



Celebrating 35 Years OF SERVICE IN THE COMMUNITY

THIS YEAR MARKS the 35th anniversary of the incorporation of Victoria Women's Transition House as a society. Here is a brief history of the organization. As you can see, we've come a long way! ■



VISION:
A community free of
relationship violence
and abuse



*Thank you to our volunteer
models, Lindsay and Jaylen*

ARNOLD LIM PHOTOS

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SPRING 2010

Celebrating 35 Years

OF SERVICE IN THE COMMUNITY

1975 THE SOCIETY IS BORN
 After four years as a small collective, first running a women's drop-in centre and then opening its first permanent shelter for women and children, the Victoria Women's Transition House received society status on June 11, 1975. Incorporation was a requirement for receiving provincial government funding. A formal board of directors was appointed, and a constitution and bylaws written.

At the time, the Shelter had its first permanent home: a four-bedroom house that could accommodate 12 women and children. Conditions were far from ideal, with crowding, an aging building, and no access for people with disabilities, but it was much better than having nowhere for women to go.



SNAPSHOT FROM THE 1970s

“I was forced out of my house and onto the streets with two young children in the middle of the night by a drunken raging husband, and really found a warm and friendly welcome by the staff of the Transition House. I really don't know what I would have done without them. There was terrible mental anguish on my part, which the children pick up on instantly, but having staff looking after them and three meals a day kept some order in their lives. I had so much legal hassle and appointments to keep that I couldn't possibly have dragged my children to all this without it really affecting them...”

SNAPSHOT FROM THE 1970s

In August 1973, the Victoria Women's Centre submitted a proposal to the Minister of Human Resources, explaining the dire need for a transition house in Victoria. The centre was besieged with calls from distraught women who had left their husbands and were on the streets with nowhere to go. When the home situation had been completely intolerable, women left – even when there was no alternative shelter. At best, women with children were given money from the Department of Human Resources for a few days in a motel. Invariably, women became isolated and received no emotional support and no legal advice or information about housing, child care or finding work.

1979 FULL-TIME COORDINATOR HIRED
 The Society hired its first full-time coordinator to provide leadership for staff and programs.

1985 VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FORMALIZED
 The Society received a grant from the Vancouver Foundation to hire a volunteer coordinator and formalize the volunteer program. The new program included extensive training and support.

1989 PLANNING FOR A NEW SHELTER BEGINS
 When the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) provided funding to create 500 new shelters across the country, the Society purchased property from the City of Victoria and began planning for the construction of a new Shelter.



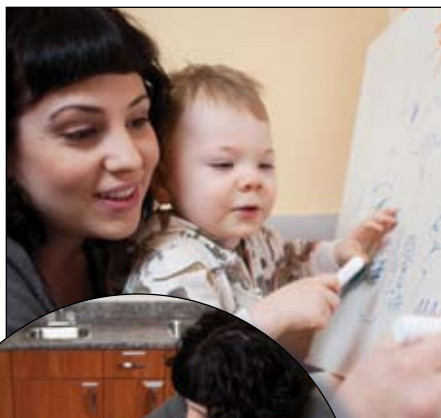
VWTH ARCHIVE PHOTOS

1991

NEW SHELTER OPENS

After two years of intensive fundraising, with help and donations of service from numerous church and community groups, and funding from various foundations, BC lottery funds, and the CMHC, the new 18-bed Shelter opened. The available space increased from 2,000 to 5,000 square feet, and two of the eight bedrooms were fully accessible to people with disabilities.

The facility still serves as the emergency Shelter for women and children leaving abusive relationships.



ARNOLD LIM PHOTOS

1996

COMMUNITY OFFICE OPENS

Through two generous bequests, the Society purchased a building to house its growing programs and larger staff. The Community Office at 3060 Cedar Hill Road continues to house several outreach programs and most of the administration and fundraising staff, and is used for training sessions and meetings.

1999

SERVICES FOR OLDER WOMEN ESTABLISHED

In partnership with an agency serving seniors, the Society established a series of services for older women, including a support group for women over 55 who had experienced abuse.

2002

HOUSING FOR OLDER WOMEN PLANNED

Thanks to another large bequest from a generous donor, the Society began planning a transitional housing project for older women.

2006

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION OF DISTINCTION AWARD

The Victoria Women's Transition House Society received the YWCA Women of Distinction Program's inaugural Women's Organization of Distinction Award.

2007

HARRISON PLACE OPENS

After five years of planning and fundraising, Harrison Place opened. The 23-unit building provides supported transitional housing for up to three years for women aged 45 to 65 who have experienced abusive relationships.

2010

35 YEARS!

Thirty-five years after its incorporation as a society, the Victoria Women's Transition House Society has five facilities, 55 staff and 75 volunteers, providing emergency shelter, a crisis and information line, counselling for children and women of all ages, referrals, prevention and outreach programs, a victim assistance program, and supported transitional housing.

Thank you to the community for providing such generous support for more than 35 years! ■



VWTH ARCHIVE PHOTO

Tōkei-ji Sanctum

This Tōkei-ji temple's sanctum was built about 480 years ago and removed here in 1907.

Tōkei-ji Temple Kamakura was established in 1285 as a nunnery to relieve unhappy women ill-treated by their husbands. In the feudal age, women's

social status was so low that they had no means to oppose, however ill-treated by their husbands. But those who finished three years discipline in this temple could cut their connection with their husbands.

From signage at the Temple

The issue of violence against women has been recognized for hundreds of years in many places around the globe. Please join our 35th Anniversary Campaign to End Violence Against Women.

Go to our website to learn more, or call us at 250-592-2927.



Upcoming Events



OUR 35th Anniversary Campaign launched in Black Press in February. Go to the News and Events Blog section of our website, at www.transitionhouse.net



PLEASE go to our website to learn more about us and to sign up for our electronic newsletter. ■

www.transitionhouse.net

MAY 14, 2010, 7:00 AM TO 7:00 PM

Esquimalt High School's Cycle for Change

On Friday, May 14, 2010, a group of **Esquimalt High School** students will cycle for 12 hours around the school's track to raise money and awareness for the Victoria Women's Transition House Society. This is their second year hosting the event. Students will raise money by collecting pledges, and hosting a lunch barbecue and dinner (by donation) on event day. They welcome the community to drop by and show their support.

MAY 15, 2010, 9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

Royal LePage National Garage Sale

On Saturday, May 15, 2010, **Royal LePage** offices across Canada will come together to host the second annual **National Garage Sale** for shelters across Canada. Victoria Women's Transition House is one of three south island shelters that will receive proceeds from the event. The Royal LePage Coast Capital Garage Sale will be held at AMJ Campbell Van Lines, 137 - 2924 Jacklin Road.

JUNE 24, 2010

15th Annual Victoria Golf Club Ladies Charity Tournament

Proceeds raised through the tournament will be donated to the Victoria Women's Transition House Society. Over the last nine years, the tournament has raised over \$400,000 for Transition House. We would like to thank all event sponsors and participants who have participated in the past and who are registered this year.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2010

Victoria Women's Transition House Society's 35th Anniversary Annual General Meeting

Details and invitations to follow

OCTOBER 10, 2010

Royal Victoria Marathon

Victoria Women's Transition House Society hopes you will join the **Mission: Transition** team to walk or run the 8K or half or full marathon in the Royal Victoria Marathon. **Your participation will help us celebrate and raise funds for our 35th Anniversary Campaign to End Violence Against Women.**

This year the Royal Victoria Marathon will take place on October 10, 2010. **Our goal is a team of 100 members, to raise \$50,000 to help end violence and abuse against women in our community.** We encourage each team member to raise a minimum of \$350, and to recruit a friend, to help support the immediate needs and costs at the 18-bed emergency Shelter.

We urge you to register early, at www.royalvictoriamarathon.com, to give yourself ample time to train and fundraise.

If you have registered to participate on our team, or are interested in participating, please contact Elissa Bergman, at 250-592-2927 ext. 214, or elissab@vwth.bc.ca ■