



Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention Activities Overview 2010-2011

Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention (PAC) is an advisory committee to the Premier with member organizations appointed by Executive Council representing government departments, community advocates, crisis and outreach workers, and representatives of legal, medical, and law enforcement circles to ensure diversity and collective responsibility for family violence prevention. PAC was first established in 1995 by former Premier Catherine Callbeck and was renewed for five years by Premier Robert Ghiz in spring 2009.

This Activities Update details the accomplishments of PAC in the second year of the five-year mandate, April 2010-March 2011.



Premier Robert Ghiz (left) signing the declaration of 2011 Family Violence Prevention Week, joined by PAC Chair Dr. Philip Smith (center) and Minister of Community Services and Seniors, Hon. Janice Sherry (right).

Message from PAC Chair

PAC continues to bring together talented and committed representatives of organizations central to the mission of preventing family violence in our province. Part of our work involves being informed about and supporting key community services for families where violence already has occurred. Part of our work involves understanding the needs of families whose circumstances mean they are at increased risk of violence in the future. And part of our work addresses the needs of the entire Island community, so that relationships of respect, care, and integrity leave no room for violence.

Some of PAC's energies in this second year of our mandate have focused on enhancing our organizational effectiveness. We developed a PAC Member Handbook that details what we are about, how we operate--including our process for consensus decision making--and how we communicate. To aid in communications, we instituted a monthly e-bulletin about upcoming events for distribution to PAC member organizations, and launched an enhanced PAC website for use by PAC members and the entire community. Being an effective Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention also requires clarity about what we mean by family violence, and we invite you to read, consider, and engage one another in dialogue about our new Family Violence Statement, presented in this report.

Most of PAC's energies this year have focused on the critical importance of appropriate services in our Island community for those experiencing family violence, and on the five priority areas identified in the first year of our mandate: civil and criminal justice issues; establishment of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) system; establishment of a comprehensive, evidence-based system for parent education and support; youth engagement in family violence prevention; and, raising awareness and changing social norms that condone violence. You will see in the report that considerable activity has led to some progress in each of these areas, and that much work remains to be done.



Dr. Philip Smith
PAC Chairperson

Dr. Philip Smith is Professor of Psychology at the University of Prince Edward Island, where he teaches courses in introductory psychology, statistics and research design, and child development, and advises honours students conducting research in family violence prevention. He served as President of the PEI Transition House Association in the late 1980s and was a member of the Advisory Council to the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women in the 1990s. Dr. Smith and his wife Cathy Morgan live in Stratford with their children Alexandra and Elijah.

Premier's Action Committee
on Family Violence Prevention



Comité d'action du premier ministre
sur la prévention de la violence familiale

PAC members recognize the privilege that is ours in being responsible for moving forward the PAC vision, "A society where all individuals are safe, respected, and valued, where any form of violence is unacceptable; and where children, women, and men have opportunities to reach their full potential and contribute to the overall well-being of all families and communities." PAC members also recognize that progress toward this vision requires the knowledge, skills, and sustained commitment of Islanders from every walk of life and every part of our community. We invite your energetic collaboration.

PAC's Vision

A society where all individuals are safe, respected and valued; where any form of violence is unacceptable; and where children, women, and men have opportunities to reach their full potential and contribute to the overall well-being of families and communities.

PAC Mandate

The mandate of the committee is:

- to coordinate the implementation of the provincial Family Violence Prevention Strategy;
- to ensure integrity of community participation is maintained;
- to ensure an evaluation component is in place;
- to develop a work plan;
- to promote the importance of resource allocations necessary for implementation of the strategy; and
- to communicate initiatives to ensure a high public profile for family violence prevention is maintained across the province.



PAC research interns Leanne King (left) and Tracy Powers (right).

PAC Family Violence Statement

Family violence affects, or will affect, all people in Prince Edward Island. Family violence is connected to abuse of power and control, and to injustice based on sex, race, age, class, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. Individual history, family history, and current circumstances play a role in family violence.

Family violence is known by many names: child maltreatment, child abuse, incest, child exposure to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, spousal violence, woman abuse, domestic violence, sibling abuse, parent abuse, elder abuse, and abuse of older adults.

Family violence can affect anyone, from any demographic: cultural, national and ethnic origin, socio-economic status, education, gender, age and physical or mental ability.

Family violence can take many forms: harassment, verbal abuse, threats, financial abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, neglect, damage to property, injury to pets, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and homicide.

Family violence can happen between: current and former intimate partners (married and unmarried couples, including same-sex couples, and dating partners); a legal guardian or parent and child; blood, marriage or adoptive relatives; and a live-in caregiver and care recipient.

Family violence hurts. It can cause physical and psychological harm. Family violence violates the victim's rights and freedoms. Family violence harms the healthy development of children and youth.

Family violence is a public health issue, a criminal justice issue, and a human rights issue. To address family violence, all of us in Prince Edward Island must work together and share our resources.



PAC summer student, Jeremy Doucette



- **Monthly PAC E-Bulletin**

In April 2010 an electronic bulletin (E-Bulletin) was launched for PAC members to share information on upcoming events and activities related to family violence. The PAC E-Bulletin is compiled monthly and distributed by email to PAC members, and is posted on the PAC website www.stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca to share information on upcoming events with the public. The E-Bulletin was managed and distributed by Tracy Powers, PAC's one year public intern.

- **Family Violence Statement**

In December 2010 PAC members updated the PAC definition of family violence into a Family Violence Statement that incorporates the contexts and complexities of family violence.

- **PAC Website Redesign and Update** www.stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca

The PAC website is a key resource for the public and professionals to obtain the most up-to-date information on family violence services, prevention and upcoming events. The redesigned website, launched at the start of 2011 Family Violence Prevention Week, includes the latest government web page features as well as a section highlighting "What's New" on the website. The site also incorporates an emergency exit button on every page. The website was designed and implemented by Nick Mullen, public intern for PEI Partners for Community Safety which is a multidisciplinary knowledge and communication network coordinated through the Department of Justice and Public Safety. Additional design and technical support was provided by government's Strategic Marketing, Communications PEI and IT staff. PAC gratefully acknowledges the in-kind support provided by PEI Partners for Community Safety and government staff. Updating and expansion of the website content is an ongoing activity.

- **PAC Member Handbook**

The handbook gives an overview of PAC activities and provides guidelines for the conduct of PAC business. The handbook was prepared by PAC member Lisa Murphy with input from PAC members. The handbook's design and consensus model are based on the PEI Status of Women Council and Staff Handbooks.

- **Intern Support**

Applications for research interns to work with the Family Violence Prevention and Community Development Coordinator and to provide support for PAC were successful:

- The Public Internship Program provided funding for a six month intern, Leanne King, a UPEI graduate with a degree in Family Science and Nutrition. Ms. King joined the one year intern, Tracy Powers, who was recruited in February 2010. Ms. Powers is a UPEI graduate with a joint degree in Psychology and Sociology.
- Skills PEI provided funding for a summer student, Jeremy Doucette, a UPEI Psychology honours student.

- **New Community Resource: "Neighbours, Friends, and Families" brochures**

"Neighbours, Friends, and Families" brochures and accompanying posters in English and French with information on ways to help victims were produced and launched at the start of Family Violence Prevention Week. (For details see the Social Marketing Working Group update)

- **Think Tanks on Parent Education and Support**

Two Think Tanks were held, engaging over 100 stakeholders. In May 2010 participants discussed existing parenting programming, identified gaps and reached consensus that a comprehensive approach to parent education and support is needed on PEI. In November 2010 The Triple P Positive Parenting Programme, a promising evidence-based comprehensive strategy, was reviewed for possible implementation on PEI. The Canadian Liaison for Triple P delivered a presentation and answered participants' questions on the programme.

Youth Education Working Group (YEWG)

This year the Youth Education Working Group:

- Reviewed the 2005 PEI Youth Peer Violence Prevention Consultation Report and identified the need to determine how the experiences of youth may have changed with the emergence of electronic technology and social media.
- Compiled and reviewed information on student surveys that may be used in the future to collect information on the experiences of youth with family and dating violence.
- Initiated a review of evidence-based programs to reduce youth relationship violence.
- Reviewed options for engagement of PEI youth in priority-setting as well as planning and implementation of programming to increase healthy relationship skills and decrease relationship violence.
- Encouraged student participation in 2010 Family Violence Prevention Week by providing information on a wide range of activities to the Eastern, Western and French School Boards, the PEI Teacher's Federation and the PEI Home and School Federation. This was a universal prevention activity (for all students).
 - o The YEWG invited schools to share information on their Family Violence Prevention Week activities and issued Certificates of Appreciation for participation to:
 - Bluefield High - P.U.R.P.L.E. Committee (*P*romoting, *U*nderstanding, *R*espect, *P*rotection, *L*ove, *E*quality),
 - Elliot River Elementary School
 - Montague Regional High School - S.A.V.E. Chapter (*S*tudents, *A*gainst, *V*iolence, *E*verywhere)
 - Morell Regional High School - S.A.V.E. Chapter
 - Souris Regional High School - S.A.V.E. Chapter.



PAC Chair Dr. Philip Smith (sixth from right) and PAC member Phil Matusiewicz of PEI Family Violence Prevention Services (third from right) join students participating in a walk at Credit Union Place in Summerside in recognition of 2011 Family Violence Prevention Week

Civil/Criminal Issues Working Group (CCWG)

The role of this working group is to co-ordinate the activities of various committees in the province that are focused on family violence issues in the context of the criminal and civil justice systems. The primary focus of this working group is indicated prevention (for persons already affected by family violence). Work of these various committees includes the following:

- Victims of Family Violence Act Steering Committee - monitors utilization of the Act; and co-ordinates police training, and training for justices of the peace designated under the Act.
 - o Meetings with Justices of the Peace and police supervisors were held.
 - o Annual police training on Family Violence Response - two sessions held in November, 2010
 - o Standardized wording for release of offenders on police undertakings approved by Chiefs of Police
- Linking Criminal/Civil Justice Systems Working Group - focused on information access between the Civil and Criminal justice systems in cases of family violence.
 - o Ongoing meetings to determine feasibility of a system to link civil and criminal orders in cases of family violence involving children.
 - o FPT Working Group on Family Violence formed on the issue of intersection of criminal and civil justice systems- 3 representatives from PEI are members of this committee.
- Family Violence Court Working Group - assessing the feasibility of moving forward with a domestic violence court option for PEI.
 - o Discussions with Policy Board have been initiated.
- Child Sexual Abuse Advisory Committee - conference planning, development of publications, and review of the Child Sexual Abuse Protocol.
 - o Planning underway for a conference in May 2011 - Boys Hurt Too: Understanding and Responding to Male Child Sexual Abuse
- Woman Abuse Protocols - ongoing work in updating protocols and developing new protocols
 - o Updated protocol on Police Response to Domestic Disputes signed off by Chiefs of Police.
 - o Training for front line workers on Family Violence Education for Professionals held in March 2011.

Social Marketing Working Group (SMWG)

The SMWG reviewed the work of the previous Social Marketing Committee active from 1998-2001. The feasibility of conducting a follow-up public opinion survey was discussed. The Working Group decided that a higher priority would be to renew and expand prevention strategies previously employed in the province.

Specific activities undertaken were:

- Updating of the pocket-sized Family Violence Resource Guide. This was an indicated prevention activity (for persons who have experienced violence).
- Development of a new brochure and poster for community members entitled "Neighbours, Friends, and Families" to provide information on ways to help victims of family violence. Content was adapted with permission from the New Brunswick "Safer Families...Safer Communities" campaign. The new brochure and poster were designed and brought to completion by Kelly Robinson and Donna Langille of Community Legal Information of PEI, and PAC member Jody MacLennan, in consultation with the PAC 2011 Family Violence Prevention Week Co-ordinating Committee. The brochure and poster, released during Family Violence Prevention Week, continue the theme of the PEI community-level "Peace begins at home" campaign. Brochures are available in English and French at all PEI public libraries, PEI Access sites, Social Assistance Offices, Community Legal Information Services of PEI, Victim Services and PEI Family Violence Prevention Services. To date more than 2,000 brochures have been distributed. The brochure and poster can be downloaded from the PAC website www.stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca. This was a universal prevention activity.

Parent Education and Support Working Group (PESWG)

PAC has identified comprehensive parental education and support as having high potential to prevent abuse against children and violence within parental relationships, both immediately and across generations. Effective parenting also has far-reaching influences across health, education, community and social services, and justice. Through this workgroup, and in cooperation with the PEI Children's Secretariat, PAC brought together over 100 stakeholders from across PEI to one or both of two think-tanks held in May and November of 2010. Participants strongly endorsed the need for parent education and support from infancy through adolescence, across the entire Island community, and addressing prevention that is universal (the entire population), selective (families with specific risk factors) and indicated (families who already have experienced significant problems). Particular attention was given to the possibilities of Triple P Positive Parenting Programme, given its strong evidence of effectiveness, across cultures. A planned February visit by Triple P founder, Dr. Matt Sanders of the University of Queensland, Australia, was cancelled due to weather, and will be rescheduled for late 2011.



Guest speaker Debbie Eastman, Program Implementation Consultant for Triple P Canada (right) with facilitators Donald DesRoches (centre) and Alaina Roach-O'Keefe (right) at the Second Think Tank for Parent Education and Support.



Premier Robert Ghiz (second from left) and Minister Janice Sherry (far right) join PAC Chair Dr. Philip Smith (second from right) and Donna Langille from Community Legal Information Association PEI (far left) in the formal release of the new brochure "Neighbours, Friends, and Families" with information on ways everyone can help victims of family violence.

2011 Family Violence Prevention Week Coordinating Committee (FVPWC)

Family Violence Prevention Week is held each year in February on PEI. The week runs from Sunday through Saturday and includes Valentine's Day. The FVPWC is a PAC ad hoc committee convened annually to develop and publicize a schedule of events being held around the province in recognition of PEI Family Violence Prevention Week. This is a universal prevention activity (for the entire population).

This year the FVPWC:

- Assembled and published the events on the PAC website, www.stopfamilyviolence.pe.ca
- Arranged for PAC to co-sponsor the second annual "Walk in Silence for Victims of Family Violence" in Charlottetown. As last year, the Walk in Silence was a success with more than 70 Islanders walking from Province House to City Hall in support of family, friends and neighbours who are victims of family violence. The walk was followed by a reception hosted by the Charlottetown Mayor's Purple Ribbon Task Force. Speakers included Premier Robert Ghiz, Mayor Clifford Lee and Patricia Roy, Board Chair, PEI Family Violence Prevention Services.
- Partnered with the PAC Social Marketing Working Group to develop and distribute the new brochure and poster, "Neighbours, Friends, and Families." (See the Social Marketing Working Group update for more information).



Premier Robert Ghiz (second from left) joins PAC Chair Dr. Philip Smith (second from right), Board Chair of PEI Family Violence Prevention Services Patricia Roy (centre front) and community members in the Second Annual Walk in Silence for Victims of Family Violence

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Support Committee (SSC)

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programmes utilize Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), registered nurses who have extensive training and education in medical care and forensic examination of sexual assault victims. SANEs are on call 24 hours a day and provide care in a hospital setting to females, males and transgendered people 13 years of age and older. SANEs can also provide testimony in the court of law if needed.

During the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the SSC continued to provide support to the PEI SANE Coordinating Committee in working to implement a SANE programme on the Island. This is an indicated prevention activity (for persons already affected by violence).

- Draft educational materials explaining SANE programmes were developed by a University of Prince Edward Island student for use by the SSC and the Coordinating Committee.
- In spring 2010 the SSC and representatives of the Coordinating Committee met with Dr. Cathy Carter-Snell, a forensic nurse examiner and educator, to discuss the various SANE programme models and the range of programmes available to train nurses as Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. The web-based training program offered by Dr. Carter-Snell will be proposed for PEI nurses. Discussions are currently underway with Dr. Carter-Snell to determine the configuration and cost of the training.
- The New Brunswick Women's Special Issues Branch has invited PEI representatives to attend an information sharing meeting this summer to discuss "lessons learned" by New Brunswick's SANE programmes and to obtain their suggestions for successful implementation of a SANE programme in PEI. We are fortunate to be able to benefit from New Brunswick's experiences and to be offered access to their resources.



Expenditures

PAC receives an annual budget of \$10,000. In the 2010/11 Fiscal Year PAC Awarded grants for the following projects:

- City of Charlottetown
 - Michael Kaufman presentations for a wide range of frontline providers and the public on gender stereotypes and raising boys to be good men (expenses shared with the City of Charlottetown and the Interministerial Women's Secretariat). PAC portion of expenses - \$1,000
- PAC Social Marketing Working Group & PEI Family Violence Prevention Week Co-ordinating Committee (though PEI Family Violence Prevention Services)
 - Printing of English and French "Neighbours, Friends, and Families" brochures and posters, and PAC Banner - \$2,866
- Family Violence Education Session for Professionals
 - One day training for Island professionals on the dynamics of family violence and the impact on children, and the range of family violence services available in the province. Venue and attendant costs (expenses shared with the Interministerial Women's Secretariat and the Department of Community Services, Seniors and Labour Family Violence Prevention Office; government Multimedia Services provided in-kind). PAC portion of expenses - \$600

- Advisory Council on the Status of Women
 - Annual Purple Ribbon Campaign - \$2,000
- PEI Family Violence Prevention Services
 - Continuation of PAC website redesign and expansion in recognition that the website is an important means of communication for PAC and a core resource for victims, community members and professionals (In-kind services are provided by government Strategic Marketing, Communications PEI and IT) - \$2,000

The remainder of PAC's funds were used to reimburse PAC community representatives for travel expenses to attend meetings, general meeting expenses and Family Violence Prevention Week advertising.



Agencies or organizations requesting PAC funding for projects are required to submit a formal application for support. The form is available on the PAC website or upon request by e-mailing Dr. Wendy Verhoek-Oftedahl at wverhoekoftedahl@gov.pe.ca or calling (902) 836-6712. Projects must be consistent with PAC's mandate in order to be considered for funding. Applications submitted by individuals will not be considered. Applications are accepted year-round but MUST be received by Dr. Verhoek-Oftedahl by February 1.

PAC Committee Members



Premier Robert Ghiz (back row, centre) and PAC Chair, Dr. Philip Smith (back row, to the right of Premier Ghiz) with members of PAC, December 2010

Contact

Members of the Premier's Action Committee (2010-11)

Chair:

Member at Large - Dr. Philip Smith, Professor of Psychology, UPEI*

Resource:

Department of Community Services, Seniors and Labour
Family Violence Prevention & Community Development Coordinator*
(Dr. Wendy Verhoek-Oftedahl)

Ex-Officio:

Department of Community Services, Seniors and Labour
Director of Child and Family Services (Rona Brown)

Government Departments and Programs:

Department of Community Services, Seniors and Labour
Child Protection (Wendy McCourt)
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Student Services (Glenn Edison)*
Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning
Population Secretariat (Jane Mallard)
Department of Justice and Public Safety
Crown Attorney (David O'Brien, Q.C.)*
Victim Services (Susan Maynard)*
Health PEI (formerly Department of Health)
Primary Care: Mental Health and Addictions (Jody MacLennan)
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Sgt. Andrew Blackadar)
Inter-ministerial Women's Secretariat (Michelle Harris-Genge)*
Children's Secretariat (Sarah Henry)
Seniors' Secretariat (Catherine Freeze)

Arms-Length from Government Advisory Agency:

Advisory Council on the Status of Women (Lisa Murphy)*

Professional/Community Organizations:

Actions femmes I.-P.-E. Inc. (Debbie Gallant)
Aboriginal Women's Association (Marilyn Sark)
Association of Registered Nurses of PEI (Marilyn Sark)
Catholic Family Services Bureau (Diane Griffin)
Clergy Representative (Rev. Dr. Andrew Richardson)
Community Legal Information Association (Donna Langille)
East Prince Women's Information Centre (Andy Lou Somers)
Federation of PEI Municipalities (Ben Smith)
Medical Society of PEI (Dr. Christine MacNearney)
PEI Association of Newcomers to Canada (Melissa Coffin succeeded by Katherine Craig)
PEI Chiefs of Police Association (Chief Lewie Sutherland)
PEI Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc. (Phil Matusiewicz)*
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (Sigrid Rolfe)*
PEI Teachers' Federation (Carrie St. Jean)
Women's Institute of PEI (Glenn Younker)

*PAC Admin Standing Committee

During the 2010-11 fiscal year the PAC Committee-of-the-Whole met quarterly in the Premier's Cabinet Room, on 14 June 2010, 27 September 2010, 13 December 2010 and 7 March 2011.

The PAC Admin Standing Committee met on twelve occasions during the 2010-11 fiscal year.

Family Violence Prevention
and Community Development
Coordinator



Dr. Verhoek-Oftedahl

Dr. Verhoek-Oftedahl, Family Violence Prevention and Community Development Coordinator in the Department of Community Services, Seniors and Labour serves as Resource to PAC. She is an injury epidemiologist with 15 years of experience in public health research encompassing family violence across the lifespan including child maltreatment, teen dating violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and abuse of older adults. In September 2010 she was appointed for a two year term to the Board of the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research.

Premier's Action Committee
on Family Violence Prevention



Comité d'action du premier ministre
sur la prévention de la violence familiale

For more information:
Dr. Verhoek-Oftedahl
Family Violence Prevention
and Community Development
Coordinator
902-368-6712
wverhoekoftedahl@gov.pe.ca

