

EVALUATING OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The Centre has always tried to be accountable to our funders and the women we serve by asking for participant feedback about programs. We want to make sure that the programs and services we offer are appropriate and relevant for women in our community. We want to ensure that they address real concerns for women, and help women move forward in their lives. In the past few years, we have gone beyond customer satisfaction surveys and process tracking (counting hours of service, courses, participants). We continue to be concerned about the quality and quantity of our services, but we are also very interested in knowing what the outcomes are for women who participate. How do their lives change? Do they accomplish their goals? Are we making a difference in the community?

With the help of the Ontario Women's Directorate, we developed a logic model to identify the various milestones that a woman will pass in her journey towards violence prevention, economic independence or emotional health. Over the last year we have also participated in PEOD (Program Evaluation through Organizational Development) training provided by United Way of Greater Toronto.

This has allowed us to work with Centre stakeholders to identify outcomes women are achieving, including Board, committees, staff, direct Service volunteers, Consumer Advisory Group and service users. It is important that we work together to define "success".

As women give us feedback about their accomplishments, these outcomes are gathered to give us a picture of how the programs and services have made a difference in their lives. Our 2001-02 annual report included some of the following outcomes: 150 women registered for further training; 117 made positive changes in their lives/solved personal problems; 93 left abusive relationships; 74 developed support networks; 60 improved job performance /marketability; 25 got a job; 24 improved English conversation/literacy skills; 23 increased their coping skills; 15 began formal counselling.

We are deeply grateful to the women using the Centre for sharing information with us. We welcome feedback about the process of measuring the value of our programs and services.



MOTHERS & CHILDREN AT RISK PROJECT

The Mothers & Children at Risk Project is a 12 week program designed to address the challenges and issues of survivors of woman abuse who have children with disabilities. This special group of women not only has to recover from abuse, but may also be dealing with guilt and self-blame, lack of family support or private respite time, among other special considerations. Activities provided during the program include supportive discussions on a variety of topics related to particular issues for women in this situation. Some of the topics will include: guilt and self-esteem; safety planning and support network; empowering people with disabilities; parenting skills; and custody battles.

The group is facilitated by Ana Maria Oyarzun who has a strong background in Psychology, Popular Education and Arts of the Oppressed. We will also have professionals in different fields coming as guest speakers. The group meets 2 hours each week for 12 weeks starting in January and in April. Childcare will be provided, some considerations apply. Please call us for more information. Our thanks to the Children's Aid Foundation for funding this project!

SWC 20th ANNIVERSARY VIDEO

With the help of eight fabulous women, lights, cameras and action - the work of SWC has been documented for life. An eight-minute video was launched September 17th 2002 to mark the 20th anniversary of SWC. The video, a montage of quotes and memories from women who contributed to and have benefited from the Centre, will be used to promote SWC to media, funding agencies and the general public. Thanks to all of the women who participated in the video and to Torstar Media Group Television for the company's generous donation of equipment and facilities.

Rekha Shah
Producer

Speaking of Women

Scarborough Women's Centre hosts an annual fundraising event called Speaking of Women, held in November of every year, where speakers discuss what they've learned along their life journey. We are very pleased that **Scotiabank Women in Business** sponsored the event, which raised over \$7,000. for our programs and services.

In November 2002 our speakers included CHFI Radio personality **Erin Davis**; freelance author and writer of Solitaire: The Intimate Lives of Single Women **Marion Botsford Fraser**; Director of Corporate Human Resources for Magna International **Sandra Levy** (an Olympic athlete and lawyer); and Women - in - Motion Career

Education Director **Akela Peoples**.

Common themes discussed during this annual event are: the importance of honouring yourself, believing in yourself and trusting that you have the ability to make your dreams come true. Scarborough Women's Centre helps women on the road to their own personal success with the programs and services we offer every day. Stay tuned for information about Speaking of Women 2003: November 8/03.

Kim Cochrane
Chair, Fundraising Committee

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!!!

At our 20th Annual AGM in September 2002, two new members were elected to the Board of Directors, by the membership. **Shirley Kandappu** is an accountant who spent many years working in Fortune 500 companies and is now practicing privately. **Darlene Watman** has spent many years in the non-profit sector in Scarborough and is now a consultant with government. Both women have been involved with the Centre through the ESS Advisory Group, and received their 5 year Ontario Volunteer Service Awards in April 2001. We are delighted with the knowledge and care which they bring to their positions, and look forward to working with them to make the Centre a good place for women. Please note that the Centre is seeking new Board members. If you would like more information, please contact Lynda Kosowan, Executive Director. Women who represent the diverse communities

that we serve are especially requested to apply.

WHO IS AT THE CENTRE?

The Access Committee is dedicated to ensuring that all women are able to be part of the Centre, regardless of diversity. Diversity is recognized by the Centre to include race, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, colour, citizenship, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, political affiliation, receipt of public assistance, membership in a union or staff association, or level of literacy.

We need your help to see how we're doing. Please complete our confidential participation profile and return it to the Centre as soon as possible. You will find a down loadable copy on-line at our website, or call in to request a copy. We are surveying participants, volunteers, staff, committees & Board. Thanks for your help!

Have you seen our Website?



It's full of information re programs, volunteering & special events.
Visit us at:

www.scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

WOMEN'S PLACE STOREFRONT

The Centre has been part of the Women's Interagency Storefront Project since 1995. With development funding from Trillium Foundation, we were able to conduct a needs assessment with women in local malls. This research showed us that 52% of women surveyed had never used any kind of services, not even a library. They told us that they had not been aware that services existed; or didn't think those services were for women like them; or felt fear of talking about personal matters with strangers. We identified the need for a safe, comfortable place in a public setting like a mall, where women could learn more about services and resources available to them. This would be a stepping-stone connecting them to services, and also would improve the network for services for women in Scarborough.

Women's Place is now in its 5th year of service to the community. It is located at Malvern Town Centre, in the Tapscott/Neilson area. Last year, three thousand women used the drop-in to get information, check out community resources, access the internet, or meet other women who want to move forward in their lives. There are 20 community volunteers, 2 part time staff, and 5 partner agencies. Scarborough Women's Centre was the trustee of funds for the first six years. Although Malvern Family Resource Centre has now taken over responsibility

for Women's Place, we are co-chairing the Steering Committee, and actively involved in the project. We remain committed to ensuring that isolated and vulnerable women in Malvern have the opportunity to become active in their community, and get the support they need to achieve their goals for change.



Annual Mother's Day Tea

Mark your calendar for
Saturday May 10th, 2003
for our annual fundraising tea

RSVP by May 2nd/2003.



21st Century Anyone?

The Centre is pleased to announce that we have been able to add extension mailboxes to our voice mail system. They have been chosen to be as simple as possible to use, so that women can leave confidential, private messages

when they need to. Callers are also still welcome to leave a message in the general mailbox. This voice mail system is in effect if we are not able to get to the phone during office hours, or at all times during the evenings and weekends. Our outgoing message also gives information for women in crisis who need help right away. They are asked to call Assaulted Women's Helpline (416) 863-0511; Distress Centre (416) 408-4357; or Community Information Toronto (211).

To access an extension mailbox, press the mailbox number during the outgoing message. These are: Executive Director - extension 1; Case Manager - extension 2; ESS Program Coordinator - extension 3.

We remain committed to answering your phone call in person whenever possible, and thank our Volunteer Information Counsellors for their part in making this possible!

WOMEN AT THE CENTRE



is a publication of Scarborough
Women's Centre
Submissions, letters and
suggestions are very welcome.

Please forward to:
Lynda Kosowan, MSW, RSW
Executive Director