In May 2011, we had another successful Walk a Mile event, raising an amazing $34,000 in pledges and welcoming over 600 people. In addition, an anonymous couple from Vancouver gave $28,000 as a matching gift. Everyone did a phenomenal job of fundraising and we extend special thanks to our top fundraisers: Dwane Ford ($5,925), Mike Kroeger ($1,525), Howard Liptrot ($1,135), Bruce Bryant-Scott ($1,130) and Leopold Bienkowski-Gibbons ($1,109). (We extend a special apology to Mike Kroeger for not being publicly recognized as 2nd top fundraiser at the event and thank him for being so gracious in accepting our oversight.) Our presenting sponsor, RBC, was our top event sponsor, and had over 50 employees join in the walk and volunteer. Team RBC ($20,416), CFUV 101.9FM ($1,764), Bruce & the Boys ($1,130) and Victoria Social Media Ninjas ($700).

Emily Ellingsen Achievement Awards

In honour of outstanding achievement and support through volunteerism and/or fundraising, Jules Wilson was the first recipient of the Emily Ellingsen Achievement Award last year. This year we were proud to present the award to two more remarkable individuals. Christy Smith courageously shared her experience as a survivor in October 2010 when she launched a social media campaign around her participation in the GoodLife Fitness Marathon. An article about her in the Times Colonist prompted a $7,500 donation from generous donor, Rudi Hoenson, bringing her grand total for the event to over $20,000.

This was followed by a personal letter included in our holiday mail campaign and, in April, Christy organized a fundraising event at Willow Stream Spa where she unveiled her personally designed Sh! Campaign t-shirts that raise awareness about the issue of sexualized violence and are now on sale at LeBleu Boutique with all proceeds benefiting WSAC. Christy’s goal is to break the silence that surrounds this issue and to let survivors know that they are not alone. Due to her ongoing efforts, Christy was selected by Glacier Smartwater and Plan Canada’s “Because I am a Girl” initiative to accompany Olympic champion Jennifer Heil to Rwanda to help celebrate the completion of a new school for girls. Congratulations and thank you, Christy!

Niki Hodgkinson was the recipient of the second Emily Ellingsen Award at the Tri of Compassion in July. Niki launched her fundraising efforts in the spring by doing a spin demo for six hours in the front window of the Lululemon store in downtown Victoria. Together with DJ Anger and Plint’s Prints she created and sold a music CD that included training music for Triathlon of Compassion and various other smaller events that were organized on our behalf. Charmaine Welch and Myrna Nygaard organized the Metchosin Fabric Fest in March, Christy Smith launched a t-shirt campaign at Willow Stream Spa, the Victoria Highlanders women’s soccer club invited WSAC to be the recognized charity at one of their games in May, Tara Paterson organized a garden party and panel discussion about feminism through the ages in July, the Eves of Destruction roller derby team welcomed WSAC to their game in August and donated partial proceeds from ticket sales, and Julie Denly from UVic Hope is organizing a benefit concert and raffle that will take place this fall.

Thanks to the efforts of these groups and many others, awareness of WSAC and the issue of sexualized violence is kept at the forefront and invaluable connections with donors and supporters are made.

August 2011

It is our Mission

To support, empower and advocate for women who are survivors of sexual assault and sexual abuse and to work towards the prevention of sexualized violence against women.

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Women’s Sexual Assault Centre

healing, education & prevention

Celebrating our Special Events

Special events play an important role in the work of WSAC. At our Annual General Meeting on September 15th we will be celebrating all of those people who put in countless hours to organize special events on our behalf, the participants who take part in them and the donors and businesses who give so generously with pledges and sponsorship.

Events, and the publicity around them, advertise that WSAC exists in Greater Victoria to serve survivors of sexualized violence. We know that one in three women are sexually assaulted every year and only 6-10% come forward to report to the authorities or to seek assistance. Community events, with the support of the media, keep us in the public eye, build awareness of our Centre, and, most importantly, ensure survivors know where to turn for help. In addition, events allow us to educate the public about sexualized violence issues and raise much-needed financial support.

This past year over $75,000 was raised at special events like the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, Triathlon of Compassion and various other smaller events that were organized on our behalf. Charmaine Welch and Myrna Nygaard organized the Metchosin Fabric Fest in March, Christy Smith launched a t-shirt campaign at Willow Stream Spa, the Victoria Highlanders women’s soccer club invited WSAC to be the recognized charity at one of their games in May, Tara Paterson organized a garden party and panel discussion about feminism through the ages in July, the Eves of Destruction roller derby team welcomed WSAC to their game in August and donated partial proceeds from ticket sales, and Julie Denly from UVic Hope is organizing a benefit concert and raffle that will take place this fall.

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Annual General Meeting Thursday, Sept 15th

Please join us at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, Sept 15th at James Bay New Horizons, 234 Menzies St., 4-6pm. In addition to providing an update on our programs, we will be honouring our special event participants and organizers. RSVP (250)383-5545 or wvwsac@vwsac.com.
Project Respect - Program Highlights

Project Respect works to prevent sexualized violence among youth aged 14-19 by providing safe and skillfully facilitated spaces for young people to begin to think critically about, act to resist, and create positive alternatives to the harmful (yet normalized) messages they receive about gender, relationships, sexuality, and violence. Programming addresses power dynamics, leadership, and societal influence by focusing on knowledge change, skill-building, attitude change, and social change.

Project Respect reached 1020 youth during the 2010/11 school year through 55 two-part workshops in schools and community-based organizations, including 5 new partners. Our primary focus this past year has been strengthening and expanding partnerships with alternative schools and organizations serving marginalized youth. This allows us to engage with more young people living in contexts that produce greater risk of victimization and/or perpetration. We also facilitated 4 Young Men’s Groups and 6 Young Women’s Groups, with specialized curricula. In addition to working with young people who face a lot of structural barriers, another focus has been on doing more work with young men to explore masculinity and challenge gender expectations that lead to gender based violence. Our Young Men’s Groups are facilitated by two man-identified facilitators and specifically explore: the gender expectations of the ‘Man Box’, sexualized behaviors, enthusiastic consent and positive sexuality, and creating alternatives to violent masculinities. We were also able to engage with adult men in a similar way at our tent at the annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes fundraiser. At our tent, we had a “Break out of the Man Box” graffiti wall, where participants wrote comments and thoughts that challenge dominant expectations of being a man. A few people also shared their personal experiences on video camera at our speaker’s corner. This footage will become part of a larger video project we are starting, through which Project Respect will create video resources featuring boys and men in our community talking about gender and their roles in preventing sexualized violence.

The Prevention Team:
There have been several changes in staffing this year at Project Respect. PR said good-bye to Prevention Coordinator, Soumya Natarajan, in August 2010 and to Prevention Coordinator, Billy Bingaman in October 2010. Soumya and Billy were instrumental to the success of Project Respect in their respective 2 and 5 years with us. In October 2010, Elcia Loiselle was hired as Prevention Coordinator and Vince Terstappen joined us as Prevention Educator. As a dynamic team, Elcia and Vince dove right into the work of Project Respect and enjoyed an exciting year working with the Greater Victoria community. In November 2010, Vince had to leave PR to move to Vancouver, having contributed invaluable knowledge and skills to the program at a pivotal time. David Boffa became the new Prevention Educator this past May bringing a wealth of experience in anti-violence work. PR could not do the work it does without our extended team including: facilitators, Patelina Hakkarien, Nishad Khanna and Billy Bingaman; practicum students, Lydia Hodgens and Leah Wall; and, volunteers, Anni Pattla, Keyanna, and Cassie.

Respect Revolution Campaign
This year Project Respect partnered with Girls Alternative Program for our Respect Revolution Campaign. Over several weeks Project Respect engaged with the girls at GAP supporting them to deepen their understanding of sexualized violence and create social action through Facebook. We collaborated to create the Fierce Youth Reclaiming Empowerment (F.Y.R.E.) Facebook group as a public awareness/social action initiative to take a stand against websites that promote sexualized violence through gossip that degrades girls’ and women’s sexuality (e.g. through labels like “slut”). In particular, girls wanted to stand up against a website called themdry.com that had targeted the Vancouver community, including several girls in girls and women in the Victoria area. We then promoted (and continue to promote) the Facebook group via our own Facebook page and through Twitter as well as at events like Walk a Mile in Her Shoes. The F.Y.R.E. Facebook group currently has 153 members.

Direct Client Services

Triumph-Informed Practice and Support (TIPS) on the Road!
In 2008, WSAC developed and began providing training in the community on trauma-informed practice as a way to share what we know about supporting survivors of sexualized violence. A trauma-informed perspective is like a lens that can be applied to any field of work, youth work, medical, social work, policing, etc. This lens helps a supporter better understand the range of responses and increase their awareness of their primary work with a survivor by acknowledging the centrality of safety in supportive relationships, understanding the myriad of ways people respond to trauma and the importance of support for workers.

We’ve been so encouraged to see how our clients and community members have begun to understand the roots of sexualized violence. These stories act as a chorus of awareness and funds, and an in-depth, honest and poignant story of one woman’s difficult path to healing from sexualized violence. These stories act as a chorus of voices, help us all to better understand different perspectives, to hear the diversity of processes if community members who are survivors, and hopefully to challenge us to understand the roots of sexualized violence and to work together to make our community safer for all.

Highlight on WSAC’s Sexualized Violence Victim Services Program

Thank you for your continued support of WSAC’s Sexualized Violence Victim Services Program. This year Project Respect and the many individual donors and businesses whose generous gifts support the program.

Thank you, Anna! We all feel so sad to see you go, but so excited for what comes next for you all! Thank you, and we’ll miss you, Sarah Schlote, Grace Lore, Savanna Peekeekoot, Kim Hamilton and Lindsay Nicholson.

We are adding NEW information to our website! Visit us at www.yesmeansyes.com or follow us on Twitter: @projRespect

Special thanks to the provincial employees who generously support our crisis and info line & workshops for partners and friends.

DIRECT CLIENT SERVICES

Focus on Sexually Maltreated Children

On August 14th, WSAC was honoured to accept a banner from Metis visual artist, Anna-Celestya Carr, as part of her “Men’s Banner Project”. Anna began the interactive community project five years ago as a way to include men in conversations surrounding the issues of violence against women. The process is part visual, part performance and part interactive and the banner is a tool to begin dialogue, show support and build a stronger community through art. At the event, which took place in Centennial Square, Anna asked men walking the streets downtown to place their hands on the banner as a symbolic pledge to never use their hands in violence against women. The banner was accepted in partnership with UVic’s Anti-Violence Project and will be displayed at future community events for both organizations. Thank you, Anna!

This year Project Respect offered a new banner to community members as part of the Project Respect’s F.Y.R.E. Campaign. The banner was accepted in partnership with UVic’s Anti-Violence Project and will be displayed at future community events for both organizations. Thank you, Anna!