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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ABUSED WOMEN CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE**

**What will happen to the 12,000 women and children who used Alberta Shelters in 1994? With the privatization of social services, Women's Shelter budgets are up for grabs. Due to the tireless and dedicated efforts of community activists, shelter workers, and the women who have used shelters, Alberta in the past, had a comprehensive network to deal with violence against women and children. This network is now at risk.**

**Women's shelters have been designated, without consultation, to the Commissioner of Services for Children. Women are not children. This move will surely minimize the focus on violence against women.**

**We maintain, that at a minimum, the partial funding currently received from the province be guaranteed. How else will shelter doors remain open?**

**The magnitude of family violence in this province should be enough to ensure the ongoing existence of funding. Our own government statistics show us that 1 in 4 women have experienced abuse. The Edmonton Police Service statistics show 1,783 incidents of family violence were reported in the 1994 calendar year, the RCMP confirmed 1,752 incidents, with similar statistics from the Calgary Police Service for the same calendar year.**

**Shelters are an essential service. They arose from an identified need to provide safety for women and children who experience abuse. Shelters also provide services that are comprehensive and preventative in nature. Women's shelters are the "only" agencies that provide this service in the Province.**

**A new distribution system that would see dollars pass through regions puts core funding for women shelters in jeopardy.**

**Our focus has been and needs to remain on abused women. Women with and without children. We question whether this is possible under regionalization and through the Commissioner of Services for Children.**

**For more information:  
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