

## **ACWS Report: Workplace Wellness and Safety: What we all can do**

### **1. Background:**

Thanks to funding from the Health Sciences Association of Alberta, the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) has been able to move forward on an agenda to address domestic violence in the workplace. Our four part approach, as outlined in our initial proposal includes:

1. *develop* a toolkit to train managers and staff on responsibilities concerning domestic violence as it occurs in and impacts the workplace;
2. *develop* a public dissemination toolkit to raise awareness among men in the workplace on matters of domestic violence and how they can take a leadership role in prevention;
3. *offset* infrastructure costs incurred in the day-to-day business operations of this work; *and*
4. *contribute* to the results achieved at the ACWS hosted World Conference on Women's Shelters (September, 2008).

ACWS undertook to develop resources for Alberta's civil society and business communities that consisted of a training program, toolkit and public awareness tools, including a process for engaging men. This package will achieve three outcomes:

- *By outlining the realities and effects of family violence in the workplace, there will be an increase in awareness and skillful response;*
- *In offering management practical tools and methodologies that address issues in the office, including policy interventions, organizations will be empowered to manage the issue, care for their staff, and reduce costs associated; and*
- *Through inviting men to reframe their thinking about family violence as a women's issue, into a matter that concerns them and requires their leadership and response, staff wellness and productivity will be enabled.*

The following report will address the many activities undertaken in the second year of the initiative, as well as provide a mid-year update. The chart below outlines our proposed activities from our initial proposal.

Program year	Activity: Workplace Wellness and Safety
Year One November '07 – October '08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host launch of initiative.</li> <li>• Create initiative work plan, logframe and benchmarks for deliverables; set up initiative focus group (ACWS, HSAA and other stakeholders). Set up DME process.</li> <li>• Research workplace interventions.</li> <li>• Initiate design of toolkit templates x2:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Domestic violence workplace interventions</li> <li>○ Engaging men in the workplace</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Annual report to HSAA</li> </ul>
Year Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete design of toolkit templates x2</li> <li>• Test draft templates on focus groups</li> <li>• Revise templates; retest</li> <li>• Annual report to HSAA</li> </ul>
Year Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize templates and print</li> <li>• Design marketing campaign</li> <li>• Launch the workplace documents</li> <li>• Test training</li> <li>• Annual report to HSAA</li> </ul>

**Year One:** November 2007 – October 2008 (See Previous Report)

**Year Two:** November 2008 – October 2009

ACWS saw staff changes which meant that we worked more with consultants in year two to bridge the gap. Our key activities were in line with what had been contemplated in year two.

- ✓ We have completed the design of the toolkit template
- ✓ The draft templates were tested with focus groups
- ✓ The templates were revised taking into consideration the feedback

Plus:

- ✓ In partnership with HSAA, Leger Marketing and the University of Alberta School of Business, we conducted an opinion survey to greater understand Albertan's perceptions around workplace violence. A media event was held releasing this information on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009.
- ✓ The former Minister responsible for Status of Women heard our presentation on domestic violence in the workplace and provided some additional funds to present presentations around Alberta.

November 2009 to present

- ✓ 100 prototype kits printed.
- ✓ Training material tested

Since October, we have altered our plan slightly to ensure that the materials developed are marketable. We hired Butler Business Solutions to develop a marketing strategy for the toolkit.

They were asked for

- (a) an assessment and review of the tools developed to date
- (b) gaps in materials that need to be addressed;
- (c) an economic impact analysis that will be available to customers of the toolkit.
- (d) possible mechanisms to protect ACWS intellectual property
- (e) recommendations and approaches for engaging men in the workplace.

We are currently awaiting their final report, with their recommendations regarding training and promotional methods, including costs, price range and total income from sales (with achievable targets identified), funding required and a draft budget to ensure sustainability of the project. They have identified recommended changes and adaptations and these are currently being implemented. Adding together the estimated percentage of employed Victims (5.94%) and employed perpetrators (6.04%) it is determined that 12% of an organization's workforce is directly impacted by domestic violence.

There were a number of concerns from our focus groups regarding the development of a separate toolkit for engaging men in the workplace. They include:

- Questions about why men are being singled out
- Concerns about the time required and appropriateness of delivering a separate toolkit
- Difficulty in seeing men's roles and responsibilities in the workplace is different from their female colleagues.
- A bias for gender neutrality when it comes to violence against women.

As a result, we have not at this point developed a separate toolkit for engaging men in the workplace.

Of note, focus group testing to this point has also given us feedback on a misperceived notion that all material must be gender neutral, which affects the marketability.

Adding together the estimated percentage of employed victims (5.94%) and employed perpetrators (6.04%) it is determined that 12% of an organization's workforce is directly impacted by domestic violence.

Conservatively estimated, the total monetized costs of domestic violence in the workplace per 100 employees is \$84,628.68

## 1. Activities:

This progress report represents Year Two plus activities that have occurred until May, 2010.

Activity	Organization	Outputs	Outcomes
<b>Presentations: to May 2010</b>			
Introduction of Toolkit (March, 2010)	Human Resource Services Division Edmonton Public Library	-PowerPoint - Tent Cards - Response Guide for Supervisors -Brochures	- Library participates in further focus group testing - Expresses interest in incorporating into library policy with further presentations to staff by ACWS
Interview with Ali Grant, (March, 2010)	Ending Violence Association of BC	Information regarding potential of regulatory review and amendment. WorkSafe BC has incorporated a new module on When Relationship Violence Intrudes in the Workplace into the Preventing Violence in the Workplace course,	- Not yet known -
Interview with Dafna Izenberg	Consultant	Article in Occupational Health and Safety magazine <a href="http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB-ohs-mag-0510.pdf">http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB-ohs-mag-0510.pdf</a>	- Increased profile for ACWS and HSAA; greater awareness amongst readership
Presentation of draft material (January, 2010)	Sub committee of shelter directors	Model policy improvements Contact Information and process identified	- Shelters involved in toolkit development and responses
DV in the workplace (November, 2010)	Alberta Shelter Directors	PowerPoint presentation brochures	Small subcommittee is formed
DV in the Workplace	AUMA	Powerpoint Handouts	Increased awareness amongst the 30 municipal officials attending the presentation

Activity	Organization	Outputs	Outcomes
<b>Presentations: Year Two November 2008 – October 2009</b>			
<b>Domestic Violence in the Workplace: <i>Everyone's Business</i></b> (October 8th, 2009)	Release of Leger Report	Leger Report Media Release	- Better understanding of working Albertans' perceptions of violence in the workplace - Information provided to public
<b>Domestic Violence in the Workplace</b> (June, 2009).	Edmonton Downtown Business Association	PowerPoint presentation	Members of the Downtown Business Association have a better understanding of DV in the workplace.
<b>DV in the workplace</b> (May)	Southern Alberta Forum on Public Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint presentation'</li> <li>• Media release</li> <li>• media interviews on Shaw Cable, a local radio station and the Lethbridge Herald.</li> </ul>	Greater awareness in the Lethbridge area on dv in the workplace thanks to media coverage on Shaw Cable, a local radio station and the Lethbridge Herald.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DV in the Workplace (Edmonton AB, March 20 2009): violence in the workplace</li> </ul>	<b>Alberta Union of Public Employees</b> Close to 200 participants attended a session on domestic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Powerpoint presentation</li> <li>- Handouts</li> </ul>	
<b>DV in the Workplace</b> (Edmonton, AB, March 16 <sup>th</sup> ,	<b>Edmonton and District Labour Council</b>	Poierpoint presentation Handouts	

Activity	Organization	Outputs	Outcomes
2009) domestic violence in the workplace			
<b>Royal Alex Hospital Social Work Week</b> (Edmonton , March 4, 2009):	35 Health Care professionals at the Royal Alex hospital		
Discussions on developing an improved employer response to domestic violence (May)	National retailer	Background information provided to retailer	- Retailer works to improve response to dv with greater involvement with shelters across the country
DV in the Workplace (April, 2009)	WW Cross	Poweropint presentatoin	-
<b>Breakfast with the Guys</b> (Calgary, March 12, 2009):	185 Calgary business and community leaders	Lundy Bancroft gave keynote speaker to on domestic violence in the workplace, media interviews on dv in the workplace a 20 minute interview on CBC Wild Rose Country.	- Greater public awareness of dv in the workplace by the Calgary business community - Major employer (Enbridge) speaks to the need for employers to address the issue
ACWS Newsletters and webpage	ACWS	-feature articles and photos -3500 hardcopy circulation x 2	

<b>Meetings and Conferences:</b>			
<i>Edmonton Breakfast with the Guys</i> (Nov '09)	ACWS	-	-project vision -contacts and networks -global awareness raising
1 <sup>st</sup> Canadian Domestic Violence Homicide Conference (London, Ontario, June 2009)	London Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System and The University of Western Ontario		-public awareness of ACWS project on dv in workplace -awareness with government -fundraising for survey
Community Initiative Against Family Violence (Edmonton working group)	ACWS	documents on dv in the workplace discussion on issue	

<b>Focus groups:</b>			
2 ½ hour ACWS workshop on domestic violence in the workplace with 20 stakeholders (Calgary)	ACWS	Powerpoint Handouts questions	-stakeholders engaged in research process -gathering direct experience with issue -development of community ownership of work -expanding research community -discovery of community assets -development of core project needs
Focus Group, Edmonton (November, 2009)	ACWS	Powerpoint Handouts	-stakeholders engaged in research process -gathering direct experience with issue -development of community ownership of work -expanding research community -discovery of community assets -appraisal of materials developed to date
Focus Group,			

Edmonton			
<b>Working groups:</b>			
AB Leader's Working Group (June '08)	ACWS	-root cause analysis -powerpoint -backgrounder -meeting notes -15 participants	-awareness raising -leadership buy-in -discovery of community assets -problem and process identification
Cup of Tea (HR group under development Nov '08)	ACWS	-presentation on issue	-commitment to and interest in project outcomes -development of working group with key women business leaders
<b>Research and Development of the Toolkit:</b>			
e-research (on-going)	ACWS	-documents -media tracking -PSAs -websites	-increased understanding of dv workplace research environment -connection with international research groups
Research and Development (on-going)	ACWS	-publications -draft documents evaluation, project calendar plan, toolkit design	-increased sector awareness of ACWS research on dv in workplace

<b>Documents:</b>			
London Conference abstract (March '09)	ACWS	-abstract	
Domestic Violence in the Workplace Website	ACWS	-website posts	
ACWS WEBSITE	ACWS	-website posts	
Project backgrounders (for multiple stakeholders/events)	ACWS	-documents	
Project presentations (for multiple stakeholders/events)	ACWS		
Focus group/working group questions	ACWS		
Media releases (multiple)	ACWS		
e-documents on ACWS webpage and World Conference webpage	ACWS		
Project logframe and	ACWS		



draft evaluation documents			
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**2. Funding allocations**

Year One Activities
ACWS staff office support and administration
Consultant: Wayne MacLeod (fees, travel, accommodation)
Presenter: Dennis Butler (fees, travel, accommodation)
Catering for consultations
Conference participation (Amsterdam: fees, travel, accommodation, per diem)
World Conference
Project banner
Project documents and supplies
Focus groups

### **3. Results:**

Implementing the above activities and designing the documents required has resulted in excellent achievements. This project has garnered significant *media response* from all types of media. We have drawn in *key stakeholders*, such as Dennis Butler (VP Liz Claiborne), who are now aware of the ACWS initiative. These supporters are local, national and international and they want to stay in contact with us. Additionally, we have garnered interest in our forthcoming manuals and trainings: this attention also stretches across Canada and globally. For instance, we have been informally invited back to Amsterdam (Violence in the Health Sector Workplace) to present further results in 2010. All levels of *governments in Canada* have been contacted and presented with information—either through the *Breakfast with the Guys*, private meetings, the World Conference, or by co-hosting with us (such as the *Cup of Tea* with Minister Iris Evans). Anecdotally, the Calgary based *Homefront* team was looking for an expert to brief their community on the issue of domestic violence in the workplace and contacted the American NGO, Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence—and they pointed our Calgary neighbours in our direction! The University of Alberta's *Faculties of Law and Business* have met with us around direct initiatives they can partner in to raise awareness on this subject. Finally, by foregrounding this issue—through presentations and conversations—in *conferences* across Canada and internationally, ACWS has raised the profile on domestic violence in the workplace. This is a level of awareness-raising and capacity building that was not identified on the horizon at the point of inception for *Workplace Wellness and Safety: What we all can do!* We are pleased to report to you the discovered reach of this work.

Finally, we are happy to note that nearly 1,900 people have been reached with information, discussion or direct training on this issue. Additionally, the ACWS Newsletter was circulated in hardcopy among 10,500 contacts (conservatively); the reach of website postings (ACWS and the World Conference sites) is global. We must also include, of course, the impact of the sustained media coverage. The reach of the 10 minute CTV segment alone was extensive. Through the World Conference, the coverage was global.

### **4. Next Steps:**

The focus of the next project year is on the development of draft documents for Alberta workplaces. This entails two parts: the policy and training manual and the design of interventions for engaging men in the workplace. The target date for these documents is summer, 2009. They will be first discussed with the members of the Alberta Leader's Working group. There is real potential that a few of these leaders will commit to testing the documents



at their workplaces. Once tested and revised, we anticipate a media launch of the published documents.

In support of this work, ACWS hopes to retain Leger Marketing (with a partial contribution on their part) to implement a general population survey on violence and domestic violence in the Alberta workplace. This will be significant—it will be one of the first such surveys in Canada. The University of Alberta, School of Business and Status of Women Canada are also prepared to make a contribution to this project. The data it will provide is key to contextualizing the issue in Alberta and in framing the need for the interventions. We will also be collecting data to support our work at various presentations held over the upcoming months.

ACWS will continue to raise awareness, build capacity and gather information. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, the Calgary *Breakfast with the Guys* (March '09) will focus on this issue. Following the *Breakfast* we are organizing a working group to discover the experience of Calgary's business community.

Finally, we would like to thank HSAA for their support and vision in addressing an issue that has largely been invisible to employers and employees. Raising awareness is an important first step in addressing domestic violence in the workplace and through the course of this project we will have some very tangible outcomes that make work a safer place for abused women.