



Fall 2017

VICTORIA WOMEN'S
**Transition
House**
SOCIETY

No Longer a Private Matter.

A notable trend this year at VWTH is the increased number of women and children from Victoria's immigrant and refugee community at our emergency shelter and accessing our counselling and support programs.

Some of these women come to us from cultures where emotional and physical abuse is viewed as a private matter – something to be quietly endured.

Recently, one of our women's counsellors, Afrah*, was approached by women from her spiritual community who were interested to learn more about available domestic abuse resources.

Afrah referred these women to Victoria Women's Transition House but then, suspecting that other women may be experiencing a similar situation, she offered to make a presentation at a women's group gathering about Healthy Relationships. She showed a short film, "One Hit Leads To Another" that dramatized scenes of spousal assault and presented interviews with victims and offenders.

At the end of the film, the room was silent. Some women were shocked to realize that they have been victims of physical, emotional and psychological abuse for most of their adult lives.

Assured that confidentiality would be respected and that they would not be deported for coming forward, one woman at a time confided to Afrah about abuse in their home. Afrah listened empathetically and then connected these women to community resources and other counselling services including information about the VWTH emergency shelter.



A NEED TO EDUCATE MEN AND WOMEN

Recognizing that there was a bigger issue, Afrah met with a spiritual leader in the community who immediately agreed for a need to educate both the newcomer men and the women about domestic violence and abuse, emphasizing that abuse is not acceptable, is a criminal act in Canada, and could seriously influence spiritual practice.

According to the Canadian Women's Foundation website, ***"Immigrant women may be more vulnerable to domestic violence due to economic dependence, language barriers and a lack of knowledge about community resources. Newcomers who arrive in Canada traumatized by war or oppressive governments are much less likely to report physical or sexual violence to the authorities, for fear of further victimization or even deportation."***

SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

Victoria Women's Transition House continues to support women of all ages and all cultural backgrounds. We continue to work with local settlement agencies, police and our own VWTH program resources to support and educate. Domestic violence and abuse is not a private issue – it is a community issue and affects all of us.

**Name has been changed*

Our Mission

Victoria Women's Transition House Society, working collaboratively, provides shelter, support, counselling and education to women of all ages, with or without children, so that they can live free from the effects of abuse in intimate relationships. The Society strives to prevent and eliminate abuse through education, advocacy and partnerships.



10 Things Men Can Do To Prevent Gender Violence

Adapted from the work of Jackson Katz jacksonkatz.com

- 1. It's a Men's Issue.** Approach gender violence as a MEN'S issue involving men of all ages and socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds. View men not only as perpetrators or possible offenders, but as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers.
- 2. Speak up.** If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing his female partner – or is disrespectful or abusive to girls and women in general – don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him about it. Urge him to seek help. Or if you don't know what to do, consult a friend, a parent, a professor, or a counsellor.
- 3. Have the courage to look inward.** Question your own attitudes. Don't be defensive when something you do or say ends up hurting someone else. Try hard to understand how your own attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
- 4. Offer support.** If you suspect a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually abused, gently ask if you can help.
- 5. Seek professional help NOW,** if you are emotionally, psychologically, physically or sexually abusive to women or have been in the past.
- 6. Support Victoria Women's Transition House.** Join us in our work to end all forms of violence against women. Attend our events, rallies and other public events. Raise money for us so that we can continue our prevention and intervention work. If you belong to a team or fraternity, or another student group, organize a fundraiser.
- 7. Recognize and speak out against homophobia and gay-bashing.** Discrimination and violence against lesbians and gays are wrong in and of themselves. This abuse also has direct links to sexism (e.g. the sexual orientation of men who speak out against sexism is often questioned, a conscious or unconscious strategy intended to silence them. This is key reason few men do speak out).
- 8. Educate Yourself.** Attend programs, take courses, watch films, and read articles and books about multicultural masculinities, gender inequality, and the root causes of gender violence. Educate yourself and others about how larger social forces affect the conflicts between individual men and women.
- 9. Stop buying sexism and misogyny.** Refuse to purchase any magazine, rent any video, subscribe to any website, or buy any music that portrays girls or women in a sexually degrading or abusive manner. Protest sexism in the media.
- 10. Lead by example.** Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don't involve degrading or abusing girls and women. Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including anti-sexist men's programs.

At Victoria Women's Transition House, we strive to educate children and youth about gender equality and healthy relationships. We teach youth to recognize behaviours that lead to relationship violence and abuse; give examples of ways to help them avoid or prevent being in an abusive relationship; and empower youth to become advocates in their peer groups and to cultivate healthy relationships.

We offer violence prevention workshops and presentations for middle school and high school students as well as educators, as part of the VWTH education and outreach initiative called **Violence is Preventable (VIP) Program**. Our **Children Who Witness Abuse Program (CWWA)** provides both individual and group counselling for children and youth who have witnessed domestic abuse in their family. Group programs include two 2-week Summer Camp sessions and a one-week Spring Break Camp, which are offered annually free of charge.

Help us spread the word about the importance of violence prevention, especially for children and youth. For more information about our CWWA or VIP programs, visit transitionhouse.net or call our Community Office at **250.592.2927**.

VWTH Compassionate Pet Boarding Program

Victoria Women's Transition House is excited to launch a Compassionate Pet Boarding Program for the pets of women and children fleeing domestic violence and abuse and accessing our Emergency Shelter.



While we know that there is a link between domestic abuse and animal abuse, VWTH does not have the resources to house companion animals at our Shelter. This leaves many women facing the difficult decision to either

leave their pets behind or remain in the abusive environment.

Sadly, many victims stay in an abusive home for fear that their abusive partner will subject their pet to continued abuse, if left behind. And knowing a woman's concern for the pet, an abusive partner may use this against her - threatening or abusing the animal directly. Equally disturbing, animals left with their abusers may face torture or even death.

VWTH wants to eliminate as many barriers as possible to help women to make changes in their lives and to live a life free of abuse. To help with this, we have established the VWTH Compassionate Pet Boarding Program in partnership with a local animal shelter.

You can support this initiative by making an online donation at transitionhouse.net/donate or call our Community Office at **250.592.2927**.



Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, September 19
2:00 - 4:00pm
Carlton House,
2080 Oak Bay Avenue

The Board of Directors of Victoria Women's Transition House invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting. Enjoy tea and freshly baked goodies, a guest speaker, and more as we mark another year serving women and children fleeing abusive situations.

To RSVP contact Emily at emilyc@vwth.bc.ca or call **250.592.2927 ext. 213**

Upcoming Events

Royal LePage Shelter Foundation Golf Party

Tuesday, September 12 | 1:00pm
Cedar Hill Golf Course,
1400 Derby Road



Join VWTH at the Annual RLP Shelter Foundation Golf Party in support of four local women's shelters. Golf tournament starts at 1:00pm. Silent auction begins at 5:30pm to be followed by dinner and a live auction. For more information and tickets, please go to rlpgolf4shelter.com.

An Evening with Nahid Sewell

Friday, September 15 | 5:00-7:00pm
Victoria Golf Club, 1110 Beach Drive



*Nahid Sewell will read excerpts from her book "The Ruby Tear Catcher" and reflect on her time in Iran and the place of women in Iranian society - before and after the Revolution. This event includes a Wine and Cheese Reception, Book Reading, Q & A period, and Book Signing. For tickets and more information, visit vgccharity.com. To purchase a copy of "The Ruby Tear Catcher," contact Emily at emilyc@vwth.bc.ca or call **250.592.2927 ext. 213**.*

Sponsored by Investors Group Victoria Downtown Region Office.

Willow Wealth Management of Raymond James presents Cherish: A Glamorous Evening of Fashion and Philanthropy

Thursday, October 26 | 7:00pm
Oak Bay Beach Hotel,
1175 Beach Drive

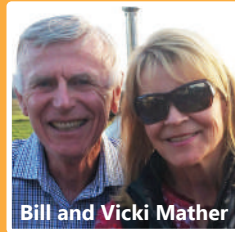


Sixteen of Victoria's finest dancers will be commanding the runway in the latest fall fashions! This glamorous event will be presented in the beautiful David Foster Theatre at the Oak Bay Beach Hotel. Come enjoy complimentary wine, delicious food and a fantastic array of auction items. All proceeds to benefit Victoria Women's Transition House and Dance Victoria Society. Tickets available at rmts.bc.ca/tickets-and-events

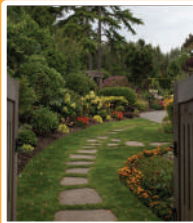
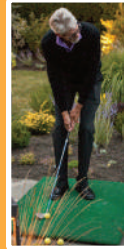


Summer Soirée

A very special thank you to **Drs. Vicki and Bill Mather** for hosting *A Summer Soiree* at their beautiful waterfront home. This fundraising event was a huge success with over 100 guests, live music, dancing, silent and live auctions, bocce ball, a golf skills competition, and more. Supported by the Victoria Golf Club, its members and staff. Thank you to the planning committee; **Vicki Mather, Paula Hopwood, Eva Kiess, Alisa Kerr, Tilly Enriquez, Dave Schneider, Bernice Deering and Shelley Evans** for all your hard work in making this event happen and to all who attended. **We are so grateful for your support!**



Bill and Vicki Mather



Thank You Vecima Networks!



Recently, Vecima Networks hosted a golf tournament with proceeds of over \$9,000 to benefit Victoria Women's Transition House. **Thank you friends!**



YES! I wish to support Victoria Women's Transition House

I would like to give a gift of:

\$1000 \$500 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____ A tax receipt will be issued for all donations over \$10

Mail: 100 - 3060 Cedar Hill Road Victoria, BC V8T 3J5

Online: Visit transitionhouse.net and click on Donate

Phone: Call 250-592-2927 to make a credit card donation

Enclosed is my cheque payable to Victoria Women's Transition House

I prefer to use my Visa Mastercard AmEx

Card No: _____ Expiry: ____/____/____

Cardholder Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

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Fall 2017

Production of this newsletter was generously discounted by:

