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VIDEO LAUNCH

Behind Closed Doors



We are in the final stages of producing a video intended to educate parents and other adult mentors about the challenges children face growing up in a home with violence or abuse. The video will explain behavior issues adults may witness and offers tools to effectively support these children to overcome their trauma.

We extend warmest thanks to all who supported this project and look forward to honouring their contributions at our launch event.

If you are interested in receiving an invitation to our Official Launch or for more information please contact Tracy Lubick at tracyl@vwth.bc.ca.

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Artwork created by a participant of the Older Women's Group

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SHELTER COUNSELLOR

How is tea going to make everything better?

Earlier this year we had a woman stay at our shelter who taught us all a very valuable lesson. This woman's situation was complex and stressful; she was new to Canada, had recently left her abusive partner and was trying to navigate the emotional and legal implications of her decision.

She was dealing with many anxieties so oftentimes the suggestion was gently made by the counsellors to have a cup of tea. She always found the suggestion interesting; I remember hearing her ask under her breath while she was filling the pot with water, "What is it about this tea that is going to make everything better?"

Then she had an 'aha moment'. She noticed that while she waited for her tea to cool, there was this moment when she just had to wait; and while she was waiting she couldn't address any of the elements that were providing stress in her life, all she could do was sit and wait.

I remember her coming to me one morning announcing, "Ok, I understand why the counsellors kept suggesting that I have a cup of tea, it was the process of putting my life on pause that made me feel better."

The lesson to be learned from this story is to take time for yourself in the midst of whatever might be going on in your life; in whatever chaos, to take a moment – have some tea. Or practice yoga, visit with a friend or go for a walk - whatever helps you to find peace. These elements of self-care are vital to nurture resilience and self-worth in women while they are staying at our shelter.

We would like to take this opportunity to send our gratitude to Silk Road Tea Company who has provided a beautiful selection of teas at our shelter since 1998. Without the abundance of tea in our cupboard, this 'aha moment' may not have been possible.



A therapeutic teapot created by a resident of Harrison Place

I could never be more proud

Thirty years ago, Andrea and her two young sons fled to our shelter when abuse at home became intolerable. Andrea rebuilt, remarried and recently joined Transition House as a volunteer. Her family's reaction to her reconnection to Transition House was emotional and enlightening, reviving memories of how the effects of abuse rippled out to their family. In honour of her decision, her children deferred Christmas presents this past year and instead collected new items on our shelter wish list to donate to Transition House. Below is the letter her son wrote to her as part of his expression of support.

Mom,
Earlier this year you told me that you had decided to volunteer your time at the Women's Transition House. I was elated. I figured this was going to be good for you mentally. However, I had no idea how much of an impact it would have on me. I must admit it brought flooding back a torrent of

memories and feelings.

It's crazy what kids remember and I believe that memories, good or bad, help build a person's character. From these experiences I have made decisions: to ensure children come first no matter the circumstances and to never raise a hand to a woman, ever.

.....
"I relied on you to be strong and guide us through a defining moment in our young lives. And look where we ended up- successful, happy, family oriented adults with bright futures thanks to you."

Your pain and suffering was not in vain as it taught me to be a better man and husband. If I was to die tomorrow and you had no idea how I saw you in life, just know this: I could never be more proud of you for doing this. I know it must be

hard for you seeing these women and children going through the same thing you went through. I hope this helps you heal in your lifelong journey to feel the peace you deserve and that you can pass on your experience and wisdom to those women who need insight into what to expect during their troubled times.

Also, I hope this helps you understand how much I love and admire you. It can never be said how much Emmett and I relied on you to be strong and guide us through a defining moment in our young lives. And look where we ended up - successful, happy, family oriented adults with bright futures thanks to you. So anytime you have doubts on how much I care, just look back on this letter to assure you that a mother's love for her son NEVER goes unnoticed.

Forever your son,
Alex

*names have been changed to protect the anonymity of this family

12 Years of Support *Victoria Golf Club*

Thousands of volunteer hours, generous event participants, donors and sponsors equate to hundreds of thousands of dollars raised in support of VWTH. Our valued partnership with the Victoria Golf Club over the past 12 years is a prime example of a community connection that has been integral in helping us to provide programs and services for women and children in our community. In 2001, an organizing committee of seven club members raised \$10,000 by holding a Women's Tournament that continued to grow and gain momentum and has incorporated a mixed tournament, men's tournament and gala event now organized by a committee of over twenty volunteers and VGC staff and raising over \$100,000 in support of VWTH, the Pacific Centre Family Services Association (added in 2013) and, new charity recipient of the men's tournament for 2014, KidSport.

"We are pleased to be a longtime supporter of the Victoria Women's Transition House and value the work that they do in providing housing and support to women and their children escaping violent family situations," says Vicki Mather, 2014 VGC organizing committee Chair. "The Club continues to be committed to supporting safer families and we invite everyone to join us at the 2014 Links to Change events and help us raise much-needed funds for our three partner charities and their programs that help to facilitate positive change."



Patricia Mariash (middle) of Bayview Place presents a trophy at the Women's Tournament



BC's Premier Women's Golf Event and Dinner - July 17
Come Together - a 50th anniversary tribute to Beatles' music
- an evening of savory food, great music and fun - July 18
Men's Charity Golf Open and Reception - July 19

For information about the Victoria Golf Club or the Links to Change charity events, visit www.vgccharity.com or contact Tracy Lubick, VWTH Development Director, at 250.592.2927 or tracyl@vwth.bc.ca.

It's all about community connections

Community collaboration and partnership is the key to providing the best services to the women and children who seek services from the Victoria Women's Transition House. An excellent model of this partnership was the development of the Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU) which includes police, victim service workers, social workers and probation officers. We rely on these community collaborations to promote safety to victims of violence in relationships and to assist them through the justice system. RDVU recently was recognized with the Premier's Award for Promoting Innovation & Excellence in Partnerships for the best practices in the province.

In addition, through our Spousal Assault Victim Support Program, we work from two courthouses in Greater

Victoria to provide guidance and, when appropriate, court accompaniment to women who are proceeding through the justice system. We also collaborate with forensic nurses who support women who have been abused.

Without these vital connections with our community partners, we could not do the needed work to support women through the many challenges they face. Just as important, we rely on our

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"We recognize that these collaborative and supportive relationships are the foundation of creating a community without intimate relationship violence and abuse."

connections with you as donors to continue building hopeful futures and make our communities safer and stronger together. We recognize that these collaborative and supportive relationships are the

foundation of creating a community without intimate relationship violence and abuse.

Thank you for staying connected.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The more we talk about it, the sooner it will stop

Tammy Dickeson has been a dedicated volunteer at Victoria Women's Transition House since the fall of 2001. Over the past 12 years, she has contributed over 1300 hours of her time through a variety of tasks. Sorting recycling, serving as assistant to our house manager, training for the speaker's bureau, co-facilitating volunteer training, taking care of houseplants and arranging and staffing booths at various community locations are just a few of the valuable ways she has contributed over the years.

In addition to volunteering, Tammy has also been a very successful fundraiser for VWTH through her participation in the Victoria Marathon. By educating her coworkers about the issue of violence against women and gaining their support, Tammy has raised more than \$17,000 towards programs for women and children who have experienced domestic abuse.

When asked why she has chosen to give so much of her time and support to VWTH, Tammy replied, "I found I didn't have the money to give to causes, but I had the time to give to my community. So, I looked for the right place to participate and give back."

"I have had the opportunity to take on a variety of volunteer jobs with VWTH. Having a variety of ways to use my skills and change my routine keeps the volunteer experience fresh. When volunteers are trusted and respected, we grow and stick around!"

Regarding her fundraising efforts, Tammy adds, "I have been fundraising for years, but I don't even care about raising the money. For me, it's about talking to my coworkers about issues surrounding violence against women. It can't be a secret. The more we talk about it, the sooner it will stop."

Kerilee McLeod



Kerilee (far L), being acknowledged by Michelle Koroll, the Practicum Coordinator

Kerilee McLeod, one of our Children Who Witness Abuse counsellors, was recently honored by the University of Victoria's Child and Youth Care Department for her continued and outstanding contributions to the program as a Practicum Supervisor.

Kerilee, an alumni of UVic's Child and Youth Care Program, has mentored twelve students since she graduated from the program herself.

"The students that Kerilee has supervised are so fortunate to be a part of Kerilee's passion for this work and learning how to create safe and supportive counselling for the children and parents we serve."- Janet Henly, Community Programs Manager



Tammy Dickeson (L) being recognized by Tracy, our Director of Development

Tammy is a valued volunteer, ambassador and supporter and her passion and commitment are deeply appreciated by all of us at VWTH!

If you'd like to know how you can volunteer, contact Dianne de Champlain at 250.592.2927 ext 220 or dianned@vwth.bc.ca.

FROM CUPCAKES TO CURTAINS

Host a Fundraiser

Did you know that almost \$180,000, or about 1/5 of our annual fundraising goal, was raised last year through events that were hosted by local clubs, organizations and groups of friends in Greater Victoria?

Fundraising events, from golf tournaments to cupcake sales, can be a fun, collaborative way to make a difference in the lives of women and children in our community!

When asked what inspires all of

these individuals to host an event to raise funds for VWTH, Penny, our Development Associate, explains: "We receive all sorts of proposals throughout the year. Some people are entrepreneurs who want to give back to the community through their business, some are passionate students hoping to raise awareness of the issue of violence against women and others want to make an impact with their gift and know that together, with friends or co-workers, a little work and a lot of fun can go a long way."



For ideas and more information about hosting an event to support the Victoria Women's Transition House, contact Penny at 250.592.2927 ext. 213 or pennyd@vwth.bc.ca or visit our website.



If you were one of the lucky people to participate in the Victoria Goddess Run in the past, you know what an inspiring, energizing and fun event it is and how it has become the "talk of the town" as a premier destination event for walkers and runners alike.

This year is no exception and we're pleased to announce the addition of a partnership with Bear Mountain and The Westin Bear Mountain that will offer special goddess rates at the hotel (if you'd like to make it a weekend getaway with friends or family) along with an expo and health & wellness activities starting Friday night (including Yoga at Sunset, a Bathrobe Run, Kids/Family Run) and continuing until Event Day on Sunday, June 1st at Westhills Stadium with the BMO 5k, Westhills 10k or Red Barn Market half-marathon. As a fundraising and awareness event, we invite you to raise pledges and help us reach our \$10,000 goal for VWTH. Contact Penny Dunlop at pennyd@vwth.bc.ca or (250)592-2927 for help with your fundraising options.

Don't delay, register for your goddess weekend events today at www.victoriagoddess.com

Thank you for supporting a more hopeful future for women and children escaping abuse.

I want to **make a difference** in the life of a woman recovering from domestic violence. Here is my donation:

\$500 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____ Please direct \$10 toward my Society membership (membership is non-tax deductible)

I will contribute by cheque credit card

Credit Card # _____

Name on Card _____

Expiry ____/____ Visa MC Amex

Signature _____

Please sign me up for your monthly e-news. My email _____

Please send me information on making a gift in my will to Victoria Women's Transition House.

I have already named VWTH in my will.



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