The 16th year of this awesome event once again garnered tremendous support from the community. With 221 participants and over 100 incredible volunteers, $17,000 was raised in support of the services provided by WSAC. We thank the following generous businesses for their sponsorship and ask that you in turn support them: Fort St. Cycle, Frontrunners, Runners of Compassion, Asics, Esquimalt Rec Centre and the City of Esquimalt, Robert Cameron Law, Peninsula Co-op, Ocean River Sports, St. John Ambulance, Chateau Whistler, National Car Rental, BC Ferry Corporation, Country Grocer, Breadsticks Bakery, Thrifty Foods, Old Victoria Water Company, Island Displays, Pederson’s Party Rentals, Cycles West and media sponsors – A Channel, CFAX 1070, 100.3 the Q and the Zone at 91.3.

Please join us in Esquimalt again for TOC 2010 in July! – to be announced

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WSAC featured in Uvic’s Martlet article

In June we welcomed over 300 people to our 3rd annual Walk A Mile in Her Shoes event at Centennial Square and raised $17,000. We would like to thank the many men from Victoria and beyond who came out to walk in everything from slippers to flip-flops to heels to show their support of the women and girls in their lives. They stepped out with energy, enthusiasm and compassion to make a stand and to say that violence against women is not okay and that we all play a vital role in ending it.

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WSAC featured in Uvic’s Martlet article

The Women’s Sexual Assault Centre wishes you a wonderful holiday season and great 2010!

Our Story
The Women's Sexual Assault Centre (WSAC) was founded in 1981 by a group of volunteers and funded by the Victoria Downtown Association. In 1986, WSAC received funding from the Provincial government and became a registered charitable organization.

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.

WSAC Board of Directors
Kim Brown, co-chair
Sally Gose, co-chair
Allison Beardsworth, co-chair
Natasha de Klerk, Ann Evans
Heidi Exner, Michelle Haddon
Kylene Haist, Liz Morrison
Shannon Schaus, Katie Shaw
Shelley Spring, Made Kenna Rielly
Makenna Rielly, Executive Director

Why Your Support is So Important & What You Can Do to Help
Half of the Centre’s annual budget comes from provincial government contracts, and the remainder is made up through grant-writing, special events and the generous support of hundreds of individuals and businesses in the community. These gifts allow us to deliver services far beyond the scope of what is covered under our contracts. In addition to counselling and crisis services for survivors, we are able to do important outreach and education in the community and deliver much-needed prevention education to youth through Project Respect. George’s giving went way beyond his personal donations. Please talk about us with your own friends, family members and new acquaintances. Let them know why you support us. Create your own legacy, just as George did. You will be helping to make a difference in many lives.

Other Ways to Give –
• Join our Thrifty’s Smile Card campaign. Get a card from us to use towards the purchase of your groceries. Thrifty’s will donate 5% of your total grocery bill directly to WSAC.
• Give a donation in lieu of a Christmas, birthday or holiday gift this year. A letter of acknowledgement can be mailed directly to the recipient or given to you so that you can personally present it to your loved one.
• Check out our Wishlist by visiting “Ways to Give” at www.wsac.org. You may have items at home that may be useful to the Centre.
• Become a Monthly Donor. Your donations can be automatically deducted from your bank account or credit card. It’s easy, reduces administrative costs and contributes to our ongoing sustainability.
• Leave a legacy – include us in your will.
• Donate to our Endowment Fund at the Victoria Foundation.

Special thanks to the WestShore RCMP for once again conducting their own in-office campaign in an effort to provide self-care items and special gifts for our clients during the holidays. Your partnership is so appreciated!

Thank you to the UVic’s Martlet newspaper for selecting us as the beneficiary of their November concert at the Victoria Event Centre. The event raised $728 thanks to the talents of musical guests “Les Monstres Terribles”, “The Virgin Space Cadets”, and “Mile Edit”. We also thank Genevieve Dale of CFUV radio for providing time for us to talk about the services available at WSAC on-air.

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Project Respect

Respect Revolution Campaign
For the second year in a row, we held a Respect Revolution Campaign at Victoria High School. In the ten-week program, we discussed gender, gender-based violence, consent, media, communication, power, relationships and drugs and alcohol. Our team of “Respecters” took part in two community events. First was the creation of a mural in collaboration with antidote: Mutricial and Indigenous Girls and Women’s Network. Second was VWSAC’s third annual “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” event where the Respecters led the march holding the Centre’s banner.

Visit our Website at www.yesmeansyes.com

Part of mural created by antidote: Mutricial and Indigenous Girls and Women’s Network and “Respecters”

A Mother’s Perspective
“I have first hand experience of three beautiful, healthy daughters who experienced the benefits of Project Respect training and now, in their early adult lives, are miles and years ahead of most adults in understanding self-respect. This project is a quietly powerful, essential service offered to the community to help prevent sexualized violence in young people.”

~ Barb Armstrong, Victoria community member and mother of five

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Thank you to our practicum students who have helped us so much this year!

Paulina Hakkarainen
Tara Munro
Jessica Blair

Integration of sex and gender-specific tobacco interventions in chronic disease management

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“we acknowledge the Coast Salish Territory that we live, work and present upon.”

Direct Client Services

Sharing What We Know

Practicums at WSAC
The Direct Client Services team has offered practicum placements for many students over the years from the University of Victoria, City University and Camosun College. Sharing our skills and experience with students is a renewing and grounding experience for our team. Students ask questions that help us to articulate why and how we do our work, and share new ideas and perspectives that help to invigorate our work with clients. These students are also the next wave of practitioners. This fall, we have a practicum student from the University of Victoria Bachelor of Social Work program, Kirsten Bingham. Kirsten has been a wonderful addition to our Crisis Team as both a crisis line support worker and a crisis counsellor. UVic Masters of Education Counselling Psychology students, Lindy Devine (Three Summers Cohort) and Lisa George (Aboriginal Communities cohort) are working with our Stopping the Violence Program, allowing us to reduce the waitlist for individual counselling, and bringing their wealth of work and life experience to the Centre!

Partners in Research
Over the past year, we’ve been contacted by a number of agencies in British Columbia and abroad to participate in research. Following along the lines of our intention to ‘share what we know’, we’ve been pleased to be partners on two proposals from the Centre for Excellence in Women’s Health: Integration of sex and gender-specific tobacco interventions in chronic disease management, which is focused on improving best practices in smoking cessation among individuals with substance use, trauma and mental disorders, and Integrating trauma-informed addictions treatment for women with co-occurring substance use, mental health and violence issues, which is exploring the neurobiological, social, and psychological connections between trauma, addictions and mental health issues.

We have also been asked to contribute data for an international study looking at the types of services accessed after a sexual assault. We were thrilled to be asked to participate and continue building an international body of knowledge around sexualized violence.

TIPS Training
Following on the heels of the Trauma-Informed Practice and Support Training (TIPS) that the Centre offered to community partners in youth-serving agencies in 2008-2009, we applied for funding to utilize the core of this training and modify it to offer similar work to workers who provide services to people who are experiencing homelessness, additions and mental health issues. We have just found out the Victoria Foundation has provided $15,000 to fund five series of TIPS training! This training will be focused on basic trauma response skills, care of the worker, and an overview of recent research on the impacts of trauma on the whole self. We have received many requests for TIPS information and training from various sectors in the community. In our strategic planning for this program, we identified that while some agencies may be able to use our fee-for-service training, other agencies with minimal professional development dollars would be unable to attend. This grant will enable these groups with limited funds to receive the TIPS training at a much reduced or waived fee, continuing the accessibility of the TIPS program to a wide range of community support workers!

Advanced Clinical Training
In January 2010, WSAC will be hosting an advanced training for EMDR practitioners. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is a method of psychotherapy that has been extensively researched and proven effective for the treatment of trauma. EMDR is a set of standardized protocols that incorporates elements from many different treatment approaches, and is one of the counselling modalities offered at WSAC. This training with Dr. Ulrich Lanius, Ph.D. and Dawna Dix Milstein, O.T. will focus on using EMDR with people who have dissociative symptoms which will allow both our three internal EMDR practitioners as well as other counsellors from the community to deepen their skills and knowledge. Offering this training on the Island continues to build our community of practice and support for the trauma response sector. Space still available!

“What A Year! Project Respect, the prevention initiative of VWSAC has had a productive and inspiration-filled year reaching 1,940 youth through community and school-based workshops at 17 schools and 14 community groups. Victoria Opportunities for Community Youth Leadership (VOCYL), Community Living Victoria, Young Parents Support Network and the Boys and Girls Club were among the community partners that we presented to. We also took part in numerous conferences and events including the Honour Youth Conference and the Age to Engage Conference.

VOCYL is made up of youth from diverse backgrounds and with different abilities that desire to share their personal experiences and knowledge in order to advocate for inclusion and belonging for everyone. Although statistics tell us that over 80% of women with disabilities will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, services that exist to educate women about sexualized violence rarely recognize the unique factors and experiences that individuals with disabilities face. Project Respect was able to adapt their presentation for the specific needs of the individuals we serve, recognizing their vulnerability and varying abilities. The presentations provided an excellent opportunity for all the youth to explore these topics and to gain a sense of respect for themselves and others.”

Tracy Gill, VOCYL Program Coordinator

For more information about Project Respect, visit www.yesmeansyes.com or contact us at (250)383-5545 or info@yesmeansyes.com. You can also follow us on Twitter! @projRespect