



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
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**From Isolation to Integration:
Public Legal Education and Information Needs in Response to
Family Violence in Rural Areas of Canada**

**Final Report
(Unedited)**

August 2001

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Note: The information contained in this report is compiled by Archibald & Chrnkovich
Consultants

Executive Summary

This report reviews the findings of existing research relating to violence against rural women, children, youth, and older adults and describes two areas of the research. The first is the public legal education and information (PLEI) needs identified to date, regarding violence against women, children, youth and older persons in rural families. The second area covers the most effective strategies and tools used or proposed to distribute PLEI in rural areas.

This report is divided into three sections: the first describes the research methods used in the project, the second describes the project findings and the final section discusses the implications of these findings for follow-up activities of the project.

Research Methods

Qualitative research methods were used in this project. The primary research tool was a document review of available existing research from community-based or government-sponsored/academic participatory research projects. Collectively, these reports are referred to throughout this report as "Group I" and "Group II" reports. The majority of the Group I reports focus on violence against rural women. The family violence PLEI needs assessments undertaken by seven core PLEI providers — Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Yukon Territory — make up the majority of the Group II reports reviewed for this project.

During the course of this research, the researcher did travel to Fredericton to review the collection of documents on rural family violence at the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. While at the Centre, the researcher met informally with staff and board members and with the Executive Directors of the PLEI Service of New Brunswick and the Caring Partnerships Communities United Against Family Violence.

A six-person Advisory Committee was established to review and recommend changes to the report and provide guidance on the follow-up activities to this report. The Committee is made up of two justice officials, two representatives from core PLEI provider organizations and two PLEI intermediaries who are representatives from organizations working with rural women, children, youth, older persons who are victims/survivors of violence.

Project Findings

The focus of the project findings is on the issues and needs relating to PLEI materials, activities and their dissemination. The first issue addressed in the project findings is the issue of terminology.

Terminology: The terms "family violence," "rural" and "public legal education and information" used by the core PLEI providers and PLEI intermediaries need to be clarified in any follow-up activities to this report.

How these terms are used in the research and the issues that arise regarding terminology are discussed in the report. For example, how the term family violence is defined must be considered when addressing the issue of naming abuse; the need for consistency in the message and the problems associated with the use of gender neutral language (i.e. family violence) in rural context need to be considered. Another issue addressed in the project findings relates specifically with how "public legal education and information" is defined. How PLEI is defined impacts on issues of what is understood to be PLEI (i.e. understanding the difference between PLEI and government communication) and who plays a role in designing and delivering PLEI (i.e. the role of PLEI intermediaries in informing and educating the public).

Issues and needs: The rural context of violence against women, children and youth and older persons is characterized by a litany of what rural communities are lacking: services, transportation, information and economic opportunities. While the report is not an exhaustive examination of the issues, barriers and needs identified in the research, it does outline some of the key issues that people experiencing violence within a rural context face when seeking legal information.

The issues are categorized into seven themes. The headings, while useful in drawing out the rural characteristics, are not precise and are not mutually exclusive. Collectively when read together, their fluidity becomes evident. For example, lack of transportation could be seen as a facet of "geography" or "isolation." Therefore, in some cases, there is overlap and redundancy.¹ The seven themes are:

- *Geography* - distance and lack of transportation limits women's access to services and information.
- *Isolation* - physical, social, cultural, linguistic.
- *Lack of anonymity and confidentiality*- everyone knows everyone, high visibility when seeking out support, fear of reprisals from abuser.
- *Lack of and inadequacy of Services and Information available* -emergency services, transition houses/shelters
- *Community values, cohesion and the rural ethic of self-sufficiency* - patriarchal values, close-knit character of community, fear of reprisals from family members and community, denial
- *Economic Considerations/Poverty* - economic reality of rural life and economic impact on farm life
- *Availability of guns* - greater accessibility and use of guns in rural areas; and may be more viable to discharge a firearm in a rural area without being.

The needs identified focus on how PLEI can be used to respond to individual as well as institutional needs. At the individual level, the needs primarily deal with PLEI strategies to assist

¹ The themes used are a combination of those identified by Candace Brookbank (Candace Brookbank, *Spouse Abuse in Rural Communities: A Review of the Literature, (TR1996-5e)* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1995)) and Yasmin Jiwani (Jiwani 1998). The reports in Group I present a full discussion of many of the barriers confronted by rural women living in abusive relationships. In particular, the research report on two British Columbia rural communities by Yasmin Jiwani provides a comprehensive discussion and thematic analysis of the barriers and responses to violence in these rural areas.

rural persons living in abusive relationships in recognizing, disclosing, and responding to abuse. The impact of the close-knit community and the rural ethic of self-sufficiency serve to make it very difficult for women in rural areas to name the abuse they live with, let alone disclose it. Other legal and non-legal information that PLEI organizations can provide for victims/survivors of abuse and for those dealing with persons who are victims of violence or at risk are outlined in the report.

Getting PLEI to individuals is important. The difficulties regarding access to PLEI are identified in the report alongside ways to develop and distribute PLEI that respect the individual's privacy, take safety issues into concern and address the more common systemic barriers confronted by victims in rural areas (i.e., poverty, cultural issues, social isolation, literacy, classism, racism, homophobia and sexism).

At the institutional level, ways to ensure how PLEI materials and resources can better prepare professionals for dealing with the issues regarding violence against women, children and youth, and older persons in rural areas are discussed. In particular, needs of those within the criminal justice system, health services and social services are reviewed.

Implications of the Research for follow-up activities

The report identifies and discusses some key points for consideration for follow-up to the report:

- ⇒ *Limitations of the Research* - the first key point is acknowledging the limitation of the research to date. The scope of this project to date is limited primarily to findings about violence against rural women. The findings do not adequately reflect the diversity among rural women nor the unique needs regarding violence against children and youth and older persons, including those marginalized within these populations. These are obvious gaps that have to be considered when deciding the scope and direction of the project.
- ⇒ *Naming the Abuse* - the second key point is acknowledging the importance of plain and familiar language that is consistent, to the extent this is possible, in the messages PLEI providers send out to their communities. This is particularly important around how "violence" is defined. For the follow-up activities to this project, it is important to consider what term or terms should be used to describe violence within the family context and the scope of the term(s).
- ⇒ *Systemic Nature of the Issues* - the third point draws attention to what PLEI is and the extent to which PLEI can address the types of needs identified in the research. Many of the issues and the resulting needs are complex and not simply addressed by providing more PLEI materials in a given community. The barriers and resulting needs regarding PLEI materials and delivery mechanisms are deeply rooted in the structural inequalities that perpetuate violence within these communities and the larger society. Therefore in framing this project, it is important to take note of the larger issues that are not addressed in this report that have a direct bearing on the success of PLEI. Two options for framing the project that respond to the systemic nature of many of the issues are outlined. Both of the benefits and challenges of these options are discussed.

⇒ *Collaboration among all PLEI providers*- another consideration is that in recognizing the many PLEI intermediaries that actively produce and disseminate PLEI materials, there is a need to respond to the issues identified in the research through co-ordination and collaboration among all PLEI providers dealing with targeted groups within rural populations.

The report suggests reaching out beyond the core PLEI providers to ensure that all of those actively and effectively designing and providing PLEI dealing with violence against rural women, children and youth, and older persons are included in identifying and implementing any follow-up activities in this area. Such consideration could also serve to meet another frequently noted need identified in the research— consistency in the messages and information provided in the rural communities.

Specific examples of participatory approaches used by the PLEI Service – New Brunswick and Community Legal Information Association of P.E.I with other organizations in these two predominantly rural provinces are revisited in the report from the perspective of how these organizations have identified and used many of the rural characteristics noted in the research in a positive way to strengthen their PLEI projects.

1.0 Introduction: Purpose of Report

This project was intended to review the findings of existing research relating to violence against women, children, youth and older adults and to describe two areas of the research: the public legal education and information (PLEI) needs identified to date, regarding violence against women, children, youth and older persons in rural families and the most effective strategies and tools used or proposed to distribute these PLEI materials in rural areas.

Statistics do not indicate that the level of violence in families in rural areas is higher than in urban areas (Statistics Canada 2000; Brookbank 1995; Jiwani 1998; CAPRO 1998). In fact, in many ways the experience of violence is similar in urban and rural settings. Some of these similarities include stereotypes of abused people, denial of abuse, fear, isolation, lack of support, patriarchal values and poverty. However, as research on violence in rural areas begins to develop, it has become clear that violence in rural areas possesses unique characteristics, which should impact on the content of PLEI and how it should be disseminated.

This report has been prepared to facilitate discussions on the direction to pursue in responding to family violence PLEI needs in rural areas across Canada. The report consists of three sections: the first describes the research methods used in the project, the second describes the project findings and the final section discusses implications of the findings for the follow-up activities.

2.0 Research Methods

Qualitative research methods were used in this project. The primary research tool was a document review of available research from community-based or government-sponsored/academic participatory research projects. Collectively, these reports are referred to throughout this report as "Group I reports." The majority of the Group I reports focus on violence against rural women. The research reports used for the review consist of reports forming part of community-based organizations research and advocacy projects, and academic and government-sponsored participatory action research projects.

The family violence PLEI needs assessments undertaken by seven core PLEI providers — Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Yukon Territory — make up the majority of the Group II² reports reviewed for this project.

The objective of these assessments was to identify gaps in the available public legal education and information on family violence issues and to make recommendations regarding future family

² See appendix 1 for a complete listing

violence resource needs.³ The needs assessments were conducted by staff of the PLEI organizations or by consultants contracted by the particular PLEI organization. The Group I and II reports are listed in Appendix #2 of this report.

All core PLEI organizations were asked to participate in a brief interview regarding the information and education materials and services they produce and/or use pertaining to family violence in rural areas. Due to the shortage of time and available scheduling dates (i.e., mid-February and March — close to fiscal year end), many of the core PLEI providers were not available for interview. Information was obtained from the Web sites of the organizations unable to complete an interview. A listing of the PLEI information and education services and materials relating to violence against women, children and youth and older persons in rural areas produced and/or used by the core PLEI providers are presented in Appendix #2.

During the course of this research, the researcher travelled to Fredericton to review the collection of documents on rural family violence at the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (MMF Centre). While at the Centre, the researcher met informally with staff and board members and with the Executive Directors of the PLEI Service of New Brunswick and the Caring Partnerships Communities United Against Family Violence. The experiences and observations of this trip are documented in Appendix #3 of this report.

Also, a six-person Advisory Committee was established to review and recommend changes to the report and provide guidance on the follow-up activities to this report. The Committee is made up of two justice officials, two representatives from core PLEI provider organizations and two PLEI intermediaries who are representatives from organizations working with rural women, children, youth, and older persons who are victims/survivors of violence.

3.0 Project Findings

In this section, the findings from Group I and II reports, are presented and discussed, beginning with an overview of the reports and, where possible, their research purpose and methodology. The remainder of this section presents gaps/limitations in the literature regarding the subject and reviews the project findings beginning with a discussion of terminology, followed by the issues and needs relating to PLEI materials, activities and their dissemination.

3.1 *Overview of the Group I and Group II Reports*

3.1.1 Group I Reports

The Group I reports deal primarily with the experiences of women in rural areas who are abused by their partners. The research was not specifically undertaken to gather public legal information and education needs and strategies. Many are reports of participatory research projects undertaken in response to a need, to advocate for change or to reform a policy, law or program.

³ Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc., *PLEI Family Violence Materials: Needs Assessment Report, Synthesis of Findings* (Ottawa: Department of Justice, March 2000), p. 1.

In place of identifying needs, these reports provide thoughtful and in-depth analyses of the rural characteristics that intensify the barriers victims of violence in rural areas of Canada experience when naming, disclosing, responding to, and, ultimately, preventing abuse. These reports are primarily academic and/or government-sponsored participatory action research projects, with a few number being part of community-based organizations research and advocacy projects. Some were government-sponsored or academic reports that used methods other than a participatory research approach (i.e., Brookbank 1995).

A number of the government-sponsored projects were joint initiatives between community-based organizations and the federal Department of Justice. This series of reports used community-based researchers to conduct research in their own communities. The purpose of the research was twofold: first, to obtain a better understanding of the unique challenges confronting rural women experiencing violence, and second, to identify the most appropriate supports and interventions that were effective for rural women living with abuse.⁴ These reports represent six diverse Ontario rural areas and two rural areas in British Columbia.

A number of Group I reports were undertaken by the research teams at the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre dealing with violence in rural areas, religious communities in Canada's Atlantic region, and violence suffered by people with disabilities and immigrant communities. As well, reports from the research teams examining violence and the girl child and dating violence were reviewed. A report from the Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment examines the experiences of rural women in East Central Saskatchewan (Martz and Sarauer 2000). A research study for the Canadian Panel of Violence Against Women (Milne 1992) provides a national perspective from qualitative research conducted with rural service providers. A smaller number of reports represent community-based research by organizations that work to end violence (Bernadette McCann House 1996; Gilson 1994).

A number of statistical reports were also included in the Group I collection (Phillips and Hornick 1992; Statistics Canada 2000; Dansy Consultants 1992).

3.1.2 Group II Reports

All but one of the Group II reports deal with the family violence PLEI needs assessments completed by or under contract for core PLEI providers in seven jurisdictions — Alberta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Yukon one report synthesizes the findings of these assessments. The other report — *the 1997 PLEI Review* — deals with PLEI more generally and provides insights regarding strategies for delivery of PLEI and the role of PLEI as part of popular education.

⁴ Lorri Biesenthal and Lynn dee Sproule, and Mary Nelder, Susan Golton, Donna Mann, Denise Podovinnikoff, Inge Roosendaal, Shellie Warman and Donna Lunn, *Research Report: The Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Final Report (rr2000-15e)* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 2000), p. 10.

All the core PLEI providers undertaking the assessments, with the exception of the Community Legal Information Association (CLIA) – P.E.I., canvassed service providers for their views. In Alberta, agencies working in the family social services field in Calgary and Edmonton as well as agencies such as women's shelters and multicultural organizations were solicited for information for the study. The New Brunswick study emphasized three particular special needs communities: rural women, Aboriginal communities and adults with disabilities. The Newfoundland and Labrador study stated that its purpose was "to determine what the legal information needs are for women and children of Newfoundland and Labrador who have experienced domestic violence."⁵ The Nova Scotia study involved service providers who worked with women, men, seniors and children who are victims and perpetrators of family violence. The focus of the P.E.I. study was on women who lived or are living in abusive relationships and their experiences with the criminal justice system. The Yukon study attempted to identify PLEI gaps in information specifically related to groups it refers to as "special needs groups" which included women, youth, immigrants and First Nations individuals.

As noted, these assessments, other than New Brunswick, were not specifically focussed on rural populations. Nonetheless, the needs of rural communities were cited often in all of the assessments. This response reflects the growing significance of rural violence in the research. A synthesis of the findings of the needs assessments and a summary of the needs and recommendations by jurisdiction are provided in Appendix #4.

PLEI Services of New Brunswick and Community Legal Information association of Prince Edward Island can provide some insight into what a co-ordinated response for core PLEI providers to rural violence looks like and can do to meeting some of the needs identified.

3.2 Terminology

Adequately addressing the PLEI needs related to family violence in rural Canada requires clarifying what is meant by the terms "family violence," "rural" and "public legal education and information." These terms mean different things to different people. How these terms are used in the reports reviewed is the focus of this sub-section.

3.2.1 Family Violence

Research has identified two recurrent issues related to the use of the term "family violence": gender neutrality of the term "family violence" and what constitutes "family violence".

In the family violence PLEI needs assessments (Group II reports), "family violence" is not defined. However, the focus of the reports, the people who were consulted, interviewed or surveyed for the reports, and the needs and recommendations, all suggest that "family violence"

⁵ Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland (PLIA-Nfld.), *Family Violence Needs Assessment, Final Report* (Ottawa: Department of Justice, March 2000), p.2.

is used primarily to describe violence against women, and then, in descending order of frequency; violence against children and youth, older persons, people with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, men abused by women and violent women who abuse men.

Regarding women who abuse men, the Nova Scotia PLEI needs assessment states that “[m]ale victims of family violence are often forgotten, according to focus group participants”. In response to this concern, most respondents agreed that information materials on family violence should be non gender-specific, rather than geared toward women and men separately. Similarly, in the Saskatchewan report, two participants indicated that they were in the process of revising their own material to make it gender-neutral.

The problem with using gender-neutral language, such as “family violence” in the context of intimate violence is that it implies (as do terms such as “spousal assault” and “domestic violence”) that “there is a gendered symmetry to interpersonal violence in families.”⁶ However, data from the 1999 General Social Survey illustrates that women are more likely than men to experience more severe and more repeated forms of violence, and they are more likely than men to experience more serious consequences as a result of being abused. Further, it is argued that the use of such language obscures the relationship of woman abuse to systemic societal inequalities.⁷

In the Group I reports, the term “family violence” is seldom used. When it does occur, it most often refers to violence against women in relationships. In a few reports the term “family violence” and “domestic violence” appear interchangeably. In other reports the terms “spouse/spousal assault” and “spouse/spousal abuse” are preferred terms. For example, the study, *Domestic Violence and the Experience of Rural Women in East Central Saskatchewan* (Martz and Sarauer 2000), uses the UNICEF definition for domestic violence: “Domestic violence in this study is defined as violence against women and children by intimate partners and other family members.” Other Group I reports (with the exception of the Scott with Van Dine 1995 report) use the terms “woman abuse” and “violence against women” interchangeably and focus their research specifically on abuse of women.

There is more uniformity among the Group I reports on what constitutes violence. As the understanding of violence increases, the recognition of what constitutes violence expands. While usually associated with physical abuse, the definition of violence now includes sexual, verbal, emotional, spiritual, financial and verbal abuse (Brookbank 1995; Final Report: Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women 1993; Martz and Sarauer 2000; Milne 1992; Roehner Institute 1994; Scott with Van Dine 1995).

It is worth noting the use of gender-neutral language to address this need in a report prepared by Health Canada on husband abuse. It states that “there is no evidence that the number of Canadian

⁶ Rural Womyn Zone, www.ruralwomyn.net/. The Rural Womyn Zone is a Web site of an expanding network of women living in rural areas across the United States and Canada.

⁷ The *Final Report of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women* (1993) suggests there are inherent problems in using the term “family violence” to determine incidence of violence that people experience. The Panel argues that it is important to name the violence accurately, and that the term “family violence” is often misleading and inaccurate as it is mostly women who experience violence in the home.

husband abuse victims warrants the type of specialized services that have been developed for women abuse victims. Nor does the current research support changing the wording of family violence materials from being specific to women victims to being gender neutral.”⁸

A number of the Group II reports did address the second issue — the question of what constitutes violence. The reports from the core PLEI organizations in New Brunswick, P.E.I., Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia note the importance of defining family violence with a view to raising awareness about what constitutes “violence” or “abuse.” For example, the New Brunswick study refers to research carried out in rural communities in the province that found the following:

... it was clear that one cannot simply use an academic definition (there are many!) and ask rural communities to take ownership of it. Rural people may not even think they have a problem in their community. ... people in rural communities who were asked to discuss abuse typically agree that family violence is wrong and that it should be stopped. Despite this, ... a great deal of tolerance for abusive behaviours and a tendency to make excuses for the abusers and/or blame the victims. This apparent contradiction stems from the fact that people’s definition of “family violence” related only to severe physical assaults — not the “everyday” painful, hurtful and negative things that are happening in many families.⁹

The Martz and Sarauer (2000) study and the Jiwani (1998) study, *Rural Women and Violence: A Study of Two Communities in British Columbia*, have adopted the widely used definition of violence against women or woman abuse that expands the conduct of violence beyond physical and sexual abuse:

... the misuse of power by a husband, intimate partner (whether male or female), ex-husband, or ex-partner against a woman, resulting in a loss of dignity, control, and safety as well as a feeling of powerlessness and entrapment experienced by the woman who is the direct victim of ongoing or repeated physical, psychological, economic, sexual, verbal, and/or spiritual abuse. Woman abuse also includes persistent threats or forcing women to witness violence against their children, other relatives, friends, pets, and/or cherished possessions by their husbands, partners, ex-husbands, or ex-partners.¹⁰

In rural communities, naming the abuse is an issue that has been identified throughout the research. This is discussed in greater detail in sub-section 3.3, Issues, Barriers and Needs.

⁸ Leslie Tutty, *Husband Abuse: An Overview of Research and Perspectives* (Ottawa: Health Canada Family Violence Prevention Unit, 1998), p. 24.

⁹ Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEI Service-New Brunswick), *A Needs Assessment of Family Violence Law Information for Hard to Reach Target Groups in New Brunswick, Final Report* (Ottawa: Department of Justice, March 2000), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰ This definition is taken from Walter DeKeseredy and Linda MacLeod, *Woman Abuse, A Sociological Story* (Toronto, ON: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997) p.5.

3.2.2 Rural

Like the term "family violence," the term "rural" has been attributed various meanings. Of the seven needs assessments included in the Group II reports, six include provinces and a territory that have rural populations exceeding the national average of 22 percent as noted in the 1996 Census. One half of the population in the Atlantic provinces resides in rural areas, as defined by Statistics Canada (New Brunswick 51%; Newfoundland 45%; Nova Scotia 45%; Prince Edward Island 55%). In Saskatchewan, 37 percent of the total population is classified as rural.

Most reports in Group II did not provide a specific definition for the term "rural." In the Alberta report, rural clients were defined as "clients outside municipal boundaries."¹¹ In the New Brunswick study, focus groups were conducted in six small communities "to provide an overview of the unique challenges associated with different rural areas in New Brunswick."¹² The communities ranged in size from close to 20,000 (Miramichi) to fewer than 5,000 (St. Stephen). The Saskatchewan study included, communities ranging in population size from 4,800 (Meadow Lake) to 500 people (Hanley) within its review of rural communities.

For those reports that focus on rural communities, defining "rural" may seem unnecessary; As noted by Elizabeth Teather rural residents do not debate the concept of "rural community" because to them it is a relatively simple matter.¹³

The Statistics Canada definition is often used to capture the meaning of "rural community": rural areas are those having a population base of fewer than 1,000 people and a population density of fewer than 400 people per square kilometre. This definition has been used by a number of the reports reviewed (i.e., Biesenthal and Sproule 2000; Brookbank 1995; ORWAS Community Reports 1998).

It is argued, however, that defining "rural" using a quantitative measure, as does Statistics Canada, places "rural" in opposition to "urban" and, as a result, can exclude diverse characteristics of rural communities and a community's self-definition of rurality.¹⁴ Further, a strict demographic and quantitative definitional framework is not required to define "rural". Rather, "rural" can be defined by simple common sense as a descriptive term "commonly understood to refer to the countryside or small towns as opposed to cities."¹⁵

Rural communities are diverse places full of diverse people that need to be considered in research projects. As Milne notes,

¹¹ Public Legal Education Network of Alberta (PLENA), *Agency Perceptions of Family Violence related Public Legal Information Services and Materials* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, March 2000), p. 10.

¹² PLEI Service-New Brunswick 2000, p. 4.

¹³ E. Teather, "Voluntary Organizations as Agents in the Becoming of Place," *The Canadian Geographer*, 41(3), 226-234, 1997, p. 229.

¹⁴ Y. Jiwani with the assistance of S. Moore and P. Kachuk, *Rural Women and Violence: A Study of Two Communities in British Columbia*. (TR1998-16e) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1998), p. 1.

¹⁵ Jiwani 1998, p. 36.

... there is no typical rural setting in Canada. It can be a farm, a northern single-resource community...A rural woman in Canada may be English or French with an agricultural ancestry, a native woman who lives on an isolated reserve, or an immigrant woman whose husband is working in a mining town, or a woman who lives in a dying logging community, ... small coastal fishing village. ...Consequently, the experience of a farm woman in southern Ontario is very different from ...an immigrant Mexican Mennonite in southern Manitoba or a transient summer worker in the Yukon.¹⁶

It is imperative that the diversity of rural peoples is recognized. For example, while the report, *Family Violence in Rural, Farm and Remote Canada*,¹⁷ implies in the title that it reflects the experiences of many rural peoples and does provide definitions of rural and remote, in fact the report "input is from farm women and the information is specifically designed to relate to farm families and their needs."¹⁸ While equating rural with a farming lifestyle is important, it does not cover the full range of rural experiences.

Although the meaning of "rural" and "rural people" is difficult to define uniformly, some similar measures of the significance of "rural" exist. These include low population density, single or limited economic base, limited access to services and resources (social, economic, legal, medical, educational, etc.).

In follow-up work to this report, it may be worthwhile to take into consideration these indicators of rurality and include within its definition all those communities that self identify as rural in addition to the Statistics Canada's definition of rural communities.

3.2.3 Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI)

It is difficult to provide a clear and exact definition of PLEI. In the *1997 Public Legal Education Information Review Report*, PLEI was described as follows:

Generally PLEI refers to law information and educational activities targeted at the public. PLEI also refers to how these activities are delivered: the methods, venues and types of legal information activities engaged in by a wide range of organizations. Lastly, PLEI often refers to players engaged in PLEI activities.¹⁹

This description does not elaborate on what is meant by "information" or "education activities," other than referring to the information as "law information." The 1997 PLEI Review description of how PLEI is delivered across the country provides some insight into how PLEI is interpreted

¹⁶ Wendy Milne, *Violence Against Women in Rural Settings* (unpublished report prepared for Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women August 1992), p. 2.

¹⁷ Wendy Scott with Carolyn Van Dine, *"Family Violence" in Rural, Farm and Remote Canada* (Ottawa: Department of Justice and Canadian Farm Women's Network, 1995).

¹⁸ Scott with Van Dine 1995, p. 1.

¹⁹ Marie Moliner, *1997 Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) Review: Tools for Moving Forward* (Ottawa: Department of Justice, November 1997), p. 6.

by those involved in the review. In this description, it would appear that PLEI is intended to focus on the "legal" issues that arise in all aspects of individuals' lives.

PLEI is delivered through a variety of activities and in a wide range of locales. Justice Canada, core PLEI provider and intermediary law information activities encompass print and audio-visual materials about specific legal issues (e.g., divorce, support and custody, tenant rights, hunting and fishing); law lines staffed by people who give legal information; taped legal information available by telephone ("Dial-a-law," Téléphone Juridique); speakers, seminars and workshops on specific legal topics; school based law curricula; electronic access to legal information (ACJNet and others); interactive learning modules (LawRoom on SchoolNet); and popular theatre.

Some of the examples of innovative PLEI practices across Canada noted in the 1997 review that are relevant to this report include the following:

- *Ask Me No Questions* — a youth-market novel published in Newfoundland and Labrador. The characters in the "world-renowned" book encounter child abuse and learn about legal procedures to try to deal with it.
- Mock medical and trial scenes videotaped by a social justice partnership in Nova Scotia to show health professionals how to assist victims of assault to gain redress through the justice system.

Both of these examples have a direct link to legal aspects of abuse.

PLEI is not defined in the Group II needs assessment reports. When reviewing the questions used for interviews, focus groups and surveys in these reports, it appears that PLEI is not limited to information about the law and legal rights, but includes information about abuse and violence — dynamics of abuse, naming abuse, etc. These broader elements of PLEI appear to be tied to the education component of PLEI.

The needs assessments give some indication of the flexibility of the definition of PLEI — ranging from legal rights of victims of abuse, to prevention of violence, to education on the facts of abuse/violence — by naming abuse, its root causes and the responses to violence of specific groups affected by violence (primarily women and why they don't leave).

In other assessments, both service providers and women want to see materials aimed at abusers to show them that their behaviour is wrong. And, as previously noted, some organizations mentioned that materials should also be aimed at women offenders and male victims.

Three of the Group II needs assessments identified a need for mediation information and data on the risks for women living in or leaving abusive relationships.

Mediation and alternative dispute resolution materials are fully available in print and on-line. It appears that the federal government produces most of the material.²⁰ Within the context of the needs identified in this research, none of the publications critically examine if and how mediation and alternative dispute mechanisms work in the context of abusive relationships — i.e., between intimate partners, between parent and child or between siblings — a specific need identified in these assessments.

It is beyond the scope of this report to explore the issues surrounding PLEI versus communication. None the less, it is highly unlikely that specific information needs as noted above regarding mediation or showing abusers that their behaviour is wrong can be met with government materials. As was noted in the *1997 PLEI Review*, a government publication “cannot criticize the law it is explaining, or provide strategic input on how it affects a particular audience.”²¹

The *1997 PLEI Review*, in making this point, quotes a comment made by PLEI providers at a Public Legal Education Association of Canada (PLEAC) conference that is useful to restate given that the subject matter of the quote was also raised in reports as an information need (i.e., specific information regarding the impact of support payments for low income women on social assistance, etc.):

The strength of a PLEI publication is that it can tell the client: “This law will affect you this way.” The Child Support guidelines package is helpful to the extent that it describes the law as it applies to many families. However, the Department’s materials did not include, and could not be expected to include, a statement about how, for some women, the guidelines could result in lower support payments, and this process for applying for a variation could increase family tensions. This is what our clients need to know.²²

Accordingly, issues surrounding the use of PLEI as information or communication, and subsequently, the most appropriate methods of distribution of information should be considered further.

In the Group I reports, the term “PLEI” is not used. Needs relating to information and resources are identified but are not limited to legal information and educational activities about the law, the criminal justice system or the legal rights of citizens. In these reports, these and other needs, issues and barriers are presented within a broader examination of the relationship of rural

²⁰ See for example the Health Canada, Minister publication, *Family Group Decision Making: Communities Stopping Family Violence, Questions and Answers*. (Ottawa; Public Works, 1998). This manual discusses the steps to take when family group decision-making deals with family violence matters. Apart from the need for an assessment for risk and safety of participants—which is not explained—there is no critical analysis of whether this type of alternative dispute resolution mechanism is, in fact, appropriate where abuse is involved. On the Provincial Association of Transition Houses in Saskatchewan (PATHS) and the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC) web sites, there are information and research materials provided on the role of mediation and restorative justice in dealing with issues associated with violence against women.

²¹ Moliner 1997, p.28.

²² Moliner 1997, p. 28.

characteristics and the systemic inequalities perpetuating violence (i.e., poverty, sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, etc.). These issues, barriers and needs are discussed more fully below.

3.3 *Issues and Needs*

Women, children, youth and older persons²³ who experience violence in rural contexts lack services, transportation, information and economic opportunities. While the following discussion is not an exhaustive examination of the issues identified in the reports, it outlines some of the key issues that people experiencing violence in rural areas face when seeking legal information.

Within the context of PLEI materials and strategies for distribution, the *Final Report 1994, A Holistic Response to the Victims of Family Violence in a Rural Environment*, sums up the needs of rural people living in or surviving abusive relationships, as reflected in the Group I and II reports:

The specific needs of victims: raising public awareness of the problem of family violence and providing various means of community-based education were seen as essential components of a process which would alleviate a serious social problem as well as changing attitudes and values which perpetuated the problem.²⁴

The research identifies public legal education and information as part of a larger process of change and accordingly the needs reflect this. The following sub-section presents the PLEI needs as identified in both the Group I and II reports. It discusses the issues identified in the research and follows with a discussion of needs.

These issues are not mutually exclusive and, in some cases, one compounds the impact of the other. For example, for a person who has no access to private transportation and is physically isolated, the cost of using public transportation (e.g., a taxi or bus) may be prohibitive, if finances are an issue.

While the problem may not appear dissimilar to those confronted by urban women and, to a lesser extent, children and youth and older persons, a rural context tends to intensify these problems.

The issues are categorized into seven major issues, which are meant to facilitate discussion. Of necessity, the categories are fluid and overlap considerably. For example, lack of transportation could be seen as a facet of "geography" or "isolation." Therefore, in some cases, there is overlap and redundancy.²⁵

²³ A profile of violence against women, children and youth, older persons and doubly isolated peoples based on the reports in Group I and II is provided in Appendix #5.

²⁴ Dorothy Gilson, *Final Report 1994, A Holistic Response to the Victims of Family Violence in a Rural Environment* (Antigonish, Nova Scotia: Naomi Society for Victims of Family Violence, 1994), p. 264.

²⁵ The themes used are a combination of those identified by Candace Brookbank (Candace Brookbank, *Spouse Abuse in Rural Communities: A Review of the Literature, (TR1996-5e)* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1995)) and Yasmin Jiwari (Jiwani 1998). The reports in Group I present a full discussion of many

a) Geography

The remoteness of many rural communities poses significant challenges to the provision of information and services to victims of abuse. Victims may have to travel long distances to obtain information; they may be prevented from using telephones and public/private transportation. Some also have no access to hydro facilities. In some communities, party lines do not ensure privacy and accessing phone booths may require traveling a significant distance (Biesenthal and Sproule 2000; Milne 1992).

Due to physical geography and sparse population in certain rural areas, adequate transportation services may not exist. The lack of public transportation, lack of access to private vehicles and the expense or inadequacy of public transportation (e.g., taxi services) serve to isolate abused people from services, prevent them from obtaining general information (Biesenthal and Sproule 1997, 2000; Jiwani 1998; Harbison et al. 1995; PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000) and restrict their ability to escape from dangerous situations (Rooendaal 1998; PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000).

Another transportation difficulty identified by the Saskatchewan study is that the locations of service providers do not often reflect common travel patterns. As a result, a woman may find that service providers are located in a number of different communities: legal clinics are often a significant distance from small communities, and women may have to travel great distances to reach a shelter. “This creates additional financial costs and psychological costs for the woman trying to access services for herself and her family” (Martz and Sarauer 2000). (I don’t understand this paragraph: what is meant by boundaries; all services may be far from each other?)

One report noted that many of the programs that have been established for abused immigrant women mostly exist in major metropolitan areas, because the percentage of women living in rural areas is small (Miedema 1999).

b) Isolation

The experience of isolation resonated throughout the reports reviewed. Abused individuals are isolated by a number of complex and interlocking factors.

While the experience of emotional isolation is common to abused people in both urban and rural areas, physical isolation, for example, from neighbours is more of a reality in rural areas. As one study noted, abuse on farms is easier to hide.²⁶

Some reports noted that some abusers will intentionally move to a rural area to isolate his partner from friends, family and other sources of support: “[S]ometimes an abusive man will move to the

of the barriers confronted by rural women living in abusive relationships. In particular, the research report on two British Columbia rural communities by Yasmin Jiwani provides a comprehensive discussion and thematic analysis of the barriers and responses to violence in these rural areas.

²⁶ Diane J. Forsdick Martz and D. Bryson Sarauer, *Domestic Violence and the Experiences of Rural Women in East Central Saskatchewan* (Muenster, SK.: St. Peter's College, September 2000), p. 23.

country because he feels assured that neighbours will not intervene or question his authority over his wife.”²⁷

Abused people can also be isolated from information and education on legal issues by a number of social, cultural and linguistic characteristics (PLENA 2000; PLEI Service – New Brunswick, Nova Scotia PLEI 2000; Saskatchewan PLEI 2000). Further, immigrants require services and legal information that are culturally sensitive and linguistically accessible. It is often difficult or impossible for immigrants to find information in their own language (Miedema 1999; Biesenthal and Sproule 2000; Venugopal 1991).

Also, immigrant and other rural women have concerns about going to shelters for information (Miedema 1999; Biesenthal and Podovinnikoff 1998).

c) Lack of anonymity and confidentiality

Many of the reports identified that the lack of anonymity and confidentiality influenced whether an abused person sought help in crises as well as help to leave or cope with an abusive situation (Jiwani 1998; Kolomeitz-Warman 1998).

Women are reported to be reluctant to involve the police in abusive situations because private information can become public knowledge when phone numbers, addresses, names and other information are announced over the police scanner; listening to police scanners is a common way for local people to find out what is going on in the community.²⁸

Victims may not be able to obtain available information, if they are required to frequent high visibility areas to do so, because they may not wish their friends and neighbours to know about the abuse. For example, in one report, youths and adults were deterred from seeking information in a case where the parking lot of a mental health office was located next to a popular diner, and in another case where the guidance counsellor’s waiting area was near a high traffic area of the school.²⁹

It is widely acknowledged that lack of anonymity affects decisions to confide in professionals.³⁰ The perceived lack of confidentiality when accessing services in rural communities has been identified as a significant barrier to seeking help. For this reason, “Mental health counsellors,

²⁷ S. de Vink and D. Doherty, *Family violence on the farm and in rural communities* (Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, 1995), p. 14.

²⁸ Arlene Haddon, Marilyn Merritt-Gray, Judith Wuest and H.E.A.R Research Team, *Private Matters and Public Knowledge in Rural Communities: The Paradox* (Fredericton, N.B.: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, January 2001), p.11.

²⁹ Haddon et al. 2001, p. 19.

³⁰ Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Helpers Exploring Abuse and Responding Research Team (HEAR), *Prevention of Family Violence in Rural Town, Island and Geographically Isolated Communities, Determining Socio-cultural Influences on the Meanings of and Responses to Woman Abuse* (Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, 1997), p. 15; Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 24.

school guidance counsellors, doctors and a host of service providers are regarded with extreme suspicion."³¹

Lack of anonymity also causes women to feel judged (Biesenthal and Sproule 2000). As one woman identified:

In a small town, everybody knows everybody's business and sometimes that's even scarier and you stay because you are not going to leave your husband because the whole town might know about it and what are they going to think about me?³²

It has been noted that immigrant women are even likely to seek information from doctors because "it is easier to say that she needs to see a doctor than a social worker. For many immigrant women, visiting doctors is legitimate but visiting a social worker is not."³³

In one report on barriers to accessing support services, some women indicated that they would prefer to leave their county to seek shelter in order to ensure anonymity and alleviate concerns about safety that arise when the individual is too close to home.³⁴

Finally, lack of confidentiality was noted as a factor that precluded teens from disclosing information regarding abuse (i.e., worrying about the lack of confidentiality and the requirement of teachers, counsellors and doctors to inform their parents when information regarding abuse is shared³⁵).

d) Inadequacy of services and available information

All of the reports concluded that there is a basic lack of services and easily available information. Social services are limited, services directed specifically at violence against women may be difficult to access, few emergency intervention services exist, affordable housing is scarce, and a central location for legal information is often not feasible.

Reports indicated that having information to name the abuse was key to people leaving an abusive family situation (Biesenthal and Sproule 2000; Scott with Van Dine 1995). As well, access to shelters and to general legal information, especially through police, was identified as a key component for naming the abuse.

³¹ de Vink and Doherty 1995, p. 20.

³² Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 23.

³³ Baukje Miedema, *Barriers and Strategies: How to Improve Services for Abused Immigrant Women in New Brunswick. Research Paper Series, Number 1* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre and University of New Brunswick, 1999), p. 13.

³⁴ Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Family Violence on the Farm and in Rural Communities Research Team (Farm and Rural Research Team), *Barriers to the Use of Support Services by Family Violence Victims in Northumberland County Final Report* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre, unpublished, 1997), p.16.

³⁵ Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre, *Strategies Toward Violence Free Relationships For Girls and Women Living in Rural Communities in Atlantic Canada*, unpublished, 2001, p. 5.

However, the reports revealed that many women did not know about services available to help them.³⁶ Many women felt it was difficult to find information even when they were actively looking.³⁷

Lack of trained staff with knowledge about legal issues or how to find such information was identified in the reports. Staff is not able to assist people in identifying what they need to know (i.e., information about property law, custody and support, peace bonds). As a result, people seeking information are not receiving what they need, or they are being misinformed (PLEI Service – New Brunswick; CLIA – P.E.I.).

All the PLEI assessments identified the need for alternative methods and formats for public education to assist those with disabilities, low literacy and low education levels (MMF Centre 2001).

Lack of rural-based information was identified as an issue. For example, safety plans that may be suitable for urban residents don't address the reality of rural life. Other information that is available is usually urban-based (CLIA – P.E.I., PLEI Service – New Brunswick; Saskatchewan- PLEA).

With respect to immigrant women, it was noted that upon immigrating to Canada, they were not provided with information about their legal rights about woman abuse or about the services available in cases of woman abuse.³⁸

Many immigrant women whose first language is neither English or French encounter difficulty getting legal information from Immigration Canada because of the computerized tele-service that screens and directs phone inquiries. Communication over the phone is challenging for those who are not speaking in their native language.³⁹

Lack of information regarding sponsorship and status can lead to problems for immigrant women especially where the threat of deportation is used by abusive spouses.⁴⁰

Immigrant women noted other barriers to services such as fear of police, lack of outreach services to newcomers and lack of cultural diversity of social service agencies' staff and programming (Venugopal 1991).

³⁶ Farm and Rural Research Team 1997; S. E. Golton, S. E., *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Oxford County* (TR1998-12e-4) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1998), p. 14; Metz Murray Group (PLEI-Yukon), *Needs Assessment Public Legal Education and Information Products* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 2000); Community Legal Information Association of PEI, Inc. et al. (CLIA-P.E.I.), *Information Needs Assessment of Women Victims of Family Violence Going through the Criminal Justice System* (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 2000); Saskatchewan – PLEA 2000.

³⁷ S. Kolomeitz-Warman, *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Cochrane and Area*. (TR1998-12e1) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1998), p. 23.

³⁸ Miedema 1999, p. 6.

³⁹ Miedema 1999, p. 6.

⁴⁰ M. H. Venugopal, "Service in Rural Areas" in F. Rafiq (ed.), *Towards Equal Access: A Handbook for Service Providers Working with Survivors of Wife Assault*, pp. 161 - 164 (Toronto: Immigrant & Visible Minority Women Against Abuse, 1991); Jiwani 1998, p. 38

e) Community values, cohesion and the rural ethic of self-sufficiency

The values and characteristics of rural communities were identified in a number of reports as prohibitive for the initiation of educational activities that could assist abused people. Traditional attitudes were identified in a number of reports as a major barrier to change and leaving abusive relationships.⁴¹ For teens, there appears to be pressure to have a partner and to date early, and for women there is pressure to have a partner. This is often seen in family patterns that are played out in generation after generation.⁴²

The ethic of self-sufficiency, traditional religious and family-oriented values and sexual stereotyping about roles and division of labour have all been identified as barriers in rural areas that may compound the difficulty for women in obtaining information that would help them leave an abusive situation (PLEI Service – New Brunswick; Jiwani, 1998).

Among rural families in New Brunswick “the unity of the family is paramount. Many women stay in abusive relationships for the sake of the children or to avoid being ostracized. They do not want to tear them away from a rural lifestyle, pets and friends. Some rural families have lived in their communities for generations and have deep emotional and relationship ties to the area that make it difficult to consider relocating (PLEI Service – New Brunswick; Milne 1995).

The culture of certain Religious communities, which may reinforce the notion that a woman should submit to her husband, can reinforce traditional gender roles and “normalize” abusive behaviour.⁴³ Within such communities leaving a marriage often results in loss of church and community (de Vink and Doherty 1995; Jiwani 1998; MMF Centre 1994). The close-knit character of certain communities can also foster fears of reprisals from family members and the community if victims disclose or respond publicly to the abuse, which encourages denial.

The community response to the realities of violence in families is crucial to the options and information available to people in abusive homes. While there are examples in the literature of communities co-ordinating activities to help abused people, there are also many examples of community attitudes that deny the abuse and blame the abused. This is an atmosphere in which volunteers and employees who work to deal with violence often face public scrutiny and harassment for speaking out.⁴⁴

It is noted that within rural communities there is a “strong code of taking care of one’s own problems and of keeping silent about abuse in rural communities.”⁴⁵

⁴¹ Gilson 1994; Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 25; MMF Centre 2001.

⁴² de Vink and Doherty 1995, p. 23.

⁴³ MMF Centre 2001.

⁴⁴ Biesenthal and Sproule 1997; Haddon et al. 2001; Kolomeitz-Warman 1998; Donna Lovelace, “The Struggle of Volunteers in Rural Communities” in *Vis-à-Vis: Newsletter of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1993), p. 8.

⁴⁵ Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre, 2001, p. 5.

In one study, participants felt that the local justice system often responds on the basis of the abusing partner's reputation rather than events, especially when the judge or responding police officer is a relative or friend of the accused.⁴⁶

A rural ethic of self-sufficiency and pride often dictates how survivors want to be viewed in the community, which contributes to their fears of stigmatization. Social stigma was cited in the reports as a barrier to disclosing, leaving abusive relationships or to seeking help. Victims of abuse typically suffer extremely low self-esteem and are often reluctant to admit even to the appropriate authorities that they have been abused (Jiwani 1998; PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000).

f) Economic considerations

Poverty is a pervasive issue in rural communities and a direct link to abuse. The economic crises typical of many rural areas influence the options available and the ability to leave an abusive relationship. In rural areas, families have been losing farms, mines have been closing, the lumber industry is in decline, and the fishery is shrinking due to depleted stocks (Milne 1992).

Many women cited economic considerations as a major factor for not leaving an abusive situation (Biesenthal and Sproule 1997; Jiwani 1998; Kolomeitz-Warman 1998). Rural women and girls are often dependent financially on a family business and there may be few employment or education options. Public transportation to seek work may be non-existent. Leaving a farm may put the animals, crops and viability of farm in jeopardy thus attacking the very source that sustains the family (MMF Centre 2001).

It is a challenge to find a job in a rural area, particularly in a one-industry town. If a woman has been working in a joint partnership with her husband on the farm and walks away from the arrangement, it is difficult to find alternative work (Biesenthal and Sproule 2000).

In rural communities, unemployment rates are above the urban rates in all provinces except the Prairies (Statistics Canada, Rural Statistics).

As well, "[e]conomic barriers were cited frequently as reasons for not obtaining legal services and pursuing cases through the court system."⁴⁷ The victim may not even be able to make a long distance phone call. For those who have accessed the legal or social services system, lack of money remains a factor. Many rural women do not know about legal aid services and most cannot afford a lawyer (PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000).

g) Availability of guns

Many of the reports identified access to firearms as a major safety concern. While rural women reported the presence of weapons slightly more often than did urban women⁴⁸ it was highlighted

⁴⁶ Haddon et al., 2001, p. 10

⁴⁷ Jiwani 1998, p.62.

⁴⁸ A. Levett and H. Johnson, *A Statistical Comparison of Women's Experiences of Violence in Urban and Rural Areas*. (TR1998-17e) (Ottawa, ON: Department of Justice Canada, 1997), p. 22.

in many reports that firearms are available in many rural homes. In one study, roughly half of the women interviewed stated that their abusive partners had access to guns.⁴⁹

Police were often aware that firearms were involved, and some women felt this made the police more reluctant to intervene. Women also expressed concern about how easily their partners were able to obtain firearms (Biesenthal and Podovinnikoff 1998).

While the incidence of violence in rural and urban areas may be comparable, the issue of access to guns in rural areas was raised repeatedly in the reports reviewed. Jiwani provides a review of the literature on use of guns in rural areas. She suggests that although the difference in the prevalence of gun violence against women in rural and urban communities is not statistically significant, the current literature does highlight that the greater accessibility to and number of guns in rural areas are factors in the intimidation, terrorization and murder of women in violent relationships. While gun ownership and accessibility may not be the sole reasons for wife-killing in rural areas, the fact that guns are present and accessible may accentuate their use in situations of violence. Second, it may be more viable to discharge a firearm in a rural area without being detected or attracting police attention.⁵⁰

3.4 Issues, Needs: The Impact on PLEI

The above discussion summarizes many of the barriers faced by rural victims and survivors of abuse and the unique rural characteristics that contribute to the increased vulnerability of abused women and to a much lesser extent, abused children, youth and older adults.

The reports are useful in identifying a number of areas where PLEI organizations can play a critical role in removing some of the barriers confronted by abused women and in identifying the services that are in a position to assist women in naming the abuse and finding information about their options.

3.4.1 PLEI Responding to Individual Needs

As noted, the impact of the close-knit community and of the rural ethic of self-sufficiency serves to make it very difficult for women in rural areas to name the abuse they live with, let alone disclose it. At an individual level there are actions women can take. These are summarized as recommendations from survivors:

... women develop safety measures and supportive networks; research the availability of services in their area; recognize that abusers are not going to change; not remain in the abusive relationship for the sake of children; and to recognize that they are not alone.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, 36.

⁵⁰ Jiwani 1998, p.7.

⁵¹ Jiwani 1998, p. xviii.

Initial disclosure of abuse seldom is to a police officer. It is more likely to be to a friend than a professional. If it is to a professional or police officer, these individuals must be familiar with the relevant law and able to provide the basic information about available support services or referrals to where this type of information can be found.

The inaccessibility of legal aid and lawyers necessitates the “widespread distribution of information in plain and multiple languages about legal aid services, child support payments, women’s rights, property issues, custody and access issues and what legal aid covers.”⁵² Other legal and non-legal information that PLEI organizations can provide for victims of abuse, or be aware of to refer to clients, are listed below.⁵³

Legal Information

- Information on specific laws and legal procedures relevant to victims of violence/abuse.
- Information on court procedure and how it is supposed to work, how it really works and why delays occur.
- Information on family law, including such topics as retrieving property, matrimonial property, custody and access to children, enforcing child support orders.
- Better and more accurate information about mediation and other alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, including the risks for women and how to address safety issues with these options.
- Information on alternatives to the criminal justice system such as civil sexual assault actions, conflict resolution including restorative justice and victim/offender mediation, including the kinds of risks and consequences for women in relation to these alternatives.

Other PLEI Information

- Information or messages that describe abusive behaviours.
- Information that presents and responds to family violence in a social and economic context.
- Information that will help to raise a victim’s confidence and self-esteem.
- Information about the impact of family violence on children.
- Information about personal safety issues to consider when leaving violent relationships.

⁵² Jiwani 1998, p. 173.

⁵³ This list of information is compiled from the needs identified in the Group II assessments.

- Information on the relationship of support to issues of custody and enforcement, income support, etc.
- Up-to-date local information about:
 - local, regional and provincial services and agencies available;
 - living in a shelter;
 - lawyers who have had training on the domestic violence legislation (i.e., P.E.I. and Saskatchewan legislation).

Getting PLEI into the hands of individuals is important. The reports identified the difficulty of finding legal information. Many of the Group II reports identified ways to develop and distribute PLEI that respect the individual's privacy, take safety issues into concern and address the more common systemic barriers confronted by victims (i.e., poverty, cultural issues, social isolation, literacy, classism, racism, homophobia and sexism). These are discussed below.

Rural Content

A recurring suggestion was the need to target information to specific groups and not rely on generic information. In particular, all information should have a rural content, depict rural life in the graphics and reflect a rural perspective. Such materials should be available not only locally but also in the larger centres where rural people may go for assistance.

Appropriate Information (rural culture, ethnoculture, religious beliefs, etc.)

To assure PLEI materials are reflective of and useful to the community targeted (i.e., culturally appropriate), it is suggested that PLEI materials be developed in consultation with service providers and representatives of the groups targeted (i.e., youth, immigrant women, religious faith communities, etc.).

Varying Needs and Abilities

As well, it is noted that PLEI materials and resources must reflect the variety of needs and abilities of those targeted (i.e., plain language, bilingual materials, non-official languages, as well as alternative formats, such as audio tape or Braille, video and multimedia approaches, television, radio advertisements and poster campaigns; radio and television talk shows; Internet Web sites — interactive for questions). In rural communities, outreach workers and travelling legal clinics promote personal contact (whether by phone or in person).

High Visibility of PLEI Materials

Print materials should be available in public areas frequented by rural people, such as grocery stores, recreation centres, drug stores, libraries, schools, post offices and caisses populaires, churches, medical clinics and community halls. Messages directed at men should be in places such as garages, bars and gyms.

Format of Print Material

The format of print materials also can facilitate easier and safer access. The following are examples that address some of the safety and privacy issues women have noted around seeking out information:

- flyers in local papers;
- wallet-sized cards with contact numbers that police, doctors, clergy and others can give out; and
- messages in phone bills, power bills.

Providing information in women-only spaces is also something advocated in some of the reports (i.e., women's washrooms). For a specific example of this refer to the discussion on the experiences of the PLEI Service – New Brunswick working with the clergy in Appendix #3.

Many of the PLEI organizations, as well as the federal Department of Justice, are turning to the Internet to distribute information. The effectiveness of the Internet as a distribution tool for rural areas (perhaps with the exception of New Brunswick) needs to be considered. Preliminary information obtained from Statistics Canada regarding Internet use in rural households is presented in Appendix #6. Excerpts from an ongoing research initiative regarding Internet use are also provided in Appendix #6. This latter research underscores how the information highway is bypassing certain sectors of the Canadian population — particularly women, certain ethnic groups, those with lower incomes and those living in rural and remote regions of the country. This is an issue that merits further exploration, considering the increasing reliance by PLEI organizations as well as the Department of Justice on the Internet to distribute public legal information and education materials.

3.4.2 Institutional Needs

The second area identified in which PLEI materials and services are required (when dealing with family violence in rural areas) is the institutions that deal with victims of violence. PLEI materials and resources can better prepare professionals for dealing with the issues. In particular, needs of those within the criminal justice system, health services and social services have been targeted.

a) Changes needed in the legal system

Most of the reports suggest numerous needs specific to the legal system, although two reports acknowledged that there has been significant improvement in the justice system's response to violence.⁵⁴ Many of the needs identified are summarized in the following recommendations to the justice system:

⁵⁴ Community Abuse Program of Rural Ontario (CAPRO), *Communities Against Violence Conference*, Dec 9-11, 1998, *Aylmer, Ontario Conference Proceedings* (unpublished, 1998); Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 35.

Recommendations concerning the justice system included: treatment of women survivors' experiences as credible and valid; increased provision of court services and legal aid; increased awareness of the dynamics underpinning woman abuse; increased enforcement of orders (restraining, no contact orders and peace bonds); more vigorous implementation of policies dealing with violence against women in intimate relationships; increased representation of women within the police and judiciary; reduced time span between charges and court appearances; a coordinated response, and stronger laws against woman abuse. Participants emphasized the need for the justice system to privilege the protection of women who are survivors of abuse. Additional recommendations emphasized the need for Victim Assistance Services to provide court accompaniment and to act as liaisons between police, courts, legal aid, and women survivors; and, changing the criteria for eligibility and range of coverage for services provided by legal aid.⁵⁵

Participants emphasized the need for the justice system to protect women who are survivors of abuse. Additional recommendations emphasized the need for victim assistance services to provide court accompaniment and to act as liaison among police, courts, legal aid and women survivors; and, changing the criteria for eligibility and range of coverage for services provided by legal aid.⁵⁶

A number of these changes require widespread structural change. There are opportunities for PLEI providers to assist in addressing some of the needs relevant to the police, judges, Crown attorneys and lawyers.

Police

In cases of police intervention, officers are in a key position to provide important legal information to women.

The attitude of a police officer determines access to legal information and shapes women's legal experiences.⁵⁷ Negative experiences with unsympathetic police were often compounded by the geography of a rural area where there were repeated incidences of police being friends of abusers and being reluctant to arrest or press restraining orders.⁵⁸

In cases where police provided information, such as phone number for the nearest shelter or an overview of what to expect from a legal proceeding,⁵⁹ women felt this was critical to making a decision about leaving an abusive situation. On the whole, women had positive experiences when the police believed them, were quick to respond and supported them.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Jiwani 1998, p. xvii.

⁵⁶ Jiwani 1998, p. xvii.

⁵⁷ Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 35.

⁵⁸ Milne 1992; M. Nelder, *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Espanola*. (TR1998-12e2) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1998), p. 21; MMF Centre, 2001.

⁵⁹ Golton 1998, p. 14.

⁶⁰ Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 20.

Overall, the reports indicated that: "The variation in women's experiences with the police suggests that the effectiveness of the police in each case depended a great deal on the individual police officer."⁶¹

The most frequent need identified in the reports was for more training and education for police on violence and the dynamics of abuse. Police as representatives of the legal system should be knowledgeable about the legal system and able to refer individuals to local, available services and resources. It was felt that this training should be up-to-date and ongoing.⁶² Police need to learn to take women's fear seriously (Martz and Sarauer 2000) and to treat women with respect.⁶³ Police need to be knowledgeable about all the other services in the rural area offered for victims of violence (Group II needs assessments, Biesenthal and Sproule 2000).

Crown attorneys and judges

The experiences of women with the Crown attorneys and the court were also mixed, depending on the rural area where they lived.⁶⁴ Many women did not have contact with the Crown attorney before a hearing, nor did they know that the role of the Crown includes interviewing a woman before a hearing.⁶⁵ Women were satisfied in the cases where the Crown was knowledgeable about the issue of violence and good at explaining the court process.⁶⁶

Two key needs were identified in regard to the role and responsibilities of the court system and the Crown attorney's office.

The primary need is for better training and education for Court personnel (Crown attorneys and judges) on woman abuse.⁶⁷ This should include sensitivity training on the issues of violence, and how to keep victims informed and involved throughout the process. For example, protocols should be developed that ensure the Crown attorney's office takes responsibility to initiate and continue contact with women throughout the whole proceeding.⁶⁸ The protocols should also ensure that the Crown consults with women and other support services if needed throughout the process.⁶⁹

The need for knowledgeable and supportive victim witness services in all rural areas was also identified (CAPRO 1998; Jiwani 1998). Victim assistance workers would have a role to:

- accompany women to court and to the police;
- act as liaisons between women and Crown attorneys and judges; and

⁶¹ Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 20.

⁶² Golton 1998, p. 21.

⁶³ Jiwani 1998, p. 174.

⁶⁴ Nelder 1998, p. 23.

⁶⁵ Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 39.

⁶⁶ Kolomeitz-Warman 1998, p. 28; I. Roosendaal, *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry*. (TR1998-12e5) (Ottawa, ON: Department of Justice Canada, 1998), p. 23.

⁶⁷ CLIA - P.E.I. 2000; CAPRO 1998; Jiwani 1998, p. 173.

⁶⁸ Nelder 1998, p. 30.

⁶⁹ Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 39.

- act as advocates for women.⁷⁰

Outreach workers and advocates, as well as a travelling legal clinic were identified in the Group II reports as important factors in overcoming the numerous barriers noted by women in going through the court system, both criminal and civil. The need for a woman's advocate was also identified in the Group I reports. This person would be knowledgeable regarding legal issues surrounding family violence and the social support system that exists for victims and survivors of family violence. The woman's advocate would be highly visible and easily accessible (Martz and Sarauer 2000).

Lawyers and legal clinics

Legal aid clinics and lawyers were identified as sources of legal information. Widely reported by women and in the Group II reports was the lack of legal aid services in rural areas (CAPRO 1998; Jiwani et al. 1998; Martz and Sarauer 2000). The Saskatchewan study revealed that legal aid lawyers are only available in some small communities, and only on an intermittent basis. And those women that did use legal aid or private lawyers had to travel to a larger centre to meet with them. "This created a difficult situation. In order to access a Legal Aid Lawyer, you must have limited resources, yet at the same time you must find the money to travel."⁷¹

Women expressed a great deal of confusion about the role of legal aid: legal aid has a priority for abused women only if they call the police or have medical evidence of abuse, which means many women are not eligible to receive legal aid.⁷²

In response to the problems regarding access to legal aid and lawyers, the reports noted the need for PLEI materials on specific legal issues, travelling legal clinics, toll-free legal information lines, education of legal aid staff and private lawyers on the issues of violence against women and increased legal aid services in rural areas with an expansion of the criteria for service to be covered by legal aid (CAPRO 1998; Jiwani 1998; Nelder 1998).

b) Changes needed in services

The needs identified in social and health services were extensive as many services do not exist, and the providers of those that do, are often unaware of violence issues. Many of these needs are summarized in the following statement:

Recommendations for social service delivery agencies and institutions concerned the need for better trained personnel; the re-assessment and eradication of discriminatory policies; increased services; proactive measures that would enable the re-integration of survivors into the labour force and society; early intervention strategies and programs; and above all, the need for better communication strategies (using plain language and multilingual formats) by which to inform survivors of their rights and eligibility to

⁷⁰ Jiwani 1998, p. 174.

⁷¹ Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 20.

⁷² Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 38.

services, as well as the kinds of services that are available and accessible. Participants recommended the implementation of a co-ordinated response, and a centralized system which could better serve the needs of women living with abuse.⁷³

In terms of PLEI, the reports identified the need for service providers to be educated on the issue of violence and the law and to be knowledgeable about resources and services available including PLEI materials and services.

Social services

A number of social services are called upon to provide support and information to abused women. These may include services as far reaching as Children's Aid, service groups, income assistance programs, child resource programs, drop-in centers, women's centres and resource centres.

Services specific to family violence, such as shelters, safe homes and transitions houses, while often nonexistent in rural areas, play a pivotal role in the lives of abused women and children. There is a range of experiences across Canada, and it is recognized that many women do not go to shelters for a variety of reasons when they choose to leave an abusive situation (Farm and Rural Research Team 1997). While not all communities have a shelter or a shelter-based outreach worker, in communities that do have these services they play a crucial role in the safety of women and children.

However, this particular discussion focusses on the findings from the ORWAS community reports as these services are filling a gap in the provision of legal information to abused women. In the ORWAS reports, shelters were identified as the primary source of PLEI for abused women in rural communities. Responses from these reports describe the pivotal role that shelters have in the provision of public legal information:

Shelters seemed to be the main source of information regarding justice process and the issue of rights and of access to legal services.⁷⁴

Women who used shelters found that they received ongoing assistance in dealing with the legal system and support.⁷⁵

Shelters were an important source of support during court proceedings.

Services for children

Many of the women interviewed for the reports indicated a need for counselling and information services for children who have experienced and witnessed abuse. One participant from the British Columbia report⁷⁶ described her concerns:

⁷³ Jiwani 1998, p. xviii.

⁷⁴ Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 41; Roosendaal 1998, p. 23.

⁷⁵ Golton 1998, p. 18; Roosendaal 1998, p. 25.

⁷⁶ Jiwani 1998, p. 35.

My main concern ... was that they would grow up and think that this is normal. I wanted them both to grow up and know what it is to love and be loved, what that really is to feel safe [sic], to know that I am safe ... I want my children to grow up and respect me and love me and maybe look to me for some guidance, and how can they do that if I'm cowering and afraid to stand up for myself?⁷⁷

The report that included interviews with women in Saskatchewan identified the need for counselling for children.

In many cases, school-aged children were able to access counselling through their schools ... When dealing with older children, women felt that the counselling must be confidential. In their experience, children in high schools will not become involved in counselling if they are not sure it is confidential.⁷⁸

The study on sexual abuse of children in rural Alberta found that child welfare workers, police and Crown attorneys worked well on difficult cases.⁷⁹ This type of co-operation is imperative in rural areas where there is a lack of treatment services and often a geographic distance between key support systems.

It is imperative that all social service organizations and staff have training on the issue of violence to enable them to provide appropriate services to victims of abuse.

Community and Frontline Services

Training on the law is also needed for community workers, especially front-line workers in shelters and transition homes. Group II reports noted that the volume of legal information requests received by service providers is increasing and becoming more sophisticated (PLEI Service – New Brunswick, PLI of Newfoundland and Labrador). At the same time workers are not adequately prepared to provide law information to their clients, nor are they up-to-date with legal information (PLEI Service – New Brunswick). Requests from community workers for more information, supplemented with instructional videos and workshops, were identified by some core PLEI providers (PLEI Service – New Brunswick, PLI of Newfoundland and Labrador).

The Nova Scotia core PLEI provider recommended that service providers have access to "train the trainer" programs, workshops and manuals to upgrade their knowledge of family violence law.

The reports identify the key role that shelters and some social service providers are being called upon to play in the provision of legal information and education in some rural areas. This affirms

⁷⁷ Jiwani 1998, p. 35.

⁷⁸ Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 22.

⁷⁹ Donna Phillips and Joseph Hornick, *Review and Monitoring of Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Selected Sites in Rural Alberta, Studies on Sexual Abuse of Children in Canada*. (WD1992-14e) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1992), p. 44.

the need for PLEI organizations to recognize the role of these particular intermediaries and work in conjunction with them to provide information and training across organizations. It is also essential that some method of recording and distributing the resources and information lists among all services be developed in response to the lack of knowledge and awareness about existing PLEI materials demonstrated by service providers in the Group II needs assessments.

Health, medical and mental health services

Women who are abused often go to medical professionals for treatment of injuries, support, treatment of depression and safety. Women had very mixed responses from medical services. In situations when medical personnel were supportive, women felt that the experience was very beneficial.⁸⁰ However, there were also many experiences when medical personnel were not supportive and not well informed about issues of abuse (Biesenthal and Sproule 2000; Martz and Sarauer 2000). In one study of 30 emergency room health care providers (many of whom work in rural hospitals and health centres), the respondents noted that "without disclosure, the majority would not offer information to a patient who presented with indicators of abuse for fear of humiliating her."⁸¹

Using health services to disclose experiences of abuse is not always an option in rural areas. For example, while some women view medical centres as a safe place to go, other women have family and friends working in them and are concerned about maintaining confidentiality.⁸² Another concern is:

The high turnover rates of doctors in rural Saskatchewan precluded the development of long-term relationships with patients. These relationships were important for women to build trust necessary to confide in their doctor (Martz and Sarauer 2000).

There is a need for increased training of medical and mental health professionals on the issue and dynamics of violence against women. Also medical professionals could easily distribute legal information in the form of pamphlets and other reading material to women when they disclose experiences of violence. Health care professionals need to establish co-ordinated and consistent services to women in rural areas. As noted, in relation to social services, there is also a need for health services to work in a co-ordinated fashion with PLEI organizations to ensure they have adequate legal and resource information to distribute should a patient disclose abuse.

A mechanism for sharing information with professionals and service providers has been identified by a number of core PLEI providers as a means of increasing the awareness and use of PLEI materials.

⁸⁰ Martz and Sarauer 2000, p.18.

⁸¹ PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000, p. 10.

⁸² Biesenthal and Sproule 2000, p. 32.

3.4.3 PLEI Responding to Community Needs

The needs identified to improve community responses for abused women are summarized in the following statement:

Recommendations for communities (residents, agencies and businesses), included: increasing awareness about woman abuse and services that are available for survivors; increased public education strategies which involve the use of the media, organization of public events and advertising campaigns; changing attitudes towards woman abuse and women in general; introduction of violence prevention curricula and strategies in schools; and enhanced support for community-based services and initiatives. In addition, participants recommended that communities take a proactive approach and be encouraged to intervene in cases involving woman abuse.⁸³

Given that, in some rural areas, the values and attitudes that form the fabric of the rural community promote denial of abuse and victim-blaming, it is not a surprise that the reports stress that a fundamental aspect of any public awareness or education campaign is understanding what violence is. As noted in one research report, participants in a particular project, while knowledgeable of various forms of woman abuse, were adamant that abuse was not a problem in their region, other than isolated pockets of the community or with "people from away." The researchers explain this view as follows. "When people think they know each other well, there is a reluctance to believe that someone you know is being abused. It reflects on you. ...signs of abuse in a woman who is a partner of a man whose public image is exemplary may not be correctly interpreted, or acknowledged."⁸⁴

In rural areas, it is important that public awareness campaigns on violence against women, children and youth and older persons be more than a promotion of zero tolerance.

Slogans that promote "zero tolerance" are probably not helpful since everyone agrees that abuse is not okay. It might be more helpful to encourage dialogue about what abuse is, how it can be dealt with in personal relationships and how to talk constructively about it with family, friends and co-workers.⁸⁵

In the Group II reports, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick identified the need for massive public awareness campaigns similar to the drinking /driving campaign to facilitate a shift in public attitudes towards family violence. As well, the Group II reports identified the need for community education initiatives such as town hall meetings, public forums and council meetings directed at defining abuse and promoting messages that abusers must be accountable for their actions.

⁸³ Jiwani 1998, p. xviii.

⁸⁴ Haddon et al. 2001 p. 10.

⁸⁵ Haddon et al. 2001, p. 20.

However, as noted by one of the Advisory Committee members, it is difficult to get rural community members to attend women abuse education initiatives. Women fear being identified as/exposing themselves as victims. It is further suggested that this type of education needs to be part of already structured events and organization agenda such as church meetings, community group meetings (Lions, Kinsmen, Women's Auxiliaries), school curricula, adult education programs, etc.

Two segments of the community that are identified as playing a pivotal role for PLEI on violence within the rural community are schools and the clergy.

Schools

Education in schools was identified as an important step in the prevention of violence. All core PLEI providers undertaking the family violence needs assessments recommended that family violence education be part of every school's curriculum. While one study indicated that women had positive experiences and support from their children's school⁸⁶ not all schools are viewed as a safe place to disclose experiences of violence by children or parents (Biesenthal and Sproule 1997).

One teenager who was attending high school tried to tell her school counsellor, who was a priest, about her abusive relationship but felt embarrassed and concerned because the counsellor was a friend of her boyfriend's family.⁸⁷

There are some examples of extensive work to provide information on violence in the school system. In one rural community there had been ongoing collaboration among local shelters, social services, the Crown attorney's office and the local school boards to develop violence against women curricula, a protocol for children witnessing abuse and in-service workshops for school personnel. It was felt that this project was preventative as well as offering a long-term problem-solving component (Bernadette McCann House 1996).

Clergy and religious organizations

Some reports indicated support from pastors and clergy.⁸⁸ In the British Columbia study⁸⁹ service providers were concerned about referring women to mainstream religious institutions. One participant noted the lack of support of some pastors: "I have heard some women say some pastors really believed that women just need to try harder."⁹⁰

The church is often a significant focus of social life in rural communities.⁹¹ Therefore, it has a key role to play in PLEI public awareness and education campaigns.

⁸⁶ Roosendaal 1998, p. 20.

⁸⁷ Kolomeitz-Warman 1998, p. 23.

⁸⁸ Kolomeitz-Warman 1998, p. 21.

⁸⁹ Jiwani 1998, p. 105.

⁹⁰ Jiwani 1998, p. 105.

⁹¹ de Vink and Doherty 1995, p.15.

The Saskatchewan study⁹² revealed that the clergy were the third most commonly accessed service by abused women. Clergy are in a pivotal position to assist rural people who are in abusive situations. However, in many communities there is still fear and trepidation in talking about abuse in the church (CAPRO 1998). This is in part attributable to certain values and beliefs held by the clergy of the church.

In Atlantic Canada, considerable research has been undertaken by the MMF Centre Religion and Violence research team regarding the role of the evangelical churches in counselling and working to end male violence against women. One particular project explored how churches and transition houses may be able to work in a co-ordinated way.⁹³ The differences in ideology and practice between the two continue to make this difficult. The majority of ministers have some factual basis for their conceptions of family violence but "see violence among church families as a family problem, and the wife abuse as a part of a spiritual struggle rather than as an outcome of structural inequalities between men and women."⁹⁴ Ultimately while there are obvious benefits to having clergy work co-operatively and in co-ordinated manner with others such as transition houses and service providers on campaigns against violence, this is an ongoing challenge.⁹⁵

At a minimum, educating the congregation about abuse is imperative, and all clergy should have a complete list of services and available information to assist people in understanding the spiritual as well as structural inequality dimensions of abuse.

A co-ordinated response with PLEI providers working with the various players involved in responding to violence in rural communities is essential in addressing many of the PLEI needs identified at the individual, community and institutional levels. It would be beyond the mandate and capability of PLEI organizations to address all of the PLEI needs identified to date. Appendix #3 of this report presents some examples of PLEI providers working in a co-ordinated way to meet rural needs. The work of the PLEI Service – New Brunswick and CLIA – P.E.I. can provide some insight into what a co-ordinated response for core PLEI providers to rural violence looks like and can do to meeting some of the needs identified.

The next section discusses the considerations for follow-up activities in the research based on the findings discussed above.

⁹² Martz and Sarauer 2000, p. 29.

⁹³ Nancy Nason-Clark, "Conservative Protestants and Violence Against Women: Exploring the Rhetoric and the Response," *Religion and Social Order*, Volume 5, 1995, pp. 109-130.

⁹⁴ Nason-Clark 1995, p. 109.

⁹⁵ As follow-up to this research project, the MMF Centre and the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces Family Violence Committee produced a 52-page handbook called *Understanding the dynamics of family violence: a ministry handbook*. It is a guide for pastors and others in the church to understand the importance of ministry to those who have been hurt by family violence. The handbook is an overview of some of the issues relevant when considering the church's response to family violence. Family violence, child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse are defined. With reference to religious practice, the handbook explores such questions as: Does violence happen in Christian homes? Why do people stay in abusive homes? And why is it so difficult to stop family violence? Information is provided on abusers and how pastors can minister to an offender. Other topics include working with secular agencies and forgiveness. The role of the church and the pastor in responding to family violence is described, along with obstacles that hinder an effective ministry in the area of family violence.

4.0 Implications of the Research for the Follow-up Activities

There are a number of considerations for the follow-up activities to this project.

4.1 *Limitations/ Gaps of the existing Research*

In deciding where to go with this project, it is useful to be aware of the limitations of the research to date. This review is far from definitive on the PLEI needs regarding violence against women, children, youth and older persons living in rural areas.

The PLEI needs-assessment reports (Group II reports) do not identify the PLEI needs, gaps and issues in relation to family violence in British Columbia, Manitoba, Nunavut, NWT, Ontario and Quebec. While the Jiwani report and the ORWAS reports do address the needs, gaps and issues in British Columbia and Ontario, the shortcoming of the needs-assessment reports is further highlighted by the limited number of community-based research projects dealing with violence against women in rural areas in Manitoba and Quebec; and dealing with children and youth and older persons in rural areas in all jurisdictions.

While violence against children, youth and older persons was to form part of this review, these components are non-existent, except in name. This is due to the fact that the focus of the majority of Group I and Group II reports is on violence against women living in rural areas.

There are very few research reports available regarding children, youth and older persons in rural families throughout Canada. The limited number of such reports in Group I are primarily studies by the research teams at the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. Many of the reports from the Centre are not specifically described as *rural* research projects, yet since at least 50 percent of the population is rural in this region, it is safe to conclude there is a substantial rural component to all the participatory research. Only two of the Group I reports deal in any detail with abuse of older persons. One of the reports is based in Nova Scotia and does contain limited information regarding services for abused older persons in rural areas. The other report is research undertaken by a woman's shelter in Selkirk, Manitoba.

The Department conducted a PLEI family violence needs assessment of the deaf community within Canada in March 2000. Nonetheless, the issues and needs of deaf women, deaf children and youth or deaf older persons in rural areas are not dealt with adequately in this report because there is very little research on this subject.

The Group I reports, for the most part, do not deal with the intersection of factors such as race, class, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and physical/mental challenges with violence against women in rural areas, let alone children and youth and older persons. There are some reports that recognize the diversity among rural women but these are limited.

There is mention made in some reports of the issues and the needs of women who are physically/mentally disabled but these are not specific to rural communities (i.e., Roehrer Institute, MacDougall). The same can be said of immigrant and visible minority women (i.e., Jiwani, Miedema, Biesenthal and Sproule). There are specific reports dealing with the issues and

needs of rural/low income women in New Brunswick (PLEI Service – New Brunswick – Child Support). Again these are few and certainly not representative of all jurisdictions.

Suffice it to say, the scope of this project to date is limited to findings about violence against rural women. The findings do not adequately reflect the diversity among rural women nor the unique needs regarding violence against children, youth and older persons, including those marginalized within these populations. These are obvious gaps that should be considered when deciding the scope of any possible future projects.

4.2 *Naming the Abuse*

A finding that arose from this research is that there is a need to ensure consistency, to the extent this is possible, in the messages PLEI providers send out to their communities. This is particularly important around how “violence” is defined. Many of the Group I reports noted that while many victims of abuse, as well as community members generally were aware of what constitutes physical or sexual violence, the same could not be said for the other facets of abuse such as emotional, financial, mental and psychological. Having a consistent message in the materials that provides a full and complete understanding of all facets of abuse is important.

In this report, the term “family violence” has not been used except when describing or discussing a report that has used the term. Where possible, terms that more accurately describe those to whom the violence is directed within the family context are used, e.g., “violence against women,” “violence against children and youth” and “violence against older persons.” This approach is consistent with the working definition adopted by the Family Violence Initiative:

Family violence is a concept which includes intra- and extra- familial abuse of children and youth, and of older persons; and abuse of women by their male partners. It can take a number of forms in addition to physical assault, such as intimidation, mental or emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, deprivation and financial exploitation.⁹⁶

Where the approach does deviate from this working definition is with respect to the context of “family.” This report has interpreted the context in the same manner as Statistics Canada in the *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile* (Statistics Canada 2000). There it notes that “[d]efinitions vary according to the type of relationships considered under the definition ‘family’ (e.g., marriage, blood, adoption, foster care, step and blended family arrangements, and same-sex relationships).”⁹⁷ As a result, research was not identified that deals with extra-familial or intra-familial abuse of children and youth and older persons (i.e., institutional child sexual assault or institutional physical abuse of older adults). This is not to suggest these forms of violence are not significant in rural areas, but simply that they are beyond the scope of this definition and therefore are not addressed in this report.

⁹⁶ Brookbank 1995, p. 3.

⁹⁷ Statistics Canada (2000), *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada) p. 9. Also note that foster families were not identified in this report but may be another rural grouping that the Committee may wish to identify. In New Brunswick, 80% of foster children are living with rural families. There is very little information dealing with abuse of foster children in foster families.

In adopting this approach of naming the violence, there is a need to be clear on what is meant by the term "violence." The term is used interchangeably with "abuse" in this report and both refer to all forms of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, spiritual, financial and verbal abuse/violence.

As already noted, this report has not included as a category of violence, violence against men. Only one of the Group I reports identified this issue of abuse along with a few Group II reports.⁹⁸

The issue is not about the existence of violence against men by women. However, there is a debate about how common it is and the degree of harm inflicted by this violence. For example, many argue that "men in our society are seen as having more power than women" and that "aggressive behaviours by women against men in couple relationships must be seen differently from men's violence toward women."⁹⁹ In the same report, it goes on to state that "[p]erhaps more importantly, there is little evidence that men are as severely injured as the female victims of male violence."¹⁰⁰ The decision to exclude this issue of violence against men by women was not a result of a lack of available, existing research, but because of the controversy surrounding the research.

For the follow-up activities to this project, it is important to consider what term or terms should be used to describe violence within the family context and the scope of the term(s). The Caring Partnerships Communities Against Family Violence¹⁰¹ may be a useful starting point to consider. While using the term "family violence," the Partnerships group provides a detailed explanation of what it means and provides examples of people who are victims of abuse that reflect the rural context. It acknowledges that family violence relates to the abuse and mistreatment of individuals in an intimate or family relationship. The Partnerships explanation notes that family violence can be physical, sexual, emotional or financial in nature; that it happens everywhere to people from all backgrounds with women, children and the elderly being the most vulnerable and at risk. The definition and explanation are reproduced in Appendix #7.

4.3 *Systemic Nature of the Issues*

Another consideration when determining any possible follow-up activity is the extent to which PLEI can address the types of needs identified in this report.

As noted above, many of the problems and the resulting needs are complex and are not simply addressed by providing more PLEI materials in a given community. The barriers and resulting needs regarding PLEI materials and delivery mechanisms are deeply rooted in the structural inequalities that perpetuate violence within these communities and the larger society. Therefore, it is important to take note of the larger issues that are not addressed in this report that have a direct bearing on the success of PLEI.

⁹⁸ Wendy Scott with Carolyn Van Dine, 1995.

⁹⁹ Tutty 1998, p. 5.

¹⁰⁰ Tutty 1998, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ For more information on Caring Partnerships please refer to "The New Brunswick Experience," in Appendix #3.

Rather than attempt to restate the message of the PLEI Service of New Brunswick on this point, it is reproduced in full as it speaks to this issue so clearly:

... there are multiple, interrelated obstacles that contribute to the difficulty of delivering law information to disadvantaged groups. These problems are rooted, in part, in the limitations on the social services and communications infrastructure through which specialized information can be transmitted to those who may have special needs. It is often difficult for the existing network of service providers to disseminate information effectively in geographically isolated areas or to respond to different cultural environments. Difficulties specific to given groups are frequently complicated by a generally disadvantaged context of poverty, low literacy, physical isolation and problems of self-esteem. ...

Unfortunately, many of the barriers confronting these subgroups are systemic in nature. Some are imbedded in institutional frameworks and societal attitudes which have fostered systemic problems such as racism, gender inequality, sex-role stereotyping and so on. Others relate to economic and environmental factors such as poverty. Some of these issues must be addressed at a national and even global level.¹⁰²

Left to ponder on is the extent of issues/needs that could be incorporated in any follow-up work in relation to this project. One possibility would be to look specifically at the role of the core PLEI organizations (i.e., core PLEI providers, which in this report includes PLEAC) and the federal PLEI program to determine the follow-up work within this framework.

Alternatively, the role of core PLEI providers and those PLEI providers that fall within the 1997 *PLEI Policy Review* definition of PLEI intermediaries could be looked at.¹⁰³ Should there be a decision to cast the net to include PLEI intermediaries, this would be consistent with a need resonating throughout the reports — the need for PLEI materials and their distribution in rural areas to be part of a larger process responding to and, ultimately, preventing violence against women, children and youth and older people.

a) The role of core PLEI providers and PLEI intermediaries

This project attempted to rely upon existing research and determine from this what PLEI needs have been identified. Evident throughout the Group I ORWAS report findings and some of the needs assessments, there is an expectation that action must and will be taken to address their findings.

¹⁰² PLEI Service – New Brunswick 2000, p. 29.

¹⁰³ PLEI intermediaries "tend to be front-line service delivery organizations who receive funding from provincial governments and from private sources such as Law Foundation. The range of possible PLEI intermediaries is extensive forming a web of community resources with the potential to reach all organized aspects of the social justice network. PLEI intermediaries include legal aid clinics; women's shelters; health centres; churches; and organizations that target specific publics: seniors, women, Aboriginal groups, immigrants, racial and cultural minorities, people with disabilities and injured workers." Moliner 1997, pp. 11-12.

In seeking out existing research on rural violence, lessons learned and current initiatives with family violence PLEI materials and distribution, the researcher did call upon the expertise and resources of those working at the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre and the PLEI Service – New Brunswick, as well as other core PLEI providers and service providers such as the Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan (PATHS). Despite the researcher's repeated attempts to explain that the project was, to date, limited to developing this report, still expectations were raised that this report would lead to action and that any possible follow-up work should be done co-operatively with these groups.

Furthermore, the research findings support the view that further activity cannot simply be another report or a consultation with focus groups in rural areas across Canada to identify what their needs are. This has been done over and over again with certain sectors of the population. The PLEI needs assessments were not unique and reaffirmed much of what has been said in other research regarding violence against mainstream women. At the same time, this project reaffirms the paucity of research dealing with abuse of girl and boy children and youth and older adults, as well as marginalized women, children and youth and older persons in rural areas.

Without question, follow-up activities should be, or should include a substantial component of, community-based action that is integrated and co-ordinated within current strategies dealing with violence against women, children and youth and older persons in rural communities. The insufficiency of the research dealing with marginalized groups suggests that more work is required to ensure that the needs of these groups are addressed in future PLEI material.

Again, this work should be undertaken with broad-based participation of those affected by the research, namely, mainstream and marginalized women (and girl and boy children and youth, older persons) living in rural areas.

b) The work of PLEI providers

Should there be a decision to narrow possible follow-up work to identifying those needs that fall within the mandates of core PLEI providers, there are some thoughts arising from the research that are worth sharing.

The role of the core PLEI providers vis-à-vis the role of the federal PLEI program was an undercurrent in some of the Group II needs assessments.

Some Group II reports refer to federal publications such as:

- *Abuse is Wrong in Any Language – A Handbook for Service Providers Who Work with Immigrant Women*
- *Peace Bonds*
- *Stalking is a Crime called Criminal Harassment*
- *The Secret of the Silver Horse*

As noted in the research, users of PLEI materials and PLEI intermediaries were not well aware of nor did they use these publications. This finding, in the researcher's view, underscores the needs raised in the reports for PLEI information that reflects the expressed needs of the targeted group and that is presented and disseminated in a manner best suited to that group's circumstances (i.e., language, format, style, rural content).

In response to such needs, the follow-up work should deal with the question of the role the federal PLEI program plays in meeting the identified needs.

The *97 PLEI Review* addresses this question, recommending that the federal PLEI program not engage in the work of developing PLEI materials, but that this be left to PLEI organizations. The findings in this report confirm this view.

The findings do however give some indication of the type of role the federal PLEI could play to address some of the needs identified to date. On this note, co-ordination and collaboration with agencies, organizations and groups working in these areas are critical to ensuring PLEI is integrated into a larger process working to address the structural inequalities perpetuating violence (e.g., CLIA – P.E.I. and the Provincial Strategy).

While this research did not provide for an opportunity to fully explore the work of core PLEI providers in the area of family violence in rural areas, it is evident from the findings that not all core PLEI providers are engaged at the same level and detail in producing and distributing PLEI materials and services that are specifically targeted to rural users.

Furthermore, it appears that PLEI providers are not fully aware of which PLEI organizations are working in this specific area and what they are producing. Attempts to compile a listing of all the available information being used and education activities undertaken by PLEI organizations regarding violence in rural areas was not very successful given the time lines of this project. (The results of the inquiry regarding PLEI materials and activities are incomplete and listed in Appendix #2).

It is necessary that a system be established to record, on an ongoing basis, what materials and resources are available that address PLEI rural needs regarding violence. As well, such a system should provide information on how to find these materials and resources. This catalogue would require ongoing maintenance to ensure it was current. The system should be shared among the PLEI providers serving rural populations (i.e., PLEI providers in larger centres should have access to this information as rural women and others will travel to larger centres for services for privacy or safety reasons).

On this point, it is important to note that, there is a distinction to be made between PLEI materials and government "communication." Should an ongoing system be set up for materials, it may be prudent to decide what materials will be considered "PLEI materials" and how these decisions will be made. For example, there is legal information on the PATHS Web site that might be appropriate to include, but there remains the question of how to classify it. Similarly, there would be decisions on how to classify government publications that fall within the realm of "communication" rather than PLEI.

4.4 *Variation among PLEI providers and its implication for future action*

There are many PLEI intermediaries actively producing and disseminating PLEI materials. One example is the *HOT PEACH PAGES* produced by PATHS and distributed in Saskatchewan telephone books.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, it is not surprising that a need identified by the research is for co-ordination and collaboration among core PLEI providers and all other PLEI providers dealing with targeted groups within rural populations.

It is hoped that any follow-up to this project will reach out beyond the core PLEI providers to ensure all of those actively and effectively participating in PLEI family violence issues are included. This would encompass organizations such as the MMF Centre and the other four centres of research on violence, provincial organizations such as PATHS, as well as national organizations such as the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres (CASAC), the National Organization Immigrant and Visible Minority Women (NOIVIM), the Disabled Women's Network (DAWN) and provincial committees such as the Premier's Committee in P.E.I.

The participation of these organizations and groups could meet some of the needs identified in the reports. A participatory approach involving a diverse group of PLEI intermediaries can itself be a tool for educating participants on the issues and raising awareness.

Involving PLEI intermediaries in the potential follow-up work may also help ensure consistency in the messages. It is evident from a review of the work of the PLEI Service – New Brunswick as well as the publications and materials of the organizations PLEI Service, New Brunswick works closely with, i.e., MMF Centre and Caring Partnerships and, that there is a consistency in the messages of all of these organizations on what abuse is. While these organizations produce their own materials, their close working relationship over the years has no doubt contributed to the consistency of their messages.

The reports reviewed as well as the Atlantic experiences of this particular research affirms the need for PLEI and strategies for dissemination that are community-based; designed, developed and distributed using community organizations and services working in an integrated and co-ordinated manner.

At some point in the process, thought could be given to holding a conference or gathering that brings together those with experience with and commitment to PLEI alongside those with the experience and commitment to ending the violence and achieving equality. Collectively, these groups could explore the lessons learned regarding the strengths and challenges of PLEI materials and services meeting the needs as they know them and as identified in the research.

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix H for a sample of these materials and further discussion about them.

Appendix 1

Group I and II Reports

Appendix #1

Reports Reviewed

Group I Reports: Community-based, Academic and Government-sponsored Research Reports on Violence Against, Women, Children and Youth, and Older Persons

1. Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence (December 1999). *Violence Prevention and the Girl Child Final Report*.
2. Bernadette McCann House (1997). *A Measure of Hope: Developing a Model to Evaluate Violence Prevention Initiatives: Building Knowledge, Building Strategies*. Unpublished
3. Biesenthal, L. and D. Podovinnikoff. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Vermilion Bay*. (TR1998-12e6). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
4. Biesenthal, Lorri and Lynn dee Sproule and Mary Nelder, Susan Golton, Donna Mann, Denise Podovinnikoff, Inge Roosendaal, Shellie Warman and Donna Lunn (2000). *Research Report: The Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Final Report* (rr2000-15e). Ottawa. Department of Justice Canada.
5. Biesenthal, Lorri and Lynn dee Sproule, with the assistance of Zeneta Plocica (1997). *Violence against Women in Rural Communities in Canada, Research Project Background*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
6. Boulet, K., Roy, T., & Brown, M. (1997). *Legal Rights for Farm and Rural Women in Manitoba*. Manitoba Association of Women and the Law.
7. Brookbank, C. (1996). *Spouse Abuse in Rural Communities: A Review of the Literature*. (TR1996-5e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
8. Community Abuse Program of Rural Ontario (CAPRO). (1998). *Communities Against Violence Conference, Dec 9-11, 1998, Aylmer, Ontario Conference Proceedings*. Unpublished.

9. Dansy Consultants, Inc.(1992). *Domestic Homicides Involving the Use of Firearms*. (WD1992-20e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
10. de Vink, S. and D. Doherty (1993). *Family violence on the farm and in rural communities*. Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, 1995.
11. Edleson, Jeffrey L. and Marilyn D. Frank. "Rural Interventions in Woman Battering: One State's Strategies." *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, Vol. 72, No. 9 (1991): 543-551.
12. Farm Women's Legal Rights Project. *Farm Finance and Operations: What Women Should Know*. Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Rights for Farm Women.
13. Farm Women's Legal Rights Project. *Matrimonial Property and Inheritance Law on the Farm*. Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Rights for Farm Women.
14. Gilson, Dorothy (1994). *A Holistic Response to the Victims of Family Violence in a Rural Environment*. For Naomi Society for Victims of Family Violence. Antigonish, Nova Scotia.
15. Golton, S. E. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Oxford County* (TR1998-12e-4). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
16. Research and Statistics Division, Policy Sector: Department of Health Canada. (1996). *Rural Women and Substance Use Current Issues and Implications for Programming*. Ottawa: Office of Alcohol, Drugs and Dependency Issues, Population Health Directorate.
17. Haddon, Arlene Marilyn Merritt-Gray, Judith Wuest and H.E.A.R Research Team (January 2001). *Private Matters and Public Knowledge in Rural Communities: The Paradox*. Fredericton, N.B.: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research.
18. Harbison, Joan, Stephen G. Coughlan, Barbara Downe-Wamboldt, Robert G. Elgie, Patricia Melson, Marina Morrow (1995). *Mistreating Elderly People: Questioning the Legal Response to Elder Abuse and Neglect, Volume One Societal Frameworks and Responses to Elder Abuse and Neglect*. Halifax, Nova Scotia. Unpublished
19. Hymers, Dianne (1993). "Abused Women in Rural and Remote Communities: Isolated in More Ways Than One." *Vis-à-vis: Newsletter of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Summer 1993).

20. Jiwani, Y. with the assistance of S. Moore and P. Kachuk. (1998). *Rural Women and Violence: A Study of Two Communities in British Columbia (ORWAS)*. (TR1998-16e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
21. Jiwani, Y. with the assistance of S. Moore and P. Kachuk. (1998). *Executive Summary: Rural Women and Violence: A Study of Two Communities in British Columbia*, (WD1998-11e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
22. Kolomeitz-Warman, S. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Cochrane and Area*. (TR1998-12e1). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
23. Kuropatwa, S. & Josephson, W.L. (1997) *Summary of proceedings for the Western Canadian Research Centre on Family Violence and Violence Against Women: development workshop*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Research Centre on Family Violence and Violence Against Women.
24. Levett, A. and H. Johnson. (1997). *A Statistical Comparison of Women's Experiences of Violence in Urban and Rural Areas*. (TR1998-17e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
25. Lovelace, Donna. (1993) "The Struggle of Volunteers in Rural Communities." *Vis-à-Vis: Newsletter of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1993).
26. Mann, D. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Grey-Bruce Counties*. (TR1998-12e3). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
27. Marshall, Pat F., et al. *Changing the Landscape – Ending Violence, Achieving Equality. Final Report of the Canadian Panel on Violence against Women*. Ottawa, ON: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1993.
28. Martz, Diane. J. Forsdick and D. Bryson Sarauer. *Domestic Violence and the Experiences of Rural Women in East Central Saskatchewan*. Muenster, SK.: St. Peter's College, September 2000.
29. McDonald, L. and A Collins (2000). *Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults: A Discussion Paper*. For the Family Violence Prevention Unit, Health Canada. Ottawa: Health Canada.
30. McLaughlin, K., & Church, S. (1993). *Cultivating Courage: The Needs and Concerns of Rural Women who are Abused by their Partners [Ingamo Family Homes]*. Woodstock, Ontario.

31. Miedema, Baukje (November 1999). *Barriers and Strategies: How to Improve Services for Abused Immigrant Women in New Brunswick. Research Paper Series, Number 1.* Fredericton, New Brunswick: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre and University of New Brunswick.
32. Merritt-Gray, M. and J. Wuest. "Counteracting abuse and breaking free: the process of leaving revealed through women's voices," *Health Care for Women International*, 16, 1995, pp. 399-412.
33. Milne, W. (1992). *Violence against women in rural settings*. Unpublished report prepared for the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women.
34. Milne, W. (1995, September). Paradise Lost: Violence Against Rural Women. *Transition*, pp. 14-15. Ottawa
35. Miramichi Emergency Centre and Research Team. *Barriers to Family Violence Victims' Use of Support Services in Northumberland County: A Research Proposal*. Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre. Unpublished
36. Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre Research Team. (February 2001). *Strategies Toward Violence-Free Relationships for Girls and Women in Rural Communities in Atlantic Canada*. Fredericton, New Brunswick: unpublished.
37. Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (1997). Helpers Exploring Abuse and Responding Research Team (1997). *Prevention of Family Violence in Rural Town, Island and Geographically Isolated Communities, Determining Socio-cultural Influences on the Meanings of and Responses to Woman Abuse*. Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research.
38. Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Family Violence on the Farm and in Rural Communities Research Team (Farm and Rural Research Team) (April 1997). *Barriers to the Use of Support Services by Family Violence Victims in Northumberland County Final Report*. Fredericton, New Brunswick: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre. Unpublished.
39. Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (1994). The Religion and Violence Research Team. *Family violence and the United Baptist and Wesleyan Churches of Atlantic Canada: first phase report*. Fredericton: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research.
40. Nelder, M. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Espanola*. (TR1998-12e2). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.

41. Nova House Women's Shelter (1995). *Interdisciplinary Perspectives Interventions for Older Victims of Abuse*. Selkirk Manitoba: Nova House Women's Shelter.
42. Phillips, Donna and Joseph Hornick (1992). *Review and Monitoring of Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Selected Sites in Rural Alberta, Studies on Sexual Abuse of Children in Canada*. (WD1992-14e). Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
43. Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (1999). *Child Support Law Information Needs Assessment for Subgroups in the General Population Phase II Final Report*. Fredericton, New Brunswick: PLEI Service of New Brunswick.
44. Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (1998). *Child Support Law Information Needs Assessment for Subgroups in the General Population Phase I*. Fredericton, New Brunswick: PLEI Service of New Brunswick.
45. Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (1994). *Development and Implementation of A PLEI Woman Abuse Project A Final Report*. Fredericton, New Brunswick: PLEI Service of New Brunswick.
46. The Roeher Institute. *Violence and People with Disabilities: A Review of the Literature*. Ottawa, ON: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 1994.
47. Roosendaal, I. (1998). *Ontario Rural Woman Abuse Study (ORWAS) Community Report: Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry*. (TR1998-12e5). Ottawa, ON: Department of Justice Canada.
48. Scott, Wendy with Carolyn Van Dine (1995). "Family Violence" in *Rural, Farm and Remote Canada*. For the Canadian Farm Women's Network.
49. Statistics Canada (2000). *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
50. Statistics Canada (1997). *A Statistical Comparison of Women's Experiences of violence in Urban and Rural Areas*. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.
51. Statistics Canada (2000). *Rural Statistics* Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
52. Struthers, M. (1994). "At a Crossroads in the Work to End the Violence: A Rural Perspective." *Canadian Woman Studies Journal*, 14 (4): 15-18.
53. Venugopal, M. H. (1991). "Service in Rural Areas." In F. Rafiq (ed.), *Towards Equal Access: A Handbook for Service Providers Working with Survivors of Wife Assault* (pp. 161 - 164). Toronto: Immigrant & Visible Minority Women Against Abuse.

54. Watanabe, M. and A Casebeer. (2000). *Rural, Remote and Northern Health Research: The Quest for Equitable Health Status for all Canadians, A Report of the Rural Health Research Summit*. Prince George, British Columbia, October 23-25, 1999.
55. Websdale, Neil. *Rural Woman Battering and the Justice System: An Ethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Series on Violence against Women, 1998.

Group II Reports:

Public Legal Education Needs Assessment and Evaluation Articles

1. Alderson-Gill and Associates Consulting Inc. (2000). *PLEI Family Violence Materials: Needs Assessment Report Synthesis of Findings*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
2. Community Legal Information Association of PEI, Inc. et al. (2000). *Information Needs Assessment of Women Victims of Family Violence Going through the Criminal Justice System*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
3. MacDougall, Jamie C. PhD. (2000). *Family Violence and the Deaf, Legal Education and Information Issues: A National Needs Assessment*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
4. Metz Murray Group (2000). *Needs Assessment Public Legal Education and Information Products*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
5. Moliner, Marie. (1997). *1997 Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) Review: Tools for Moving Forward*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
6. Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (2000). *A Needs Assessment of Family Violence Law Information for Hard to Reach Target Groups in New Brunswick, Final Report*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
7. Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (2000). *PLEI Family Violence Materials: Needs Assessment Report*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.
8. Public Legal Education Network of Alberta (2000). *Agency Perceptions of Family Violence related Public Legal Information Services and Materials*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.

Group III: Reports Identified by Review but Not Received

The following articles were identified but not received in time to include in the review:

1. Barter, Patricia (1993). *Voices of the Women: Report of the Powell River Women's Needs Research Project*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Women's Equality.
2. Hornosty, J. (1995). "Wife abuse in rural regions: structural problems in leaving abusive relationships (a case study in Canada)," in F. Vanclay (ed.), *With a Rural Focus*. Waga Waga, Australia: Charles Sturt University, Centre for Rural Social Research.
3. Kowaz, Andrea M. (1996). *Communities Betrayed: Multiple Victim Child Sexual Abuse in Rural Communities*. Vancouver, B.C: BC Institute on Family Violence.
4. Langlois, Line, Marthe Larochelle, Denise Lemieux and Nicole Racine (1996). *Intervening with Deaf Women Who are Victims of Spousal Violence*. Charlesbourg, QC: Comité d'aide aux femmes Sourdes de Quebec (CAFSQ).
5. Trute, Barry (1994). *Coordinating Child Sexual Abuse Services in Rural Communities*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Appendix 2

Core PLEI Provider - PLEI Information and Education Services and Materials

Appendix #2

PLEI information and education services and materials relating to violence against women, children and youth, and older persons in rural areas

ALBERTA: LEGAL STUDIES PROGRAM

PUBLICATIONS

No rural specific publications

A Guide to Using the Criminal Code of Canada, Second edition, 1990

LawNow

Published 6 times/year, each issue includes a feature section, special report section, as well as regular columns on such topics as Online Law, Not-for-Profit Law, Human Rights, Business Law, Criminal Law, and Family Law.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Legal Studies Program continues to receive requests for lawyers to speak to schools and community organizations. Two volunteer speaking engagements were arranged for a total of 60 students at JJ Bowlen School in 2000.

Also responds to requests for legal information from the public. Over 140 such requests were dealt with in 2000.

OTHER PLEI SERVICES

The Legal Studies Program is under contract with the Department of Justice Canada (DOJC) to develop, manage and facilitate ACJNet. ACJNet (Access to Justice Network) <http://www.acjnet.org>. The contract with the Department of Justice Canada will conclude on March 31, 2001, at which time the Legal Studies Program will assume full responsibility for the service.

Canadian Legal FAQs <http://www.law-faqs.org>

This popular website contains short questions and answers on commonly asked legal questions, organized by topic. By combining the short, to-the-point information with questions written from the user's perspective, FAQs prove to be a powerful tool for information seekers.

LawNow WEBSITE

<http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/lawnow>

VIOLET: Law & Abused Women <http://www.violetnet.org>

VIOLET started as a joint project of the Legal Studies Program and the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters. Its objective is to provide women with a virtual place to seek legal information and to develop a virtual community in the area of wife abuse. A secondary objective is to use VIOLET as a platform to give women a reason to learn to use the Internet technologies.

ROSENET: LAW AND ABUSED IMMIGRANT WOMEN

www.rosenet-ca.org

RoseNet is a joint project between the Legal Studies Program and Changing Together, Centre for Immigrant Women. Funding from the Alberta Human Rights Education Fund (AHREF) enabled the Legal Studies Program to train and conduct six needs assessment sessions with groups in Edmonton and Calgary and to partially develop a web site. The AHREF funding ended in March 2000, but the project was continued with funding from the Alberta Law Foundation.

A special project funded by the Department of Justice Canada enabled the Legal Studies Program to review the current state of resource materials on elder abuse available to seniors, service providers, regulatory agencies, and the public in both electronic and non-electronic media. A thorough review of the literature was done as well as a review of current programs being offered to seniors in Canada. The data collected serves to spotlight the gaps that exist in the information and communication systems pertaining to seniors. This review includes a telephone survey of service providers who deal exclusively with seniors in order to canvass their understanding of the situation and collect their thoughts about how best to address the information gaps. The Legal Studies Program now has a repository of information sources that will be useful to service providers, academics, and the seniors themselves.

BRITISH COLUMBIA: LAW COURTS EDUCATION SOCIETY

PUBLICATIONS

No specific publications for rural populations experiencing family violence.

Courts of BC

What Happens in Provincial Court?

Courtwatcher Manual

Parenting After Separation Handbook

A workbook for separating parents. It includes information on how to resolve legal issues, a list of resources in the community and recommended reading materials. Also available in culturally adapted versions in Chinese and Punjabi.

Comparative Justice System

Pamphlets in Arabic, Chinese, Punjabi, Farsi, Korean, Spanish, Polish and Vietnamese with English and Facilitator's Guides to help answer common questions about the police, lawyers and the courts.

Learning About the Law

An overview of BC law suitable for an intermediate ESL level. Topics include family law, criminal, law and civil law.

Legalpix

A set of symbols and pictures depicting various legal scenarios (Criminal Law, Family Law, How To Prepare Victims and Witnesses for Court) that can assist persons with special communication needs and their caregivers in understanding the courts and the justice system.

OTHER MATERIALS - VIDEOS

Parents are Forever

A video that helps children whose parents are separating learn about parental obligations and legal responsibilities along with information about the federal Child Support Guidelines.

See You in Court

A video in American Sign Language which explains the legal system as well as criminal and civil trial procedures.

EDUCATION

Resources for school include Wall Charts and Advanced Mock Trials based on actual cases and deal with challenging and socially relevant issues" including Regina v. Girard, a murder case involving the battered wife syndrome and Regina v. Westerland, a case of sexual assault involving the defence of honest but mistaken belief in consent. The charts and trials come with guides.

MANITOBA: COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA

PUBLICATIONS

No specific publications for rural populations experiencing family violence.

Domestic Violence Fact Sheet

Women in abusive Relationships

Court Orders for Your Protection

Manitoba also uses (but did not produce):

Family Violence - What You Need to Know (Law Society of Manitoba)

Family Law in Manitoba 2nd edition 1999

EDUCATION

Law phone-in program - legal information over the phone.

Speaker's Bureau - speakers on various issues including domestic violence and family law.

Community Legal Intermediary Training - course includes segment on family violence.

NEW BRUNSWICK: PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SERVICE OF NEW BRUNSWICK (PLEI SERVICE-NB)

PUBLICATIONS - PAMPHLETS (MATERIALS ARE NOT BOUND)

Survival Strategies, Information for Abused Women/Comment Survivre, Renseignements Pour les Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements. November 1993. Reprinted: March, 1997.

Dealing with the Police, Information for Abused Women/L'appel a la Police, Renseignements Pour Les Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements. Revised and reprinted: March, 2000.

No Means No, Sexual Assault Law/Non C'est Non, Guide Juridique en Matiere D'Aggressions Sexuelles. December, 1993.

Getting Married? Before You Say Your Vows Be Sure Your Home is Loving and Safe! June, 1996.

Adults with Disabilities and Seniors, Tips on Recognizing and Preventing Abuse and Neglect. March, 1998.

Helping New Brunswickers Know the Law/Le Droit a la Portee des Neo-Brunswickois(es). Revised May, 1993.

Assault/Les Voies de Fait. May, 1992.

Who's Minding the Kids? A Sitter's Guide/Qui S'Occupe des Enfants, Guide a L'intention de la Gardienne ou du Gardien D'Enfants. Revised March, 1997.

Peace Bonds, Information for Abused Women/Engagements de ne pas Troubler L'ordre Public, Renseignements Pour les Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements. November 1993.
Reprinted: March, 1997.

Going to Court, Information for Abused Women/La Comparution Devant un Tribunal, Renseignements Pour les Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements. November 1993.
Reprinted: March, 1997.

Workplace Harassment, What Municipal Employees Should Know. January, 1997.

Brochures and Booklets (Bound Material)

Changing the Ending, A Video Dealing with the Fears and Concerns of Abused Women who Encounter the Criminal Justice System After Being Assaulted by Their Partners. March, 1997.

Child Abuse, Recognize it, Report it, Prevent it/Les Mauvais Traitements Envers Les Enfants, Reperer, Signaler, Prevenir. Revised and reprinted: March, 2000.

Abuse and Neglect of Adults with Disabilities and Seniors/Violence et Negligence a L'Egard des Adultes Handicapes et des Personnes Agees. March, 1998.

What Parents Should Know About Child Protection/Ce Que Les Parents Devraient Savoir sur la Protection de L'Enfance. February 1993 Revised October, 1997.

Services for Victims and Witnesses of Crime, An Overview of the Victim Services Program/Services aux Victimes et aux Temoins d'un Crime, Apercu du Programme des Services aux Victimes. February, 1995.

Information for Immigrant Women, What is Women Abuse?/Information Destinee aux Femmes Immigrantes, Etes-Vous Victime de Violence? Revised and reprinted: March, 2000. This publication is also available in French, Spanish, Chinese and Serbo-Croatian in pamphlet format.

PUBLICATIONS - TENT CARD FOR DESKS AND LAPEL PINS

We Treat Women Abuse Seriously, Nous Prenons Soin des Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements. 1997 and tent cards reprinted on a regular basis.

JOINT PUBLICATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick and Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre. *Sexual Harassment in Schools, It's No Joking Matter.* October, 1996.

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick, and New Brunswick Coalition of Transition Homes and Second Stage Shelters. *Spousal Assault, What Victims Want and Need from the Police, Violence Conjugale, Ce que les Victimes Veulent et Recherchent de la Police.* April, 1997.

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick and New Brunswick Department of Education, New Brunswick Guidance Counsellors (N.B.T.A. Guidance Council),. *Dating Violence.*1994.

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick and New Brunswick Department of Public Safety. *Victim Impact Statements, Only You Know How This Crime Affected You/Declaration de la Victime sur les Repercussions du Crime, Vous Etes la Seule Personne a Savoir Comment ce Crime Vous a Affectee.* December, 2000.

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick and Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons, Violence and Disability Team of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. *Adults With Disabilities May Be at Risk/Les Adultes Hnadicapés Courent un Risque.* [n.d.](poster)

EDUCATION - VIDEOS

Changing the Ending, An Educational Video on Spousal Assault and the Criminal Justice System/Changer Sa Destinee, Un Video Educationnel sur les Femmes Victimes de Mauvais Traitements qui ont Affaire au Systeme de Justice Penale.

EDUCATION - OTHER PLEI SERVICE NB SERVICES

Web site - now fully operational with 90% of publications accessible.

PLEI Service-NB is active in providing workshops, radio call-ins, presentations, etc. in communities throughout New Brunswick.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Committee on Abuse and Neglect of the Elderly. *Elder Abuse, It's Time We Do Something About It.* [n.d.]

Coordinator of the Victim/Witness & Family Crisis Unit of the Fredericton Police Department. *Women's Guide to Legal Resolutions to Family Violence.* [n.d.]

Family Services of Fredericton Inc.. *Are you a Woman Living Scared in Your Own Home?* [n.d.]

Family Services of Fredericton Inc.. *Our Programs Include: Counselling, Family Life Education, Consumer Financial Counselling, Consultation/Training, Public Information, Family Violence Counselling/ Nos Programmes Counselling, Education sur la vie Familiale, Service de Consultation Financiere, Consultation/Formation, Information du Public, Service du Consultation sur la Violence, Familiale Mediation* [n.d.]

Hoffmann-La Roche Limited, University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing, Ontario Network of Sexual Assault Care and Treatment Centres *Sexual Assault and Drug Misuse, What Should I Know to Protect Myself?*. [n.d.]

Men Against Sexual Aggression University of New Brunswick. *Hey Guys! This Pamphlet Can't Stop Women From Being Sexually Assaulted... You Can!* [n.d.]

Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Religion and Violence Research Team. *God Speaks Out Against Violence.* [n.d.]

Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Religion and Violence Research Team. *Christian Love Shouldn't Hurt, Support for Pastors.* [n.d.]

Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, Religion and Violence Research Team. *Dating Violence and Christianity.* [n.d.]

Women's Policy Office, Newfoundland Department of Education *Dating Violence*. [n.d.]
World Evangelical Fellowship, Commission on Women's Concerns. *Task Force to Stop Abuse Against Women*. 1997.

NOVA SCOTIA : PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION OF NOVA SCOTIA (PLENS)

EDUCATION MATERIALS

No specific materials for rural population.

Pamphlets produced by PLENS (also available online):

Helping Nova Scotians Understand the Law:	Elder Abuse - Adult Protection Act
Helping Nova Scotians Understand the Law:	Family Court
Helping Nova Scotians Understand the Law:	Peace Bonds
Helping Nova Scotians Understand the Law:	Sexual Assault
Helping Nova Scotians Understand the Law:	Wife Abuse

OTHER LEGAL MATERIALS

Federal Government Materials:
Department of Justice

- The Secret of the Silver Horse
- What to do if a Child tells you of Sexual abuse
- Another Way: Mediation in Divorce and Separation
- Divorce Law Questions and Answers
- Drinking and Driving
- Abuse is wrong in any language: Bookmark
- The Criminal Law in Canadian Society
- Child Support Guidelines
- Information for Victims of Crime:
 - The Victim Fine Surcharge
 - The Victim Impact Statement

National Parole Board
Family Violence

Solicitor General
Basic Facts about Corrections in Canada
Information for Victims: Questions and Answers about
Corrections & Conditional Release

Provincial Government Materials:

Department of Community Services

- What is Municipal Social Assistance
- Coordinated Home Care Program
- What Happens if you are Abused
- Information about the Children and Family Services Act
- Information for Parents
- Adult Protection: Helping Adults in Need of Protection

Dalhousie Legal Aid Service

- Information pamphlet
- What You Should Know as a Single Mother on Family Benefits or Municipal Social Assistance about the Man-in-the-House rule.

Family Mediation Nova Scotia

- Mediation
- Making Mediation Referrals

OTHER SERVICES

PLENS web site: www.chebucto.ns.ca/Law/PLENS/otherorg.html

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: COMMUNITY LEGAL INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

PUBLICATIONS

No rural specific information

CLIAs booklets and pamphlets (also available online):

- Support: What you need to know*
- Living Together: Common Law Relationships*
- Islanders' Guide to the Family Law Act*
- Islanders' Guide to the Victims of Family Violence Act*
- Guide concernant la loi Victims of Family Violence act*
- Names*
- Who Am I*
- Financial Support Variation Proceedings*
- Under 18: Child Abuse and Neglect*
- Under 18: You and Your Parents*

OTHER SERVICES

Community Legal Information Association of Prince Edward Island, Inc. (CLIA) web site: www.isn.net/cliapei/

ONTARIO: COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION ONTARIO (CLEO)

PUBLICATIONS

Assaulting A Child...Punishment or Crime? September 2000

Do You Know a Woman who is Being Abused? A Legal Rights Handbook March 1998 (available in French and English on-line and French, English and Spanish in written format). This handbook deals with the justice system as well as such issues as safety plans, support orders, and how to get a job. It also provides the phone numbers for a number of resources, shelters and safe houses throughout Ontario.

Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence Fact Sheet February 2000

Elder Abuse: The Hidden Crime March 2000

Some of the materials produced by other sources include materials produced by Legal Aid Ontario such as:

Financial Eligibility April 2000

You and Your Lawyer July 1999

Family court information includes:

Applicant's Guide to Applications November 1999

Motions for Temporary Orders November 1999

Respondent's Guide to Applications November 1999

OTHER PLEI SERVICES

According to their web site: Most publications are available in French, and some are available in other languages. CLEO also maintains a resource library of public legal education materials produced by other sources.

QUEBEC: EDUCALOI

PLEI SERVICES

Educaloi has a fairly large web site providing information on a number of topics including Family Law. The information is in French only.

There is a link entitled Violence Conjugal which is broken into three sections: a definition of conjugal violence, the role of the police and the role of the judiciary.

Appendix 3

The Atlantic Experience

Appendix #3:

The Atlantic Experience

The approach and work of the PLEI Service of New Brunswick and the Community Legal Information Association of PEI regarding family violence are profiled in this Appendix. This is followed by a brief discussion on lessons learned from the approaches used by these two core PLEI providers.

New Brunswick Experience

The Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (MMF Centre) was established in 1992. It's goal is to undertake research which will offer practical, action-oriented ways to help end family violence. In 1997 the MMF Centre became a founding member of the Canadian Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence. Of the five research centres, the focus as indicated by the name of the Centre is on family violence. One of the ongoing research projects the Centre is Family Violence on the Farm and in Rural Communities. However, in addition to this project, all other projects have an integral rural component since the research is participatory and community-based.

There is a strong working relationship between the MMF Centre and PLEI Services of New Brunswick. While the factors that contribute to the success of this co-operative and successful relationship were not explored, the results of this collaboration were. One such example is the Caring Partnerships: Communities United Against Family Violence. This is an initiative which is committed to promoting public awareness of family violence through community grassroots projects and activities suited to the particular community. The MMF Centre and PLEI were instrumental in the establishment of the

Caring Partnership initiative that has grown to become a provincial committee with numerous New Brunswick communities involved.

Fundamental to the success of initiatives such as this and other successful work of both the MMF Centre and PLEI Services is the commitment the staff of these organizations to working in a co-operative and integrated way with other community-based agencies, service organizations and groups active in family violence issues. The importance of an integrated, community-based response to family violence was explained in the Caring Partnerships Community Development Handbook written by PLEI and the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Foundation,

On-going efforts and public awareness initiatives to deal with family violence have been initiated by both the federal and provincial governments, non-profit organizations, women's groups, service providers, crisis intervenors and others. Still, one group may not be aware of the best practices which another organization has developed and victims may not learn about existing interventions. To increase effectiveness, we must coordinate these efforts and make them community based.¹

From the PLEI perspective, a coordinated approach and close working relationships within the community ensure, for the most part, a consistent message is presented in the materials produced, and services provided. Also the information provided, because it is developed through working relationships with community members and organizations, is appropriate and familiar. This is important when dealing with sensitive family violence issues such as religion and violence.

¹ PLEI Service of New Brunswick and Muriel McQueen Fergusson Foundation, *A Community Handbook: Promoting Public Awareness of Family Violence through Community Partnerships* (Fredericton, NB: Steering Committee on Public Awareness of Family Violence Through Community Partnerships [Caring Partnerships], September 1996), p.i.

The MMF Centre research project discussed in the report at p. 47 involving evangelical churches in New Brunswick is an example of this work. For many, such a topic would seem unapproachable, especially within a rural context. The MMF Religion and Violence research is committed to "developing creative ways in which churches and their leaders might respond more effectively to family violence."² The MMF Centre materials targeting the church community — pamphlets that are reproduced at the end of this Appendix — have been developed in consultation with clergy of the participating evangelical churches. The churches have agreed to cover the costs of the pamphlet holders and their installation in the women's washrooms of various churches throughout New Brunswick.

The nature of information and the manner in which it is being made accessible are important considerations for rural women who are attending these churches. For women and girls who are living in abusive relationships and members of church communities that espouse traditional patriarchal values, having this type of information available to them through the church pastor/minister and in the church is significant in addressing some of the fears and barriers faced in defining and disclosing abuse.

The PLEI Service -New Brunswick pamphlet, which is also distributed through the churches, is used in counselling couples planning to marry.³ Again it was prepared in collaboration with the faith communities.

Not all core PLEI providers have the benefit of the collaborative working relationships with other community organizations and agencies, including a research centre on family violence. However, PLEI Services in New Brunswick demonstrates through its work the importance of building co-operative relationships within the community to

² This is taken from a pamphlet on the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research that is produced by the Centre.

³ This pamphlet is reproduced at the end of this Appendix.

address violence against women, children and youth and older persons and ensuring that the information they produce is part of a larger initiative. This larger initiative may or may not be one that they are responsible for, none the less, this type of approach recognizes that "simply producing another publication" may not be "effectively respond to the needs of abused women."⁴

In undertaking and developing a series of woman abuse initiatives, PLEI Service-New Brunswick included a number of components in response to an initial needs assessment and research findings.

The project began as simply another publication — one dealing with information for abused women. However, during the initial needs assessment and research phase, it soon became apparent that to effectively respond to the needs of abused women, we would have to consider other initiatives to facilitate access to information about the law and social services.

We identified a number of important components...These included publishing accurate and appropriate information about the law and making it widely accessible to service providers and professionals who work with abused women; creating linkages and dialogue between crisis service providers and the professionals in the justice system who regularly deal with family violence matters; and finally, developing initiatives to disseminate information directly to abused women particularly those with unique barriers such as rural women, immigrant women, etc. ⁵

⁴ PLEI Service of New Brunswick, *Development and Implementation of a PLEI Woman Abuse Project, A Final Report* (Fredericton, N.B.: PLEI Service of New Brunswick, January 1994), p. 1

⁵ PLEI Service of New Brunswick, 1994, p.1.

The three components that made up the PLEI women abuse project were: a legal rights handbook intended for service providers of abused woman as the first stage; a conference on woman abuse which dealt with legal remedies for front line workers who provide crisis services to abused women; and an awareness campaign.

The goal of the awareness campaign was to heighten public awareness of woman abuse issues by disseminating a variety of plain language information pamphlets about criminal and other legal aspects of woman abuse to as wide an audience as possible. Health care providers and community-based organizations were approached to deliver the information. PLEI-NB approached the Medical Society of New Brunswick and the Nurses Association of New Brunswick about working collaboratively on this campaign. The groups agreed to work on a joint venture to distribute lapel pins and tent cards for desks during Family Violence Prevention Month with the agreed-to message, "We treat woman abuse seriously". The purpose of the button and tent care was to encourage women who are victims of abuse to ask their health care providers for help.

In discussing the project with the PLEI Service-NB, it was noted the lapel pins were far less popular among physicians but the tent cards continue to be requested and used both within and outside of the province by health care providers.

The Prince Edward Island Experience

This approach of working with other community-based services and agencies to develop materials and distribute materials in a collaborative way as part of awareness

campaign, advocacy initiative or other action, is not only practised by PLEI Service-NB In PEI, the core PLEI provider – the Community Legal Information Association of PEI (CLIA-P.E.I.) has developed a similar approach in dealing with family violence.

CLIA-P.E.I. works collaboratively with service providers and front-line groups addressing family violence issues throughout the province. It works with the MMF Centre in Fredericton on research projects and this collaboration has resulted in a regional [Atlantic] circle of support for those groups working in this area. Within the province, CLIA is working with the Transition House Association of PEI exploring justice options for victims of violence. While Transition House is the lead on the project, CLIA is involved in the workshops with survivors of violence to explore justice options including civil remedies and the use of emergency protection orders.

This co-operative approach used by CLIA naturally resulted in their involvement with the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention.

This Committee is made up of 16 community representatives and 7 government representatives for five year terms. This Committee is responsible for implementing a five-year strategy on Family Violence Prevention for P.E.I.. It reports directly to the Premier on all issues related to the implementation of the strategy and all related issues of family violence prevention and intervention on the island.

The CLIA-P.E.I family violence PLEI needs assessment was conducted by facilitators at the CLIA-P.E.I. in cooperation with the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention. Conducting this assessment with the cooperation of the committee provided to be an effective means of ensuring action on the recommendations made in the assessment. Many of the recommendations in the PLEI needs assessment are geared towards making systemic changes that address the needs or obstacles identified by the 31 women who participated in the project, all of whom have had experience with the

justice system as survivors of family violence. Most of these recommendations have been incorporated into the province's family violence prevention strategy the Committee is responsible for implementing.

In documenting what the Committee has accomplished to date, there are specific achievements regarding Public Education and Awareness, in addition to increased frontline community services (i.e. transition houses and sexual assault crisis centre). When comparing the recommendations of the report with the achievements of the Committee, there is a parallel and consistency between the two. There are over fifty public education and awareness projects undertaken as ongoing partnerships between government and communities with the Committee being either directly or indirectly involved. For example the availability of outreach workers in parts of the Island where previously there was no outreach service.

Lessons Learned from the Atlantic Experience

The approach used by core PLEI providers and the relationships established with other groups working on issues regarding violence against women, children and youth and/or older persons is essential to the effectiveness of the PLEI materials and their distribution.

Due to the unavailability of the other core PLEI providers for interviews, it is unclear based on the assessments and review of the providers' web pages, whether other organizations use approaches similar to those used by the New Brunswick and PEI core PLEI providers.

This is important to clarify as this approach is one that appears to be working to meet many of the needs identified in the reports regarding rural women and children living with abuse. The approach is sensitive to the target audience – rural women, children

and youth, older persons — as it actively engages them and organization working with them to participate in the process of designing, developing and implementing PLEI materials. This approach actively addresses some of the barriers these groups confront as members of rural communities. For example, by working with other agencies, the PLEIs can try to ensure consistent messages about naming abuse are being distributed throughout the communities.

Such an approach may be one that could serve to address some issues that surfaced in the PLEA-Saskatchewan needs Assessment.

The PLEA-Saskatchewan needs assessment sought the opinions and views of service providers, and other organizations and agencies regarding their familiarity, use and views of specific federal PLEI information dealing with family violence. Also respondents identified information needs of specific populations. The populations identified were rural communities (29% of respondents), Aboriginal communities (18%), disabled persons (18%), violent women (18%), older adults (11%), immigrant women (11%), persons experiencing marital breakdown (7%); and victims involved in the criminal justice system (7%).

In the PLEI needs assessment, two respondents indicated that they were in the process of revising their own material regarding abuse to make it "gender-neutral" to address the needs of abused men and violent women. One respondent did indicate that this alone would not meet the information needs of abused men as the dynamics of the abuse may be different than they are for abused women.

The problems associated with using gender-neutral language are highlighted in this report. None the less, it is important for PLEI providers to discuss fully the consequences of using "gender neutral" language in its PLEI materials.

Another organization in Saskatchewan has been dealing with this issue and no doubt has valuable experience to contribute to the discussion. The Provincial Association of Transition Houses (PATHS) has an extensive web site dealing with violence against women, children and youth, older persons and men.

The Paths web site identifies the following topics as headings for information, including legal information, referrals and links to other services. Some of the publications noted include PLEA-Saskatchewan materials.

- Abuse Information in 25 languages!
- Information for:
 - Older Adults
 - People with Disabilities
 - Teens
 - Men
- The Mediation Wheel: Reality, Beliefs, Effects
- Resources for Rural Women
- Stalking

While not targeting "violent women" as identified in the needs assessment, the PATHS web site does include information for men who may be abused. This information sheet was written and provided by men and staff of the ALTERNATIVES: An Accountable, Advocacy Program For Men Who Are Violent To Their Partners. In addition to this information, PATHS has also provided information on the research on men abuse, the controversy surrounding this research and several papers on the provocation defence. The PATHS information addresses these issues fully and in so doing recognizes the gender-based component of violence against women and children without minimizing issues of abuse that men might confront.

After reviewing this list, it became apparent many of the information needs, with exception to the violent women, paralleled the listing of abuse materials available through the Provincial Association of Transition Houses (PATHS) web site

Of particular interest was the HOT PEACH PAGES material that PATHS has developed. While this deals with legal information and referrals, it is the concept that is exciting to consider for core PLEI providers.

HOT PEACH PAGES would appear to address some of the problems individuals face in accessing available information and seeking help "without everyone knowing about it."⁶

HOT PEACH PAGES reaches rural as well as urban areas. Again for the purposes of this report, it is beyond the scope of this paper to explore Hot Peach Pages in detail, however the highlights of an evaluation of the project with samples of the pages are provided in Appendix#8. Even though PATHS is not a core PLEI provider, the legal information provided in Hot Peach Pages addresses many of the rural needs being identified. It is therefore worth noting and perhaps for other core PLEI providers to explore. Learning from the lessons from the Atlantic PLEIs there may be some benefit in exploring this tool for follow-up activities to this report.

PATHS legal information web site is only accessible to those able and willing to use the Internet. However, for those who do, which hopefully would include many of the service providers, organizations and groups who were respondents in the Saskatchewan PLEI needs assessment, there is information available that speaks to many of reported needs.

⁶ Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan, PLEI Family Violence Materials: Needs Assessment Report (Ottawa: Department of Justice, March 2000), p. 9.

Prayer: "O Lord, keep me out of the hands of the wicked. Preserve me from those who are violent, for they are plotting against me."
Psalm 140:4 NLT

When abuse happens to others..

"All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source of every mercy and the God who comforts us. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NLT

"A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need." Proverbs 17:17 NLT

"Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds." 1 Peter 3:8 NLT

"Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay." 1 Peter 4:9 NLT

"Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2 NLT

"When God's children are in need, be the one to help them out. And get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner or, if they need lodging, for the night." Romans 12:13 NLT

"Do for others what you would like them to do for you." Matthew 7:12a NLT

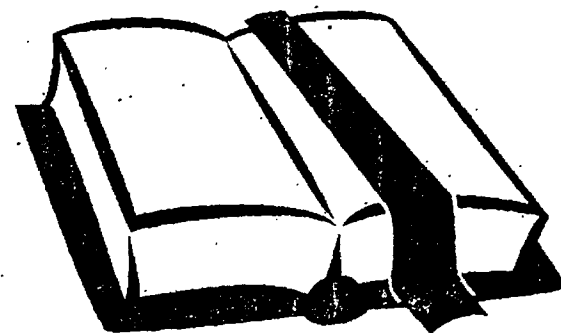
How Can You Reach us?

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God Speaks Out Against Violence



**Religion and Violence
Research Team**

Anger and Violence are not in God's plan for us.

"A fool gives full vent to anger, but a wise person quietly holds it back." Proverbs 29:11 NLT

"Keep away from angry, short-tempered people, or you will learn to be like them and endanger your soul." Proverbs 22:24-25 NLT

"A hot-tempered person starts fights and gets into all kinds of sin." Proverbs 29:22 NLT

"Dear friends, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight." James 1:19-20 NLT

"Anger is cruel, and wrath is like a flood, but who can survive the destructiveness of jealousy?" Proverbs 27:4 NLT

"A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls." Proverbs 25:28 NLT

"The words of the godly lead to life; evil people cover up their harmful intentions." Proverbs 10:11 NLT

"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: ...hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, ...anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19, 21 NLT

"The Lord examines both the righteous and the wicked. He hates everyone who loves violence." Psalm 11:5 NLT

"Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways." Proverbs 3:31 NLT

"Give up your violence and oppression and do what is just and right." Ezekiel 45:9 NLT

Love is what God requires of us. This love does not include violence or abuse.

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance." I Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT

"And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church ...In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife." Ephesians 5:25, 28 NLT

"And you husbands must love your wives and never treat them harshly." Colossians 3:19 NLT

God heals those hurts in our lives, taking care of us.

"He heals the brokenhearted, binding up their wounds." Psalm 147:3 NLT

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you." 1 Peter 5:7 NLT

"Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28 NLT

"God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble." Psalm 46:1 NLT

"He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak." Isaiah 40:29 NLT

"And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to him than a whole flock of sparrows." Luke 12:7 NLT

The Religion and Violence Research Team

The Religion and Violence Research Team is a multi-disciplinary research team involving both university researchers and denominational partners.

Our Mandate

The team's mandate is to explore and understand the role of churches, clergy and congregations in responding to the pain and suffering caused by violence and to work together with faith communities to enhance their response to this important issue.

How Can We Help?

The Religion and Violence Research Team can help by:

- Offering a workshop at your transition house or church.
 - Connecting you to clergy who are sensitive to the dynamics of abusive relationships and the importance of transition houses.
 - Sharing information about abuse within Christian families and how best to help Christian women.
 - Linking you to church resources.
-

*Members of the Religion and
Violence Research Team*

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*Christian Love
Shouldn't Hurt*



Support for Pastors

As a minister, have you ever:

- ♦ felt overwhelmed by the need to help abused women?
- ♦ felt like you needed more resources to help you respond to violent families?
- ♦ been frightened for the safety of women or children in your congregation?
- ♦ felt like your training did not equip you to respond to victims of abuse?

We can offer you help or resources.

Listening to the Voices

Interviews from clergy across Atlantic Canada.



He got aggressive ...when I had a call from her that was interrupted so I felt there was something amiss, so I went to the house...and I heard him punching her... You could tell by looking at her that she needed to go to the hospital, so at that point I had to decide how to cope with all this...she was severely beaten about the face and head.

I've had a lady who has come to me, out of fear for her own life and her children's lives, with a husband who, again has come from an abusive home. They have had eighteen years together...He has pushed and shoved her from time to time. But his scare tactic is to put his hunting rifle on the bed and say "I'm gonna shoot myself and somebody else." She has endured this kind of abuse for...years.

I tried really to discourage her against marrying him, I really did...I went ahead and married them eventually...He was pretty rough with her. It was fine for about the first two months and after that things just seemed to get worse and worse...He really was nasty with her and he would hit her and everything, and slap her.

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How Can We Help?

The Religion and Violence Research Team can help by:

- Offering a workshop in your church.
- Forwarding information on violence against women and other forms of family violence.
- Sharing information on abuse within Christian families and how the church is responding to this issue.
- Making the links with church-sponsored groups as well as transition houses.

All these forms of abuse are wrong and some, such as physical and sexual assault, are even criminal. Most abusive persons eventually do use physical force.

Are there warning signs?

Yes. If you answer yes to the questions below, you may be in an abusive relationship. Does your partner....

- think he/she is always right?
- put you down, say you are too fat, too skinny, ugly or stupid?
- always decide what to do and where to go?
- tell you how to dress or wear your hair?
- want you to give up all of your friends?
- insult your work or your courses at school?
- force you to have sex when you do not want to?
- get angry and break things?
- slap or push you or threaten to hurt you?

What can I do if I answered "yes" to these questions?

Get help and make sure there has been real change before you go ahead with marriage. Talk to somebody who can tell you about your options. Reach out for help. There are people who take family violence seriously! These might include:

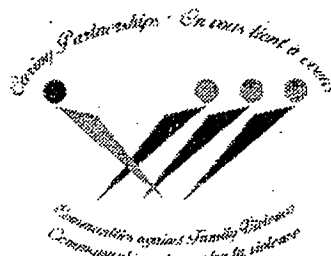
- your local transition house,
- family counselling or mental health clinic,
- minister or clergyperson,
- family doctor or public health nurse,
- school guidance counsellor,
- employee assistance program,
- police or RCMP (if you are being physically or sexually assaulted),
- victim services office,
- lawyer (for specific legal advice),
- domestic legal aid (free legal help with family law matters for victims of domestic violence),
- public legal education (general information about the law).

This brochure has been published by...



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and Information Service
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Fax: (506) 457-7409

PLEIS-NB is a non-profit organization. Its goal is to provide New Brunswickers with information on the law. PLEIS-NB receives funding and in-kind support from the Department of Justice Canada, the New Brunswick Law Foundation and the New Brunswick Department of Justice. This pamphlet does not contain a complete statement of the law. If you have specific legal questions, you should consult a lawyer.



This pamphlet was developed in collaboration with the Woodstock Caring Communities Committee and the Woodstock and District Ministerial Association.

Stamp your organization's logo and address here.

June 1996

ISBN 1-55137-891-4

Selling married?

*Before you say your
vows be sure your home
will be loving and safe!*

What will your home be like?

Getting married is a very important decision. Couples who make this commitment have the opportunity and the responsibility to create a home environment that is supportive, loving and secure for all members of the family.

Sometimes this is not the case. For some family members, home can be a violent and terrifying place. It can be a place where family members are devalued and humiliated. When this happens, it is called "**family violence**".

Some people even get married to escape the violence in their own homes. They are tired of feeling worthless and unwanted. They long for a safe place. But individuals who grow up with abuse could end up duplicating the experience in their own marriage.

Think carefully about how you can make sure your relationship is a caring and mutually supportive one.

But we're in love!

It takes more than romance to make your home loving and peaceful. Some individuals who seem loving and caring at one moment are controlling and manipulative the next. It might start with an angry outburst, followed by remorse and tenderness, gifts and promises. Next there may be sorrow for hurting you, tears, threats of suicide or pleas for forgiveness. But it happens again and again. This is known as the "**cycle of violence**". If it describes your relationship you should get help now, because it usually gets worse over time.

Don't all families have their squabbles?

Yes, every family has disagreements and even an occasional argument. But this is not the same as the systematic abuse suffered by victims of family violence. Many live with despair, self-blame, thoughts of suicide, drugs or alcohol. Their misery

may be repeated over generations since children who grow up in homes where insults, beatings and threats of harm are part of everyday life, may think this is "normal" family life. It isn't.

Once we're married things will get better!

Getting married is not a magical cure for a hurtful relationship. Once married, many people feel trapped. They may stay and suffer for many reasons. Here are a few.

- They don't want to break their wedding vows - not realizing that the abuser has already broken the vows.
- They fear being judged by family, friends, church and community - not realizing that these are the very people who can be supportive.
- They feel shame and guilt.
- They love the abuser and hope for change.
- They are financially dependent and have young children.
- They fear they will not be believed because the abuser is a good provider, a loving parent and a respected community member.
- They are not aware of social assistance, legal solutions or support.

Breaking the cycle of violence is not easy. Consider seriously what you are doing before you find yourself in a difficult marriage. Remember, the situation might even become dangerous.

Can things change if we really try hard?

Change is not easy. If there is violence or abuse in your relationship now and you decide to get married without seeking help, your home may never be a peaceful place. Consider these points.

- You can't change another person - change must come from within. An abusive person must admit it is wrong to mistreat you. He or she must decide to get help and be willing to go for counselling to unlearn abusive behaviour.
- Just because an abusive person says "sorry" and "things will change" does not mean they

will. Ignoring insults or hoping it will get better does not work. Things will probably get worse.

- If your relationship doesn't get better, your children can be affected even if they are not abused. Children who see one parent abuse the other are often anxious and confused. They may even lose respect for the parent who is abused. Moreover, they are more likely to find themselves in abusive relationships later on.
- It's not victims who need to change although the abuser often blames them for everything. Most abusive persons blame somebody else for their acts. Or they have excuses. They might drink and blame their violence on alcohol. They might blame the pressure of work or unemployment. They might believe that they have a right to control their spouse. Abusers almost always have an excuse to justify their violence. There is no excuse - nobody deserves to be abused!
- Change will not happen overnight. It takes a commitment to real change and outside help.

It can't happen in our relationship!

Many people who hear about family violence think it refers to some "monster". It does not describe their situation. They've never been beaten, kicked or burned. But abuse is not limited to **physical violence** and it can happen to anyone.

It may involve **emotional abuse** such as constant insults and put downs or isolating you from family and friends. It might be subtle like not letting you grocery shop or drive. But it takes more serious forms too such as threats to harm you, the children, pets or your property.

If one spouse insists on controlling all the household money, it can lead to **financial abuse** by forcing the other spouse to be completely dependent. Abuse can also include **sexual assault** if there is unwanted or forcible sexual touching and activity. This can happen even in a marriage.

Appendix 4

PLEI Family Violence Needs Assessment - Needs and Recommendations By Jurisdiction

Appendix #4

PLEI Family Violence Needs Assessments

Summary of the Needs Identified in the Family Violence PLEI Needs Assessments

And

Needs by Jurisdiction

This summary of needs was taken from Alderson-Gill and Associates Consulting Inc. (2000). *PLEI Family Violence Materials: Needs Assessment Report Synthesis of Findings*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.

PLEI MATERIALS

- Generally simplify information and make materials graphically striking;
- Create materials which provide up-to-date information/research and an up-to-date list of resources and services, ensuring regional relevance, that both clients and service providers alike can access;
- Develop materials which explain the actions that will be taken from the first time a victim contacts the justice system;
- Create materials which name ranges of abuse and emphasize the positive aspects of taking action against abuse;
- Create materials which take into account the needs and concerns and particular experiences of diverse populations (i.e., attentive to religious/cultural issues, financial and educational barriers, isolation and age issues, lifestyle and age issues);
- Change formats of materials to accommodate people with special needs, different abilities: i.e. Braille, videos, radio advertisements, attention to simplicity of language;

- Create materials in Native dialects and languages likely to be spoken by new Canadians;
- Ensure adequate communication and consultations between PLEI producers and the targeted end-users, such that PLEI materials reflect their expressed needs and are presented and disseminated in a manner best suited to their circumstances;
- Ensure that information materials consider the safety of those using them. For example, attention must be paid to size (large pamphlets are dangerous because abusers may come across them) and content (messages about abuse which are direct and accusatory can also put women's safety in jeopardy).

ACCESS TO PLEI MATERIALS

- Create easier access to materials that explain the legal system comprehensibly and accurately;
- Ensure that adequate information is distributed to potential victims before family violence occurs so that people can identify abuse and know prior to crisis the steps that can be taken to act upon it;
- Ensure wide distribution and access of materials in venues where victims routinely frequent such as bathrooms and grocery stores;
- Ensure access to legal information for victims who need assistance in isolated areas;
- Use alternative formats of materials to accommodate people with special needs, different abilities: i.e. Braille, videos, radio advertisements, attention to simplicity of language;
- Promote public awareness campaigns to facilitate shifts in attitudes about family violence with particular attention to rural areas where family violence may be more often condoned;
- Ensure adequate communication and consultations between PLEI providers and service providers, to ensure that PLEI materials and initiatives will maximise their accessibility;
- Support the development of accessible PLEI materials and services among different levels of government.

COORDINATION

- Establish more systematic communication between those who develop family violence materials and those who need to be aware of them and those who will use them;
- Ensure adequate mechanisms for sharing family violence resources among different levels of government;
- Create infrastructure to help facilitate information exchange between different social service organizations and support interagency collaborations;
- Ensure stronger linkages between federal producers of PLEI materials and provincial and local sources.

SERVICES

- Expand existing services and build services to bridge gaps in transitional phases, such as when a client moves from crisis to counselling;
- Expand existing services to diverse populations and develop partnerships between Native people, immigrants, gays, seniors, disabled, and low income people to discuss their particular family violence information needs;
- Develop resources in social service agencies so that victims receive adequate time with social workers and counsellors;
- Create "women helping women" groups (i.e., focus groups facilitated by women who have survived family violence);
- Develop a live 24-hr. 1-800 hotline serviced by social workers/counsellors for victims of violence;
- Seek to ensure that female social workers, counsellors and members of the legal system are available to serve women victims of violence.

TRAINING

- Increase legal training/knowledge of frontline service workers such as those working in women's shelters;
- Ensure that social workers, counsellors and members of the legal system are informed regarding family violence issues;
- Improve service providers' awareness of different family violence materials;
- Provide sensitivity training for all workers in the criminal justice system;
- Ensure that information is distributed to violence victims in a compassionate and understanding manner, with attention to particular social, economic, cultural, religious, age, ability, lifestyle needs.

NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY JURISDICTION

The purpose of the needs assessments varied across the jurisdictions and, correspondingly, so do issues. Access to legal services for victims of family violence, was a common issue across the jurisdictions, with all reports noting that access to services is a concern amongst all rural users. The specific needs of the seven jurisdictions are as follows:

a) Alberta Needs

Agencies participating in the assessment noted that providing services in rural areas was difficult because of community dynamics - everyone knows the individual that the social worker is seeing. Other participants felt that not enough was being done to reach poor or isolated clients. Nearly all respondents indicated that the single greatest need was improved access to and availability of appropriate materials and services. (p. 14)

All participating agencies mentioned the need for accessible materials. This meant that core materials should be available in major and minor language groups and in alternative formats, such as audiotape or Braille.

In the case of PLEI materials, content should be at an appropriate cognitive level, be specific for the target audience rather than a generic resource, and be sensitive to religious or cultural issues.

Of the six areas where agencies felt they were least effective (p. 10), one area was hard to reach clients such as rural women. Several participating agencies serve areas outside of their municipal boundaries. Comments on page 39 included: "We need ways to reach poorer and isolated clients in rural or hard to reach areas". "Issues of risk to the client are more significant in rural areas and will need to be addressed". "Legal resources are not user friendly.." "Legal aid needs to be more accessible..."

One area where workers feel they have been successful is in the creation of the VIOLET web site which increases information to women in rural areas (www.violetnet.org p.37). The report does not address the number of rural women who have safe access to Internet service and therefore it is not clear if this is a viable alternative for women in rural areas.

b) New Brunswick Needs

The study findings suggest there is a need to work with communities to define abuse beyond physical abuse. The study refers to the findings from the *Family Violence on the Farm and in Rural Communities* research team, one of several teams associated with the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research. The research team interviewed dozens of women who experienced abuse in a rural context and conducted three community focus groups in Northumberland County.⁷ The team found that people in rural communities who were asked to discuss abuse typically agree that family violence is wrong and that it should be stopped. Despite this, the team found a great deal of tolerance for abusive behaviours and a tendency to make excuses for the abusers and/or blame the victims. This apparent contradiction stems from the fact that people's definition of "family violence" related only to severe physical assaults - not the "everyday" painful, hurtful and negative things that are happening in many families.

This report strongly suggests that all attempts to address abuse through family violence awareness materials, including law information, be sure to name the various forms of abusive behaviour, rather than to label them with vague terms that may not be relevant to rural target audiences.

The study also identified specific barriers to legal information that are faced by abused rural women. The study states,

Based on responses from a survey of transition houses, focus groups and several other consultations, the following common obstacles to accessing law information or assistance were identified. Some of them relate quite specifically to the fact that the abuse was experienced in a rural setting. They tend to fall roughly into two kinds of barriers: those that are tangible and practical, and those that are more psychological in nature.⁸

The barriers identified are:

- **Poverty** - Many victims of abuse are poor and it is not uncommon for an abusive spouse to have complete financial control. The victim may not even be able to make a long distance phone call. For those who have accessed the legal or social services system, lack of money remains a factor. Many rural women do not know about legal aid services and most cannot afford a lawyer.

⁷ Family Violence on the Farm and in Rural Communities Research Team, *Barriers to the use of Support Services by Family Violence Victims in Northumberland County* (Fredericton, N.B.: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, 1997).

⁸ PLEI Service of New Brunswick, March 2000, pp. 8-10.

- **Transportation** - Control of the purse strings often extends to controlling access to transportation. Access to public transportation is especially difficult in rural areas. Some areas, like Miramichi, reported that public transportation is seriously limited and that there is virtually no service in the outlying rural communities. In a situation of family violence, the decision to leave one's home must be made in an urgent manner that does not allow for working out the logistics of travel.
- **Low Education/Literacy Levels** - Of all New Brunswickers, 25 percent over the age of 16 fall into the category of lowest literacy skills.⁹ A recent study reveals that the percentage of women over the age of 25 with a less than grade 9 level of education ranged from 12-13 percent in Woodstock, St Stephen, and Miramichi, to 18 percent in Sussex and 29 percent in Shediac.¹⁰ Service providers in our study spoke of the added problems low literacy and numeracy skills place on women who are trying to leave an abusive relationship.
- **Lack of familiarity with legal rights and with the legal system** - Many rural women do not know their legal rights, others may not realize that they have legal rights, and others are misinformed about their rights - often by partners. This was found to be common with regard to child custody and support. Often an abused woman who wants no further contact with her partner will willingly forfeit child support payments because she believes that paying child support grants the abuser automatic access to the children.
- **Stigma** - Victims of abuse typically suffer extremely low self esteem and are often reluctant to admit even to the appropriate authorities that they have been abused. Particularly in small communities where lives are more intertwined, in many cases service providers may know their clients socially. In fact, the survey of approximately 30 emergency room healthcare providers undertaken in this study found that without disclosure, the majority would not offer information to a patient who presented with indicators of abuse for fear of humiliating her. Many of those who participated worked in rural hospitals and health centres.
- **Limited Resources for Service Providers** - The consensus among service providers who participated in this study was that although they are trying hard to meet clients' needs, including law information needs, they are ill

⁹ Statistics Canada. (June 1998). *A New Brunswick Snapshot, International Adult Literacy Survey*, Catalogue #89-565-XEE.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. (1996). *Census*.

equipped to address most of them. Many of the service providers felt that parents in general, and rural parents in particular, must deal with a system that is fragmented, decentralized, under-funded and inefficient. Service providers pointed out that some of the existing print materials dealing with law information topics would be useful for them to share them with their clients. However, many who took part in the focus groups were not familiar with the PLEI publications which were provided during the de-briefing. Many service providers expressed frustration that they are often inadequately prepared to provide law information to their clients. The point was made that if they as intermediaries are not aware of or up-to-date with legal information, then their clients are further disadvantaged. All thought that the existing materials were good resources that would make them more comfortable in helping their clients. However, everyone agreed that other means of information delivery were necessary for rural people.

- **Long Waits to Get Help** - Service providers stressed that caseloads are heavy and waiting periods for services can be unrealistically long such as being screened into subsidized housing, the legal aid program and so on. In fact, in rural areas there is very little if anything available in terms of second stage housing. Transition houses are similarly limited in the long-term support they can offer. Delays in accessing the legal system, for example, to obtain an interim custody or support order, contribute to many women's decision to return to the abusive situation.
- **Cultural Values** - In every focus group, participants stressed the influence of traditional religious or family-oriented values as factors that compound the difficulty for women in obtaining information that would help them leave an abusive situation. The unity of the family is paramount. Many women stay in abusive relationships for the sake of the children. They do not want to tear them away from a rural lifestyle, pets and friends. Women are often ostracized if they leave a marriage.
- **Farm Life** - For many farm families the stakes are especially high since divorce could mean the end of the family farm and livelihood. Particularly where farm animals are involved, rural women may refuse to seek shelter when they are assaulted because of threats to harm or neglect the animals (spring lambs, geese, pony, house pets, etc.) One participant suggested that rural women would be better positioned to leave abuse if there was some kind of shelter or assistance available to help their animals.
- **Fear** - Many women leaving a violent relationship in a rural area continue to fear for their personal safety. Many victims are reluctant to pursue any course of action that might aggravate their abusive partner. Women in rural

areas may be isolated and police response times may be long. Moreover, in rural areas there is a much greater likelihood that there are firearms present in the household for hunting or vermin control. This increases a woman's fear and the risk of serious harm.

- **Trauma** - At times of personal crisis, victims of abuse are traumatized and it is particularly difficult for them to absorb written information.
- **Frustration with System** - Some women complained of feeling revictimized by both the social services and judicial system. It was suggested that many feel they have to act submissive to get anything at all from the services available.

c) Newfoundland Needs

The woman assessed in this study noted they wanted answers to a number of specific legal questions dealing with such issues as pressing sexual assault charges, retrieving property, matrimonial property, peace bonds, custody and access to children and enforcing child support orders. (p. 17)

One woman who had represented herself through the court process said that information on court procedure and how it really works would have helped her. This woman had accessed all the materials she could get her hands on and find them helpful although they "it took some time to go through". (p. 22)

The women had tried asking for help from a number of sources. One woman had been asking "just about everyone", and kept getting conflicting answers. She has questioned police officers, lawyers, and crisis counsellors. (p. 18) Another first approached legal aid, but she did not expect the length of time it took for them to determine if they could represent her, and she was definitely not expecting them to deny her. This woman also relied on the advice of her abusive mate. Service providers commented that victims do rely on their abusive partners. (p. 20)

Women wanted access to legal professionals instead of relying on non-legal professionals for legal advice.

Service providers noted that they are approached with legal questions regarding such issues as custody and access to children, procedural questions, and criminal law questions.

One worker finds the Public Legal Information Association's brochure on domestic violence helpful. Workers stated that clients needed to know how the system works - and why delays occurred.

The community workers consistently expressed a desire for information targeted towards themselves, perhaps to be supported by workshops or instructional videos.

The volume of legal information requests they receive is increasing and becoming more sophisticated. They are looking for more technical, comprehensive tools. There was also significant discussion about bringing this information into the schools at the junior and senior high levels. This suggestion to promote education to the younger generations is preventative in nature, but not solely. Children do live in homes that experience family violence and they have their own questions and worries, and even less resources to access information than their parents.

Both women and workers wanted better and more accurate information about mediation. The report notes that mediation should never be used in the case of a power imbalance.

d) Nova Scotia Needs

Isolation was seen by respondents as being a huge issue related to family violence. Particularly in rural areas of Nova Scotia, women have incredibly limited access to programs and services. This problem is compounded by the fact that those in abusive situations are generally under the control of the abuser and are isolated from their families and communities. A large number of abuse victims do not have access to transportation from their homes to helping organizations.

Respondents also indicated that there appears to be a certain societal tolerance for abuse in rural communities.

While there are already a variety of information materials available on the subject of family violence there is no adequate mechanism for sharing information about resources and materials. While access to written materials is difficult, focus groups also noted that man groups do not have easy access to the Internet to allow them to search for information.

There was a consistent preference for materials which contain local resource information. The user therefore has information about what is available within their province and what is more relevant to the local community rather than nationally.

Male victims of family violence are often forgotten, according to focus group participants. The majority of respondents recognized the fact that some male victims are treated with suspicion by those in the legal system and, in some cases, are not believed. Additionally, there do not appear to be any services available specifically for male victims of family violence.

e) Prince Edward Island Needs

It was clear that the issue of information dissemination needs to be addressed so that women and the service providers who serve women are aware of all the information resources that do exist within the system and the community. Statistically, only 4 women of participating 31 were aware of the Community Legal Information

Association; 3 women can not remember during the traumatic time; 2 women of the 31 used CLIA's services but were not aware that it was CLIA. Therefore, 22 of the 31 women participating in the focus groups across the Island were not aware of CLIA and its services. For the women who used CLIA's toll-free legal information line, they found the service useful; however, they would recommend it be extended to a 24 hour service with human response to their calls - not an answering machine.

Women's experience and expertise needs to be involved in the creation, development, implementation and evaluation of programs and services offered by the Criminal Justice system. A formal women's working group is considered a necessary step in the evolution of compassionate justice for women victims of family violence.

On-going sensitivity training for all criminal justice system service providers needs to be a part of employee continuing education activities. Legal information training needs to be available to front-line workers and criminal justice system service providers.

There was a variety of sources (Police, Victim Services, CLIA, Crown Attorney's office, Outreach & Support Services, family, friends, etc.) women tried to receive information and answers from; however, most of the women did not know what questions to ask or where to go for answers or did not receive informative answers when they did ask. There was a lack of compassion given to the women by police and lawyers when they did have the courage to ask questions and this behavior severs open communication from a victim's perspective. One women noted it is difficult to know what questions to ask. She stated that it would be helpful to have an advocate review her situation and then provide information through a step by step process.

The women stated that the criminal justice system seemed to be set up to protect the abuser's rights.. When the women were asked who or what organization they would send a women for help most women answered a specific outreach worker or victim services representative.

f) **Saskatchewan Needs**

The report from Saskatchewan notes that rural residents are often isolated from information, services and support.

It also notes that the information that is available is often city-based and not particularly relevant.

In recognizing the rural population of Saskatchewan is sizable and well above the national average, the study states that the need for specialized family violence material

addressing the particular needs of rural residents is significant. Specialized delivery methods are also required to ensure that the information is accessible to rural users.

Rural people experiencing family violence may find they have difficulty accessing available information. It may be more difficult to seek help without everyone knowing about it. Safety plans that may be suitable for urban residents don't address the reality of rural life. Other information that is available is usually urban-based. Isolation from people and resources is a real concern.

While many respondents indicated a need for rural-based family violence material, they recognized that many of the resources would still be located in larger centres. Even so, a strong need was identified for material that addressed the unique situation faced by rural people experiencing family violence.

Eight of 28 respondents (29 percent) identified a need for rural-based information. The comments included:

We are a rural community and most info is in the city. We put the material in our school but the info is usually based on urban areas of aid - we need more info for rural communities only.

Need pamphlet on rural referrals, what is available.

Rural and northern isolated areas require different approaches, especially when there is such limited resources.

The available information does not always address the unique needs of rural women.

While support workers recommended more materials, they were not aware of all the current publications provided by PLEI. In particular, one quarter of the respondents were familiar with the Department of Justice Canada publication "Abuse is wrong in any language- A Handbook for Service Providers who work with Immigrant women". This particular publication was developed by the core PLEI organization in New Brunswick and does address the needs of immigrant women living in rural areas to a certain extent. None the less, it is not widely known. The other Justice Canada publication "The Secret of the Silver Horse," a book about child sexual abuse, was known to almost 90% of the respondents.

g) Yukon Needs

In this study, the needs or gaps in PLEI identified included the following:

- The need for PLEI materials in simple English since literacy is a big concern
- The need for PLEI material target immigrant women and men to address the lack of knowledge and awareness among immigrant people about their legal rights in the country. The example used is the fear of immigrant women being deported.

- The need for a centralized agency that is responsible for disseminating PLEI to service providers in Yukon communities. Service providers indicated they have difficulty accessing federal PLEI materials. There was a lack of knowledge about what types of PLEI exist and where to obtain such materials. One half of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of what PLEI information on family violence was available in their communities.
- The need for PLEI to target youth about PLEI materials on family violence, date rapes, etc. It was also noted that youth must be involved in the process of producing the materials targeted for youth.

Appendix 5

Profile of Violence Against Women, Children and Youth and Older Persons in Rural Canada

Appendix #5

A Profile of Violence in Rural Areas Across Canada

Violence Against Women

Since the 1980s, research has demonstrated that violence against women in rural families is equal to that of women in urban families. A statistical comparison of women's experiences of violence in rural and urban areas (Levett & Holly, 1997) indicates that 30% of urban women who have lived with a spouse have experienced at least one incidence of violence. This is slightly higher when compared to 26% for rural women.¹¹ Dansy Consultants reports that almost one-half (49 percent) of the victims of domestic homicide involving firearms are killed in rural settings.¹² Further research indicates that women in rural families are slightly more likely to leave their abusive partners and significantly more likely to eventually return to the abusive home.¹³ Rural women also reported feeling more isolated from family, neighbours and friends than their urban counterparts and are more likely to say they were psychologically unaffected by abusive partners.¹⁴

Despite the similar statistics studies of violence in rural areas measures a significant difference in the services and information accessible to women who are experiencing abuse in rural areas. As one report acknowledge this contributes to why women in

¹¹ Statistics Canada, *A Statistical Comparison of Women's Experiences of violence in Urban and Rural Areas* (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 1997); and Levett, A. and H. Johnson, *A Statistical Comparison of Women's Experiences of Violence in Urban and Rural Areas*, (TR1998-17e). (Ottawa, ON: Department of Justice Canada, 1998).

¹² Dansy Consultants Inc., *Domestic Homicides Involving the Use of Firearms* (WD1992-20e) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1992).

¹³ Arlene Haddon et al., *Private Matters and Public Knowledge in Rural Communities: The Paradox* (Fredericton, N.B.: Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research, January 2001), p. 5.

¹⁴ Arlene Haddon et al., 2001, p. 5.

rural areas stay in abusive relationships five to eight years longer than their urban counterparts (McLaughlin & Church, 1993).

Violence Against Children and Youth

Violence against children and youth is not as well researched as violence against women. Most research tends to focus on children rather than youth. More scarce is research dealing with violence of children and youth within a rural context. Research regarding violence of children and youth has focused primarily on physical and sexual abuse, child neglect, sexual exploitation and witnessing violence.

One study that reviewed and monitored the child sexual abuse cases in rural Alberta indicates that children are more vulnerable to sexual abuse in the rural home than they are in outside settings. In the majority of cases in rural areas child sexual abuse occurred in the home (63%) while in urban areas 44% of abuse occurred in the home.¹⁵

The study found that in rural areas children were more likely to disclose incidence of abuse to child welfare workers or counselors. This is in contrast to urban areas where children disclose to parents, friends or police. The findings also indicate that reporting from child welfare worker to police is more delayed in rural areas.¹⁶

Statistics Canada data indicate that regardless of the type of abuse, or the child's age, children and youth were most often assaulted by their fathers. In incidence involving parents, in 1999, children were the victims of their fathers in nearly all (98%) sexual assault incidence, and a large majority (71%) of physical assault incidents.

¹⁵ Donna Phillips and Joseph Hornick, *Review and Monitoring of Child Sexual Abuse Cases in Selected Sites in Rural Alberta, Studies on Sexual Abuse of Children in Canada*. (WD1992-14e) (Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada, 1992), p. 17.

¹⁶ Phillips & Hornick, 1992, p.11

Girls are the primary victims of family assaults. Eighty percent of the child and youth victims sexually assaulted and 53% of the victims physically assaulted by their families were girls.

There is not a lot of research that examines violence against children and youth using gender-specific analysis. This is something however, that the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre and others have advocated for and undertaken. This approach is evidenced in the final report of the Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence regarding violence prevention and the girl child. It identifies that "violence against girls is common and endemic in Canadian society. That such violence is becoming normalized and increasingly accepted as a way of life."¹⁷ The report goes on to note the " differential gender-role socialization of girls and boys" and the importance of gender-specific programs are required "as the outcomes and impacts vary for boys and girls."¹⁸

Violence Against Older Persons

The profile on violence against older persons living in rural areas is not very well developed. In *Statistical Profile of Family Violence in Canada* only older adults living in private dwellings were interviewed. Of those interviewed, 1% reported physical, sexual abuse by spouse, caregiver, adult child. There was no statistical breakdown available among these particular family members. Seven percent of older persons interviewed reported emotional or financial abuse by child, caregiver or spouse. Again, there was no distinction made between these three categories of family member. In the same report, however, it does state that a "vast majority of this abuse was committed by a spouse."¹⁹

¹⁷ Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence, *Violence Prevention and the Girl Child Final Report*, December 1999, p. 17.

¹⁸ Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence, December 1999, p. 17.

¹⁹ Statistics Canada, 2000, p.27.

On the other hand, research regarding police-reported violence presents a different finding. In 1999, there were 802 reported cases of violence against older adults by family members. It states that among those victimized by a family member, older adults were more likely to be victimized by adult children (43%) and spouses (28%) and least likely to be victimized by elderly parents or siblings..²⁰

It is interesting to note that in the Nova House Women's Shelter report, it suggests that based on previous research that "a considerable proportion of abuse of the elderly is spouse abuse, which in some cases may have been occurring in the relationship for many years."²¹ A 1984 survey of older persons abuse suggested that the within the family, the abuser was a spouse in 58% of the cases with 42% of the cases being an adult child or other person.²²

Violence Against the Doubly Isolated: Rural Immigrants, the Disabled, Same-Sex Relationships and other Marginalized Groups

There is limited information on the extent of violence experienced by immigrants, the disabled and other doubly isolated groups who live in rural areas. What does exist tends to focus on metropolitan areas. None the less, it is recognized that these groups require extended and specialized services and legal information when there is violence experienced in the family. Yet these services and information are sorely lacking. For example, it is known that women with disabilities are up to 10 times more likely to be

²⁰ Statistics Canada, 2000, p.29.

²¹ Nova House Women's Shelter, *Interdisciplinary Perspectives Interventions for Older Victims of Abuse* (Selkirk Manitoba: Nova House Women's Shelter, 1995), p. 16.

²² Nova House, p. 16.

assaulted yet shelters and transition houses for abused women and children are not only scarce in rural areas but often not accessible for disabled women.²³

The profile of violence against doubly isolated women, children and youth and older persons is incomplete and until it is better understood, the barriers and needs will also continue to be incomplete. In the next part, the barriers, needs and strategies identified in the existing research are presented and discussed.

²³ Dianne Hymers, "Abused Women in Rural and Remote Communities: Isolated in More Ways Than One." *Vis-à-vis: Newsletter of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Summer 1993), p.8.

Appendix 6

Use of Internet in Rural Areas of Canada

Appendix #6

Use of Internet in Rural and Small Towns

The following excerpts from documents discuss the use of Internet in rural areas.

The first excerpt is taken from the Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin Catalogue no. 21-006-XIE Vol. 1, No. 7 (May 1999) entitled, Computer Use and Internet Use by Members of Rural Households, and written by Margaret Thompson-James.

In 1989, 12 percent of rural and small town residents used a computer at work. This increased to 17 percent in 1994. Among these individuals, 40 percent were affected by the introduction of computers at work.

In 1997, 29 percent of rural households had one member who had used computer communications at least once (from any location). In 10 percent of rural households, one person used computer communications in a typical month from home. General browsing and e-mail were the most common uses while electronic banking and shopping were much less common.

Individuals in rural households are less likely to have used computer communications; nevertheless, a number of rural households also have tried using computer communications at least once (28.9 percent)

The second excerpt is from a report prepared for the Policy Research Initiative by the Social Cohesion Network. November 1998 entitled, PRI - Sustaining Growth, Human Development and Social Cohesion in a Global World. CHAPTER 4 - SOCIAL COHESION REKINDLING HOPE AND INVESTING IN THE FUTURE A Report prepared for the Policy Research Initiative by the Social Cohesion Network.

Lack of access to Information - Internet

The Social Cohesion Network shares many of the concerns of the Knowledge-based Economy / Society (KBE/S) pilot project with regard to access to information technology. Often, information access is key to both the economic and cultural well-being of individual citizens. In 1997, 36% of Canadian households had a computer and 13% had access to the Internet. But this new medium is beyond the reach of many Canadians, particularly women, certain ethnic groups, those with lower incomes and

those living in rural and remote regions of the country, and may not be providing the type of information that Canadians need to feel part of the national community.

During the past 18 months, many of the departments and agencies in the Social Cohesion Network have been participating in the Ekos Research Associates survey on The Information Highway and the Canadian Communications Household. They are also currently exploring with Statistics Canada the feasibility of a survey on Citizen Access and Participation in Communication Technologies. Combined results from these studies will help us to determine the demographics of users and non-users and whether Canadian content is adequately available on-line.

Appendix 7

Caring Partnerships Definition of Family Violence

Appendix #7

Caring Partnerships Definition of Family Violence

The following definition is taken from the PLEI Service of New Brunswick and Muriel McQueen Fergusson Foundation (1996). *A Community Handbook: Promoting Public Awareness of Family Violence through Community Partnerships*. Fredericton, NB: Steering Committee on Public Awareness of Family Violence Through Community Partnerships [Caring Partnerships].

What do we mean by family violence?

There are many definitions of family violence. (See Section 4 - Resources for some examples.) They all acknowledge that family violence relates to the abuse and mistreatment of individuals in an intimate or family relationship. The abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, or financial in nature. Family violence happens everywhere and to people from all backgrounds. Women, children and the elderly are the most vulnerable and at risk. All forms of family violence are wrong and many are criminal in nature.

For example, all of these people are victims of family violence:

- a woman whose spouse pushes her around or hits her
- an individual in an intimate relationship whose partner forces or coerces unwanted sexual contact
- a child who suffers physical, sexual or emotional harm by another family member
- a person whose spouse insists on controlling everything including activities, friends, and money
- an elderly person who lives with physical, mental or financial mistreatment or neglect
- a child who witnesses one parent assaulting, abusing or belittling the other parent
- anyone who lives with family members who constantly humiliate and put them down
- a person whose partner threatens her/him, the children, property or pets with harm.

Appendix 8

PATHS Hot Peach Pages Information

Appendix #8

Sample Hot Peach Page from Saskatoon Phonebook

ABUSE HELP LINES

Are you being abused?

It's abuse when someone who should care about you does or says things that hurt you or make you feel afraid, helpless or worthless. Here are only a few examples:

- slapping, hitting, punching, choking, grabbing, shoving, kicking you or your kids, your pets
- threatening you, your kids, friends, family or pets
- hitting, kicking, slamming walls, doors, furniture, possessions
- forcing you to have sex
- calling you names, swearing at you, yelling
- controlling all the money, even money you earn
- blaming you or your kids for everything
- putting you down, making you feel like nothing you do is ever good enough
- treating you like a servant or slave
- controlling where you go, what you do, what you wear
- controlling who you see, who you talk to
- humiliating you in front of other people
- refusing to let you leave the relationship

Who gets abused?

Women—all ages, races, religions, rich, poor, farm, city—even pregnant women. Men. Infants, kids, youths, seniors. Professionals, employees, people with disabilities, church goers, students. Friends, relatives, neighbours. Married, common law, separated, divorced, dating, straight, gay. It could be anyone—even you. No one deserves it.

What if you are being abused?

It's not your fault. You can't stop the abuse or change the abuser. Only the abuser can. Meanwhile you need support and safety. There are people who care and are ready to listen. Talk to someone you trust. Call the numbers on this page. Keep asking for help until you get it.

What if someone you know is being abused?

Even for adults, admitting to and breaking free from abuse can be very hard, even dangerous. No one should have to do it alone. If you think an adult is being abused, let them know you care and will listen. Suggest they get help from someone they trust. Show them this page. If you think a child is being abused, call Social Services at 933-6077.

SaskTel is pleased to sponsor the Abuse Help Lines page published by the Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan. This information supports SaskTel employees' chosen social cause, which is the prevention of child abuse. SaskTel's provincial social cause partner, the Saskatchewan Institute on Prevention of Handicaps (306-655-2512) offers a free "Healthy Parenting Home Study Program" to parents with children five and under. Visit www.PreventionInstitute.sk.ca. For details on SaskTel's Social Cause, visit www.SaskTel.com.

Crisis Lines/Emergency Numbers

Saskatoon Police Emergency.....911
(for RCMP detachments, see other side of page)
Saskatoon Mobile Crisis (24 hours).....933-6200
*Saskatoon Sexual Assault Centre (24 hrs)....244-2224
Victims Services.....975-8400
*Farm Stress Line.....1-800-667-4442

*Abused Women's Info Line (24 hrs).....1-888-338-0880

*Kids Help Phone (24 hrs).....1-800-668-6868

*Parents Help Line (24 hrs).....1-888-603-9100

Free Shelter & Support for Women & Kids

*Saskatoon Interval House (24 hours).....244-0185
YWCA244-0944
Family Healing Circle Lodge.....653-3900
Crisis Nursery.....242-2433
Salvation Army Family Services (also men)....242-6833

Counselling Services/Support Groups

EGADZ Youth Centre.....931-6644
*Family Support Centre.....933-7751
*Family Service Bureau.....244-0127
*Catholic Family Services.....244-7773
*Gay & Lesbian Health Service.....665-1224
SK Voice for People with Disabilities...1-877-569-3111
Alternatives: For Men Violent to Partners.....655-8989

Multicultural Services

Immigrant Women.....978-6611
Open Door Society.....653-4464

Aboriginal Services

Saskatoon Indian & Metis Friendship Centre...244-0174
Metis Family & Community Justice.....242-6886
*MACSI (Metis Addictions Centre).....652-8951
*Family Healing Circle Lodge.....653-3900
STC Family Centre.....978-7400

Provincial Legal Aid Office.....1-800-667-3764

**These agencies do not subscribe to Call or Name display.*

If you are abusing someone, there's help for you too. Call one of these services.

The Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan (PATHS) designed the Hot Peach Pages™. Abuse is a crime. It is harmful to anyone involved, and can have long-term effects on the victim's health, family, and community. Child abuse will not stand. Family violence will not stand. For more information, visit www.abusehelp.sk.ca.

About the Hot Peach Pages™

By the end of June, 2001, there will be 800,000 Abuse Help Lines pages in Saskatchewan (one for every resident over the age of ten). They will be in 95% of all private residences in the province, in all doctors' offices, in hospitals, social work offices, law offices, police stations, restaurants, gas stations, phone booths, and so on. And they will sit there safely all year round. The significance of this page was described in a proposal submitted by PATHS to the Crime Prevention Investment Fund in 1998:

"most sexual assaults, beatings and murders of Canadian women are by men known to them, and most occur in their own home. The place where women's security is at greatest risk is in the home. So where is the logical starting point to place supports and resources and begin dealing with women's personal safety? *In the home! In every home!* And what goes into 95% of the homes in Saskatchewan and stays there all year round, guaranteed? The phone book! Nothing else does--not pamphlets, not posters, not power bill inserts, not wallet cards. The phone book, and only the phone book, is uniquely and perfectly suited to be the ultimate initial 'abuse' information, education, and referral resource."

Conceived in Saskatchewan, Canada, the Hot Peach Pages™ were originally intended for publication in the telephone book. They first appeared in the Saskatoon City and Saskatoon District 1999-2000 telephone books as a full page with information about abuse in the left-hand column (almost identical to the current General abuse information available on the Hot Peach Pages™ web site) and with helping agencies listed in the right-hand column under different headings (again, much like the headings currently available on this web site). The 30 or so agencies listed on each Abuse Help Lines page already appear somewhere else in the phone book, but listing them all on one page under explanatory headings and alongside information on abuse has proven to be a very powerful tool--not just another tool, but rather a whole new tool. We learned from the Final Evaluation Report of the Hot Peach Pages™:

"It appears that the Pages are being used by clients of service agencies at an increasing rate; and it is particularly utilized by those who are in crisis situations. Whereas some callers to the agencies listed on the Hot Peach Pages must first call several agencies, callers using the Hot Peach Pages are more likely to find the exact agency they need. The information provided on the Hot Peach Pages--particularly the concise list of help lines and the accessibly written description of what constitutes abuse and where someone might go for help--is described by professionals working in the area to be exactly what is most needed. The vast majority of professionals surveyed rank the Pages very highly in ten separate categories (indicating degrees of usability, usefulness, accessibility, and appropriateness) and there is clearly a commitment to use this resource in their professional practice. The response to the Hot Peach Pages from citizens in the community, some of whom are affiliated with service providing agencies and some of whom have personal experience with violence and abuse, is overwhelmingly positive. Moreover, interviews with women and men who have been subjected to abuse indicate that these Pages provide exactly the kind of information that is needed when individuals find themselves in distress. ... these findings are very clear: **the Hot Peach Pages is a much needed, well received and important resource for the people of Saskatchewan.**"

SaskTel (Saskatchewan's Crown Telephone Corporation) is paying to publish the Hot Peach Pages™ Abuse Help Lines page in every telephone book in Saskatchewan for the 2000-2001 publication cycle, as part of SaskTel's contribution to the social cause of the prevention of child abuse. On October 6, 2000, the Abuse Help Lines page in the Saskatchewan phone book was officially launched in Saskatoon and Saskatoon District by SaskTel and PATHS at a news conference. To send SaskTel an e-mail thanking them for their sponsorship of the Abuse Help Lines page and congratulating them on their corporate commitment to the residents of Saskatchewan, you can write to community.relations@sasktel.sk.ca. (It would be great if you sent a copy of your e-mail to PATHS at paths@sk.sympatico.ca. Thanks.)

Ideally, the Hot Peach Pages™ Abuse Help Lines page would be everywhere, and would say everything necessary to persuade everyone in need to seek help. To that end, our Hot Peach Pages™ on the Web supplement those in the phone book because on our web site, we have and/or provide links to:

- abuse information in other languages
- additional specific information for teens, seniors and the disabled
- the web pages of listed agencies (if available)
- much more information on abuse than can be printed on one page in the telephone book.

Even better would be Hot Peach Pages in every phone book in the world. Right now, people in three other Canadian provinces are looking to get Abuse Help Lines pages in their telephone books. If you live outside Saskatchewan, Canada, and would like to lobby your telephone company or telephone book publisher or government to print an Abuse Help Lines page in your phone books, we would be happy to help in a consulting capacity. E-mail paths@sk.sympatico.ca for information.

An Evaluation of the Hot Peach Pages™: Final Technical Report Highlights

(Statistics from October, 99 to February, 2000)

- The Hot Peach Pages were the most frequently used source for phone numbers of participating agencies, generating over one-third of all calls. Combined, the white and yellow pages generated fewer than one-tenth of all calls.
- The Hot Peach Pages are even more user friendly for people in crisis. In 66% of crisis calls, the caller got the number from the Hot Peach Pages. In less than 2% of all crisis calls did the caller get the number from the white or yellow pages.
- People in crisis who used the Hot Peach Pages called the right agency with their first call--7.5% of crisis callers who didn't use the Hot Peach Pages had to be referred on to another agency.
- 75% of professionals (police, physicians, lawyers, psychologists, social workers) expressed an urgent need for one accessible resource that compiles telephone numbers, and 81% want that resource to include accessible information about the nature of violence. (Why such a need with all the pamphlets, wallet cards, and posters that agencies have been producing for at least a decade?)

Professional support for the Hot Peach Pages:

- Before seeing the Hot Peach Pages, a lawyer wrote, "[What's needed is a resource that is confidential and discrete], info that the guy doesn't think she went out to get just to piss him off. Please proceed with anything that can help--the 'Hot Peach Pages' sound good."
- One RCMP officer noted that "The Hot Peach Page is a very good idea. I made photocopies and placed them in my duty bag so I can distribute to victims." A Saskatoon Police officer indicated that s/he asks victims of violence if they know where their telephone book is "then I tell them to look at the Hot Peach Page whenever they're ready. I know they'll find something there to help them." Speaking more specifically to the accessibility of the Pages, another RCMP officer commented that this is "concise and simple. Very easy to look at and read. Gets the point across. Everything is covered on one page."

- A family law lawyer who had begun using them noted that, "This is a positive initiative Ö for many women who experience various levels of abuse. Having something in writing that they can refer to at home to reinforce my information is useful. The compilation of services makes for easy reference as well. I recently faced an emergency situation with an abused woman [out of town] ... I really missed the easy access the Hot Peach Pages provide."
- Family law lawyers: "I was not aware of this directory until receiving this survey. I hope that the people needing this information are aware of it because it is well done and could be of great assistance." Another wrote, "I work with 'abused' individuals daily Ö I am embarrassed to acknowledge [that] your survey brought this to my attention!!!" And still another commented that, "I was not aware of this until your correspondence. Now that I am, I will keep it in mind for persons needing help."
- One psychological counsellor noted that she had a client who was "dealing with some really difficult issues and was really distressed. The Hot Peach Pages helped to simplify things, figure out that it was a matter of right and wrong, and what was happening to her was wrong, wrong, wrong."
- Another counsellor noted, "It's a simple tool but it does the trick when you're dealing with clients who are in the midst of an abusive situation and don't have the time for long winded theories. They need plain descriptions and lots of proof that there is a way out. This Page helps me to get them to realize this."
- A family physician wrote, "It's a super readable page. It lets me steer patients in the right direction after I have done what I can to treat the physical results of battering."
- In describing one client who was living in an abusive relationship, one social worker wrote, "She was all excited. Here was finally something that really got to her, made sense to her." Others wrote: "What a great find for those, like my client, who need it." And: "The Hot Peach Page is easy to use. Discrete." And: "I hope the Hot Peach Pages continue to be published annually throughout Saskatchewan." And: "It makes my job easier because chances are the clients have this right in their homes. No worries that I'll run out of wallet cards or pamphlets while on visits."

Public support for the Hot Peach Pages:

- "I opened the phone book to find help and I found the Peach Pages. I read it again and again and realized that I was not alone and there were people out there I could talk to. If it were not for these phone numbers all on one page Ö I would

probably still be in that abusive relationship. I thank you SaskTel for having this page Ö if I was helped then many others were as well. With this page I got the courage to leave."

- "Fate was on my side when I heard about [the Hot Peach web site and page in the phone book]. I never knew such great information and resources existed. I have also learned that I am not crazy in thinking there has been something wrong with my life for several years now. I was led to believe it was all my fault. Now I know better Ö I could go on but you have probably heard 'my' story many, many times! I just want to send you my gratitude for all the wonderful information that I have found in my quest for a better life and well being."
- "I would like to let you know how valuable I feel the Hot Peach Page is and especially in a highly accessible place like the phone book. How great is that! I'm excited about having the information in the phone book because everyone has one and if you are in an abusive environment its right at your fingertips. In my personal experience finding the information I needed was complicated and time consuming. I was left feeling helpless and alone. Knowing where the information was would have been very helpful as well as empowering at a time in my life when I felt very powerless Ö. This is potentially life saving material and would be beneficial to all in need across Saskatchewan." (emphasis added)
- "The issue of violence against women is incredibly important, and from my vantage point Ö I can confirm that this type of resource is valuable to Native as well as non-Native communities. In my travels throughout North America this year, it has become apparent that Saskatchewan is somewhat of a leader in providing such a resource; indeed Ö it is precisely the kind of innovative program one might expect from the birthplace of Medicare."
- "I am sending this e-mail in support of the Hot Peach Page-Abuse Help Lines. What a great idea to have numbers and info at a person's convenience ... women and men need this information!!!"
- "I recently discovered the 'Hot Peach Page' in the Saskatoon telephone directory. I think its inclusion is an excellent and long overdue initiative, and I congratulate those who thought of it. Finally, information that will help abused women and children is available in virtually every home. Please continue to provide funding for this brilliant idea."
- "Including the 'Abuse Help Line' pages in the recent Saskatchewan phone book is a great idea; I hope it continues to be part of future phone books! This kind of information is often difficult to find within the phone book itself, since many folks are confused where to find #'s at the best of times and especially during stressful

times (as would be the case if one were needing abuse help services). I was surprised to find out that the 'abuse' information isn't considered a permanent part of every phone book, since it reflects precisely the sort of information one would expect to find highlighted in a high-quality phone book."

- "I want to emphasize how critical it is that the 'Hot Peach Pages' receives funding for years to come ... It is people in crisis who are primarily using these Pages and having the necessary phone numbers that they need to call in the very front of the phone book is ... [an] effective way for them to receive the assistance they need."
- "I wish to convey my congratulations to the people whose initiative, hard-work, unfailing belief in a good idea ... brought the 'Hot Peach Pages' to the new ... phone book. The information is clear, concise, easily understood ... This addition to the phone book is sure to make a big difference to many people's lives, a big, positive, healing difference. ... As a woman who left a situation of domestic abuse, my only regret is that [this initiative] did not happen sooner. My hope is that this Pages will be included in every phone book."
- "The Hot Peach Pages is an invaluable addition to our phone books ... It is a reflection of the health of our society when services for the abused are 'up-front' and clearly listed - the Hot Peach Pages makes up for the time before when numbers for services were 'buried' somewhere in the phone book, seeming to sanction the traditional secrecy-and-shame barriers to help and healing. Congratulations! We hope that this will continue to be an on-going feature of our provincial phone directories." (2 signatures)
- "I am writing to express my support for the continuation AND expansion of the Hot Peach Pages! ... Given the statistics in regard to abuse, there is no question of the need for this information in ours and in other communities. I would suggest that SaskTel support this important endeavor to ensure access to needed services."
- "Violence remains a pervasive, but often invisible, part of many women's, men's and children's lives. The victims of violence need a place of safe refuge, but they also need to know how to get that information. The 'Hot Peach Page' provides an easily accessible resource."
- "An idea whose time has come. Keep it up."

JUSTICE CANADA



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