol and drug problems and ask potential learners about the stability of their personal relationships. However, we know that