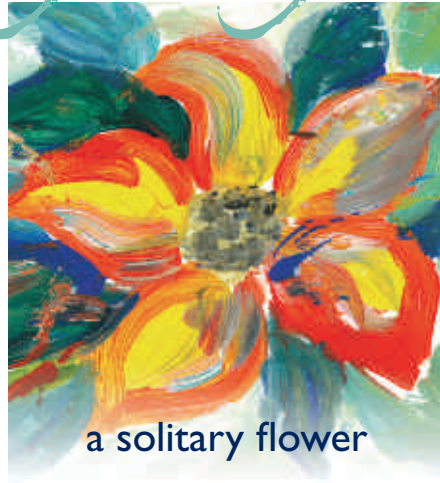


Changing Lives



Out of the darkness...



a solitary flower



blossoms into a bouquet

A Life Forever Changed –
Paintings by Shelter Art Break Participant,
Spring 2008

Breaking the cycle of abuse

ON ANY GIVEN DAY, there are seven to nine children housed in our shelter with their mothers. They range in age from newborn to 17, although we often have more younger than older children. When they arrive at the shelter they are confused and unsure of why they are there. But they quickly find that it is a safe and homey environment.

The aim of our children's program is to help children understand that family violence is *not* normal, that it is not their fault, and that there are other ways for people to deal with their anger. Our goal is to educate the children and *break the cycle of abuse* that can flow from generation to generation. We also teach them what to do if there is violence in the home, and every child leaves the shelter with an emergency safety plan.

Children's program staff are on site seven days a week, with one professional counsellor on site five days a week. In addition, two child activity workers assist the counsellors, who work with the children one on one or in groups.

Transition House also relies on the support of volunteers, who help provide activities for children when mothers are in counselling, or have housing, legal aid, social services or health care appointments. Volunteers also watch children during meal preparation, read stories to help settle children before their bedtime, and help child activity workers with the arts and crafts program, field trips and other activities planned for each day.

School-aged children attend their regular schools only if there is no danger of having an abusive father or other family member pick them up. A neighbourhood school is very supportive in accepting and working with children from the shelter. For children who are not attending school while at the shelter their mother or a worker can pick up school work.

We try to make the environment pleasant and full of positive activities. Support from the community helped to build the play area, where kids can explore and have fun (see photo on page 3). ■

The aim of our children's program is to help children understand that family violence is not normal...

VICTORIA WOMEN'S
Transition House
SOCIETY

Crisis Line
(250) 385-6611

Community Office
Suite 100 – 3060 Cedar Hill Road
Victoria BC V8T 3J5
P 250-592-2927 Ext 214 • F 250-592-9279
E info@vwth.bc.ca

www.transitionhouse.net

CREATING THE POT OF GOLD: *The Rainbow Project*

TWELVE RESIDENTS of Harrison Place are creating their own “pots of gold” at the end of the rainbow, thanks to the Rainbow Project. By learning how to set financial goals, track spending and save money, the women are moving toward self-sufficiency. This is just one of the goals of the Victoria Women’s Transition House’s 23-unit supportive housing project for women aged 45 to 65 who have left abusive relationships.

With the lack of affordable rental housing in Victoria, ensuring that residents of Harrison Place have the capacity to move on to safe, secure housing after their maximum stay of three years is a priority. The Rainbow Project is helping to provide each participant with a framework to do this.

Participants increase their financial literacy by attending workshops on topics such as “Stretching the Dollar,” debt collection, creating a spending plan, and completing a cash flow information sheet. They also complete a goal-setting process, receive monthly individual financial consultations, and enter their monthly financial data into an Excel spreadsheet.

Perhaps most importantly, though, as each participant’s financial literacy grows, so does her savings. Each participant who establishes a set of financial goals aimed at self-sufficiency will have her monthly savings – to a maximum of \$50 per month – matched three to one.

Although the participants are only receiving income assistance or disability pensions, most are managing to save \$50 a month by tracking their expenses and balancing their budgets.

With the three-to-one matching, this will amount to \$3,600 at the end of the program (April 2010) for those who have met their goals.

By learning how to set financial goals, track spending and save money, the women are moving toward self-sufficiency.

For Diana, one of the first Harrison Place residents, the project has provided an excellent incentive to save money. One of her goals is to have a damage deposit and a couple of months’ rent for the day when she moves out of Harrison Place. Looking much farther into the future, she says, “I’m also saving money to pay for a burial service for me, so my son doesn’t have to deal with it.”

Like many of us, Suzanne, also an original resident, didn’t learn how to deal with money from her family. “The money just came in and went out,” she says. “We lived from paycheque to paycheque, never saving and never talking about money.” As an adult, she got “caught in the same trap,” living from day to day and not planning ahead.

But now, thanks to the Rainbow Project, all that has changed. “It’s really exciting to see money building in the bank account,” Suzanne says. She intends to use the money for retraining. “I’m looking at the big picture. It’s about hope – putting a plan in place that will give me some direction, and help me have a better future.” ■

The Victoria Women’s Transition House Society is grateful to our Rainbow Project funders:

Canada



How can we help you?®

Women’s
Inter-Church Council
of Canada

Giving in tough economic times

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, donors and the charitable sector are wondering how global economic conditions will affect them. But with the Canadian economy in a strong position to weather the storm, there are reasons to be optimistic. And the charitable sector has always done better than other sectors during tough economic times – thanks to the steadfast loyalty of donors to their favourite causes. When things get tough, people dig deep to help those who are less fortunate.

One thing we know for certain is that Victoria Women's Transition House donors continue to be as generous and loyal as ever! And for this we are grateful.

For donors who know their charities are going to need their help more than ever, here are a couple of ways to make an even bigger difference through charitable giving.

Gift capital losses on depreciated securities

In Canada, capital losses can be carried back three years and forward indefinitely to offset capital gains.

For example, you can gift depreciated securities to the Victoria Women's Transition House, realize the capital loss and apply the loss against past and future capital gains. Then, with your charitable tax receipt for the value of the donated securities, you can offset taxes you would otherwise pay. After 30 days, you could repurchase some or all of the same securities, depending on what happens in the markets during those 30 days.

Remember your favourite charities in your will

A US study found that during the Depression, major gifts to charities grew by more than 70% as a result of charitable bequests. In tough times donors naturally become more conservative but no less philanthropic.

We are at a moment in history when once again, bequest giving is an important way for donors and charities to help people in their communities. A charitable bequest – a gift to a charity made after your death – can be structured in several ways, and can be changed at any time if your circumstances change.

If you would like to make a charitable bequest to the Victoria Women's Transition House, please call. Our professional staff will be pleased to speak in confidence with you about your charitable giving goals. ■

NOTE:

This article is intended only to provide ideas for charitable giving, and should not be seen as tax or investment advice. Please consult your professional advisors for more information.



Shelter's playground area.

Thank you to the Queen Alexandra Foundation and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for their contributions to Phase 1 (slide for younger children, left), Harbourside Rotary of Victoria for Phase 2 (climber for older children, right), and the City of Victoria for planning assistance.

Calendar of Events

JUNE 25, 2009

14th Annual Victoria Golf Club Ladies Charity Tournament

Attracting women golfers from around Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, the Victoria Golf Club Ladies Charity Tournament brings together over 130 players, volunteers and sponsors.

More than \$363,000 has been raised to date, directly benefiting clients served by the Victoria Women's Transition House, and making a difference in the lives of abused women in Victoria.

Presented in Partnership with Investors Group.



JULY 10 & 11, 2009 (8 PM)
JULY 12, 2009 (2 PM)
LANGHAM COURT THEATRE

A Measure of Love, by Nicolas Billon

This humorous, poignant and totally engaging play about two older women who repair a relationship that was disrupted by an adolescent misunderstanding was well received at last year's Fringe Festival in Victoria.

Each hour-long show will be followed by a reception in the Langham Court Theatre Lounge, featuring a display of art by local women artists, music by local musicians, and refreshments. Tickets are \$25, with proceeds going to the Victoria Women's Transition House Society.

For tickets, please email Jayde Farrand at jaydefarrand@gmail.com.

MAY 1 - OCTOBER 11, 2009

Royal Victoria Marathon pledge drive

Join the VICTORIAN EPICURE Mission: Transition team (the team of the Victoria Women's Transition House Society) to walk or run in the 8 km, half marathon or marathon, and to raise awareness and funds. Our goal for the marathon is to have a team of 100 members or more, and to raise over \$30,000 to help end relationship abuse in our community.

KEY DATES:

- May 15:
Early-bird registration deadline (see www.royalvictoriamarathon.com and link to Racing Events and Register, or contact Elissa Bergman, Development Associate, at elissab@vwth.bc.ca or 592-2927 ext. 214)
- June 1–October 1:
Team training each Wednesday, at the Community Office and to the Cedar Hill Golf Course
- June 11:
Team and Sponsor Kick-off BBQ (location to be announced)
- June 25:
Team meeting about fundraising goals at the Community Office
- October 1 and 7:
Pledge drop-off and pick up team t-shirt and team information for event day at the Community Office
- October 11: Race day!



The Victoria Women's Transition House Society would like to acknowledge the following Victorian Epicure Mission Transition Team Sponsors:

TEAM TITLE SPONSOR



VICTORIAN
EPICURE

ENDURANCE SPONSOR



POWER SPONSORS



SEPTEMBER 29, 2009

4 – 6 PM

VICTORIA GOLF CLUB

Annual General Meeting

Victoria Women's Transition House Society

Everyone is welcome.

Please RSVP to nickib@vwth.bc.ca by September 15. ■